

College

Newsletter



MacKillop

St Mary MacKillop College Canberra



Volume *Seven*

9 June 2023

Coming

Up

MON 1 2 J U N

- King's Birthday (Public Holiday)

WED 1 4 J U N

- Mathematics Information Evening

FRI 1 6 J U N

- Senior Exams Conclude

MON 1 9 J U N

- Year 7 Camp - Group 1 Departs
- Year 12 AST Trial

TUE 2 0 J U N

- Year 12 AST Interviews
- Write a Book in a Day Competition

WED 2 1 J U N

- Year 7 Camp - Group 1 Returns
- Year 7 Camp - Group 2 Departs
- Year 8 Pilgrimage & Coastlife
- Year 9 YLead Program

THU 2 2 J U N

- Year 8 Pilgrimage & Coastlife
- Year 9 Transition Day
- Year 11 2024 Parent Information Evening

FRI 2 3 J U N

- Year 7 Camp - Group 2 Returns
- Years 11 & 12 Results Check
- Year 10 Course Preview Day

MON 2 6 J U N

- Year 10 Urban Challenge - Group A Departs
- Year 10 Reflection Day - Group B



Principal's Letter

Principal's Prayer

Lord, in the spirit of reconciliation, we pray for your strength and grace to forgive, accept and love one another, as you love us, forgive us and accept us in the sacrifice of your Son. Amen.



Dear parents/carers, teachers and students,

Parent Surveys

Thank you to the nearly 300 parents/carers who have completed the Parent "Tell them From Me" survey during the past three weeks. The survey provides the opportunity for parent/carer input into the directions of the College. The survey closes today, Friday, 9 June. If you are yet to complete the survey, your response will be welcomed and can be accessed via emails sent to you on 23 May and 7 June.

Reconciliation Week

Reconciliation Week, held annually from 27 May to 3 June, provides a focus for working towards the goal of a just, equitable and reconciled Australia for all. At assemblies on both campuses I had the opportunity to speak with students about the role we can all play in contributing to a fully reconciled Australia, through; putting a stop to racism so that all members of our community can feel safe and valued, having a strong understanding of indigenous cultures and histories, and strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-indigenous people for the benefit of all Australians. Through the Australian Curriculum, all students at MacKillop have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in each learning area.

Year 7 Enrolment for 2024

The enrolment period for Year 7 2024 closed two weeks ago with 475 enrolment applications received at that time. This included strong representations from both Catholic primary schools and non-Catholic primary schools. The numbers are very reassuring and reflect strong community confidence in St Mary MacKillop College, ensuring that we will start the 2024 school year at full capacity in Year 7. More importantly, some current Year 6 students have had enrolment interviews in recent weeks and from the character of the individuals it is evident they will contribute to another cohort of high quality.

Cooma Connection

I had the privilege last night of being invited to speak with the School Board of St Patrick's Parish School in Cooma. For the past 10 years MacKillop and St Pat's have partnered to provide continuity in Catholic Education, with a pathway from Kinder to Year 10 at St Patrick's and then continuing at MacKillop in Year 11 and 12. Each year during that partnership we have averaged 40 students per year who have come to us in Year 11 and 12 from St Patrick's and other schools in the Cooma and Monaro and Region.

There was a great deal of interest in the pathway from Cooma parents who have younger children, along with heartening messages from those who have had students attend MacKillop – particularly relating to how they were welcomed by their peers and integrated into school life in their initial days as the "new students" in Year 11. The strong relationship between MacKillop and the Cooma/Monaro region is well-positioned to continue for at least another 10 years!

Yours sincerely,

Mr Lachlan McNicol
College Principal (Acting)





Cowra Eisteddfod

Congratulations to the students who performed at the Cowra Eisteddfod.

Our choir won 1st in Secondary Choir, 1st in School Vocal Choir, and Best Overall Choir. We also got 1st place in Senior Strings and Junior Band, 2nd in Junior Strings, and highly commended for the Senior Wind and Guitar Ensembles.

