SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

At Saint Martin of Tours all children from Prep-Grade 6 are involved in a Social and emotional Learning Program called Bounce Back. ‘Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process of acquiring the skills to recognise and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, and handle challenging situations effectively.’

Social and Emotional Learning

- Promotes positive mental health
- Is a protective factor for mental health difficulties
- Is relevant to schools and school staff:
  - children’s academic learning
  - classroom management
- There is growing interest in SEL internationally and nationally

Relevance of SEL to schools

- Social and emotional competence is linked to:
  - improved academic motivation and achievement
  - increased engagement with learning
  - increased pro-social behaviour
  - reductions in problem behaviour
  - greater job satisfaction for staff
  - long-term success

- SEL is coherent with education policy and curriculum objectives

Social and emotional competencies are self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, responsible decision making and relationship skills.
Parent Information: Introduction to BOUNCE BACK!

If you are resilient you are able to cope reasonably well with difficult situations and things that go wrong and then ‘bounce back’. Throughout life children will need skills and attitudes to help them to bounce back. They will encounter everyday challenges such as making mistakes, falling out with a friend, moving house or school and losing in a sports competition. Many will also face challenges such as adapting to family breakdowns, a step-family, the illness or death of a family member, or being bullied.

The BOUNCE BACK! Wellbeing and Resilience program teaches children the skills and attitudes to help them become more resilient. It uses literature as a starting point for discussions and follow-up activities. These ten coping statements are a core part of the program.

BOUNCE BACK! stands for:

- Bad times don’t last. Things always get better. Stay optimistic.
- Other people can help if you talk to them. Get a reality check.
- Unhelpful thinking makes you feel more upset. Think again.
- Nobody is perfect—not you and not others.
- Concentrate on the positives (no matter how small) and use laughter.
- Everybody experiences sadness, failure, rejection and setbacks sometimes, not just you. They are a normal part of life. Try not to personalise them.

BOUNCE BACK stands for:

- Blame fairly. How much of what happened was due to you, to others and to bad luck or circumstances?
- Accept what can’t be changed (but try to change what you can change first).
- Catastrophising exaggerates your worries. Don’t believe the worst possible picture.
- Keep things in perspective. It’s only part of your life.

The program can help your child to get better at:
- Using helpful thinking when faced with a problem or a difficult situation
- Thinking more optimistically, i.e. expecting bad times to get better
- Understanding that everyone has setbacks and difficulties, not just them
- Talking to people they trust so they get a reality check on their thinking
- Being brave and facing their fears
- Managing strong emotions and turning a bad mood into a good mood
- Getting along with others and cooperating
- Setting goals, being resourceful and not easily giving up
- Being kind, fair, honest, friendly, responsible, and accepting of differences
- Respecting other people and not bullying others.

You can help your child get the best out of their involvement with Bounce Back! if you reinforce the key messages they are learning.
Our term one topic is Core Values.

**Parent Information: Core values**

Our values are statements about how we think we should behave and what we believe is important. Our values are our moral map, which guide our behaviour and actions. The following values are taught in the BOUNCE BACK! program. Acting on these values can increase your child’s sense of being a decent, worthwhile person and help them to be more resilient.

**Key messages to communicate to your child about values**

**Your values are easy to talk about but harder to act on**

The real test is whether you still follow your personal values when it is inconvenient for you or when there might be possible unpleasant or uncomfortable outcomes for you. Nobody is perfect, but it’s important to try and live by your values even though you may not always succeed as well as you would like. Keep trying to improve.

**Being honest**

Being honest means telling the truth and not stealing; it means giving things back when they belong to someone else and ‘owning up’ when you have done the wrong thing.

**Being fair**

Being fair means following the rules and not cheating; it means returning favours and kindnesses, and helping others to get justice and a fair deal.

**Being responsible**

Being responsible means not letting people down. It means doing the things that you have to do without being reminded. It also means choosing sensible behaviour instead of silly or unsafe behaviour.

**Being kind**

Being kind means caring about other people and their wellbeing, and showing support and thoughtfulness to others.

**Being cooperative**

Cooperating means working together with someone to achieve something that you both want. It requires sharing ideas and resources, listening, encouraging each other, making sure that both of you have a say, doing your share of the work, and making decisions together that are fair to both of you.
Accepting differences in other people
Everyone is different from you in some way and that’s OK. If you accept that other people are different (e.g. in where they come from, what they look like, what they like to eat or do, and in their opinions) then you get to know more people (and not just those who are similar to you), you include people who are different from you in games and conversation, and you don’t tease or exclude them.

Being friendly
Being friendly means being kind and welcoming to others and trying to include people (even if they are not your close friends or they are people who are sometimes hard to like). This means looking in their eyes and smiling, saying hello, being kind and inviting them to join in games and conversations. Being friendly towards strangers is not a good thing to do until you are very sure they are safe people.

Being respectful
Being respectful means treating others as you would like them to treat you. It means thinking about other people’s feelings and rights, being polite and using good manners, and not insulting or hurting others or their property. If you want people to respect your rights, then you have to respect their rights.

Showing self-respect
Self-respect means looking after yourself and standing up for yourself because you think you matter and should be treated well by others.

What can you do to help your child develop and live by good values?

- Give your child positive feedback when they act honestly (e.g. when they tell the truth, own up to what they have done, avoid the temptation to keep something that belongs to someone else, and when they try to identify who owns something they have found that doesn’t belong to them).
- Play age-appropriate board and card games with your children. This provides an opportunity for you to reinforce playing fairly by following the rules of a game and not cheating. Playing games with your children also provides an opportunity for them to practise social skills such as being a good winner and loser.
Help them to develop kindness and a sense of fairness towards others who are less fortunate than themselves. Model for them some ways to support others who are in need.

Encourage your child to appreciate and return the kindnesses and favours they receive from others.

Present different people’s points of view when talking problems through with your child. This helps them gain a sense of what’s fair for everyone involved.

Give your child regular chores and give them positive feedback when they do these without being reminded. Stress that people will trust and respect you more when you behave responsibly.

Model cooperative behaviours for your child by working with them on a project (e.g. building a model) or task (e.g. tidying up the garage). Comment on how and why things went well (e.g. you both did a good share of the work, each did the part they were good at and each respected what the other person did).

Provide opportunities for your child to socialise with their extended family, neighbours and friends, and participate in community groups such as clubs and sporting teams. Emphasise the importance of being friendly and accepting differences in people and discuss with your child how they might do this in each situation. Show them by example too.

Never give up! Sometimes there is a ‘sleeper effect’ and values that your child didn’t seem to ‘take up’ at an earlier age pop up in their behaviour when they are older.