Come celebrate with us!

As we know, becoming a health promoting school is a continuous cycle of improvement and involves commitment and input from the whole school community. As we look back on the past year, it is important for us to take some time to acknowledge our accomplishments: big and small.

Peninsula Health would like to acknowledge the efforts of all the wonderful people working to improve health and wellbeing in early years and schools by holding a Celebration Breakfast on Thursday 12 December at 7:30AM Hastings Community Health.

Anyone working with us to implement the Achievement Program at their centre or school is invited to come along to our celebration breakfast and share their successes and hear about all the great achievements in our local area.

For catering purposes, please register for the Breakfast by Monday 9 December. Register online at www.surveymonkey.com/s/Celebration_Breakfast
Students OK at Patterson River

The clever staff and students at Patterson River Secondary do not let an opportunity like R U OK Day slip by.

Using this Australia-wide mental health campaign as their springboard, a team of students and staff planned a month of activities and events aimed at raising awareness about the importance of strong and caring relationships.

“We wanted to get the whole school involved in this and we hoped that by using a variety of strategies, we could increase the positive impact amongst our school community” said Monique De Roche, School Nurse and key member of the Patterson River Health Promoting Schools team.

As part of the initiative, key mental health messages were embedded in the school curriculum and a range of events took place including staff and student morning tea’s, presentations by guest speakers and encouraging conversations with families about the importance of connectedness.

Not only is this initiative a wonderful way for Patterson River Secondary College to address their key priority of promoting mental health and wellbeing as a Health Promoting School, more importantly, it demonstrates the school’s commitment to promoting the health of its school community.

10 tips for your school’s wellbeing plan

1. Integrate your wellbeing plan with the Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan.
2. Consider ways to measure your achievements. It’s a good idea to start with a baseline so that you know how far your school has come.
3. Consider how you will know if you achieved what you set out to.
4. It is not cheating to change or adjust actions along the way.
5. Make sure someone is responsible for monitoring progress.
6. Provide opportunities for students, parents and staff to be involved in planning.
7. Think about the changes you would like to see for your priority health areas.
8. Changes to practice and behaviour can be measured using a variety of tools and methods including surveys, interviews, student diaries, peer assessment, observation, presentations and consultations.
9. Tap into a wider range of resources and expertise by developing partnerships with the community.
10. Think of ways to celebrate your achievements.
Festival of Healthy Living becomes EyeBelong

Many hours of planning are finally paying off with the official launch of EyeBelong activities at Eastbourne Primary, Peninsula Specialist College, Boneo Primary and Rosebud Secondary. Formerly the Southern Peninsula Festival of Healthy Living, the initiative has been rebranded EyeBelong to reflect its focus on helping schools to use art and other creative activities to promote mental health and wellbeing.

The initiative is coordinated by local agencies including Peninsula Headspace, Peninsula Health, Shine Family Life, Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Services and supported by the Royal Children’s Hospital. With the support of three community artists, students from each school will participate in Photovoice activities to explore factors impacting on their sense of identity, community and diversity.

Participating schools will work closely with students to use this information as a platform to promote mental health and wellbeing amongst young people in Rosebud West. Seawinds Community Hub will get in on the act by facilitating photovoice workshops where young people and their parents can work together to express their thoughts about mental health and wellbeing.

We look forward to bringing you more about EyeBelong as the initiative progresses. Stay Tuned!

KidsMatter update

KidsMatter is a flexible, whole-school approach for primary schools to improve children’s mental health and wellbeing. KidsMatter is a national initiative that provides the proven methods, tools and support to help schools work with parents and carers, health services and the wider community to nurture happy balanced kids. KidsMatter is a great example of a Health Promoting Schools in action. Schools that have completed all 4 KidsMatter Components are also awarded under the ‘Mental Health and Wellbeing’ category by the Healthy Together Victoria Achievement Program.

A number of local schools are already involved with implementing the KidsMatter framework with Hastings Primary School being one of the first schools in Australia to be fully recognised and awarded as a KidsMatter school.

Diana Russo from KidsMatter recently held a training session at the Frankston Best Western Hotel which was attended by 51 representatives from schools including Pearcedale Primary School, St Judes Langwarrin, St Johns Frankston East and Dromana Primary School.

For schools who are interested in finding out more about KidsMatter, a free Briefing Session will be held on Wed 4 December at Beaumaris North Primary School. For more information please contact Diana on 9411 9903 or at Diana.russo@kidsmatter.edu.au.
Westpark Primary helps families connect

Hastings Westpark Primary School is inviting local agencies and community services to take part in a whole school event on Tuesday 26 November. The ‘Getting to know the services of Hastings’ mini expo is an opportunity for families to engage with local agencies.

