

Section 3 – Low SES School Communities

Six Month Progress – 1 January 2011 to 30 June 2011.

Research clearly indicates that emotions such as sadness and anger can block learning, while others such as a sense of wellbeing, or feeling safe and valued, can promote learning. Therefore, St Joseph's School Murgon has developed and implemented a National Partnerships Program to improve student learning by focusing on the social and emotional well-being of all students, especially those who are at risk. Over the past six months this program has continued to be implemented in accordance with our school's National Partnership Plan. This has involved the continuation of programs and activities that have already been successfully established within the school and also implementing new programs. The School Counsellor (National Partnerships) along with other staff members has continued to provide established activities and services such as the Boys Well Being Program (Reach Up – Reach Out Boys Club Program), Breakfast Program, Kids Matter Program, Individual, Group and Family Counselling, Crisis Intervention and Student Protection concerns.

Furthermore, new programs have been established and implemented during 2011 including, Small Group Social Skills Program, Alternative Afternoon Curriculum Program (Berne Program), Girls Well Being Program (Bright Futures Girls Program), Junior Police Rangers Program, Indigenous Parents Program.

These programs and services continued to improve the social and emotional well-being of students in school in many ways, including:

- Increased self –awareness
- Increased self-esteem
- Improved ability to self-regulate
- Development of life skills (goal setting, cooking, being healthy, hygiene, and gardening etc...)
- Expressing emotions and feelings in an appropriate manner
- Increased ability to engage in meaning relationships with peers
- Increased ability to work cooperatively with peers
- Increased social awareness and acceptance of differences
- Greater respect for self and others
- Improved conflict resolution skills
- Less class and school exclusions for aggressive and in appropriate behaviour
- Increased motivation to learn new things
- Higher morale throughout school community
- Improved communication between school and parents
- Increased interest and support from parents in their child's education and social and emotional well-being
- No recent reports of students being involved in substance misuse
- Increased ability to engage appropriately with members of community
- High attendance rates for all students, including at risk students

As already mentioned our National Partnerships Program focuses on improving students learning

through supporting and enhancing student's social and emotional well-being. We acknowledge that this would be difficult to achieve unless we not only put in place support structures at school, but also assist with creating and maintaining support structures within the family environment and the wider community. This year we have increased our support for parents and strive to continue to find creative and purposeful ways to engage them more in child's learning and overall well-being.

Significant Achievements/Activities – 1 January 2011 to 30 June 2011.

During Semester 1 of this year we have created and implemented new programs which support and enhance student's social and emotional well-being and learning. These programs include:

Small Group Social Skills Program

We have established a Small Group Social Skills Program to support and teach social skills to identified students. The program is lead by a Teacher one day a week and involves 4 small groups from mixed year levels. Each group has a particular learning focus such as friendship building, anger management, self-esteem and self-control etc... Teachers are ask to nominate students who need support in particular areas and also those who have strengths in particular areas that can be added to groups as peer teachers. Students appear to always be fully engaged in learning within these small groups and it has been noted by teachers and other staff, the changes in some student's behaviours in class and in the playground.

Alternative Afternoon Curriculum Program (Berne Program)

This program was named after The John Berne School in NSW as it was created for the similar purpose of supporting those students who find it difficult to cope in mainstream schooling environments. Our Berne Program gives selected students time out of the classroom each afternoon to improve their skills in a flexible learning environment. At present the program caters for 7 students ranging from Year 5 to Year 7. Each afternoon a different staff member provides a different activity for learning for these students. The current timetable includes activities such as, team sports, painting and art, woodwork, gardening and cooking. The activities offered give students great variety and scope to learn new skills and feel good about their achievements. This program has received much positive recognition and feedback from parents, teachers and the students themselves.

Girls Well Being Program (Bright Futures Girls Program)

This program supports girls to develop life skills and have discussions about issues that concern them. All girls from Years 4 to 7 will have the opportunity to participate in the program as it is offered to one year level per term. The program runs for 7 weeks each term and involves the girls learning life skills such as cooking, healthy living, hygiene and appearance, social and emotional skills etc... The girls that have already participated in this program this year have really enjoyed learning about themselves and each other in a safe and supportive environment.

Indigenous Parenting Program

Previously we have provided Indigenous parents with the opportunity to talk to a few members of school staff about concerns and questions they may have relating to their child's education informally with a morning tea at the Catholic Church in Cherbourg. This was well received with 8

parents coming along. This year we wanted to further support and engage parents by offering them the opportunity to meet and have morning tea again. However, this year we also invited along Michael White from AusIDentities who has categorised students learning styles based on personality profiling. These learning styles are known as Dreamtime Personalities and most students at the school are aware of which style they belong to (Wombat, Eagle, Dolphin or Kangaroo). It was our intention that Michael would attend parent morning teas with our Indigenous parents to chat to them about how they could best help their child learn at school based on their particular learning style. The first session was unfortunately unattended, however the second session was very well received with 10 parents attending and giving feedback that they really found the information and discussions helpful and would like to continue to learn more.

