KidsMatter ambassador Tracey Spicer launches Starting School campaign

KidsMatter’s Starting School campaign allows parents to access more support for children starting school in 2014.

Research suggests that while many children make a smooth transition to primary school, about one in seven can experience difficulties such as separation anxiety and a reluctance to go to school. If not addressed, these problems can have ongoing academic and social implications for children in the future.

The Starting School resources, comprising a series of online videos and easy-to-read information sheets, will help children transition successfully from home or an early childhood setting to primary school.

The videos are hosted by broadcaster, writer and mum to eight-year-old Taj and seven-year-old Grace, Tracey Spicer. She says the resources help parents to prepare children for the best possible start to primary school.

"Knowledge is power and information helps parents feel more comfortable about what can be an incredibly stressful time," said Tracey. "The KidsMatter Starting School resources help parents to feel more empowered about sending their kids to school. As a parent, if you’re more relaxed, the kids pick up on that so they’re more relaxed to start off with as well."

Early preparation is important as helping children transition successfully to primary school is a process that starts well before the first day of term.

“Thinking about and preparing for the changes starting school will bring for your child and family lays the foundation for a positive start to school,” said KidsMatter psychologist, Marie Hirst.

“In the months before school begins it can be really helpful to start thinking about what routines need to be put in place, what your child might need to feel comfortable and what you need to discuss with the school."

And Tracey’s advice to parents after dropping their child off on the first day of school?

"Feel free to cry because when I burst into tears in the car park all of these other parents who I didn’t know came over and hugged me. It was a really nice way to meet other parents, so don’t feel ashamed or embarrassed about crying!"
Families play an important role in supporting children to manage the transition to primary school. The resources below will give you practical ideas and strategies to help your child make a successful start to school. You will be able to watch a series of KidsMatter videos, as well as access information sheets and other practical resources.

To get the most out of the videos it can be helpful to watch them in sequence (1-6) or you might prefer to choose the ones most relevant to you.

- Thinking about transition to school (video 1)
- Getting ready for school (video 2)
- Understanding behaviour (video 3)
- Problem solving (video 4)
- Coping skills (video 5)
- A change for the whole family (video 6)
- Getting help when starting school
- Children's activity books

Karen Crimmins
Student Wellbeing Leader