TOOWOOMBA WEST SPECIAL SCHOOL
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BE SAFE  BE RESPECTFUL  BE RESPONSIBLE

PBL (Positive Behaviour for Learning) Purpose Statement:
Toowoomba West Special School is committed to promoting a safe, respectful and responsible school community that enables our students to reach their full potential.

Behaviour of the week:
‘I stay in the school grounds.’
(Be Safe)

PREPARING FOR THE NDIS

For people with disability and their families, the NDIS provides more choice and control over the support they receive. Clifford Park Special School is hosting an event to inform parents and carers about the NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme). Corina Searchfield, Deputy Principal at Clifford Park informs me that this event will be delivered by a representative from the NDIA (National Disability Insurance Agency). This agency is will be directly involved with interacting with families, the consumers. This is more than an awareness-raising session. As future consumers, I am encouraging those of you who can attend to consider attending. As you can see, child-minding will be provided in order to make it easier for our families to attend.

I know some of our parents have registered already. I look forward to seeing you there and learning more about the next phase of NDIS implementation in Queensland.

FOCUS ON CURRICULUM

Students have been working with the area of two and three dimensional shapes within the Mathematicss curriculum this term. Miss Yvonne’s maths group put shapes into practical use as a culminating activity. Here she is reviewing the steps involved with her students in making hats, using circles.

PBL: POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING

We continue to implement our Behaviour Matrix this term. The matrix is a grid that includes behaviours we will be teaching...
which occur across the entire school day. Our three expectations (respect, responsibility, safety) are defined in each daily routine.

Those of you who visit the school daily for drop-offs and pick-ups will have seen an easel with any important notices for the day or week. Included on the easel is our BEHAVIOUR OF THE WEEK. This week it has been I STAY IN THE SCHOOL GROUNDS (Safety).

We use star stamps as rewards for desired behaviours. These are then transferred onto rockets with each rocket containing 10 stars. Students are able to access the reward menu each week when they accumulate a certain number of rockets.

Our PBL Team continues to meet fortnightly after school. In addition to Glenn and me there is Amy Harding (our external Coach), Megan Thompson (teacher and Internal Coach), Laura Masters (our Curriculum Co-ordinator), Mary Evans (Teacher Aide) and Megan Apalais (our Parent Representative and Vice-President of the P&C).

EVERY DAY COUNTS!

Attendance at school results in maximised learning time and we believe that if students attend every day and every learning minute of the day, we are improving their opportunities for success. Please send your child to school if they are well and there is no other reason for them to be at home. If your child is going to be absent for the day, please notify the school by phone. If your child has up to five unexplained absences, Glenn or I will be contacting you to see if there is anything we can do to help.

DATE CLAIMER:
Toowoomba West P&C Race Day

Saturday 24 October

This is one of our P & C’s biggest fundraisers so as much support as can be given is greatly appreciated. It is a great event, so book your respite / child care now!

NEXT ‘CATCH UP’ MORNING TEA
Monday 1 June at 9.30am

It is always a great opportunity to catch up with other parents and see how their term is travelling. Why don’t you come along to our next gathering on Monday 1 June at 9.30am.

It would be great to see more of our parents / carers at our next morning tea. Please bring a plate to share.

Megan Apalais
(P&C Vice-President)

PRADER-WILLI AWARENESS DAY

Brad and Amy Seawright have a daughter and son who attend our school. Their daughter, Ashley, is diagnosed with Prader-Willi Syndrome; a little known genetic condition. At our last P&C meeting Amy expressed a desire to raise awareness about Prader-Willi Syndrome. On Friday 29 May, it is Prader-Willi Syndrome Awareness Day. As this is a short time away, Amy and Brad do not want to turn this into a fundraising event for this year, but would dearly love to raise public awareness about this Syndrome.

They would like to ask our families to get behind this event and to dress their child in something orange for next Friday 29 May to help raise awareness. I know staff will be behind this and I ask if you would consider supporting this event by sending your child to school in something orange!

