

Pendle Hill High School



Newsletter

2008

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TERM 1 - BULLETIN NO. 4

KEY DATES

March

31 P & C Meeting 7pm

April

3, 4 & 5 CHS Swimming
3 Year 12 exams begin
11 Last day of Term 1

TERM 2

28 April - Day 1 Staff only
29 April - Day 1 Students

Year 12 half yearly examinations begin on Thursday 3 April and conclude on Friday 11 April.

Students are required to be at school only for their exams and must provide a medical certificate for any missed exams. Mobile phones and other electronic devices are not to be taken into any exam.

Students have a copy of the exam timetable and student conduct rules.

P & C Meeting

The next meeting of the P & C will be held at 7pm on Monday 31 March in room A1.

Please join us and take an active role in your child's education!

The next newsletter will be posted home on 11 April 2008

Our Students Our School

We are now almost at the end of Term 1 with 3 weeks of school before the school holidays begin on Friday 11 April.

With the end of term fast approaching, we are about to move into the major period of Semester One exam and assessment activities for all Year groups. Year 12 half yearly exams begin on Thursday 3 April and finish on Friday 11 April. The early weeks of next term see the start of Year 9 half yearly exams, Years 7 and 8 assessments, and Year 10 and 11 half yearly exams. The national literacy and numeracy tests for Years 7 and 9 will be held on Tuesday 13, Wednesday 14 and Thursday 15 May. Decisions relating to the placement of students into classes in Semester 2 will be made in the context of student performance during Semester One.

All students should now be preparing for these major exam and assessment activities with an organised study and revision program in addition to the regular completion of homework and assignments. Parents and caregivers can help by:

- ◆ Taking an active interest in homework and study
- ◆ ensuring there is time set aside for homework and study each day
- ◆ encouraging and supporting students to complete homework and assignments by the due date
- ◆ providing, where possible, a dedicated place for homework and study
- ◆ encouraging your children to read and take an interest in current events.

Parents should be aware that the school Library is open each day to assist students with access to resources, both book and online, and a quiet place to work and study. Mrs Credaro is more than pleased to assist students with their information and research needs.

Parents and students are reminded that teachers will be providing normal lessons and activities up to and including the last day of term, Friday 11 April. Students should continue to bring all required books and equipment each day and must continue to wear full school uniform.

In response to requests from parents, this newsletter includes feature articles on technology and cyber bullying; youth depression and other student health matters.

Judy Sims
Principal

TERM 2 SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT DAY

Monday 28 April is a School Development Day for all government schools in NSW and normal school lessons will not be held on this day. The focus of our School Development Day is on student health, with all staff undertaking First Aid training, including CPR training.

While parents are welcome to join staff for any or all of all the School Development Day activities, a cost of \$60 applies to the completion of first aid training. This cost includes a training manual and associated workbook. The workbook must be completed prior to the School Development Day. Please contact the school ASAP on 9631-9651 if you wish to register for this course.

Students return to school on Tuesday 29 April

SCHOOL ACCESS

Parents are reminded that all visitors to the school must report to Reception on arrival. **Under no circumstances should parents or other visitors go directly to classrooms or arrange to meet students in other areas of the school.** This is one of the measures we have in place to ensure the safety of students and staff. It is important that we know the identity of all parents and visitors to the school and the purpose of their visit. We appreciate your continuing cooperation with this safety measure.

Please note that between 9am and 3pm, the only access to our school is via the main entrance gates in Cornock Avenue. All other gates to our school are locked during school hours.

PRIORITY SCHOOLS PROGRAMS SURVEY 2008

A huge thank you to parents of students in Years 7, 8 and 9 for completing and returning the official, confidential Department of Education and Training Priority Schools Programs Survey.

We needed at least a 90% survey return to be considered for this program and achieved slightly better than this. Perhaps the raffle prizes helped — a mountain bike and an MP4 player! Congratulations to Ayah Alkhalwaldeh of Year 7 and Karl Miles of Year 8, the lucky winners.

Those schools to receive funding under the Priority Schools Program for 2009 to 2012 will be announced later this year. If we are selected we will have access to extra funding to continue to improve student literacy and numeracy, additional staffing, specialist consultancy support as well as access to a range of classroom, teacher and community resources.

