

Bronwen Speedie—Chaplain, White Gum Valley Primary School

Tuesdays—Senior Block, Fridays—Music Room

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Chaplain's Reflection...

Rain, rain, go away, come again another day!

Did you chant this when you were your kids' age? I can't help but think of it today as I write to you, watching the rain come down in sheets, although I'm very grateful for the effect it's going to have on the dams. I just hope I won't get drenched walking round the school!

It's a bit like life, don't you think? The situations we experience can be negative from one point of view and yet have other positive effects on our life. Part of our challenge as parents is to help children to be able to express their worries and concerns and to know that they are heard and taken seriously, but at the same time, to help them to look for the silver lining, the lesson to be learned or the positive takeaway that this experience has brought to them.

Today, I was fortunate to participate in a really valuable professional development about cyber bullying. One thing that will stick with me is that the research has found that even though children and teens may have some negative experiences online, the majority of them are able to perceive positive outcomes, including:

- 40% said their experience increased their awareness of online risks (that is, they became more adept at understanding cyber-safety)
- 33% discovered who their real friends are
- 23% learned to use the internet in a more balanced way
- 19% said they gained a greater understanding of their own behaviour.

We'd all like to protect our kids from pain and harm in every sphere. But we also know through successfully navigating difficulties that they gain wisdom. Our job is to guide them in finding the wisdom, the positives, the valuable lessons in all of life's challenges, and to model that for them in our own reactions to the curveballs that life throws our way.

Until next time,

Bronwen

Cyber Safety

Isolation has caused many families to allow children greater online access than before. In many cases, this has been very positive and has enabled children to stay in contact with friends, teachers, support workers and grandparents. On the less positive front, the Office of the E-Safety Commissioner experienced a significant spike in reports of cyberbullying in March and April of this year.

“Open and positive communication between parents and children is a key component of cyber safety”

Now, more than ever, it is time for parents to learn to understand cyber safety and to know how to get help. Open and positive communication between parents and children is a key component of cyber safety. The Office of the E-Safety Commissioner reports that many children are afraid that telling parents about negative online experiences will just lead to them getting in trouble. So have that conversation, and make sure that your kids know that even if they have made mistakes, you will help them to find out how to put things right when things go belly-up online.

Useful Cyber Safety Resources

Print this page, cut this out and stick it on the fridge!

- **Office of the E-Safety Commissioner**
 - For parents: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents>
 - Downloadable Online Safety Guide—<https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/online-safety-guide>
 - For kids: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/kids>
- **Ngala Parenting Line**—9368 9368—free service, 8am-8pm 7 days per week (including public holidays)
- **Kids Helpline**—1800 55 1800—free service, 24/7/365. Kids can also chat online to a counsellor at www.kidshelpline.com.au.
- **Bullying No Way**—an Australian government site to help kids understand and deal with bullying—<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au>
- **Commonsense Media**—an excellent resource to help parents and kids make smart choices about what TV shows, apps, games, etc. children use. <https://www.commsensemedia.org>

Breakfast Club is Back!

Cheese toasties, fruit and Milo are back on the menu at WGVPS every Tuesday morning—yum! (And occasionally omelettes and toast.) Brekky Club is FREE for ALL kids. You'll find us in canteen before school.