



WELLBEING

You're never too young to talk mental health



Tips for talking for parents and carers

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

“It takes a village to raise a child”

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. bawbaw@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au

- **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>