Well done to all staff and students involved!



Senior Exams

Senior Exams have now begun and will take place until the end of Week 18. We wish all Senior students the best of luck!

We also congratulate our Year 10 students who sat exams earlier this week.



Pentecost and Reconciliation

The feast of Pentecost is the celebration of the birth of the church. This feast starts the season of growth and renewal for the church. It is at this time that we are reminded of the significance of reconciliation and healing in our lives. At our school we strive to create an environment where forgiveness, compassion and unity flourish. Having also simultaneously celebrated Reconciliation Week it is a great opportunity to focus on the importance of reconciliation and healing both individually and as a community.

Reconciliation, as taught by our faith, is a sacred act of seeking forgiveness and restoration of relationships. It is a process that involves deep reflection, acknowledging our shortcomings, and making amends. By embracing this sacrament of healing we learn the power of forgiveness and the grace that it brings to our lives. This is something that we as a nation are still working through and this needs to be done alongside the process of healing.

In our school, reconciliation is not just limited to the confessional as a sacrament. We encourage each member of our community to embrace reconciliation as a way of life, seeking to heal broken relationships, resolving conflicts, and fostering a culture of compassion. It is through acts of forgiveness and understanding that we can create a harmonious environment both within our school and beyond.

Healing goes hand in hand with reconciliation. It is a journey that mends wounds, nurtures spirits, and brings about transformation. Healing comes in many forms, whether it is emotional, spiritual or physical. Sitting in our St Peter's Campus assembly I was reminded about the part that healing has to play in the journey towards reconciliation within our nation. Avari Petersen, a proud 'Wuthathi' woman, spoke to her peers from the heart about the need for healing to happen alongside reconciliation for those who are the first inhabitants of the land on which we live. Reconciliation and healing are ongoing processes that require patience, effort and a commitment to personal growth.

By embracing these principles in our lives, we can foster an environment of love, unity and acceptance – a reflection of Christ's teachings.

"We are but travellers here, so while we are here we should do as much good as we can and live in peace with each other."
St Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

Clare Kinnane • Assistant Principal for Faith, Mission and RE

End of Semester Events

As the end of the semester approaches, below is a summary of the activities taking place for students in Years 7 to 10.

Year 7 Camp: Week 9

Monday 19 June - Wednesday 21 June:
Students in Mindygari (Air) and Meup Meup (Fire)

Wednesday 21 June - Friday 23 June:
Students in Gurabang (Earth) and Ngadyung (Water)

Year 8: Week 9

Wednesday 21 June:

- Year 8 Pilgrimage Sydney (Earth & Water House)
- Year 8 Coastlife & First Aid (Air & Fire House)

Thursday 22 June:

- Year 8 Pilgrimage Sydney (Air & Fire House)
- Year 8 Coastlife & First Aid (Earth & Water House)

Year 9: Week 9

Wednesday 21 June:
YLead Leadership Seminar at the St Peter’s Campus

Thursday 22 June:
Year 10 2024 Transition Day at the St Peter’s Campus

Year 10: Week 9

Wednesday 21 June:
Urban Challenge Pre-Departure Meeting

Thursday 22 June:
Year 11 2024 Information Evening

Friday 23 June:
Year 10 Course Preview Day

Year 10: Week 10

Monday 26 June:

- Urban Challenge Departure (Group A)
- Reflection Day (Group B)

Tuesday 27 June:

- Urban Challenge (Group A)
- Course Counselling (Group B)

Wednesday 28 June:

- Urban Challenge Return (Group A)
- Urban Challenge Departure (Group B)

Thursday 29 June:

- Course Counselling (Group A)
- Urban Challenge (Group B)

Friday 30 June:

- Reflection Day (Group A)
- Urban Challenge Return (Group B)

Status Awards

Congratulations to the following students who have been presented with Bronze Status Awards at the Padua Assembly in Week 5 and 7.

