Learning, Caring, Sharing: the Future is in Our Hands

Moonta Area R-12 School

Student Free Day – Friday 30th October, Week 3
Jump Rope for Heart
Sally Hackett received a fantastic letter from the Heart Foundation thanking her and Moonta Area School, for our generous support in helping to protect the heart health of Australians. One quote read "Did you know that over the years not only have you helped your students to be active and healthy, but your school has raised an amazing $22,720.30. Your support means we can commit to supporting more talented researchers."
This is great result and one that all Moonta Area School can feel proud about.

End of year exams
Year 12 exams start next week across the state, and we hope all our students have done the necessary preparation to give themselves the best chance of success. Our exams are held at the Moonta Golf Club under the supervision of our senior school coordinator Mrs Meredith Westbrook. Good luck to all students with their exams. I have enclosed a little information about how parents can help with revision in this edition of MAS Media.

Review of 4 day week and daily structure
As part of Self Review, the staff have been looking at our school structures including the 4 day week and our daily lesson times. We have produced a discussion paper that looks at different alternatives as well as discussing reasons why we may need to modify. We will keep you informed as this debate progresses. Should you wish a copy of the discussion paper please contact me at the school.

Student Free Day – Friday 30th October
A reminder that our second pupil free day for the year will be on Friday 30th October. On this day staff will be completing Restorative Justice training. Restorative Justice is a process that advocates that the people most effective at finding a solution to a problem are the people who are most directly affected by the problem. Restorative processes create opportunities for those involved in a conflict to work together to understand, clarify and resolve the situation and work together towards repairing the harm caused.

Class Placements for 2010
Don’t forget to let us know, in writing, if your child will not be attending Moonta Area School next year. Also, if you have family or friends moving to the district and who definitely want to enrol their children here, please let us know so they can be considered in the class placements.
We’d like as much information about 2010 numbers as possible so we can structure the classes according to student needs.

A reminder to provide any information that you would like considered in relation to your child/ren’s placement, for consideration. It needs to be a genuine request relating to your child/ren’s academic, social, physical or emotional needs. However, sometimes there are instances where it has not been possible to meet these requests for a whole host of reasons. Please put your request in writing, or alternatively, make a time soon to see either Bruce, or Di to discuss your child’s needs. Thank you.

ATTENDANCE - IT’S NOT OK TO BE AWAY
Open and transparent communication lines between parents, students and teachers are the backbone to laying a solid foundation for effective learning to be built on. We are fortunate at our school to have such a relationship within the school community. On a daily basis both parents and students are seeking suggestions on things such as:
♦ What can we do to improve my son/daughter’s understanding?
♦ Can we organize more help for them out of class time to build their understanding?
♦ Do we need to find a tutor for them?
♦ Can the school work with us to sort out their peer group hassles?
These frequent requests reflect the genuine and sincere ambitions that parents have for their children. It would be fair to say that all parents want a better life for their children than they have had. Yet while all these positives are happening, there is one glaring inconsistency. That is, many of the very same people who are striving to find ways to build their children’s understanding, condone absences for pursuits such as shopping, helping at home, babysitting etc.
When it comes to our students let’s all adopt one of Stephen Covey’s famous adages:
“The main thing is to make the main thing the main thing” – your son/daughter’s education and future.
Should you require assistance in saying NO to your son/daughter with regard to any matter, including unacceptable reasons for absence, please do not hesitate to contact the school.
Let’s work together to make a difference to your son/daughter’s future.

Be on Time, Be at School, That’s the Rule!

This week’s picture of Mr Angus was drawn by Maddison Benn, Mrs Hutchins’ class.
Year 7 Walkathon

The year 7s completed a walkathon on Monday of Week 2 at the Moonta Footy Oval. The class were raising money to assist with camp costs.

They worked out that altogether the students walked or ran a total of 178.8km!

Sam Yandell ran a total of 9.6km, closely followed by Alec Hutchins on 9.2km. It was a magnificent effort by all involved.

