It’s almost that time when students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 sit NAPLAN tests. There are always mixed feelings and reactions from students, parents and teachers when NAPLAN is mentioned. In a study conducted through the University of Queensland, it was revealed that negative responses to the tests were most prevalent among Year 7 students. Within this context the Year 7 students did not see the purpose of the tests.

A significant proportion of Year 3 students identified positive emotions during NAPLAN, although the most significant emotions identified by students were negative. While NAPLAN was not designed as a high-stakes test, it is having an impact on some of our children. The overwhelming emotion throughout the study was negative, which can then have a detrimental impact on children’s health and wellbeing.

I have one child who loves sitting NAPLAN tests and another one who dislikes it intensely. The NAPLAN tests are here to stay as far as we can see, so what can we do to impact our children in a positive way? It’s important for schools, teachers, parents and students to remember that NAPLAN testing provides point-in-time information regarding student progress. The results are only one aspect of a child’s capabilities and merely complement teacher judgement and the existing range of informal and formal assessment in the school. Students should not be worried about sitting NAPLAN tests and they shouldn’t be disheartened or discouraged by their results. Encourage your child to see NAPLAN as a learning experience and a hands-on experience in preparing for taking exams.

Fiona Baker identifies 9 tips for parents to help their children:

1. ‘Being there’ emotionally
   During times of stress, children need extra understanding and nurturing from their parents and carers to help them feel safe and secure.
2. Discuss feelings
   Encourage your child to talk about how they are feeling as this can help them manage it.
3. Support children’s confidence
   Encourage your child to ‘have a go’ even if they are feeling nervous as this will help them to feel confident in approaching assessments.
4. Help with relaxation skills
   Encourage your child to breathe slowly to calm down and help them to imagine coping well during a test. This will help with managing anxiety.
5. Teach helpful thinking
   Encourage your child to say “I’ll give this a go” instead of “I can’t do this”.
6. Lead by example
   Be an example to your child by sharing your thinking out loud, eg. “I’m feeling a bit nervous, but I’m going to do my best.”
7. Help your child have clear expectations
   Discuss with your child what will happen, where the test will take place, there’ll be a time limit, and it’ll be under test conditions.
8. Discuss problem-solving
   Brainstorm situations that may arise during the test and come up with some possible solutions with them.
9. Teach confidence-building tricks
   As an example, have a look through the test and complete the questions that they know first before trying the difficult ones.

Nathan Hill
Assistant Head of Primary / Leading Learning Team
NAPLAN Volunteer Readers Needed!
If you are able to volunteer as a reader for the NAPLAN Numeracy Assessment next Thursday, May 11 between 9.00 am and 10.30 am, Mrs Karen Price our Student Advocate would love to hear from you! Please contact Karen by email kprice@avondaleschool.nsw.edu.au or phone 4977 0200.

Kindy Terrific Tie Day

HRIS Cross Country
The HRIS Cross Country was held this week at Avondale College on a dry and fast course. Our students were very eager to run and those who had put in the extra training were excited about trying to make it through to CIS. The 8 year boys and girls led the way in the first events by achieving the best team results of the day coming 2nd and 1st respectively. Overall our 8 year and 10 year girls won their age team events. Our 8 year and 11 year boys came 2nd in their team events.

There were 80 runners in each age group so to come in the top two places is quite an achievement. Medallions were presented to the Age Champion and ribbons to 2nd and 3rd places. Congratulations to the following champions:

**8 year girls**
- 1st Siena C
- 2nd Kayela H

**8 year boys**
- 2nd Max T

**10 year girls**
- 1st Joelle C

**12 year boys**
- 1st Luke P

The whole team ran their best and were awarded 1st place for the best performing school.

1st 1751pts Avondale School
2nd 1721pts Hunter Valley Grammar School
3rd 1674pts Macquarie College
4th 1589pts Central Coast Adventist School
5th 1588pts Calrossy Anglican School

The full results will be out early next week. The top 15 places from 9-12 years will proceed to CIS in Sydney on June 15.