A number of services have been invited to participate including health services, local government, financial support services, community groups and sporting clubs.

“We know that parents sometimes find it difficult to access services,” says principal Mark Watters “so we thought we would bring the services to them.” The event is being facilitated by the 3915 Connected group which also involves Hastings Primary, St Marys Primary and other agencies working to improve inclusion and connectedness in Hastings.

New canteen brings healthy change

The brand new canteen facilities at Frankston Heights Primary School have paved the way for a new canteen manager to serve healthy and affordable food to the children and wider school community. Linda Eames started as the new canteen manager in Term 3 and has brought a whole new look to the space as well as some tasty menu options.

“We wanted the focus of the canteen to be on healthy foods,” says Assistant Principal Carole Gagiero, “We used to serve pies and other less healthy options and that just wasn’t good enough for our students.” The School Council was keen to have a canteen that would provide healthy menu options for the children while still turning a profit and raising funds for the school.

“We’ve been really lucky to have Linda as our canteen manager,” says Carole, “Everything she does is about encouraging kids to eat healthy foods and try new things.”

The canteen features a number of standard healthy lunch options such as sandwiches and rolls, but also offers a range of healthy snacks including popcorn, carrot sticks with dip and seasonal fruit kebabs.

The healthy canteen echoes the schools commitment to promoting health and wellbeing and will be linking with the school garden next year to serve fresh produce grown on-site. The canteen menu will also be assessed by the Victorian Healthy Eating Advisory Service who provide schools with advice on how to run a healthy and profitable canteen. For more info, check out heas.healthytogether.vic.gov.au/.
Mahogany Rise touched by Christmas Spirit

Mahogany Rise Primary School is holding a whole of school Christmas lunch on Thursday 19 December for staff and students to look back and celebrate all the achievements of the past year. Organised by the KidsMatter / Parent Partnership Team, the event will be an opportunity for the school community to sit together and share a yummy meal in a friendly and festive environment.

Bianca Appleby, KidsMatter Coordinator at Mahogany Rise, sees the value of such an event and how it reflects the principles of the KidsMatter program. “KidsMatter is all about ensuring we are putting the kids first,” says Bianca, “This lunch focusses on a positive school community and we will be using placemats and table decorations that the children have made so that they know how much their contributions matter.”

The lunch event is generously sponsored by the Lord Mayor’s Charitable Foundation and the Ardoch Youth Foundation who will be covering the costs of the healthy lunch. The lunch will also feature a performance from the Year 4, 5 and 6 guitar group and will undoubtedly lead to everyone in the school singing along to their favourite Christmas carols.

A fair to remember!

As we get closer to the end of the school year, our diaries suddenly fill with all the things we are meant to do before Christmas. St Augustines PS is giving students, parents and the wider community a chance to unwind before the busy period and take part in a Fabulous Friday Christmas Fair.

The school has not held a fair in well over 16 years and the staff and students are eager to get that tradition up and going again. With input from a number of staff and community members, the school has put together a jam-packed event which includes a Giant Super Slide, Petting Zoo, Haunted House, Food stalls and much more!

Assistant Principal Emma Michaud says the Fair will build strong links with the community and engage parents and children in a fun and enjoyable event. “Our hope is that this event will not only engage our students and their families in fun activities,” she says, “but also provide an opportunity for the wider community to be welcomed into our wonderful school.”

The Fair is a great example of how a school can engage parents and community members in a fun and welcoming way. Events like these help parents/community to establish a positive association with the school. The Fair will be held on Friday 6 December from 3:30PM to 7:30PM and anyone is welcome to attend.
Monterey builds marvellous team

I’m sure staff at Health Promoting Schools can relate to a fear of adding to their already massive workload. Janet Smith, Student Wellbeing and Health Promoting Schools Coordinator at Monterey Secondary College will certainly admit to thinking this way after a false start with her Health Promoting schools team earlier this year. “Unfortunately we found it hard get people involved consistently in our Health Promoting Schools work at first. I felt the pressure.”

With support from Peninsula Health, Janet and School Nurse Mandy Rampton have recruited a new compliment of enthusiastic members to their team who are ready to sink their teeth into the two priority health areas, Healthy Eating and Mental Health.

The team now consists of senior students, parents and a range of school staff. “With our new enthusiastic team I feel that now we can really get started” said Janet who is hopeful that many hands will make light work to promote health at Monterey.