Sally Hackett & Margie Hancock

The Party House

During term 3 students from year 9 attended a performance called “The Party House” in the school gymnasium. The actors portrayed a range of scenarios dealing with issues related to alcohol and teenage parties. The performance was interactive and allowed students to ‘stop’ the play at any stage and join in with the scene in order to change a potentially negative situation. The performance challenged students to speak up and do something to minimise risks and also allowed them to consider some useful strategies.

8-a-side Cricket

On Tuesday 13th October, year 8/9 students travelled to Balaklava to participate in the Knockout super 8’s cricket carnival. Moonta Area School played two games in a round robin competition. Moonta started strongly with a win over Riverton High School. Some great batting from Rowen Nicholas, Blake Pedler and Thomas Polgreen ensured that the runs were chased down in the final over. Josh Ritter and Blake Pedler also displayed some fantastic bowling and Rowen Nicholas took some amazing catches. In the final game against Balaklava a top order collapse meant that posting a winning score was going to be difficult, although Thomas Polgreen battled valiantly throughout the innings. Balaklava were able to make the required runs which meant we did not progress to the next stage of the competition. Thanks to Michael Scarce for scoring on the day and to all of the cricketers who represented their school respectfully and with pride.

Singapore Cricket

On Wednesday 14th October, the annual “Singapore Cricket Exchange” took place at Moonta Area School. Due to several days of rain year 7, 8 and 9 students participated in a highly competitive game of Indoor Cricket. The game was played in good spirits and displayed some fantastic running between wickets by the Singaporean cricketers. The Moonta players displayed some solid batting skills and fantastic fielding. The final score was Singapore 229 to Moonta 177.

We thank Peter Watson for his assistance with umpiring on the day and also to all of those who helped out
As the exam period looms, revision takes on a vital role. But what’s the best way to get your child to study?
Child psychologist Ruth Copppard urges parents to keep things in proportion. “So many children are worried sick about letting everyone down. They feel that they are failures if they don’t get straight A’s. But there are also children who need to learn that they have to work to achieve. The best way to help both is to encourage them to view exams as doorways to the next stage. If you get through, great. If not, there will always be other chances later in life”.

Michael Duke, educational psychologist, echoes that sentiment. “Parents should be realistic about what their children can achieve. They will, after all, have been at school for 10 years before they start taking serious exams, so parents should know whether they have a child who is self-motivated or one who needs help with structuring their revision”. Another educational psychologist, Chris Nicholls, says that pre-exam panic can disrupt many households at this time of the year. “A lot of stress is tied up with perceptions of loss of control because the children don’t know what questions will be thrown at them. Help them reclaim that control by using structure and forward planning to progressively tame the exam beast”.

Some Tips
♦ Parents have to give some gentle prodding because teenagers expect mum and dad to chivvy them along.
♦ Avoid head-on conflict. Work out a sensible and productive way of discussing the topic.
♦ You know how your child works best. Remind them about strategies like flow charts and mind maps.
♦ Give them pointers on how to keep hold of the information. Research shows that this is best done by learning something and then reviewing it five minutes later. Do the same with that piece of information a day later and then a week later. They can make notes on index cards to refer to.
♦ Help them break knowledge into chunks, especially if they are feeling overwhelmed by how much they need to revise.
♦ Accept that loud music can sometimes help because teens can associate facts with tracks. Similarly, children can take in information best at different times of the day. The important factor is the total amount of time spent on revision, not the time of day, although a regular pattern of sleep will help during the revision period and the exams themselves.
♦ Bribery can help. Do a deal by promising that if they work solidly for half an hour, they can have an immediate reward such as watching a favourite TV programme. Some adolescents can’t concentrate for more than 35 minutes a time.
♦ Try to find a place in the house for revision other than their bedroom. Make it a rule that cell phones are switched off during revision times.
♦ Girls often seem to have the ability to focus better and are keener to listen to advice. Remind yourself that boys in general find revision difficult and try to be patient with them.
♦ Draw up a realistic revision timetable together that doesn’t look too intimidating. The key is to divide work and time into short chunks. Look at the exam timetable as a whole and prioritise by starting with the first exam.
♦ Make sure they eat healthily and sleep well. Cut down on carbohydrates which can make them sleepy and increase fruit and protein.
♦ Speak positively. Ask questions like “What problems will it cause if you don’t get the grades? How will you feel if your friends get better marks? When you’re older, and you wish you’d stretched yourself at this stage, what will you wish you’d done instead?” Offer support – rather than saying “Have you done your work?” ask “How can I help you, would you like a cold drink?”
♦ Encourage them to write down their goals in life on sticky notes that they can put on the wall for extra motivation.
**DMC Proposals**

