



# Information Sheets for the Health Promoting Schools Award 2004

## Mental Health Award

- Tips for applying for the Mental Health Award in 2004
- Free brochures you can order
- For your School Newsletter
- Some Useful Web Sites
- Some Useful Telephone Contacts

## Tips for applying for the Mental Health Award in 2004

- Start a Mental Health folder/file
- Divide it into the three areas you have chosen from Formal Curriculum
- File any documentation related to each of these three areas straight away.
- Documentation could include
  - copies of your formal curriculum
  - copies of your school newsletter
  - information about staff training
  - copies of relevant policies &/or procedures
  - documentation about resources, strategies and activities used in your school
  - copies of information or flyers about community activities held or promoted by your school eg: parenting groups, visits to school by outside groups/organisations
  - evidence of parent/grandparent/carer involvement in your school eg: flyers for events or requests for volunteers
- If linking school activities with national health campaigns, consider these dates:
 

• Schizophrenia Awareness Week	16-22 May	9879 2600
• National Mothering Week	3-9 May	(03) 9885 0855
• World Mental Health Day	10 Oct	9262 5111
• National Mental Health Week	10-16 Oct	9816 1611

## Free brochures you can order

There are many brochures available that contain interesting, easy to read information suitable for your school's parents. They are available free and can be ordered in bulk at any time. We have listed some of them for you and encourage you to let your parents know about them.

Suggestions:

- Order in supplies of the brochures and have them freely available for parents to pick up when they visit your school
- Order them in for a special event you may be holding.
- Use them to promote one of the national health weeks or days by giving them out to parents during that time eg: World Mental Health Day.
- Put the list of brochures in your school newsletter to let parents know they are available.

### Brochures

• Challenging Behaviours	• Mental Illness: The Facts
• Tips for Parents – Babies	• What is depression?
• Tips for Parents – Kids 1 – 4	• What are anxiety disorders?
• Tips for Parents – Kids 5 – 11	• What is an eating disorder?
• Tips for Parents - Adolescents	• What is schizophrenia?
• Tips for Parents – Relationships	• What is bipolar mood disorder?
• Supporting parents & families: the mental health & wellbeing of children & young people	

To order copies of any of the above **FREE** brochures contact the Commonwealth Department of Health on Fax: 1800 634 400 or Ph: 1800 066 247.

You can also download these brochures from [www.mentalhealth.gov.au/resources](http://www.mentalhealth.gov.au/resources)



## For your School Newsletter

The following information is provided for you to use in your school newsletter as a way of promoting positive mental health in your school community.

There are three sheets covering the following areas:

- χ Being a Parent
- χ Self-Esteem
- χ Being Bullied

# **BEING A PARENT**

Becoming a parent is one of the most important and difficult things you can do. It is also one of the most rewarding. **Most parents learn as they go**, influenced by the way they were brought up or by what they have read or watched others do. We all want our children to turn into healthy, happy, well adjusted, successful, honest, caring, responsible adults who will be respectful. It is a lot to ask. However your child relies on you to do this well.

## **YOUR FEELINGS**

As a parent you will experience a range of emotions which are all normal and yet which can make you feel like you are on a roller coaster ride. Often parents feel that they are not appreciated by their children or valued by others. Such emotions can leave you feeling guilty as well as thinking you are not a good parent. It is important to remember you're not expected to be perfect and that all parents feel that they have made mistakes at some stage. Most parents at some time feel tired and upset and question what it is all about.

## **THINGS THAT CAN MAKE IT EASIER**

- χ Find out what you don't know
- χ Be aware of how children grow and develop.
- χ Be wise enough to know that you can do things differently.
- χ Be strong enough to say you don't know how to .....
- χ Be big enough to ask for information or advice.

## **IT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO:**

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| χ Value yourself                       | χ Look after yourself |
| χ Accept your feelings                 | χ Reward yourself     |
| χ Develop positive self-talk           | χ Trust yourself      |
| χ Work out your own values and beliefs | χ Get support         |
| χ Take care of your relationship       |                       |

## **MANAGING ANGER**

Try to do something about whatever is causing the underlying feeling if you can. Get to know your own body signs when anger is building up and act before it blows up. Work out when you are most likely to lose your cool and plan to do something different at those times. Get some space.....go outside, go for a walk or a run. If you have very young children and no one to mind them take them with you. The critical thing is to admit you are angry and deal with it in a way that won't harm yourself or your family.