From the HPS Library

A Snapshot of local health and wellbeing data sources (great information for your school audit)

School Entrant Health Questionnaire (SEHQ)
SEHQ records parent’s concerns and observations about their child’s health and wellbeing as they begin primary school. The intention of the questionnaire is to assist parents to identify health and wellbeing concerns and to provide schools with a starting point for planning.


Australian Early Development Index (AEDI)
AEDI is a measure of how young children are developing in our community. The AEDI is a population measure of children’s development as they enter school. Based on the scores from a teacher-completed checklist, the AEDI measures five areas of early childhood development:

- physical health and wellbeing
- social competence
- emotional maturity
- language and cognitive skills (school-based)
- communication skills and general knowledge


Community Indicators Victoria (CIV) – Frankston / Mornington Peninsula Wellbeing Reports
Community Wellbeing Reports contain community wellbeing indicators which are used to highlight important trends and issues in our community. These reports provide a snapshot of the wellbeing of our municipalities with comparisons to regional and state-wide results.

http://www.communityindicators.net.au/wellbeing_reports/frankston
http://www.communityindicators.net.au/wellbeing_reports/mornington_peninsula
An upward spiral to wellbeing

Enthusiastic members of the Western Port Secondary College community are on a mission to promote mental health and wellbeing by building a spiral meditation path and garden in their outdoor classroom.

The garden provides a quiet reflective space for students, staff and families who need a break and some time out. Hannah Lewis, Assistant Principal explains “We want to provide a space where our school community can relax and feel tranquil and calm.”

This project would not have been possible without the hard work of students with various classes dedicated to different aspects of the garden. Year 7 students selected positive words such as “joy, peace, calm, relax and hope” which were mosaicked on to pavers by year 7, 8 and 9 students. The archway entry, garden beds and features for the centre of the garden were all designed and executed by students. Year 8’s measured and costed materials for the path and year 9’s then constructed the spiral pathway. A year 10 student aiming for a building apprenticeship assembled bench seats for the garden.

Using a whole school approach within this project has been the key to success. Strong partnerships have been developed with parents, Rotarians, school councillors, Mornington Peninsula Shire, Peninsula Health and the Warrigine Precinct who all feel very proud of the final result.

The spiral garden will be available for community use this December through a booking system. Call Western Port Secondary College on 5979 1577 to find out more.

Community Kitchens in schools

Community Kitchens are groups of people who meet weekly to cook fresh and healthy meals. Participants plan the meals together and contribute to the cost of the ingredients. Everybody gets involved in the cooking, eating and cleaning up.

Community Kitchen groups can be for students, parents or staff and set up to meet the needs of your school community. The group is facilitated by trained volunteers.

Benefits of Community Kitchens include; improved school engagement, development of practical skills around cooking, motivation and knowledge around healthy eating and links with other aspects of school curriculum eg. literacy, numeracy, health & PE.

The program can also link with other work within the school (eg. school gardens) and helps to promote healthy eating as part of Health Promoting Schools Achievement Program

Training for new Community Kitchens facilitators is being held Monday 9th December 9:30-12:30am at John Madder Hall (next to Frankston Hospital). To register or find out more contact: Suzanne Quinn, Community Kitchens Coordinator, ph: 9784 8483 or squinn@phcn.vic.gov.au.

For further information about Community Kitchens go to www.communitykitchens.org.au.
Useful links and resources

The Dental Health Services Victoria website offers primary and secondary schools a range of resources. From classroom activities to parent information, Youtube clips, this website is a great starting point for Health Promoting Schools addressing Healthy Eating and Oral Health benchmarks.


Key contacts

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Want to share?

Share your health promotion stories and successes in the next HPS Newsletter.

If you have something you would like to include in the Newsletter or would like to provide some feedback, please contact the Health Promotion Team:

healthpromotingschools@phcn.vic.gov.au

For your diary

26 November
“Get to Know Hastings Services Expo”
Hastings Westpark PS

2 December
Spiral Meditation Garden grand opening
Western Port Secondary College

4 December
KidsMatter briefing
Beaumaris North PS

6 December
Fabulous Friday Christmas Fair
St Augustine’s PS, Frankston South

9 December
Community Kitchens training
John Madder Hall, Frankston

12 December
HPS Celebration Breakfast
Hastings Community Health
www.surveymonkey.com/s/Celebration_Breakfast

16 - 17 December
MindMatters Training
Frankston
mindmatters.edu.au/professional_development/professional_development_calendar.html

1 CEIPS Achievement Program Newsletter September 2013