**Proposal One: Year 6/7 Graduation**

Proposal: We wish to run it as a combined event of both Year 6 and 7s, with the aim of it becoming a Year 7 event in the future as Year 6s graduation from primary school and move into middle school. The only reason it is combined this year is so the Year 7s of 2009 don't miss out altogether. To be held at the Moonta Football Club.

Benefits: Celebrate the end of primary school, give the students an opportunity to plan and run the event, bring parents/students and teachers together in celebration.

Change to Dress Code: Neat casual dress.

Cost: Details to follow.

Date: Monday 7th December, Week 9.

Proposer: S Hackett / A Kite / C Balnaves / D Daulby

**Proposal Two: Choir Perform to R-3 Classes**

Proposal: Performing a selection of songs to the Reception to Year 3 classes, which involve some audience participation.

Requirements from home: Choir t-shirt or Sports Top.

Date: Thursday 12th November, Week 5, lessons 6/7.

Proposer: F Camporeale / D Daulby

**Proposal Three: Choir visit to Parkview**

Proposal: Visit Parkview to entertain the people in the homes with a bracket of about 8 songs.

Date: Date and time is still being finalised with coordinator at Parkview.

Proposer: F Camporeale / D Daulby

**Proposal Four: Year 7 'Smiles' Day**

Proposal: Our class had been giving out ‘Smiles’ which are like ‘Drops’. They are given out by students to other students for doing something nice. We’ve given out 100 smiles and as a reward would like to celebrate with a ½ day of activities. Lolly shop visit and movie.

Requirements from home: Hat.

Cost: Own money.

Date: Friday 6th November, Week 4.

Proposer: S Hackett /D Richardson

**Proposal Five: English Field Trip to Port Victoria and Point Pearce**

Proposal: Students novel ‘Deadly Unna’ is set in Port Victoria and Point Pearce. Visit both sites/locations in novel.

Requirements from home: Lunch/drinks – own cost.

Cost: $5 per student.

Date: Wednesday 11th November, Week 5.

Proposer: W Brusnahan / V Ivens

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The following proposal were approved at the meeting held Monday 19th October

1. **Year 3-7 FR weekly shopping visit** – Cost: $4
   Date: Wednesday each week – on going.

2. **Year 1/2 Chu, KJ, JvG/SC class excursion** – Travel to Adelaide for excursion, either Maritime Museum or Snowdome, Museum, Central Market, or combination of above.
   Requirements from home: Packed lunch, recess, snack and drinks. Students to wear school uniform. Cost: Max $15. Date: Week 5 or 6.

3. **Nunga Little Athletics** – Held at Santos Stadium. Requirements from home: Drinks, snacks, running shoes and appropriate sports wear for the day. Cost: $5 if travelling on the bus. Friday 27th November, Week 7.


7. **Semester 2 Music Concert** – Held in the school gym, 7 – 8:30 p.m. Thursday 26th November, Week 7.

8. **Year 9 Parents Night** – Wednesday 28th October, Week 3.

9. **Year 7 Camp change of dates** – Monday 30th November – Wednesday 2nd December, Week 8.

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Australian Mathematics Competition

Earlier this year, students competed in the Australian Mathematics Competition. Some excellent results were achieved and congratulations go to those students. Certificates will be presented at the next school assembly, Tuesday 10th November (week 5).

**Distinction:** Josh Ritter

**Credit:** Josh Moss, Jake Cunningham, Brody Nitschke, Damien Silvestri

**Participation:** Adam Scott, Brodie Cunningham, Adam Silvestri
WHAT’S IN A POEM?

Independent Readers

Reading poetry with children expands their vocabulary, reading experience and skills. It can also be loads of fun! Encourage your children to look for examples of the following poetry forms or techniques in what they read — and to practise writing their own.

