

Values Education at Mackay West State School

By Linda Brown – Head of Special Education Services

I officially launched values education in our school this week as it ties in nicely with Harmony Day on the 21 March. Each Monday at assembly we will have a value stated, along with a rhyme to remember, a weekly challenge and a task for the class to complete.

I began the week by adding a little drama. I convinced one of the Teacher Aides and a few teachers to assist me. One of the school captains announced for the Teacher Aide and me to come up on stage, the Teacher Aide tripped and fell on the stairs and I started getting very cranky with her. (It was all part of the act but no-one but the pre-primed people knew!) As the Principal and another teacher rushed to her aid and I told them crossly to 'leave her there!' then others started to realise what was going on.

I told the Teacher Aide to stop being silly and get up, that she was wasting everyone's time and that I really needed to talk to the children about values. A few teachers also walked past her saying things like, 'How embarrassing!', 'You're wasting our time!', and 'I really don't have time to help you'. A teacher from the audience then called out to me that I really should be showing some care and compassion. I then apologised and we helped the Teacher Aide to a chair. The kids had caught on by now of course and were all giggling and gave her a great round of applause. It went down really, really well!

I then explained that it had all been an act but that one of our students had experienced something similar recently. On his way home from school he had helped a man who had fallen. Other people had just walked past but this boy had showed care and compassion by stopping to help. I commended him and all of them on the care and compassion that they show each other and said how proud I was to be part of such a school.

I then taught them a rhyme to remember the value, gave them the weekly challenge and asked each class to put together a list of ideas for how they can show care and compassion at school.

The kids are all really excited and keep saying that I should be ashamed of myself – then they giggle – most had never heard me raise my voice before or seen the Teacher Aide do drama! Overall, everyone seems to be very motivated about incorporating values education into the school.

I've attached the rhymes and weekly challenges and am happy for these to be shared.

VALUES EDUCATION RHYMES TO REMEMBER

1. Care and Compassion

To show care for ourselves and others too
This is what we should always do.

2. Doing Your Best

We should try really hard to do something great each day
And then finish it off in an excellent way
(Because at Mackay West – we always do our best!)

3. Fair Go

We should think about everyone here at Mackay West
When we decide what is fair and what is best.

4. Freedom

We live in Australia so let's all rejoice
That in our lives we get to have choice.

5. Honesty and Trustworthiness

It's really important to tell the truth and be honest
And to keep our word when we make a promise.

6. Integrity

We need to say what we mean and mean what we say
But we should never say anything in a mean way.

7. Respect

When we're working with others we should think of them too
And consider how they feel from their point of view.

8. Responsibility

We are responsible for what we do and what we say
Because we all play a part where we work and where we play.

9. Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion

Although we have differences, in many ways we're the same
So we should be understanding and not just lay blame.

VALUES EDUCATION CHALLENGES

1. Care and Compassion

- Your challenge for this week is to act safely all the time to show that you care for yourself and other people.
- Your challenge for this week is to do something nice for someone without them knowing who did it.
- Your challenge for this week is to let someone else have their turn first.
- Your challenge for this week is to help someone before they ask you to.

2. Doing Your Best

- Your challenge for this week is to rate yourself on effort at the end of each session – try to put in more effort each day.
- Your challenge for this week is to set a goal and then write down all the steps you need to take to achieve it.

3. Fair Go

- Your challenge for this week is to let someone else have their turn before you.

4. Freedom

- Your challenge for this week is to think carefully each time you have a choice and make sure you make a good one.

5. Honesty and Trustworthiness

- Your challenge for this week is to always speak the truth.
- Your challenge for this week is to research the truth about

6. Integrity

- Your challenge for this week is to use kind words. Don't let one nasty thing come out of your mouth.

7. Respect

- Your challenge for this week is to brainstorm how would feel when (a particular situation).
- Your challenge for this week is to work in a group with someone that you usually wouldn't work with.
- Your challenge for this week is to ask someone to explain if they disagree with you rather than get angry with them.

8. Responsibility

- Your challenge for this week is to act responsibly by keeping your eating area tidy.
- Your challenge for this week is to do what is asked straight away without any reminders.

9. Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion

- Your challenge for this week is to look for people who don't have anyone to play with and ask them if they'd like to join in with your friends.