ABOUT
PRADER-WILLI SYNDROME (PWS)

Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS) is a rare and very complex non-inherited genetic disorder in which several genes on the 15th chromosome are deleted or unexpressed. The common characteristics of PWS are small hands and feet, abnormal growth and body composition (small stature, very low lean body mass and early onset childhood obesity), hypotonia (weak muscles) at birth, insatiable hunger, extreme obesity and intellectual disability.

In recent years, the syndrome has been genetically characterized as an abnormality of chromosome 15,
and definitive diagnosis is now based on genetic testing.

### SLEEP HABITS FOR CHILDREN

The following ‘parenting tips’ are from Pamela Sippell, Guidance Officer with the ‘More Support for Students with Disabilities’ team in our Regional Office.

**SLEEP HABITS FOR CHILDREN**

“Sleep research shows that children who develop good sleep patterns usually carry these into adolescence, and beyond. If you are a parent of young children struggling to get them asleep or battling kids who want to stay up longer then a proper working knowledge of good sleep habits and sleep hygiene is a must...

**GREAT SLEEP HABITS INCLUDE:**

1. **Regular bedtimes.** Kids may fight this but be regular during the week and let kids stay up a little later on the weekends.
2. **A wind down time of up to 45 minutes prior to bed.** This includes, removing TV and other stimuli, calming children down and limiting food intake (and caffeine for teenagers).
3. **Bedtime routine** such as story temperature (baths can be good for this) and melatonin (hormone, teeth cleaning that signals psychologically that it is time for sleep).
4. **Keeping bedrooms for sleep and not TV or devices.** Bedrooms that resemble caves seem to be recommended.
5. **Maximising the 3 sleep cues** of: darkness (cave-like bedroom), lowering body that prepares you to sleep.

It seems sleep is one thing we can all be educated about. We take it for granted and often view poor sleepers through a biological lens. Better knowledge of the biology of sleep and also sleep patterns will go a long way to helping kids and teens get a good night’s sleep. I believe it is an absolute essential for good modern parenting.”

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### SOCIAL STORIES

**WHAT ARE SOCIAL STORIES?**

*Social stories* are short stories. They describe situations or concepts in a format that is meaningful for people with developmental disorders. Social stories help people with developmental disorders to “navigate” a situation which they find difficult to manage. Social stories are used as a communication strategy. They enable people to:

- understand a situation
- learn how to respond or behave in that situation.

**SOCIAL STORIES CONTAIN SENTENCES THAT ARE:**

- **Descriptive:** What is going to happen?
- **Directive:** What should I do?
- **Perspective:** How do I or others feel?

**Descriptive sentences** describe the setting, activity, who does what and why.

**Directive sentences** tell the person what is expected as a response to the cues or situation described.

**Perspective sentences** describe the reactions and feelings of the person and of others in the given situation.

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**THE PERSON (YOUR CHILD) IS ALWAYS ONE OF THE KEY CHARACTERS.**

Social Stories are individualised for the person and relevant to the person’s life.

**Why use social stories?**

- They explain how to behave in specific social situations.
- They teach specific social and communication skills.
- They assist in managing change.
- They reduce anxiety.
- They assist in managing repetitive behaviours.
- They help to cope with school curriculum issues.
- They help to teach independent living skills.

**Who can use social stories?**

People who are readers and non-readers, verbal and non-verbal people, any age group!

**How to write a social story**

**Step 1:** What is the situation with which the person needs support?

**Step 2:** What characteristics of the person do we need to consider?

- Attention span
- What motivates them
- Learning support needs
- Vocabulary
- Reading ability and visual ability

**Step 3:** Give information about the situation from the person’s perspective

- who is involved?
- what happens?
- duration of the situation
- how it begins and ends
- consequences (both positive and negative)

**Step 4:** Writing the social story - guidelines

**Use ‘appropriate’ language**

- Appropriate to the person’s comprehension skills
- Vocabulary and language familiar to the person
- Short sentences are best

**Write from the learner’s perspective**

- Put yourself in the person’s shoes during observations
- Observe the person’s reactions to situations. What confuses, frightens, motivates them?
- Write in the first person: “I can……”, “I am ……..”, “My teacher……”

**Build in flexibility**

Use sentences starting with “Sometimes……”, “Usually……”

**Define clear ways to signal the beginning and end of an activity**

“My computer time finishes when the timer rings”

**Step 5:** Implementing social stories

Read story with the person prior to use in the target situation. Check comprehension of the story.