Madison Andracchio 7A3, Daksh Babber 7F1, Nathan Baldock 7F4, Nick Barac 7W4, Zara Bergersen 7F3, Leon Boyle 7F4, Annabella Bromwich 8A1, Zoe Cabella 7E1, Michael Cawthron 7E1, Alyssa Cayzer 7A3, Peyton Childs 7W3, Lily Christian 7F4, Jorell Cooper 7A2, Makenzie Collier 7F1, Keturah Crowther 7F2, Imogen Cussen 7E1, Oliver Donnelly 7F3, Joanna D’Silva 7E2, Mady Farmer 7E4, Leila Harwick 7A3, William Hayes 7W1, Noel Hilton 7E4, Nathan Jones 7W1, Sophie Kennedy 7W3, Keira Kirk 7W2, Kasjan Komocki 7W2, Maya Liddle 7E2, Jhanvi Madua 7A1, Zac Moris 7W1, Isabel Mundammany 7E3, Xander Paterson 7A3, Cailin Petkovic 7E2, Dominic Player 7F1, Harrison Richmond 7E2, May Riesen 7F3, Zoe Rixon 7F4, Cooper Shannon 7W3, Karissa Shiels 7W2, Alexander Small 7F1, Koen Stewart 7F3, Caden Sweeney 7F2, Stella Taylor 7F4, Lily Tompkins 7A2, Sophie Wilson 7W1, Tyeshia Whybrow 7F3

Paul Durham • Assistant Principal, Pastoral Care

SRC Report

As we approach the end of the first Semester, I would like to recap where we stand with the MacKillop House charity as of now. Two weeks ago, Meup Meup hosted their fundraising week. It was a week full of exciting activities such as a photobooth, oodie day and of course everyone's favourite... Goodberry's! The St Peter's Campus raised \$1,448.03 and the Padua Campus raised \$1,072.42. It was amazing to see everyone's engagement in the fundraising process, and it was a great way to kick off the fundraising year.

Ngadyung is next up in Week 2 of Term 3. Keep an eye out around school as well as on social media for information on what the House Captains have planned for the week.

Just a reminder, at the St Peter's Campus, Sustainability Club is held every second Thursday at recess in the Julian Tenison-Woods building. These meetings, led by the Sustainability Captain, Justine Rasheed, are a great way to get involved in the school community. It is a perfect place to voice your opinions for any sustainable changes you would like to see around the school. Keep an eye out in the coming newsletters for sustainability tips from Justine herself!

Toby Barber • Communications and Connection Captain

Altitude Day



Last week we travelled to the Altitude Day at the University of Canberra, run by the team from YLead, where we were able to meet and grow relationships with students from other schools around Canberra.

We participated in a range of activities and gained valuable pieces of information. This included network channelling, overcoming difficulties, goal making, leaving comfort zones, and becoming a leader using five key points – passion, courage, support seeking, growth from hard work and action taking.

We were also addressed by three guest speakers.

- Harrison Oates, a youth advocate that works with UNICEF, Project Rocket, and studies computer science specialising in artificial intelligence. Harrison highlighted the importance of social initiatives and positively impacting our community.
- Han Worsley, a gender and non-binary advocate from a small country town in New South Wales who talked about pursuing passions and moving away from restrictive labels.
- Ben Pettingill, who shared his story about overcoming adversity and showing us how to seek our limitless visions by using 'aspire, acquire and take action.' Ben explained how we can't control outside stimulus, but we can control choices and the way we react or respond to situations.

It was a great day and opportunity for us. The bus ride home was filled with a newfound high spirited, upbeat karaoke team who were energised from the altitude of the day!

Artificial Intelligence meets Academic Integrity



Students across all year groups are completing their final assessments of the semester – projects, reports, tests, creations – allowing them to demonstrate a range of skills and competencies. Many of our senior students started their formal examination week where they have the chance to demonstrate their learning this semester against the carefully planned and challenging questions their teachers set. It is a time of year where academic integrity becomes the main, overt focus of the College.