1. **Alliteration** repeats the same initial consonant in several words in the same phrase or sentence. Example: Angus the alligator always ate apples. Pick a different letter each day for a week, and see how many words can be put into a sentence using alliteration.

2. **A couplet** is a pair of lines that are the same length, usually rhyme and form a complete thought. Example: It was a windy, dark and stormy night, The shadows of trees gave Sam a fright.

3. **A simile** describes something by comparing it to something else using the words ‘like’ or ‘as’. Examples: The boy was as thin as a stick. The moon was like a glowing ball.

4. **A metaphor** compares two things saying something is something else and does not use ‘like’ or ‘as’. Examples: The sunset was a painting. My brother’s stomach is a bottomless pit.

5. **Onomatopoeia** is a word that sounds like the thing it stands for. Examples: zoom, pop, bang, slurp, splat.

GREAT READS

- **Wombat Stew**, by Marcia Vaughn. It is the 25th anniversary of this much-loved Australian classic in which Dingo wants to cook Wombat in a ‘gooey, brewy, yummy, chewy wombat stew’. Suggested for readers approximately 5+.

- **The Princess Plot**, by Kirsten Boie. Jenna is surprised when she is chosen to play the part of a princess in a movie. But when filming starts, she finds out she is the spitting image of a real-life princess who has gone missing. Suggested for readers approximately 10+.

Australian English Competition

Earlier this year, students competed in the Australian English Competition. Some excellent results were achieved and congratulations go to those students. Certificates will be presented at the next school assembly, Tuesday 10th November (week 5).

Participation: Adele Andrew, Damien Silvestri

2009 School Magazine

2009 – the year as it happened. Do you want all the inside information? This year’s magazine will be the usual blockbuster filled with photographs, descriptions, news of events, sporting and academic achievements, art work and much more.

The 2008 Moonta Area School magazine will be spiral bound and features a colour front cover, which is protected by a plastic sheet. 6 colour pages. A wonderful piece of memorabilia, jam-packed with all the events of the year.

To secure your copy, please fill out the tear off section and forward to the Front Office with $15 (inc GST) per copy. There will be limited spares. If you don’t order and pay, you may miss out on this terrific offer.

Orders are due back to school by **Friday 27th November, Week 7.**

**2009 SCHOOL MAGAZINE ORDER FORM - $15.00 (INC GST)**

Name: _____________________________________________ Class: __________________

*If you are a community member, please write down your contact number: __________________*

*We will ring you when the magazine is ready for collection.*

I would like to order _____ copies of the 2009 School Magazine. Enclosed is $ _______

Signed: ____________________________________

APP A – Scholastic Links to Literacy #10
Canteen Roster

**Week 3**
Thursday 29/10/09

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<tr>
<td>Julie Reilly</td>
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<td>Ryan Starick</td>
<td>9:00 – 11:30</td>
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<td>Leanne Hopkins</td>
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<td>Kathy Buck</td>
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Friday 30/10/09 – Pupil Free Day

**Week 2**
Monday 02/11/09

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<tr>
<td>Lesley Scott</td>
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<td>Di Arnold</td>
<td>9:00 – 11:30</td>
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<td>Pam Clarke</td>
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<td>Bec Lauritson</td>
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Tuesday 03/11/09

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<td>David Lodge</td>
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<td>Jo Scott</td>
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<td>Michelle Northey</td>
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<td>Pam Clarke</td>
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Wednesday 04/11/09

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<td>Sonia Steele</td>
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<td>Pam Clarke</td>
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Thursday 05/11/09

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<td>Pam Clarke</td>
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<td>Ryan Starick</td>
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<td>Julie Reilly</td>
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<td>Sarah Campbell</td>
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Friday 06/11/09

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<td>Glennice Pilgram</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pam Clarke</td>
<td>9:00 – 11:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Krystal</td>
<td>11:30 – 1:30</td>
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Please could all Canteen workers let us know if you are unable to work.
Thank you.