Junior Police Rangers Program

Starting in Term 3, the Cherbourg Police and St Joseph's School are starting an exclusive group called the 'Cherbourg Junior Police Rangers' and are inviting all Indigenous Students from years 5 to 7 to participate. The program is run by Cherbourg Police staff in conjunction with Joseph's staff. The program will involve the children going by bus to the Cherbourg Police Station every Wednesday after school for 2 hours to learn police, military and emergency services related skills and drills and also learn about Aboriginal history, traditions, stories, food, music, dance and art. Students will also learn how to care for other people and property through volunteer work. This program requires the help of many Cherbourg and Murgon community members to share their knowledge and skills with the Junior Police Rangers and will give students more community spirit and pride and also improve their self esteem. All Indigenous students are participating in the program and are extremely excited about becoming Junior Police Rangers and to be working with local police.

Barriers to Progress – 1 January 2011 to 30 June 2011.

- **Parent involvement and communication difficulties:** It is sometimes difficult to get in contact with parents who live out in Cherbourg as many do not have home phones and their mail is not delivered, it has to be collected. We have attempted to break down this barrier by providing parents opportunities to meet with us (e.g. parent morning teas). Our Indigenous Participation Officer also is a great means of communication for us with our Indigenous parents.
- **Increased demand:** Many students are approaching staff asking if they can be involved in programs or asking when it is going to be their turn. All programs are kept to capacity level which ensures that students are properly supervised and able to learn effectively. With each program we offer we have to factor in time availability, staffing, resourcing etc... All programs at present have reached capacity and some students will not be able to participate in programs. Students are selected to participate in some selective programs such as the Berne Program at monthly National Partnerships Committee Meetings.

Support for Indigenous Students – 1 January 2011 to 30 June 2011.

Our National Partnerships Program supports the learning and social and emotional well-being of all students, especially those who are most at risk. A large number of our Indigenous students are at risk and are therefore supported in the following ways:

- Small Group Social Skills Program
- Reach Up –Reach Out Boys Club Program
- Bright Futures Girls Program
- Berne Program
- Junior Police Rangers Program
- Indigenous Parents Program
- Breakfast Program
- Kids Matter Program
- Individual Counselling
- Group and Family Counselling
- Crisis Intervention and Student Protection Concerns
- Well Being Centre (Koolkuna Room and new kitchen)
- Indigenous Hall of Fame
- Indigenous Support Staff
- Partnerships with local agencies which providing support and mentoring
- Pastoral home visits to parents

Most of the above programs and support structures are offered to all students within the school. However, some programs are specially designed to support our Indigenous students and their families such as, Berne Program (open to non-Indigenous and Indigenous students, however all participants are currently Indigenous), Indigenous Parents Program, Junior Police Rangers Program (Indigenous students only).

Support for other cohorts (if applicable) – 1 January 2011 to 30 June 2011.

As discussed above

Activities you would like to showcase – 1 January 2011 to 30 June 2011.

The National Partnerships Program at St Joseph's School Murgon encompasses a number of successful programs and activities which we are very proud of. However, the highlight for this year thus far would have to be the success of the Berne program. Witnessing the student's excitement and genuine eagerness to learn was extremely rewarding. As part of this program they feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for their own learning. It is clearly evident of all their faces that they feel capable and proud during activities and can often be heard discussing their achievements with teachers and classmates.

Section 5 – Milestone Reporting

Part 1 - Milestones not reported/not achieved/partially achieved in Annual Report for 2010

Milestone (state and territories may wish to identify whether the milestone relates to all sectors or a particular sector within their jurisdiction).	Detail of achievement against milestone. <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why. <i>Qualitative</i>	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe) <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>

Part 2 - Milestones in Progress Report - (Achieved 1 January 2011 to 30 June 2011)

Milestone	Detail of achievement against milestone. <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>	If not achieved or partially achieved, reasons why. <i>Qualitative</i>	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe) <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>
20 (State) additional principals recruited and appointed under Performance Agreement conditions	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
7 Catholic additional principals participated in tailored Professional Development			
7 Catholic additional schools receive funding			
Teachers from 7			

Catholic schools participate in teacher induction program			

Part 3 - Milestones that will progress through the 2011 calendar year (with no set milestone date)

Milestone	Detail of achievement against milestone. <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>	Strategies put in place to achieve milestone (including updated timeframe) <i>Quantitative and Qualitative</i>