



ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE HUNTERS HILL

YEAR 11

11/09/2018

Good Evening Year 11 Parents and Carers,

With the exams now upon us, the boys have certainly taken things up a notch and are working very well. Certainly as a vast majority, they seem very settled and many staff have commented how they appear to be getting on with things and simply 'doing what they have to' with little fuss or fanfare which is incredibly pleasing. With 8 days of exams, 3 days on retreat and a HSC Transition day to follow, the boys will be finished Term 3 in no time and will be home sweet home with you before you know it.

Our boys at the moment are demonstrating a full gamut of emotions. We have boys shining brightly without a worry in the world, some lazing in the warm spring sun, and many simply getting on with the same enthusiasm and positive energy that we have seen all year. Whilst nothing is going wrong, little bouts of stress are appearing with some boys worrying about will I cope with the exams (tomorrow) and what subject(s) will I drop etc?

Please be assured, all very normal, but for some of our boys, the end of the world. They need reassurance and to be listened to, repeating back to them their own logical conclusion. This helps keep our boys looking at the positives and helping them to re-focus, maintain or re-kindle the work ethic that has sustained them in the past and certainly in the future.

On Wednesday, we spoke to the boys about the process of the important role in the College of Dormitory Seniors. This group of 14 boys helps assist the Boarding Staff in the supervision of the Years 7 – 10 Dorms, providing them with wonderful leadership opportunities. Brother Anthony Boyd spoke about the history behind Dorm Seniors and its role. The boys are invited to nominate firstly and I must tell you, I have been pleased with the number of boys who have already nominated. This is a truly outstanding sign of the commitment our boys have to their College. Unfortunately, many of them will miss out but their generosity and commitment from the very outset deserves high praise. The selection process will commence throughout the next couple of weeks.

There is a famous quote by Henry Ford that says, ***"The harder you work, the luckier you get"***. As we reflect on the term and year so far, and approach the end of Term 3, it is a good time to consider the meaning of his words. So



many of our young men work hard each and every day, not just prior to exams or assessments, but every minute of every day. They sometimes go unnoticed but they are the ones who reap the rewards and benefits. They are the ones who learn the lesson of hard work and dedication.

Here at Joeys, one of the things we value is our young men making a 'contribution'. We put a value on academics, sport, co-curricular, spiritual faith and so on. Whilst we put importance on academics and on being scholarly, it goes beyond the achievement of top grades, to the formation of a good work ethic and the development of life habits and skills. As I have mentioned earlier in the year, we have been working on the resilience and determination / tenacity of our young men. I spoke about it again last Wednesday in our division meeting and we all agreed that one of our goals is to finish the year as more resilient and persistent young men.

One thing that I consistently remind our boys about is the need for them to make their own decisions and not be 'led' or poorly influenced by those around them. It is an area this cohort has gotten a lot better at yet like all teenagers; they have some distance to go and must constantly work at it. If it were easy to do, then everyone would do it!


In recent times, I have been reading about independent learning, the role that peer tutoring and collaboration play in adolescent learning and also some information on 'peer pressure' and adolescents / teenagers. Whilst plenty of the material is common sense and information we are all aware of, I was struck by a piece I read some time back from the Wall Street Journal and the thing that struck me the most was it also highlighted that peer pressure can be a positive thing and have encouraging outcomes. As is sometimes easy to do, we tend to focus on the negatives and shut out all other options. Some of the main points I summarised from this article were;

- facing the influence of friends represents an important developmental step for teens on their way to becoming independent-thinking adults
- both peer pressure and learning to resist it are important developmental steps to self-reliance
- a growing body of work seems to show that teens are able to make decisions as well as adults when they are not emotionally worked up
- the ability to make decisions when emotional—and peer pressure often induces emotion—isn't at full strength in the teenage years.
- Parents can also help their children anticipate situations of peer pressure, like declining alcohol at a party, and go over strategies to help a child save face while still avoiding an activity.


One for the diary, the Semi-Formal will be held at the College on November 9th and I have been finalising details for the evening. We will need to have about 20/30 parents to help set up during the day and 20/30 parents helping out on the night, so if you could keep that night free and volunteer some time it would help with the smooth running of the evening and make it a really special occasion for our boys. Once the semi-formal is underway, you can sit back and relax and enjoy an informal get-together with pizza and a glass of wine.



Travel bookings for Term 3 have now closed. All boys will be free to leave for Term 3 holidays on Thursday September 27th.



Retreat starts next Sunday 23rd September. Buses leave Joeys at 12.30pm sharp and return Tuesday afternoon for sport.



AAGPS Athletics next Saturday (22nd)
All boys to be here at the College by 8.30am.
Rally starts at 5.30pm – should conclude by 6.30pm
Boys to be in full blues – all boys must have a hat