**Public Notices**

**Little Athletics** – Friday 5:30 p.m. at the Kadina Memorial High School oval. Season has already commenced.

**Moonta Junior Tennis** – Any student wishing to play tennis this year needs to see Mrs Johnstone in the library asap.

**Road Crossing Monitors**
Term 4, Week 4
Cam Platten;
Joseph Sakoulidis;
Jacob Sakoulidis

Term 4, Week 5
Riley Hatcher;
Blake Trott;
Mikai Prohaska

**Royal Life Saving**

**Centenary Swim & Survive**
Water Safety Program

4th - 14th January 2010

4yr old $20 for ½ hr lesson

$25 Level 1 - 7 Swim & Survive and Rescue Awards

¾ hr lesson

$30 Bronze & Higher Awards

1 ½ hr lesson

Expressions of Interest / Enquiries:
Phone: 8234 9244
Online: www.sa.royallifesaving.com.au
Email: iward@rlssa.org.au

LOGBOOKS and CERTIFICATES available
Neurons look a little like uprooted trees. There's the branches at the top (dendrites) the longish trunk where the body of the cell is located (axons) and the roots (terminals) which branch out of the axons to make contact with other neurons or muscle cells.

At its most basic level, the terminals of one neuron connect with the dendrites of another neuron. The connection, known as a synapse, is a tiny gap where the brains chemicals (neurotransmitters) flow from terminals on axons to receptor points on dendrites.

It is at those points that our experiences become flesh. The synapse has both pre-connection points (transmitters) and bulb-like post-connection points (receptors). As neurotransmitters flow into the synapses, due to making or retrieving memories, the tiny receptors they latch onto cause electrical or biochemical messages in the receiving neuron.

Thus the input to a neuron occurs at the synapse and the output is a series of electrical blips firing down its axon in pre-determined (or learnt) patterns.

Within thousandths of a second, neurons which are part of sending and receiving networks can make sense of our world, and remarkably, remember the patterns of inputs and outputs so we can recall the memory later. This is the magic we call learning. What we say and do as parents affects the learning process.

Why are some things easier to learn than others?
The human brain is born with a pre-programmed expectation to learn a whole array of skills such as eating, walking, talking, simple number facts, toileting, bonding and so on.

The human brain, however, does not expect to learn certain other things and therefore requires intense coaching and long periods of practise. Such learning includes reading, writing, complex mathematics, playing sports, driving a car and so on. Whatever the brain learns, it needs experiences to build interconnections between neurons to enable the construction of memories. Scientists call these interconnections, synapses and the growth of new synapses to enable the construction of more memory networks, synaptogenesis. We now know that synaptogenesis occurs throughout life, a feature known as brain plasticity.

What is experience expectant learning?
Neuroscientists have divided synaptogenesis (the growth of new synapses) into two major categories. Category 1, is experience expectant plasticity, which is characterised by learning that occurs species-wide and within predictable periods. Category 2, is experience dependent plasticity, which is not constrained by age or time but does require relatively high degrees of motivation and effort to master. This latter type of learning is undertaken by pre-schools and schools and requires a structured curriculum and regular, specific feedback. We address experience dependent learning as it relates to reading in next week’s article.

Most experience expectant learning occurs within the early years of life and with little formal instruction and is typically the learning associated with parenting infants. Most young children learn to talk and walk easily (experience expectant) compared to learning to write their names (experience dependent). A young child masters the grammar of a language more easily during the early years while the vocabulary of the same language is subject to life-long modification. Therefore, second language learners need exposure to the grammar of the language early on if they are to speak it without an accent.

Experience expectant learning occurs when the brain encounters the relevant experience and motivation at the appropriate time (OECD, 2002). A vocabulary of 50 or so words by around age one, learnt primarily by pointing, labelling and naming items blooms into perhaps 2,500 words by age five. Wide-spread, stiff-legged movements of the toddler mature in the 2nd year of life into running, jumping, hopping, kicking, climbing and riding. During the 3rd year of life many children learn to tip-toe, balance on a narrow beam, catch items and even make rudimentary-looking drawings that represent people and environments.
To develop these skills, young children require play-time, rather than the more passive, television viewing. Children love hearing their parents communicating encouragement during these times as they seek to master a range of cognitive and motor skills. Because young children are so active and curious, a parent who provides lots of emotional support (as opposed to fear of all that might go wrong) love, and of course, time, will create the conditions for a tremendous explosion of dendritic branching on neurons (Diamond and Hopson 1998).