ADVANCE NOTICE

The NSW Teachers Federation has advised that a statewide 2 hour stop work meeting will be held on the morning of Tuesday 8 April to allow teachers to discuss proposed changes to the staffing of schools. Normal classes are expected to operate from Period 3 onwards.

Year 12 exams for Tuesday 8 April will go ahead as scheduled.

TECHNOLOGY, CYBER BULLING AND YOUR CHILD

The Department of Education and Training has released an online magazine called *Click* — *A Technology Guide for Parents*. Download your free copy at www.schools.nsw.edu.au

Email

Here are a few “do’s and don’ts” your child should keep in mind before sending their next email.

Do

- Think about how they will write their message and read it back to make sure it says what they want it to say.
- Be polite and friendly. If they are upset about something, tell them to wait a while before writing an email.
- Be careful with sending to ‘Reply All’. Do they really want everyone to get this message or only the person who sent it to them?
- Put a subject in the subject box so people know what it is about before they open it.

Don’t

- Reply to emails from people or email addresses they don’t know.
- Reply if someone bullies them or writes something bad to them. Ask them to tell you or their teacher.
- Open pictures or attachments from people they don’t know. They could contain ‘viruses’ which might contaminate the computer.
- Send spam or chain letters on to their friends. This junk mail fills up their inboxes and may stop them getting other important messages.
- Say anything in an email that they wouldn’t want anyone else to see.

Tech talk – Instant messaging

Instant messaging (IM) is a service available on the internet that allows people to chat to each other in real time and responses can be discussed immediately. IM programs are usually free to download from the internet.

When children use instant messaging services there is potential for the following problems to occur:

- IM is very addictive and may take up time that should be used for school work
- As conversations happen in real time, there is no opportunity to “take something back”
- Once your child has an IM account, they can log into any computer and start chatting, that is, they might not be at home under your supervision when they next log on to chat
- Online predators use public chat rooms to single out victims and provide them with a false friendship in order to coerce them to meet in real life.

Why not sign up to the same IM service as your child, add them as “buddies” and check out what is going on?

Online Safety Tips

Worried about your child's safety online? Here are some guidelines that can help:

- Spend time online with your children. Check out good sites together. The internet can be a fun family activity!
- Help your children use the internet as an effective research tool - learn about handy homework tips and also good searching techniques.
- Learn about the world out there. Children are communicating in a diverse range of ways, from chat to IM, and from message boards to blogs. Learn how these work and what tools they offer to protect your child's privacy.
- Be aware of online stranger danger, particularly in chat rooms. Set house rules about what information your children can give out and where they can go online.
- Put the computer in a central area of the home, not in a bedroom. Your child might think twice about looking at inappropriate websites and won't be able to chat to their friends all night while you think they are doing their homework!
- Set reasonable rules for Internet use.
- Be open with your child and encourage them to come to you if they encounter a problem online – cultivate trust and communications because no rules, laws or filtering software can replace you as their first line of defence.
- Talk with your child about how they use the Internet. Make sure they understand basic safety guidelines. These include protecting privacy (including passwords), never posting personal information, never meeting people they only know online and not posting inappropriate or potentially embarrassing photos.
- Try to get your children to share their blogs or online profiles with you, but be aware that they can have multiple accounts on multiple services.

How to protect your child from cyber bullying

- Monitor who your child is talking to.
- Restrict the people your child communicates with. Remove cyber bullies from the buddy list.
- Restrict others from adding your child to their buddy list—these enable people to track when your child is online. Restrict this in the privacy settings.
- Google your child to see what has been posted about them. Also check their screen name, nicknames, address, telephone numbers and websites.
- Do not reply to taunts or gossip. Log off immediately and stay offline for at least 24 hours.
- Block the sender. Most ISP's and IM programs have a blocking feature.
- Notify the ISP. Report cyber bullying to the bully's ISP. If your child's account has been hacked or the password compromised, you should report it to your own ISP.
- Keep the messages as evidence and report them to the school or police.
- Remind your child never to give their password or logon details to anyone, even their best friend.