NOTE: Please return all running singlets to Mr Head on Monday.
Poetry In Action
On Tuesday morning Year 7 and 8 students had the privilege of watching a live poetry performance in the Music Building. The Poetry In ‘Action’ theatre group operates out of Sydney and offers dynamic and engaging performances for school students that present poetry as an experience. Our students were laughing and shrieking as the dramatic story of ‘The Paper Tiger’ unfolded in which a zombie apocalypse was taking over the creativity and poetic capabilities of the human race. Students watched on as the two main characters discovered the five basic components of poetry to defeat the masterminding Paper Tiger - they even called on some unsuspecting audience members! It was a fantastic performance that was thoroughly enjoyed by the students and staff.

HRIS Soccer
Fourteen boys with Mr Mario Cabrera, our unofficial coach/advisor, and Mr Young, our soccer team manager, made an early start to Adamstown Oval for the annual Open Boys HRIS Soccer competition on Monday. The boys played some brilliant football and managed to secure three wins as well as three unfortunate losses. We were blessed with perfect weather for some fun in the sun. Overall it was an enjoyable education outside the classroom event on the importance of teamwork, cooperation and riding the highs and lows of life. Unfortunately, we had too much fun to remember to take any photos! Twelve eager girls led by Paige F as their Captain, went to Stevenson Park to play in the Open Girls HRIS Soccer. The girls kicked off the day by winning their first game, followed by two losses and then two draws that were decided by penalty shoot-outs. The girls contested every ball and played the last two games without substitution.

Avondale School is proud and blessed to have such willing and able students who are able to represent our school with skill, sportsmanship and determination.

Take the career test that could change your life
Our test will help you choose senior subjects and the best training and education for your career path. Includes a comprehensive careers assessment, results, workbook and debrief.
Register at: www.careeroptions.net.au/sf

Call Rachel at Career Options 0405 383 210
Book Fair and Book Week 2017
In the past we’ve held our Book Fair during Book Week. This year, for the first time, we are moving the Book Fair away from Book Week so that we can better concentrate on each event to make them both memorable events.

Book Fair – May 22 - May 24
Our annual library fundraiser Book Fair will be held in the iCentre from Monday, May 22 through to Wednesday, May 24.
- We will be selling new books from Scholastic, Central Book Suppliers and children’s Bibles from Better Books and Food.
- BOOK FAIR OPENING HOURS
  Monday 9.15 am – 4.00 pm
  Tuesday 8.00 am – 4.00 pm
  Wednesday 8.00 am – 4.00 pm
- Library classes and borrowing will run as normal and students will be able to come, browse and buy books at the Book Fair before school, recess and lunchtime and after school with a parent. All parents and friends of the school are welcome to attend.

Book Week – August 21 to August 25
Our annual Book Week activities will be held from Monday, August 21 through to Friday, August 25.
- There will be quizzes, competitions, storytellers and other fun book-related activities.
- Library classes and borrowing will run as normal.
- Our biennial K-6 Book Character Parade will be held from 9.00 am in the MPC on Thursday, August 24. All parents and friends of the school are welcome to attend. Start thinking about your costumes now!
- More details will follow closer to the date.

Fee Reminder
Just a reminder that school fee accounts are required to be paid by the first week of the term. Thank you for those payments, it’s greatly appreciated. For those on payment plans, please continue with your regular payment and ensure these continue throughout your school holiday period. Your payments help us keep a cash flow which is vital to operations of your school. We have a lot of events happening during Term 2 which your children will appreciate. If you need assistance with any finance questions, please contact Faye or Sheree at your convenience and we will be happy to assist you.

School Photo Day – Tuesday, May 16
School Photos will be held at school on Tuesday, May 16. Photo order envelopes are being sent home with students TODAY. Inside the envelope there are instructions on how to make your purchase.
No envelope, no worries! Order online at www.advancedlife.com.au by using the code 7LJ 86X 7GD.
Please note: School photos purchased online DO NOT require envelopes to be returned to school. Family photo order forms are available from both Primary and Secondary Offices.

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