This age of artificial intelligence, a focus on academic integrity (the other 'AI') is vital to maintain the excellence in education that is valued at MacKillop. In the previous newsletter, the value of the 'learning journey' and student thinking was discussed. In the past month, this conversation has been had with all students, in year assemblies and campus assemblies, where MacKillop's strategy to maintain academic integrity in the age of AI was outlined.

The first part of this process is based around removing opportunity and incentive for academic misconduct via:

- the use of leading, reliable, AI detection tools, and
- following robust, fair, and consistent investigation process and consequences.

However, our goal is not to catch students, but to promote intrinsic academic integrity and this is the second part of the strategy: to educate students about the value of their own thinking and their own academic voice. This can be a challenging task in an AI-enabled world where a full essay is a simple click of a button away, but we are developing several pathways to guide students to value their own learning in this new age including:

• Capability

In a world where AI tools are available to all, it is the unique learning, thinking and skills that you can apply that will help you stand out and thrive.

• Discernment

In a world where AI produced content is multiplying, it is your own experiences, knowledge and nous that allow you to distinguish truth and beauty from bias and deception.

• Unique voice

The current AI models have been trained upon the writing and ideas of generations before you, but the one 'voice' missing from the AI model is your own. Unless you challenge, foster and grow your own unique voice you will be denying your ability to shape the world through your ideas, inspirations and creations.

The final part of the strategy is to establish effective 'AI-robust' assessment design and College-wide strategies to support students to produce, and defend the authorship of, their own work. These strategies will be discussed with students and families in coming newsletters and presentations as we manoeuvre and adapt to ensure that student learning is the heart of all we do in this evolving field.

Tristan Burg
Assistant Principal Academic Care (acting)



Preschool High Tea Experience

With Year 12 Hospitality

In collaboration with Isabella Plains Early Childhood School our Year 12 students hosted a High Tea event for Preschool students. The Preschool students were super excited as they arrived at our Café and couldn't wait to try some foods. To begin the occasion each student was given a mini-hot chocolate, setting the tone for the afternoon. The students then enjoyed homemade sausage rolls, a tangy lemon flummery slice and a unicorn cupcake.

For the Year 12 students, this event offered a valuable opportunity to hone their service skills in a distinct setting. Embracing a different style of service, they dedicated themselves to providing table service and ensuring our little guests felt special and were looked after. The raw honesty that comes from interacting with Preschool students was both entertaining and enlightening. The success of this event has left Year 12 eager to embrace other similar events which will broaden their knowledge and skill base. Thank you to Michelle Foley from IPECS who was so willing to collaborate with our school.

CIT Hospitality Excursion

The Year 12 Hospitality students participated in an enriching event at Canberra Institute of Technology, Reid to investigate career pathways post school. They delved into the realms of bakery, patisserie, commercial cookery, events, travel and tourism. This experience allowed them to gain invaluable insights into the diverse career opportunities available to them at CIT.

Students enjoyed the hands-on activities experienced in the various workshops. They donned disposable aprons and hairnets to craft tofu steamed dumplings, mocktails, iced chocolates and crème patisserie tarts. The tourism workshops saw our students engage in a thrilling round of travel Pictionary, with destinations such as the Eiffel Tower, Leaning Tower of Pisa and even Hogwarts. Students also identified flags of the world and eagerly identified renowned Canberra attractions.

To further enhance their understanding the students heard inspiring testimonials from current and past students to shed some light on the vast career opportunities and pathways that await them beyond graduation. Our students are now empowered with newfound knowledge and a deepened awareness of the possibilities that lie ahead in the area of hospitality.

As always our students represented our College with pride, enthusiasm and eagerness to learn.

Janelle Maas • Creative Technologies Coordinator





After the flames By Cameron Jacobsen

After the devastation,
After the fire and flames,
The paw reaches out.