*Initially read the story approximately once daily (or every time the target event occurs).*

As behaviour improves, gradually ‘fade’ the story. If needed, increase the frequency of use again. The learner can share the story with others. If the story is not working, check that it is:

- Accurate / positive / read at the relevant time
Formats for social stories
Booklets and ‘big books’, Photo albums and card holders, Flash cards, Videotaped and Audio taped versions, Wall sequences.
Neil Nicoll – Psychologist, CHERI (Psychologist No. PS0003047)
This is an example of a simple 6-page social story to support morning routines.

My name is XXXX.
In the morning I do my morning jobs.
In the morning I get out of bed.
In the morning I go to the toilet.
In the morning I eat my breakfast.
In the morning I put on my school clothes.
Now I am ready for school! When I’m ready for school, Mum and Dad are happy!

There are also apps for iPads which can help you to make electronic social stories. If you go to the App Store, search for Social Stories to see the range. If you would like some help with ideas for a social story for home, please ask your child’s teacher.

CHARITY GOLF DAY FOR TWSS
Last Friday a charity golf day was held at Middle Ridge Golf Club. Two local companies were instrumental in galvanising support for this event, which has been contributing to charities for the last 10 years. One of our school parents, Sarah Rubb, works at Northbuild and spent a great deal of time behind the scenes to get the day up and running. Toowoomba Fasteners owner, Tom Herbert, was the other driving force who worked closely with Sarah and her manager, Andrew Civil. Tom has a granddaughter at our school – another connection. A crowd of almost 90 golfers descended on the golf club and, despite the freezing, windy conditions, completed 18 holes of golf. Megan Apalais and I were there to help out. We were overwhelmed by the support and generosity of the golfing community on that day. Tom rang yesterday to say that, with profits from entry fees, multi-draw raffle as well as the silver circle and putt-putt competitions, our school stands to benefit in more than $8,000 raised. That is a staggering amount. We are most grateful to Toowoomba Fasteners, Northbuild and the generosity of golfers and helpers on the day to be the beneficiary of so much good will.

Visits to Paediatricians:
If your child has a paediatric, neurologist or other specialist visit coming up, please let your child’s teacher know. This will enable us to provide an update about your child’s progress at school. Paediatricians and other specialists tell us that they find information from school to be extremely valuable e.g. in relation to a child’s behaviour, ability to concentrate, cognitive and physical skills, energy levels etc. while at school. It would be desirable to have at least one week’s notice for a report.

UNIFORMS – COOLER MONTHS ARE HERE!
Don’t forget that winter is approaching so get ready to order your V-neck, fleecy lined jumpers. These are priced at $24. We have plenty of other stock available. Payment will be required at collection of your uniform order.

Many thanks, Cherie Imms

Till next time, kind regards

Lea

****** Coming Events ******

29.05.15 | Prader-Willi Awareness Day
01.06.15 | 9.30am Parent / Carer ‘Catch-Up’ Morning Tea
25.06.15 | 5.00pm NDIS Session at CPSS
29.08.15 | Toowoomba Business disABILITY Awards
18.09.15 | ‘Talk Like a Pirate’ Day (fundraiser)
24.10.15 | Toowoomba West P&C Race Day

ACCESS TO JP: Mr. Glenn, our Deputy Principal, is a registered Justice of the Peace (Qual.). Should you need the services of a JP (Qual.) please enquire at the office to make a time to meet with him.