By around age four, most children have already developed awareness of their own minds and those of others. The child can, for example, invent the personalities for two dolls – one that acts mean and another that acts nice – then enact a scene between them (Diamond and Hopson 1998). This awareness of other people’s lives and influences is crucial to children because they will model their attitudes, dispositions and behaviour on the significant adults and children with whom they regularly interact. Imaginative play is the hallmark of the 4-year-old. Supply lots of toys where your child can invent personalities and possibilities. Listen in to their conversations. You will often hear your own words being applied to the imagined situations your child has created.

By around age six, most children can count to 30 or more, name several colours, write their own name, understand the meaning of under) and many comparative states (biggest, smallest, tallest, widest). Running, laughing, chattering, exploratory young children require little formal instruction to master such learning. But, they do require high levels of interactions with loving, caring adults and the scope to explore and make mistakes without criticism. This is the main reason why working with loving, caring adults and the scope to explore and make mistakes without criticism.

Your child is more likely to attempt learning when encouraged and guided, than when threatened, constrained or punished when things didn’t work out so well. In fact, children’s emotional states are far more significant in their intellectual development than previously thought (OECD, 2002). Emotion creates the shifting sands for the development of new concepts. The feeling of satisfaction accompanies successful mastery of learning. It’s an emotion that strengthens children and feeds into the brain’s natural disposition for learning. The early years requires, above all else, the development of emotional competencies – to be self-aware, to have self-control, the ability to resolve conflicts, to cooperate with others, to delay gratification and to seek satisfaction.

You will often hear your own words being applied to the imagined situations your child has created.

When you stop learning, you stop.

Key Points

Children love hearing their parents communicating encouragement during these times as they seek to master a range of cognitive and motor skills.

But, children do require high levels of interactions with loving, caring adults and the scope to explore and make mistakes without criticism.

Your child is more likely to attempt learning when encouraged and guided, than when threatened, constrained or punished when things didn’t work out so well.

When you stop learning, you stop.

Summary

The least I need to know

Many scientists assert that young children have brains that learns better than at any other time in their lives. Add high motivation to this wonderful window for learning, time-frames that reflect actual development rather than norms, and learning based on encouragement and sensory experiences to ensure an unbeatable combination for every child’s growth and development.

References

(Items marked * are available from Mind Webs). Log on to www.mindwebs.com.au or call Cathy Joseph for a catalogue (08) 8358 6993.

Brainy Parents, Brainy Kids, John Joseph*.


Magic Trees of the Mind, Marian Diamond and Janet Hopson*.

Brain Story, Susan Greenfield*.

The Scientist in the Crib – Minds, Brains and How Children Learn, Alison Gopnik, et al.

Next Issue - part three: Challenging and novel ways to support Early Years learning.
This is just a snapshot of what is to come...

Moonta Community library
November 9th – 20th
You are very WELCOME to come and view the talents of our year 12 students.

Wednesday 28th October
Year 9 Parents Night
Friday 30th October
Pupil Free Day

Monday 2nd – Friday 6th November
Cricket / Tennis State Carnival

Monday 2nd November
School Crossing Training
Year 10 Driver Ed
Year 8/9 Knockout Softball
5 p.m. DMC

Wednesday 4th November
7:30 p.m. Governing Council

Calendar

Wednesday 4th November
7:30 p.m. Governing Council

Thursday 5th November
3:15 p.m. Finance Committee

Week 4

Tuesday 10th – Wednesday 12th October
Year 3/4 DJ/AK/SP Camp – Warrawong – Stirling
Tuesday 10th October
9 a.m. R-12 Assembly

Wednesday 11th October
5-a-side Soccer at Maitland
R/1 (BD/LH/SH) Excursion to Maritime Museum

Thursday 12th October
Blue Light Social – Years 6-12

Week 5