Its singed, furry paw
Searches for solid purchase,
Outside protection.

The creature climbs out,
Its home burnt, chances fleeting.
Hopeful, yet hopeless.



Bringing Poetry to Life

During Week 16, students in Years 7-10 had an amazing opportunity to participate in a poetry incursion delivered by *Poetry in Action*. The incursion brought to life a range of poetry written by Australian and international poets, highlighting a range of issues and stories. Hearing the energetic reciting of poetry by young Australian actors provided an opportunity for students to hear the rhythm, passion and clever integration of poetic devices.

Students now have the opportunity to put their own ideas and experiences into writing their own poems. In Year 8 and Year 9, students are currently working on a range of learning activities in this space and Year 7 will be joining them at the beginning of Semester 2. What an amazing way to experience poetry. Above is an example of work from Year 9.

A national competition is currently being held for students to submit their writing through *Poetry in Action*. All students are encouraged to enter this competition as the poems could be used in performances next year.

Erin White and Lyndall Baker (English Coordinators) & Bronwyn Griffin (Integrated Humanities Coordinator)

Youth Ministry

On Sunday 7 May, Youth Ministry students from MacKillop were invited to participate in the Oceania Evangelisation program. This was an event where people from all around Oceania (Papua New Guinea, Solomon islands, Fiji, Tonga, New Zealand and Australia) attended via livestream, and roughly 100 people attended in person, sharing in the theme of "Jesus is Lord".

These people included youth ministers, representatives from around Oceania, students from the ACU Academy and general participants. On the day we had the opportunity to expand the connections we have with our Archdiocese and really see the many people that there are that do similar programs to us. It was amazing to see the way other cultures celebrate their mass with the same concept and learn so much about missions done in Fiji.

Faye Grant • Year 10 CSYMA Student



Integrated Humanities

The first semester of Year 7 Integrated Humanities (IHUM) has been an exciting opportunity for our students to get to know their classmates, learn about interesting topics and grow their skills.

Students are currently finalising their Classwork Portfolio task, and now is the time for them to look over their work by:

- considering the feedback from their IHUM teachers
- reviewing their own learning goals
- applying the feedback from their teachers in their Classwork Portfolios

Now that IHUM students understand how the Classwork Portfolio works, during semester 2, they are encouraged to check the progress of their results weekly and use verbal feedback from their teachers to target areas that can be improved, or where they can be challenged further. All IHUM teachers are happy to readjust the Classwork Portfolio rubric to show student progress and growth at any time.

The final comments for the semester 1 Classwork Portfolio will include learning goals for semester 2, and these comments, along with the results, will be posted on Canvas over the coming weeks. It is a wonderful opportunity for students and their parents/carers to discuss how they have been working in class and where areas for growth are for the rest of 2023.

Bronwyn Griffin • Integrated Humanities Coordinator

Performances at MacKillop

You are invited to come and watch our upcoming performances!

13 June - YEAR 8 DRAMA

What's the Drama?

This Semester, Year 8 Drama students will perform in a melodrama for family and friends. Come ready to cheer, hiss, laugh and boo.

Padua Campus Theatre at 6pm

14 June - YEAR 10 DRAMA

Duologue Performance Evening

Our students will be presenting a duologue which exemplifies their understanding of Stanislavski's approaches to characterisation.

St Peter's Campus ARC at 6pm

15 June - YEAR 9 DRAMA

Breaking The 4th Wall

Students have been learning how to talk to you, our audience, directly as they perform 'The Norse Mythology Ragnasplosion' and 'Space Princess Wars' by Don Zolidis.

Padua Campus Theatre at 6pm

27 June - JUNIOR DRAMA PRODUCTION

Drop Dead, Juliet!

Students from our extracurricular group from Years 7-9 will perform the play 'Drop Dead, Juliet!' directed by Katie Bissett. Juliet has had enough! Enough with the poison, enough with the stabbing, and especially enough with the dying. She wants a new story and she wants it now.