## **REMINDERS**

- χ **Parenting is forever, so make the foundation solid.**
- χ **Find out the right ingredients to raise a happy child.**
- χ **It is a marathon run not a short distance run so space yourself.**
- χ **You are the most influential person in your child's life.**
- χ **Mistakes only matter if you keep repeating them.**
- χ **Don't waste time and energy feeling guilty.....change what you are doing.**
- χ **Seek help from others, but keep on believing in yourself.**

# **SELF ESTEEM**

## **WHAT IS SELF-ESTEEM**

As children grow up they form views of themselves as a person, their value as an individual and how good they are at doing things. This view of self-worth is called self-esteem. **An important part of being a parent involves encouraging children to be confident and develop healthy self-esteem** (self-worth, self-image). This means children having a **true sense of their strengths and weaknesses**.

## **WHAT CAUSES LOW SELF-ESTEEM**

Low self-esteem is the result of children thinking and believing bad/negative things about themselves. Many things contribute to this negative “self-talk” including:

- ***Lack of praise, affection or attention***
- ***Not having achievements recognised***
- ***Lack of limits and discipline***
- ***Hurtful, blaming and critical comments or actions***
- ***Unfavourable comparisons with brothers and sisters***
- ***Lack of encouragement for self-care and hygiene***
- ***Lack of regular exercise and fitness***
- ***Physical or emotional abuse***
- ***Frequent arguments and conflict between parents***

## **HOW TO ENCOURAGE HEALTHY SELF-ESTEEM**

- Praise your child for their **efforts** and achievements
- Tell your child you care
- Encourage a Healthy Lifestyle
- Teach your child to be a good friend
- Encourage your child to set Goals
- Encourage your child's Independence
- Encourage your child to evaluate their own Achievements
- Encourage your child to express their Ideas
- Encourage Laughter
- Let your child make decisions
- Help your child deal with disappointment
- Help your child cope with their feelings
- Encourage realistic thinking
- Give your child accurate information
- Help your child be optimistic
- Teach your child to problem solve

## **POINTS TO REMEMBER**

Low self-esteem can also be a sign of more serious emotional problems such as anxiety or depression. If your child has been anxious or sad for a long time, consider seeking professional help

## **KIDS**

For help or more information contact:

χ **KIDS HELPLINE 1800 551 800**

χ **Teacher or School Counsellor**

ADAPTED FROM TRIPLE P - Mathew R Saunders, Karen M T Tuner, Carol Markie-Dadds 1996

# BEING BULLIED

## WHAT IS BULLYING

- χ **Verbal** - teasing, put downs, name calling
- χ **Physical** – pinching, tripping, pushing, fighting
- χ **Gesture** – threatening facial expressions or gestures
- χ **Extortion** – demanding money, lunches, schoolwork
- χ **Exclusion** – being left out of activities
- χ **Telephone** – harassment through phone calls

*Some of the worst bullying occurs when several children decide to intimidate one child.*

## HOW TO TELL IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED

Children don't always tell you when they are being bullied. Some signs might be:

- χ Shyness around other children
- χ Difficulty expressing their thoughts
- χ Low self-esteem or putting themselves down
- χ Appearing anxious, fearful or distressed
- χ Trying to avoid certain situations, such as refusing to go to school
- χ A decline in academic performance
- χ Isolation, such as having no one to play with in lunch breaks
- χ Increased risk taking

## POINTS TO REMEMBER

It is not helpful to teach or tell your child to fight back, as this can often lead to more bullying. Children who are bullied **may not be as strong as the bully, so their fear of losing fights can be quite real.** There are better ways of managing bullies. Often the best solution to bullying for children involves removing themselves from the situation and telling someone who can make a difference.

## WHAT TO DO

- χ **Calmly listen** to your child and find out exactly what has been happening
- χ If bullying is occurring take action **straight away**
- χ Talk to the **adults in charge** of where the bullying occurs
- χ If bullying occurs at school, **make sure the school is aware** of the problem
- χ **Ask your child** what you can do to help with the problem
- χ Think of **a number of options** & choose the ones that seem reasonable and likely to work
- χ **Practice the solution** with your child before they try it out
- χ **Check if this solution works**

***Bullying is not OK and action needs to be taken until it ceases.***

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## Some Useful Web Sites

The following web sites provide a variety of information around promoting positive mental health in your school community.

