

# Child Safety

It is essential that all workplaces and child safe institutions provide avenue for voice and a forum to be heard. In this edition of the newsletter, the College processes are clearly outlined below.

## **Child Safe Standard Seven**

### **At MMCRC Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused**

All child focussed places of learning want to nurture and foster the healthy personal and social capabilities of the young people entrusted to their care. Sometimes the complexities of human behaviour require further intervention and a more rigorous examination to come to an acceptable resolution. A vehicle for reasonable complaints gives all persons within a school community, agency, and empowers people to speak up if they feel there has been an injustice.

Child Safe standard seven focuses on ensuring that schools have complaints processes that are child-focused, culturally safe and accessible to everyone.

Mary MacKillop Catholic Regional College must have policies, procedures and practices to:

- have a complaint handling process focused on students and their safety needs
- take complaints and concerns seriously
- respond promptly and thoroughly
- identify and respond to all forms of child abuse
- report child abuse to relevant authorities, whether there is a legal obligation to report it.

Making a complaint can be challenging. Complaints are more likely to be raised when there are clear, well-communicated policies and procedures for concerns or allegations.

Complaint handling processes need to focus on students and their safety needs. The process should be able to handle all kinds of complaints and concerns. A complaint might reveal a bigger issue or prevent a situation from escalating.

Empowering students to raise low-level concerns improves the likelihood that they will feel comfortable making a disclosure or reporting abuse.

Staff, contractors, volunteers and families can report concerns more easily if the school has procedures that are child-friendly and accessible to students and the school community.

Mary MacKillop Catholic Regional College complies with this standard by:

- responding to complaints or concerns relating to child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors, or other persons connected to the school that:
  - is publicly available and accessible to children, students, staff, contractors and the school community
  - is child-focused
  - is culturally safe and easily understood by the school community
  - ensures complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly
  - covers all forms of child abuse
  - sensitive to the diversity and characteristics of the school community

### **The College encourages:**

- Students to raise concerns with a trusted adult if anything makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- Student discussions about what would help them speak up when they have concerns.
- Students to discuss their experiences making complaints and act on feedback from students in the school's policies and the complaint process.

Please use our College website and read carefully the [MMCRC Complaints and Grievances Management Policy](#). We encourage our community to look at section five of the document which outlines College procedures. The College also has a [MMCRC Complaints and Grievances Form](#). The form is user friendly and accessible by clicking the link in this sentence.

Regards  
John Ryan  
Deputy Principal

## Meet member of the Child Safety Team Stephen Ross-Bryant

I first became interested in youth mental health when I started teaching in Mackay Queensland. The school I attended was in a very low socio-economic area and the sheer number of mental health distress presentations were much more than I had ever anticipated in education.

I felt completely confident in my physical first-aid abilities, I had specific first-aid training when I was in the army that involved the type of injuries one would expect in combat. But when it came to mental health first-aid, I felt completely unprepared.

I was fortunate that one of my Deputy Principals was in the local Rotary club and they were pioneering the Youth Mental Health First-Aid training in the region. I completed the course, and it not only helped me in my work, but also at home with my own son.

When I came to Mary MacKillop, I was provided with the same course which boosted my knowledge and confidence and has really assisted me in my current role of Year 8 Wellbeing Leader.

At present our staff are completing mental health training as well as the College looking to support our wellbeing services through access to mental health wellbeing training.



## MMCRC COUNSELLING

To book an appointment contact your wellbeing coordinator or email us:

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