Padua Campus Theatre at 6pm



INSPIRE 2023

St Mary MacKillop Art Competition

Each year St Mary MacKillop College holds an art competition with the theme 'Inspire.' This competition is open to students in Years 7 to 12 and prizes are awarded in the following categories:

- Overall Winner
- Digital Media
- Drawing
- Mixed Media
- Painting
- Photography
- Sculpture
- People's Choice Award

Following a display of all entries at MacKillop Day, a selection of the best works will be exhibited at the Tuggeranong Arts Centre.

Minimum size for artwork is A4 and the due date for entries is Friday 25 August.

Francesca Miller • Visual Arts Coordinator (acting)

Music at MacKillop

Students can participate in our in-school instrumental tuition through the College. If you would like to take part or for further information, please speak with Ms Boulton or Mr South.

Instrumental tuition that is available:

- Woodwind** – Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone
- Brass** – Trumpet, Trombone, French Horn, Euphonium, Tuba
- Percussion** – Drum Kit and Orchestral Percussion
- String** – Violin, Viola, 'Cello, Double Bass, Guitar, Bass Guitar
- Piano**
- Voice**

Our Ensemble Program:

Mon	MacKillop Choir	St Peter's	3:45-4:30pm
	PCoPA	St Peter's	4:30-5:30pm
Wed	Guitar Ensemble	Padua - Music Room	8-8:45pm
	Senior Wind Ensemble	St Peter's - Music Room	3:45-5pm
	St Peter's String Ensemble	St Peter's - ARC Theatre	3:45-5pm
Thu	Junior Band	Padua - Ensemble Room	8:15-9am
	Junior Strings	Padua - Music Room	8:15-9am
	Musical	Padua - Theatre	3:45-5:30pm
Fri	Padua Concert Band	Padua - Ensemble Room	8-9am
	Padua String Ensemble	Padua - Music Room	8-9am

Veronica Boulton
Director of Music & Performance

Elite Athlete Spotlight

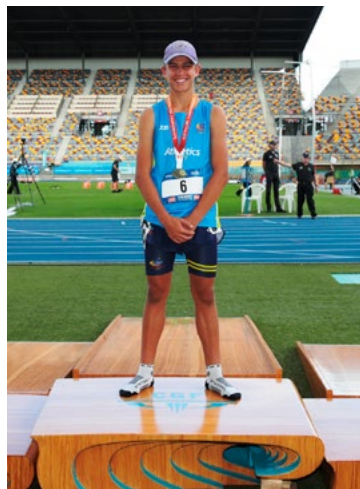
The College will choose an Elite Athlete to focus on each newsletter. Here is our first edition of the Elite Athlete Spotlight!

The Christian family is a very talented one to say the least! Lily (Year 7) and Nicholas (Year 8) are elite athletes in their own right. Not only have they both taken away Age Champions for Athletics, Nicholas was also named Age Champion for Swimming. When they are not competing at the College Carnivals, they are working and training hard to be at peak performance when representing the ACT at National Championships.

Nicholas competed at the Australian Athletics U14-U18 Championships in Brisbane earlier this year. He competed in and achieved a 7m pb in the hammer throw and won the 3km race walk, bringing home a gold medal.

Lily competed at the Australian Little Athletics Championships for U13s and threw a PB (4m) in Javelin. However, the true highlight for Lily was meeting one of her idols, World Champion Javelin competitor, Kelsey-Lee Barber.

Congratulations to Nicholas and Lily on these great sporting achievements!



Student Achievement

Charlotte Woolf, Indi Dyball and Lilly Janota (Year 12) have all been selected into the ACT U18s Girls Rugby League Team. The girls will be the first ever group of U18's girls players to represent their state/territory at the Inaugural U18s Australian Secondary School Rugby League Championships. These Championships will be held in Redcliffe, Queensland in July where they will compete against teams from Queensland, NSW, Northern Territory, ACT, South Australia and Victoria.

