

## ME LIBE NG

You're never too young to talk mental health

## Tips for talking for

## **Building Community and Social Connections**

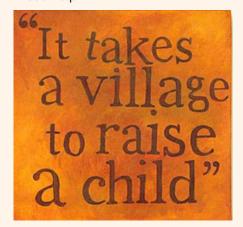
One of the ways we can enrich our lives is by building our community and social connections. It is often said that it "takes a village to raise a child." Our 'modern village' can be made up of family members, friends, neighbours, dedicated professionals, schools, parishes, support groups and community sports & service groups. Belonging to a community is proven to combat loneliness and social isolation and enhance our mental health and well-being.

At school we are encouraging connection and belonging through our community partnerships, including: visits from the residents at Abbey Gardens and regular workshops with Bunnings. We also had The Sikh Volunteer Australia organisation (who provide food & essential services to disadvantaged groups) come and speak to students recently. These connections give children a sense of belonging and help them develop social and emotional skills such as cooperation, communication, confidence, resilience and empathy.

## Kids and community: why connections are important

When your child is connected to extended family, family friends and people in their neighbourhood and community, they have:

- a sense of belonging to a place and community
- opportunities to learn about getting along with others
- opportunities to learn about being inclusive by learning about other people and themselves
- an understanding of community helpers and people they can go to when they need help



To find support and access community connection there are many services that can help:

- **St Joseph's P&F** If you would like to be involved please reach out to the P&F via mail: stjosephswarragulpandf@gmail.com or send a message through our Facebook page.
- **-Baw Baw Emergency Relief Directory** provides a comprehensive list of support services: https://www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au/Our-Community/Food-Relief
- **-Catholic Care:** Addressing the diverse needs of families and children through tailored and essential support. https://www.catholiccarevic.org.au/workshops/
- **-ParentZone Gippsland** (03) 5135 9555): Provides free parent groups, workshops, and resources for parents and carers in Gippsland, with programs available in person and online.
- **-Baw Baw Shire Council:** Offers supported playgroups like Play Matters, which are facilitated to provide a range of play options and connect families with other services. <u>bawbaw@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au</u>
- -Relationships Australia Victoria: Provides family support programs, parenting skills workshops, and free counselling for children aged 4-11 experiencing mental health challenges through services like Connect Me.
- **-Myli My Community Library**: Provide school holiday programs and activities https://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/myli-my-community-library-38541061043