YOUTH DEPRESSION

Depression and anxiety are the most common mental health problems in young people. At any point in time, between two to five per cent of young people will experience depression that is of sufficient severity to warrant treatment. Around 20 per cent of young people will have experienced depression by the time they reach adulthood.

What are the warning signs?

- Persistent sadness or anger, frequent crying.
- Difficulty thinking or concentrating, a worsening of school performance.
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, hopelessness, helplessness.
- Lack of interest in friends, family and activities they previously enjoyed.
- Lack of energy, enthusiasm or motivation (feeling slowed down).
- Restlessness, irritability or agitation.
- Changes in sleeping patterns - not being able to sleep or sleeping more than usual.
- Changes in eating patterns - eating more or less than usual.
- Thoughts of death, suicide or harming themselves.

What can you do?

When your teenager is feeling down, it's important to listen and offer help and support them to seek help.

Encourage them to:

- talk about their feelings (let them know they don't have to carry the whole load)
- talk to other people they trust
- ask for help when they need it
- spend time with their friends
- join in sports, school activities or hobbies which they enjoy and that help build their confidence
- get involved in organisations that support them and help them to develop interests
- exercise (exercise releases brain chemicals which help lift our spirits)
- find ways to relax (these can be simple such as seeing a movie or going for a walk or a surf)
- write down what they're thinking or to express their thoughts in other creative ways like painting.

If your teenager is depressed for a significant period of time it is important to seek professional help. If you or they are not taken seriously at one place, then seek help elsewhere until you are both satisfied. Contact Kids Help Line **1800 55 1800** or Lifeline 13 11 14 or visit: www.youthbeyondblue.com for more information.

Our School Counsellor, Mrs Maguire-Donvito is in our school
each Wednesday and Friday.

Please contact the school on 9631 9651 to make an appointment.



Loozit

Healthy Active Living for Young People

Are you aged 13-16?

What is Loozit? The Loozit study involves a **FREE** weight management program that empowers young people with skills, knowledge and confidence to get more fun out of life!

What's involved? Please come along weekly for nine weeks in the late afternoons for a snack and a chat with other young people who share similar concerns. Conducted by staff of The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

What's it all about? Together we will look at self esteem, setting goals, becoming more active, healthy eating and dealing with stress.

When & Where? Starting week of 28 April 2008 at The Children's Hospital, Westmead. Booking is essential.

Want to know more? Please contact: 9845 3015 or 9845 1291 or 9845 1224

Or email loozit@chw.edu.au or visit www.chw.edu.au/kids/loozit

CHILDRENS HOSPITAL WESTMEAD and SYDNEY WEST AREA HEALTH SERVICE

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of allergic reaction and is potentially life threatening. It must be treated as a medical emergency, requiring immediate treatment and urgent medical attention.

The signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis often occur almost immediately after exposure or within the first 20 minutes after exposure to a trigger such as certain foods, insect stings or medications.

Allergic symptoms may initially appear mild or moderate but can progress rapidly. The most dangerous allergic reactions involve the respiratory system (breathing) and/or cardiovascular system (heart and blood pressure).

Common Symptoms

Mild to moderate allergic reactions

- Tingling of the mouth
- Hives, welts or body redness
- Swelling of the face, lips eyes
- Vomiting , abdominal pain

Severe allergic reaction—ANAPHYLAXIS

- Difficulty and/or noisy breathing
- Swelling of the tongue
- Swelling or tightness in the throat
- Difficulty talking or hoarse voice
- Wheeze or persistent cough
- Loss of consciousness and or collapse
- Pale and floppy (young children)

A person who is suspected of having a food or insect sting allergy should obtain a referral to see an allergy specialist for correct diagnosis, advice on preventative management and emergency treatment. Those diagnosed with allergy must carry emergency medication as prescribed as well as an Anaphylaxis Action Plan signed by their doctor. Food allergic children who have a history of eczema and/or asthma are at higher risk of anaphylaxis. Administration of adrenaline using an EpiPen is the first line treatment of anaphylaxis

Go to www.allergyfacts.org.au for more information