Alec Tompkins (Year 12) recently represented the ACT in the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) and Pistol Australia (PA) National Championships in Darwin. He competed against Australia's best junior athletes and achieved impressive results. His results included 2nd in Junior Men's Air Pistol, 3rd in Junior 50 meter Pistol, 6th in Junior Standard Pistol and 7th in Junior 25 meter Pistol. Alec has now been selected to attend the National Junior Training Camp being held in Melbourne in July.

Ryan Moore, Jack Reilly, and Aiden Henderson (Year 9), and Riley Masters (Year 8) have been selected for the U15s Australian Football Team representing the ACT Schoolboys at the July 2023 National Championships in Ballarat.

Dominic Hamilton (Year 9) represented the ACT at the Australian Junior League Baseball Championships last week.

Ewan Duff (Year 8) will be competing in the Australian Teams Championships in late June in the Gold Coast with ACT Junior Tennis.

Sebastien Beath (Year 10) has been selected for the ACT U16 Indoor Cricket Team Nationals in Ipswich.



Mathematics Information Evening

Interested in learning more about pathways in Mathematics?

The Mathematics Information Evening is available to provide information about the Maths courses offered and the pathways available to students across junior and into senior schooling. All parents/carers of Year 7-10 students are welcome.

The Information Evening will be held in the **Padua Campus Theatre** on **Wednesday 14 June from 5:30pm.**

Dylan Watt & Anna Keppel • Mathematics Coordinators

Fees

Fees for Term 2 should now be finalised unless paying by Direct Debit or other approved arrangement.

Any outstanding fees should be paid immediately.

It is most important that you notify the College regarding any changes to your email address as this is our primary form of communication.

If you require more information regarding Direct Debit arrangements or other approved payment methods or are experiencing difficulty paying the fees please contact the Fees Office.

Michelle Predovan • Fees Manager

Community News

Winter Junior Fishing Comp

Merimbula Big Game and Lakes Angling Club Inc. are running a fishing competition and workshops in the June School Holidays. Rules and info can be found [HERE](#).

Competition entry is free.

Workshops are running Monday 3 and 10 July. They are also free but must be booked in advance by emailing: juniorfishing.mbgclac@gmail.com

Canberra Winter Cricket Camps

The Team at Pro Performance Cricket are excited to announce their upcoming Holiday Cricket Camps.

They offer intensive individual and group skill development for players across all facets of the game. With an excellent coach to player ratio, and a focus on a positive and fun environment it's a perfect opportunity for the kids to enhance and develop their games while having heaps of fun, making new friends and taking their game to a new level.

[CLICK HERE](#) to find more details

Tennis Holiday Camps

Canberra School of Tennis are holding camps in the holiday for anyone interested in learning, expanding their skills or looking for some fun! With experienced coaches and flexible times the camp is happening at Weston Creek Tennis Club.

For enquiries email: info@csot.com.au or call: 0432 118 204

To book now visit their [WEBSITE](#).



MacKillop
St Mary MacKillop College Canberra

Contact details



02 6209 0100



info@mackillop.act.edu.au



www.mackillop.act.edu.au



**PO Box 1211
Tuggeranong ACT 2901**



Mackinnon Street, **Wanniassa** (Years 7-9)
Ellerston Avenue, **Isabella Plains** (Years 10-12)



Absentee SMS Line
0429 131 463

Socials



[www.facebook.com/
mackillop.act](http://www.facebook.com/mackillop.act)



[www.twitter.com/
mackillop_act](http://www.twitter.com/mackillop_act)



[www.instagram.com/
mackillop_act](http://www.instagram.com/mackillop_act)



[www.youtube.com/
stmarymackillop](http://www.youtube.com/stmarymackillop)



ISSUE 7 | TERM 2 | 2023

Written by Rachel Samson

Are you a good listener?

The art of deep listening and why it matters to our kids.