Some sites, eg: Headroom, are designed for children to go to themselves, being fun to access and providing information that is easily understood.

### Suggestions:

- χ photocopy and distribute the list to staff members
- χ photocopy and distribute the list to parents and carers.
- χ reproduce the list in your school newsletter.
- χ put the web sites in your newsletter one at a time over a period of months.

## **Some Useful Web Sites**

The web sites listed are to help you find more information about a variety of issues that are related to mental health. Please carefully consider the quality of the information on the sites when you visit. All care is taken to ensure that the sites are accurate and useful, but no responsibility is taken for the information provided.

### **General**

#### **ARAFMI NSW**

ARAFMI NSW (Inc) provides support and advocacy for families and friends of people with mental illness.

[www.arafmi.org](http://www.arafmi.org)

#### **Australian Health Promoting Schools Association**

Information about networks, publications, conferences and projects.

[www.hlth.qut.edu.au/ph/ahpsa](http://www.hlth.qut.edu.au/ph/ahpsa)

#### **Child & Adolescent Psychological & Educational Resources (CAPER)**

The CAPER Playground. The Stress Slide has information on stress. The Bully Sandpit has information on bullying. The Teaching Tightrope has information on teaching. "What's New" lists conference abstracts and journal articles.

[www.caper.com.au](http://www.caper.com.au)

#### **Children's Health Development Foundation - Women's & Children's Hospital, Adelaide**

This web site has been developed to provide a comprehensive children's health resource for schools with information on promoting children's health in school communities. Read copies of "Virtually Healthy" - a newsletter for schools.

[www.chdf.org.au](http://www.chdf.org.au)

#### **Commonwealth Mental Health Branch**

This site contains fact sheets about mental health issues that can be read on-line or downloaded. It also contains updates on national mental health campaigns and strategies, as well as links to other relevant sites.

[www.health.gov.au/hsdd/mentalhe](http://www.health.gov.au/hsdd/mentalhe)

#### **DepressioNet**

A comprehensive one-stop resource for information, support and help for people who have depression and their family and friends.

[www.depressionnet.com.au](http://www.depressionnet.com.au)

#### **Internet Mental Health**

Extensive database of information, an excellent starting point with extensive links and current information for the public and mental health professionals.

[www.mentalhealth.com](http://www.mentalhealth.com)

#### **Mental Health and Wellbeing Website**

Commonwealth Dept of Health and Aged Care, many resources, brochures, reports and publications.

[www.mentalhealth.gov.au](http://www.mentalhealth.gov.au)

## Children & Young People

### **Bullying in Schools**

Dr. Ken Rigby's Bullying Page. It provides information that will help people to understand more about bullying in schools and how it can be stopped. It is of special interest to educators, children and parents.

[www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying](http://www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying)

### **CREATE Foundation**

CREATE exists to improve opportunities for the 20,000 children and young people in care across Australia. Children and young people in care are unable to live with their birth parents through no fault of their own. This site has a section for children and young people in care to share stories, comments, pictures, play games and other cool things.

[www.create.org.au](http://www.create.org.au)

**Kids Only - Child and Youth Health** - an independent South Australian Government health unit A site for 6 to 12 year olds where they can find advice and help on being a healthy, happy kid. There is also an extensive database of information for parents.

[www.cyh.com/cyh/kids](http://www.cyh.com/cyh/kids)

### **Children & Young People's Mental Health, CCH**

This is the web site for Children and Young People's Mental Health (CYPMH), Division of Mental Health, Central Coast Health. It has information and resources for children, young people and parents/carers.

[www.yppicentre.com](http://www.yppicentre.com)

### **Dougy Centre**

The Dougy Centre (The American National Centre for Grieving Children and Families) web site has some practical information for adults and children about grieving. It has a series of practical, easy-to-read guidebooks for assisting children, teens and families cope with the death of a family member. Has some useful excerpts from these books about grieving.

[www.dougy.org](http://www.dougy.org)

### **Fernside Online**

Fernside is a center for grieving children. This web site exists to reach out to the community with support and advocacy for grieving children and their families. It offers a "kid's area" with activities, questions for discussion and books. It also has a "grown up's area".

[www.fernside.org](http://www.fernside.org)

### **Headroom**

Lots of useful information on emotional, family and peer issues with specific areas for 6-12 years, 12-18 years, parents & friends and professionals & service providers.

