SOCIAL WORKER NEWS:

Something for you to think about as you launch into another action filled school year!

Occasionally your child will have a problem with another child. Children need to LEARN to get along. No one gets it right the first time and no one gets it right all the time. Children also watch and learn from the adults around them. They will be watching, learning and copying how you get along with people. Children also need to learn to cope with the realities of living and working alongside “not so nice people”. We have to foster the development of their skills to be resilient, bounce back and cope in the world. Protecting them all the time does not help.

If your child has a problem with another child:
- Listen to their concerns
- Avoid the temptation to make comments and suggestions
- Ask what they think they could do
- Don't rush in to solve the problem. Children need to learn to solve their problems with your help
- Avoid approaching the parents of the children concerned – these are children’s issues and are generally best dealt with by children
- Let your child have a go at sorting out the problem
- Seek support from the teacher or Social Worker if required

If you have a problem with another parent it will help to be mindful of the following. Parents are naturally protective of their own children. You love your children so much that sometimes it is hard to see beyond that. When speaking with your children you generally only get one side of the story and you always get your child’s view of the story. We need to remember that there are always two sides to the story and your child’s view may not always be the accurate or fully informed view. Similarly it may be that your child was wronged today but more than likely they will wrong someone the following day. No one is perfect!

Our children are an emotive topic and sometimes it is very difficult to speak without being emotive, protective and defensive and sometimes it is a little difficult to take the blinkers off. Therefore it is important to:
- Think very carefully before approaching another parent. You may not have all the facts and you may be too close to the situation or too emotional to speak in a productive manner.
- Remember that the parent you are trying to talk to will also be emotional and protective and defensive so sometimes you may be asking for trouble!
- Plan what you want to say – does anything need to be said at all
- Don’t be accusatory and judgemental
- Find a private place to talk when you both have time.
- Don’t speak while children are present, even little children
- Don’t share your concerns with other parents. We all have the right to some privacy and it is our responsibility to respect that
- Make an appointment to speak with the Principal, teacher or Social Worker if you require assistance.

Hopefully these thoughts and suggestions will be helpful. Please remember that I am available to support parents as well as children. You can reach me via the front office, by phone or via email on mahon.elaine@cathednet.wa.edu.au

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Available Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays