IDEAS FOR A REWARD MENU

- Play a game with the family
- Choose your favourite midweek meal
- Play date in the park with a friend
- A swim at the beach on the weekend
- A fun, healthy dessert (Exotic Fruit Kebabs - yum!)

HOW WILL YOUR CHILD NAVIGATE THIS YEAR’S PATHWAY?

Many students experience a rush of excitement as they walk through the school gates, a sense of belonging when they enter their classroom and a bubbling of anticipation when the play bell rings at Elanora. As the new year gets under way, over a thousand young people are busy getting on with the daily activities that will form the beginning of a new chapter in their school life. Experience tells us that as they travel the winding pathway of this year’s chapter, it will almost certainly contain potholes, be scattered with rocks and perhaps even dotted with boulders. Will your child be fragile, consumed with negativity and self-doubt as they journey along the pathway? Or will they be optimistic, adaptable and resilient? Whilst we cannot and should not, prepare the pathway for each child, we can prepare each child for the pathway.

Children learn how to navigate pitfalls on the pathway, by observing the language and actions of adults around them. Promote their resilience by using problem situations as opportunities to build optimism and confidence, rather than negativity and anger.

Handle situations calmly. If your child comes home with a problem from school, rather than getting anxious, angry and negative, take a more positive approach. If you think optimistically, so will your child. Perhaps they’ve experienced conflict with a classmate. Talk about the details of the situation, avoid jumping to conclusions and remember that there are always at least two sides to the story. You might ask for instance, “Why do you think that happened?” “If your classmate was here, what might their side of the story be?” Talk about your child’s emotions for example, “How did you feel when that happened?” “How do you think your classmate might have felt?” Choose phrases that will empower your child to try to solve difficult situations, but avoid jumping in and telling them what to say/do to fix things. “Have you got any ideas about how to solve this problem?” Your child is closer to the situation than you are and may come up with creative, age-appropriate solutions that you could never have imagined. This process also increases their ‘buy-in’ to independently carry out their solution. If you stay calm, positive and actively involve them in solving the problem, you are communicating to your child, your belief in them. This enhances their self-esteem and builds optimism. Remind children that their solution may not work first time around and tell them not to be discouraged because reviewing and tweaking a strategy until a solution is found, is a normal part of any problem solving process.

Strengthen confidence by helping your child see their capability. Do this by ‘catching them in the act’. Each time they achieve, give specific praise for what you observed. “Wow! I was impressed that you used a calm voice when talking through that problem with your little brother.” “It took a lot of effort to really listen to your sister’s side to the story.” “You showed how flexible you can be when you changed the game to something you both enjoyed.” Following up a person’s behaviour with something positive makes it more likely that the behaviour will happen again. Praising positive behaviour works in most cases but sometimes you may need to involve your child in creating an incentive plan eg a reward menu, to help motivate changes in behaviour.

Looking forward to enjoying a smooth and successful 2017 with you all.

Karen Greenwood
Student Wellbeing Coordinator
kgree128@eq.edu.au
Despite being diagnosed with Growth Hormone Deficiency at age 11, Messi, considered one of the greatest soccer players of all time, fought for his dream despite being considered too small to play high level football. Venus Williams fought prejudice and setback, growing up in a rough, disadvantaged neighbourhood in the USA.

Resilience can be likened to a rubber band because of its ability to return to form after being bent or stretched. In our Lead to Succeed lessons, we learn that resilience can be measured by our ability to ‘bounce back after bad stuff happens’.

We teach students that they might sometimes experience blockers and barriers that can obstruct their ability to be resilient. However, if this happens, just like Messi and Venus, they can learn to overcome their blockers/barriers.

One of the main barriers to resilience is referred to as the ‘Victim Mentality.’ Making excuses, blaming others or other factors for children not doing their best can encourage children to believe that their ability is out of their control. “It’s not your fault,” statements invite children to be excused for taking any responsibility. If this becomes a habit, children risk losing confidence in their ability to control outcomes when they’re disadvantaged or things don’t go to plan. To avoid the ‘Victim Mentality’ trap, stand strong against the temptation of making excuses by flipping your language. Lace your words with optimism and belief in your child. In our Lead to Succeed lessons, Penny Persistence teaches us the value of persevering to see things through, despite difficulties. Children learn that to be successful, they must learn to ‘Work Tough’ and ‘Give Effort’.

Another factor that’s vital for resilience is a healthy sense of self-worth. When hardship happens, a person with strong self-worth can bounce back because they’re confident in their belief in themselves. Unlike Cathy Crumble, they know they’re stronger than the hardship they’re facing.