[www.headroom.net.au](http://www.headroom.net.au)

### **Kids Help Line**

Provides online counselling, telephone counselling, information sheets on a range of different problems including bullying, child abuse and neglect, drug problems, domestic violence and eating disorders.

[www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

### **The Hormone Factory**

Children aged 10 to 12 are intensely curious about the changes puberty brings. They are also fascinated about how babies are made and have a growing awareness of sex. The aim of this site is to support parents and teachers in talking to children about sexual and reproductive development, to answer the questions children often ask, and the ones they don't (but wonder about).

[www.thehormonefactory.com](http://www.thehormonefactory.com)

### **South Carolina Department of Mental Health**

A fact sheet on tips for children on how to cope with a parent affected by mental illness. Simple, easy to understand language aimed at children.

[www.state.sc.us/dmh/schoolbased/thingstoknow.htm](http://www.state.sc.us/dmh/schoolbased/thingstoknow.htm)

## **COPMI (Children of Parents with a Mental Illness)**

### **CHAMPS Worldwide**

This site has been prepared so that children can have fun, have questions answered, and find out useful information about mental illness. Suitable for 5 – 12 years.

[www.champsworldwide.com](http://www.champsworldwide.com)

### **Children of Parents with a Mental Illness Homepage**

Part of the AICAFMHA web site and is a gateway to a range of information regarding the provision of services to families where one or both parents have a mental illness

[www.aicafmha.net.au/copmi](http://www.aicafmha.net.au/copmi)

### **COMIC – Children of Mentally Ill Consumers**

Provides information about COMIC activities and a summary of the issues affecting children of parents with a mental illness.

[www.howstat.com/comic](http://www.howstat.com/comic)

## **Parenting**

### **Family and Children's Services - Western Australian Government**

A comprehensive parenting site complete with up to date information, services and resources to help parents and carers in the important role of looking after kids.

[www.fcs.wa.gov.au](http://www.fcs.wa.gov.au)

### **Parenting SA - The Department of Human Services, South Australia**

Comprehensive site with Parenting Easy Guides (PEGs) which provide simple, easy-to-read information on many of the issues faced by parents from birth through to adolescence. There are also Aboriginal and Multicultural PEGs.

[www.parenting.sa.gov.au/pegs.asp](http://www.parenting.sa.gov.au/pegs.asp)

### **Child and Youth Health**, an independent South Australian Government health unit

This site is an extensive source of information on parenting, child and youth health. There is an extensive database of health information, including mental health, for parents.

[www.cyh.com](http://www.cyh.com)



## Some Useful Telephone Contacts

### Suggestions:

- χ photocopy and distribute the list to staff members
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- χ reproduce the list in your school newsletter.

## Some Useful Telephone Contacts

<b>ARAFMI</b>	<b>4369 4236</b>
χ ARAFMI provides support and advocacy for families and friends of people with mental illness.	
<b>Better Health Centre</b>	<b>9816 0452</b>
χ Extensive range of mental health brochures.	
<b>Central Intake – Mental Health (Central Coast Health)</b>	<b>4320 3500</b>
χ The first point of contact with the Mental Health Service if you or someone you know needs help.	
χ 24 hours / 7 days	
<b>Child &amp; Family Health Counselling Intake Line (Central Coast Health)</b>	<b>4328 7988</b>
<b>Kids Help Line</b>	<b>1800 551 800</b>
χ National phone counselling service for children and young people aged 5 – 18.	
χ 24 hours / 7 days	
<b>Mental Health Central Intake (Central Coast Health)</b>	<b>4320 3500</b>
χ The first point of contact with the Mental Health Service if you or someone you know needs help.	
χ 24 hours / 7 days	
<b>Mental Health Information Service</b>	<b>1800 674 200</b>
χ Largest information database of Government & Non-Government Mental Health Services in NSW.	
χ Extensive range of mental health publications & videos	
<b>Mental Health Promotion Officer (Central Coast Health)</b>	<b>4372 7276</b>
<b>Lifeline</b>	<b>131 114</b>
χ 24 hour counselling service	
<b>Paediatric Speech Pathology Intake Line (Central Coast Health)</b>	<b>4328 7999</b>
<b>Parenting Help Line</b>	<b>132 055</b>
χ Provides information and advice	
χ Extensive database of services available in NSW.	
χ Monday – Wednesday, 9am – 8.30pm	
χ Thursday – Saturday, 9am – 4.30pm	
<b>Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) (Central Coast Health)</b>	<b>4372 7288</b>