Dear Parents/Carers and Grandparents,

This week is NAPLAN testing for all students in Year 3, Year 5, Year 7 and Year 9 all around Australia. There is always a lot of discussion about the benefits of NAPLAN testing and everyone has a different perspective. However, I believe it is vital to know how our students are developing in their literacy and numeracy skills compared to other students in Year 3 and Year 5 around Australia. Some of the alarming statistics associated with illiteracy are:

- Illiteracy costs the global economy more than USD $1 trillion dollars every year
- More than 796 million people in the world cannot read and write
- Illiterate people earn about 42% less than literate people
- In various countries, including Australia, estimates show that 80% of prisoners have reading and writing skills well below basic levels
- Amongst juvenile delinquents, up to 85% are functionally illiterate.

These are the reasons why our teachers and tutors are passionate to work in partnership with parents and students to ensure that students leaving Gray School have used every opportunity to reach their full potential in literacy and numeracy.

We are very fortunate to have the US Marines once again working with our students on a number of special projects. Ms Modoh’s class have had the Marines working in the class helping them with Literacy and Numeracy and they are going to create a wonderful garden between the Admin block and the play equipment. Miss Stewart’s class have had them helping create scrap books as part of their wellbeing unit and this term Ms Rummery’s class have been learning about the states, territories and capital cities of both Australia and the USA during their library time. This has turned out to be a competition between the students and the Marines!

Sayonara—Sue Beynon, Principal and Sharon Chin, Assistant Principal
**WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

This term every grade within the school has a target to strive for in attendance. The table below shows what each grade’s average attendance was for Term 1, what their target is for Term 2 and what their average attendance is for the first four weeks of Term 2. As you can see our Early Years grades are tracking below their target. This is significant as this is where all the foundations of learning English and Maths are done. If children are missing a lot of schooling in these early years they will well and truly fall behind their peers and then it becomes incredibly hard for them to catch up. Please help us to help your child by ensuring they are at school every day so they can learn and achieve to their very best. The department requires children to be at school 90% of the time—this means only five (5) days absent in a term.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Average attendance for Term 1</th>
<th>Target for Term 2</th>
<th>Average for the first four weeks of Term 2</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Tracking well below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>Tracking below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>Tracking below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>Tracking below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>TRACKING ABOVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>ON TARGET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>93.5%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Tracking below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
<td>91.5%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>TRACKING ABOVE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Reading is as Easy as 1 2 3**

Gray Primary School and The Smith Family are offering free sessions to help you teach your child to read.

**COME ALONG and JOIN IN THE FUN OF READING**

- Morning tea provided
- Free kids books and library ball
- Little children welcome
- Learn about teaching your kids how to read, write, listen and speak
- Bear Hunt with your kids on week 3

Reading is a Family Affair

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**Save this Date**

Wednesday 21st May 11am

Gray Primary School

Assembly Hall

National Simultaneous Storytime

‘Too Many Elephants in This House’
Wild Thingz came to visit the Preschool

Some children were happy to hold and pat the animals while ... others were not so sure!
**Good Beginnings Play Groups 2014**

**Play2Learn Groups**

**MONDAY:** 9 - 11am A supported playgroup for families with children 0 – 4 yrs  
Venue: Good Beginnings Centre, Gray Primary School  
Victoria Drive, Gray  
(Please bring a piece of fruit to share)

**TUESDAY:** 9 - 11am A supported playgroup for families with children 0 – 4 yrs  
Venue: Driver Resource Centre Driver Primary School, Driver Avenue Driver  
(Please bring a piece of fruit to share)

**Play2Learn Baby Group**

**WEDNESDAY:** 9 - 11am A supported playgroup specifically for parents with infants up to 12 months. This group is delivered in conjunction with a Maternal Health Nurse.  
Venue: Good Beginnings Centre, Gray Primary School  
Victoria Drive Gray.  
(Morning tea provided)

**Palmerston Toy Library**

**MONDAY:** 9 -11am Alternate between Danila Dilba, Rolyat Street Palmerston and Palmerston Indigenous Village (PIV) Stuart Highway Howard Springs.  
**THURSDAY:** 10 – 12pm The Palmerston Toy Library aims to provide a service to families and children in the Palmerston area, by providing a mobile, outreach support service.  
Parents will be able to borrow toys from a mobile toy library that operates from Salvation Hall, Woodroffe Avenue, Woodroffe.

All Good Beginnings programs are provided free of charge  
For more information please call  
Office: 08-8932 7022 Mobile: 0417 200 170  
www.goodbeginnings.org.au

All Good Beginnings programs are provided free of charge  
For more information please contact the office on 0889327022 Mobile 0417200170

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**Celebrating Mother’s Day**

Please join us in the staffroom on Friday morning (16th May) following assembly for a morning tea in celebration of Mother’s Day.  
We hope you can join us for a relaxing morning

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**Check out Gray Primary School on the web**

http://www.grayprimary.nt.edu.au/

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**ANZAC Assembly at Gray**

**Monday 28 April 2014**  
Gorman Richard Yundan was our special guest and shared his thoughts of ANZAC Day  
Remember our diggers  
25th April  

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**The Ode**

They went not far and we are all left here still  
Age shall not weary them nor the passing years  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them  
All we will remember them  
Let us not forget  
Let us not forget
National Families Week

'Stronger Families, Stronger Communities'

Gray Primary School and Somerville Community Services invite you and your family to join us to celebrate National Families Week.