Develop self-worth by ‘letting go’ and giving children a chance to show what they’re capable of. Build a strong sense of responsibility by trusting them to take on meaningful, age-appropriate tasks without being checked on all the time.

When children make mistakes, they need to feel comfortable, not defeated. Develop a sense of accepting mistakes and failure by explaining that these setbacks are a normal part of living and learning and each hurdle is an opportunity to learn. Use supportive, constructive feedback and recognition of effort to overpower feelings of failure, guilt or shame. Specific feedback (“If you break it into small parts, it might help”) rather than negative and personal feedback is essential (“You’re never going to be able to do that,” “Reading is certainly not your strength.”)

A sense of belonging, personal competence and pride comes when children feel accepted and loved by others. They need to feel confident in their ability to meet challenges in their life. Self-worth evolves from having successful life experiences in solving problems independently, being creative and getting results for effort. Setting appropriate expectations, not too low and not too high that they can never be achieved, makes children feel powerless and incapable of controlling situations. Be attentive to your child’s needs and encourage them through tough times so that they don’t lose hope and give up but avoid overprotecting them and making them fragile and dependent on you. Parenthood is an exciting journey. Cultivate positive habits and watch resilience flourish.
Uploading photos and videos onto social media services and websites can be a great way to share memorable moments with friends and family, or to boost engagement with your community.

But there can be risks associated with posting photos and videos of children online. There are some things you can do to reduce the risk of photos and videos being shared more widely than you intended.

A Q&A article with Julie Inman Grant, Children’s eSafety Commissioner and Amanda Third, a respected colleague from academia discusses the importance of educating parents around the implications of sharing photos online before #BacktoSchool week. To access the full article, please visit Back to School: parents encouraged to #talkb4sharing

Tips for taking photos and videos and sharing them online

Public and private places
The law treats taking photos or videos in private places and public places differently, in public places you have the right to take a photo unless you do so in a way that is offensive or makes a nuisance to those around you. When an event is taking place in a private place people can enforce rules about photography, so you should consider gaining consent before taking photos and videos.

Alternate ways to share photos and videos
Other ways that may give you more control when sharing photos and videos include:
- Sharing photos by email
- Using a secure online portal
- Multimedia messaging service

How do I get involved?
1. Talk to your child about how you’d like to take a photo of them on their first day of school to mark the occasion, and explain how you’d like to share them with others.
2. If they agree, take a photo. If they don’t agree, talk about why they don’t and what their concerns are.
3. Once you have a photo, tell your child how, with whom and why you’d like to share their photo, and ask your child if it’s ok.
4. Involve your child in the process of choosing which photos to share. Seek their advice about who they’d like to share it with and why.
5. Post your back to school images with the #talkb4sharing hashtag to encourage others to have the conversation.

For more information, the Australian Institute of Family Studies website provides further information on the protection and privacy and the safety of children together with guidance on the publishing images of children and young people online.

Parentline provides help through counselling, information and referral that is tailored to meet each callers’ needs.
For Queensland, phone 1300 30 1300 (cost of a local call), hours of operation from 8am to 10pm, seven days a week.

Novita Yamin
ICT Coach
Children First

Expressions of interest are now being sought from parents/carers who would like their child to attend the following six week Centacare program at Elanora State School this term.

**The Children First Program is designed for students in Years 2, 3 or 4 who have experienced divorce or separation in their families.**

*Children First provides young people with an opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings in a safe, fun and confidential environment. It also assists children to learn and develop new ways of coping with feelings associated with their parent’s separation or divorce.*

- Six week duration – 2 hours per week (in place of regular class program from 0900-1100)
- Small group – maximum 6 students of similar age (Years 2, 3 or 4)
- Program designed by counsellors from Centacare Family and Community Services – please call Centacare on **07 5527 7211** if you require more details about this program
- Location: Elanora State School PAC (Conference Room)
- Dates – Term 1
- This course is provided free of charge for students at Elanora State School
- Limited placements available

If your child has experienced divorce or separation in the family and you would like them to attend this program,

**please register your interest no later than Mon 6 February**

by contacting Karen Greenwood, Student Wellbeing Coordinator **kgree128@eq.edu.au** | telephone 55599222.
Childhood can be difficult, and it is common for young people and their parents to need some additional support. Valli Jones is working with Elanora State School to help parents and the school to meet the social, emotional, and behavioural needs of students. With a GP referral, students are eligible for up to 10 individual and 10 group sessions. Sessions can be bulk billed, with no additional cost to parents, and take place on school grounds.

If you would like more information, please contact Valli on:
0413 415 576
valli@vallijones.com
vallijones.com