

St Joseph's School



Millar Street, Waroona, Western Australia

PO Box 129, Waroona WA 6215

Telephone: (08) 9782 6500



10th September, 2019

Dear parents/carers

I invite you to read this letter and ask you to consider if your child would benefit from being in the Seasons for Growth program that I will lead during Terms 3 and 4. I have also asked teachers to give thought to students whom they think would benefit from this program. You will be asked if you agree to your child's participation.

This Seasons for Growth program will start in Week 9 of Term 3 and finish in Week 8 or 9 of Term 4. Students who have been in groups from the last two years are welcome to repeat the program.

Your child may be unable to concentrate on school activities or is not socializing because they are distracted/worried by thoughts about one or more of the issues mentioned below. They may be wanting to talk to you or one of the teachers about how they are feeling.

What does the program do?

- Supports young children to better understand and respond to issues experienced as a result of: a death in the family (4 to 6 months after), separation of family members, divorce, fly in-fly out parent, moving school, a new member joining the family, illness in the family, the child returning to school after a long illness/injury
- Assists young children to understand that their feelings and reactions are normal
- Develops skills for coping, problem solving and decision making
- Builds a peer support network even though students and teachers do not have to know the circumstances
- Helps to restore self-confidence and self-esteem
- Educates participants about the resulting grieving process.

Note 1: This gentle educative program is not for students who are currently under the care of a psychiatrist, psychologist or counsellor. This is not a “feel good” group; it assists the students to develop skills.

Note 2: No one needs to know the reason a student joins this program; this means that I do not have to know the reason and neither do the other participants have to know. As the child’s parent/carer, you usually know the reason your child is worried.

The Seasons for Growth program uses the metaphors of the seasons to provide a concrete way of engaging with the more abstract experience of loss and grief. The program begins with autumn when the world around is changing and slowing down and ends with summer when it is holiday time.

The privacy and safety of the children is covered by a code of conduct that I discuss with them. I have spoken with other Seasons for Growth leaders and they said that the children respect that we are all in this together and do not tell other people about anyone else in the group. Your child is free to speak to you about his/her own experiences in the sessions.

The children will be given a private journal to work through. I will vary session times so that students do not miss the same class lesson each week. During each 40 minutes session, the children will use a range of activities – writing, drawing, singing/listening to music, discussion, role play, meditation/reflecting and journaling. The participants are grouped in similar ages.

Please return the permission slip to me by Thursday, 12th September if you would like your child to participate. I will call to speak with you about any of your concerns once the permission slip is returned to me.

I am available at school on 97826500 or in person (8.00 am – 9.00 am) and after school (Tues and Thurs) if you would like to find out more about the program.

Regards

Jan Young – Seasons for Growth leader, St Joseph's School



Please return to Mrs Young in a sealed envelope by Thursday 12th September, 2019.

I wish for my child _____ to participate in the Term 3-4 *Seasons for Growth* program. I understand that I can withdraw my child at any time. The program will begin in Week 9 of this term.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Contact name: _____ Contact number: _____