What: Friday Family Fun Day
When: Friday 23rd May
Time: 7:30am – 8:30am
Where: Gray Primary School

Fun Family Activities and games for all ages
Arts and Crafts
Prizes to be won!
Join us for a delicious breakfast!

National Families Week is a time to celebrate with your family, make contact with your extended family and friends, and share in the enjoyment of family activities within the wider community. It is a time to celebrate the meaning of family and to make the most of family life.

Somerville
the courage to be…
Access to Mathletics and Reading Eggs at the Family Centre

Are you wondering what Mathletics and Reading Eggs are, but don’t have access to the internet at home?

Each Monday and Tuesday from 2:30 – 3:10pm Ipads will be available for parents/carers and students to access these programs. We will show you how to access and use the Apps at your pace. Please feel free to drop in and have a look.

This is a 10 week trial and students must be accompanied by an adult. Please see the Family Centre for further information.

Good Beginnings Families Week

Tuesday 20th May 9am - 11am
Driver Resource Centre
Driver Avenue
Driver

‘Stronger Families, Stronger Communities’
‘In the Night Sky’

*Morning tea provided - fresh fruit, yoghurt and juice

NATIONAL SIGN ON DAY

Saturday 24th May - 9:00am - 12:00pm
AT
Satellite City BMX Club
Elrundie Ave Marlow Lagoon
Palmerston

VISIT www.satellitecitybmxclub.com
FOR MORE INFORMATION
Working together as a family

Discussing things as a family is often very helpful for dealing with concerns and negotiating solutions to conflicts before they get bigger.

- Talking together provides an opportunity to clarify roles and expectations
- Be sure to talk about what is working well in family relationships and not just the difficulties.
- Build trust in family discussions by respecting and listening to everyone’s views without judging or putting them down.
- Encourage children as well as adults to hear and understand each other’s views and needs.

Discussing things as a family can encourage children as well as adults to solve problems creatively. For example, once he understands that Tina just wants him to play with her, 12-year-old Luke might negotiate to spend a half-hour playing with her after dinner in exchange for her giving him uninterrupted time to get on with his homework. Having a chance to express needs in positive ways encourages healthy communication, support and cooperation.

Things to discuss

- Set up chores roster
- Tina wants to play more
- Luke wants space when he has to do schoolwork
- Dad (Robert) wants more hellos and hugs

Listening and talking

It is easier for others to listen and accept your point of view when the way you say it communicates respect and care. For example, Robert could say to Luke, “I know you had to get your science project done but I still want you to say ‘hello’ when I come home.” This shows that Robert understands Luke’s position, and wants Luke to understand his.

Small things, like saying, “How was your day?” and really listening to the answer, make a difference to the quality of communication in families. Saying sorry when you make a mistake or hurt someone’s feelings is also really important.

Ways to build caring family relationships

- Show affection (eg hugs and kisses)
- Offer help and support
- Do fun things and laugh together
- Make time to talk
- Really listen to each other

This resource is part of a range of KidsMatter Primary information sheets for families and school staff. View them all online at www.kidsmatter.edu.au
Happy families work together

“Dad, will you tell Tina not to come into my room?” Twelve-year-old Luke was complaining about his six-year-old sister. Luke’s Dad, Robert, had only just got home and was still hanging up his coat. “Dad! She’s bugging me!” called Luke as he led Tina by the hand into the lounge room. “A ‘hello’ would be nice,” said Robert. “Yeah, hi. I’m trying to do my science project. I need my space,” Luke replied. “Tina, how about you stay out here with me?” Robert suggested. Tina was not very keen on this idea. “But I want to play and you’ll be too busy,” she whined. “Here we go again”, thought Robert. “If only we all got on better.”

Managing family relationships so that everyone’s most important needs get met can be hard work. All families have times when tempers get frayed, feelings get hurt and misunderstandings occur. Maintaining positive connections when these things happen requires good communication and creative management.

Effective communication means that everyone has a say and is listened to. This can be a challenge in busy families. Pressure to get things done can mean there seems to be little ‘quality time’ for talking and listening to each other. Whether or not time is a problem, negative styles of communication often undermine relationships. This occurs, for example, when family members speak to each other disrespectfully or use put-downs.

Building positive family relationships does not mean having no conflict. Dealing with conflicts positively, as well as making time to relax and do fun things together, help to strengthen family relationships.

Set the tone for positive communication

Research on communication in families shows the importance of parents and carers communicating warmth and caring and also setting clear expectations for children’s behaviour. Making time for family members, communicating effectively and supporting each other are important ways of strengthening families and building positive relationships.

Parents and carers can set a positive tone for communication through their own example. The way you listen, and the attention and importance you give to what family members say, is as important as what you say to them and how you say it. This may not always be easy, especially when you are tired or busy and have to deal with complaining or conflict. However, listening and acknowledging others’ feelings and wants helps to reduce conflict and improves communication.