

Dear Families,

On Monday I was lucky enough to attend another camp, this time with our year two students. And next week I'll be away again on camp with the year fours. Monday was such a great day full of challenging activities and fun. The day camp in Queenscliff is a great start for the school camp program before the kids attend their first overnight camp.

I've spent some time recently with the year four students who are preparing for their camp. There are a many of our students who are nervous and a couple of them are considering if they really want to go attend. Over all the years I've been working with kids, I reckon this is normal. Kids get worried. Kids feel anxious. Kids experience nervousness.

As a parent, I wonder what to do about this. I think the most important thing is to know that our kid's feelings are normal. And telling them that their feelings are normal might be helpful, rather than saying that they should be feeling something different. Sometimes it's okay to just experience that feeling, rather than suppressing it or avoiding it.

Of course, we all want our kids to go to camp and experience the amazing things that come with it. We all want our kids to be pushed out of their comfort zone, as this is when they can experience growth. So, what is the best thing we can do to help get them along to camp? Perhaps we could let them know what we are really feeling, even if we are worried or nervous ourselves? We could let them know how important camp is, to help them develop their confidence and independence? It might be helpful to let them know that we believe in them, that we know that they can get through this. And they can get through it. It might also be helpful for us to be tough as parents, to help our kids learn to be tough.

I love being part of this community and seeing you amazing parents helping your kids to grow and achieve, pushing them to be their best.

Thanks for all your continued support,
Andy McNeilly
Mental Health and Wellbeing Coordinator