“The most precious gift we can offer others is our presence. When mindfulness embraces those we love, they bloom like flowers.” —Thich Nhat Hanh

Most of us have had the experience of talking to someone who is listening, but not *really* listening—listening, but not *deeply* listening.

Deep listening is a sense of presence, inner stillness, openness, and mindful attention to what the other communicates in their body, speech, and silence. In parenting, deep listening helps us identify and respond sensitively to children’s needs.

Decades of evidence shows that attuned, sensitive, and emotionally available caregiving promotes children’s healthy development, secure attachment, and mental health. The founders of the Circle of Security program convey the feeling of listening deeply to one’s child in a simple phrase: **“I am here, and you are worth it.”** This is a powerful reminder to us as parents that our presence and attention can be instrumental in cultivating our child’s sense of self-worth and mental health. We have only to recall the last time that we felt truly listened to in order to conjure that same sense of worthiness. “Wow, my voice matters; I am someone worth listening to.”

Unfortunately, deep listening doesn’t come naturally to all of us. It may even seem counter-intuitive in our culture of quick fixes and endless scrolling for fast advice.

Learning to Listen Deeply

So how do we practice the art of deep listening? Just as weight training helps us build and strengthen the muscles of our body, practicing deep listening builds and strengthens our capacity to listen. Every day we are presented with opportunities to practice being truly present with our families and connecting to their experience in a more powerful way. Here are some tips for building your deep listening “muscle”:

1. **Connect with yourself first.** One of the best ways to build our capacity to listen deeply to others is to practice slowing down, turning our attention inward, and being present with our own experience—with our own thoughts, emotions, and bodily sensations. In other words, by listening deeply to ourselves and connecting with our own experience, it becomes easier to do so for others.

2. **Make time.** Deep listening requires our time. It may be helpful to build regular, intentional time into your schedule to truly be present with your loved ones.

For couples, this could be a once-a-week check-in in which you give each other space to discuss what is on your mind and in your heart, with an emphasis on connection over criticism.

For parents, the walk or drive home from school and mealtimes may be good opportunities to check in with your child and simply be present for whatever comes up.

Build a routine that works for you and your loved ones, whatever that looks like. The important thing is that we make time.

3. **Minimize distractions** (and put down your phone!). Many of us have become master multi-taskers, splitting our attention between multiple tasks and flicking between tabs on our screens. Deep listening can't be just another tab open; it requires our full mind and heart to show up. Even young children can tell when adults in their lives are distracted, and research shows that parents' increased distraction can take a toll on children's development. Therefore, it is important to minimize distractions during the time we devote to deep listening. This may mean putting down our phones, turning off the TV, and shutting down the computer; it may mean going someplace away from the hustle and bustle of the office or home. We don't have to sit in perfect stillness to listen deeply but limiting distractions can help create the conditions for our minds to settle and be fully present.

4. **Notice the urge to move away** (interrupt, fix, distract, move on) and choose to come back. Mindful listening is all about paying attention and noticing, and this includes noticing when tension, anxiety, or distraction arise. Often, these signal a desire to move away from being with the person and towards doing—for example, interrupting, changing the topic, or trying to “fix” the problem. When this tendency arises, simply notice it. Name it silently, “Ah! There's me trying to fix this,” and gently return to listening.

Be gentle with yourself. Many people didn't experience deep listening in their childhood and enter adulthood with a limited capacity for listening to and being with others' emotions. We tend to fall back on the communication styles and habits that we experienced in our family of origin, even if these are unhelpful in our adult relationships. Notice when these old tendencies are present and appreciate that it takes time to learn to communicate differently. Thankfully, deep listening does not require perfection; it requires awareness—and a willingness to practice coming back to those we love again and again.



AUTHOR

Rachel Samson

Rachel Samson is an Australian-based Clinical Psychologist and Family Consultant with a passion for supporting parents to develop healthy parent-child relationships that promote optimal child development. For further details visit [Instagram @australianpsychologist](#) and [Facebook @sensitivityprojectau](#).