Dear Parents and Caregivers

Over the past two weeks I’ve spoken with a number of individual students, small groups, class groups, whole year levels and even the whole student body about behaviour expectations and the consequences of behaviour choices. In many instances, follow-up conversations with parents and teachers have taken place.

Understandably, children’s behaviour – their own or that of others - can be of great concern to parents. It is not uncommon for parents to become more stressed, upset or angry than the children involved, and when this happens, the situation tends to become more complicated. Nevertheless, there is always much to be learned, by everyone involved, from such circumstances.

I share this story about Choice and Consequence with you: ‘Five wise men got lost in the forest.’

The first one said:
- I will go left – my intuition tells me that.

The second one said:
- I will go right – there is a reason why right comes from the word ‘righteousness’.

The third one said:
- I will go back – we came from there, it means I will go out from the forest.

The fourth one said:
- I will go straight – we should move forward, the forest will end and something new will open.

The fifth said:
- You are all wrong. There is a better solution. Wait for me. He found the tallest tree and climbed into it. While he was climbing everyone else scattered towards their own sides. From above he saw where they should go to leave the forest faster. Now he could even see in what order the other wise men would reach the end of the forest. He climbed higher and saw the shortest way. He understood the problem and found the best solution! He knew that he did everything right. And the others were wrong. They were stubborn and they didn’t listen to him. He was the real Wise Man!

But he was wrong.

Everyone was right. The one who went left, found himself in the thicket. He had to starve and fight with wild animals. But he learned how to survive in the forest; he became a part of the forest and could teach others the same.

The one who went right, met thieves. They took everything from him and made him steal with them. But after some time, he had woken up something in those thieves that they had forgotten – humanity and compassion. The remorse was so strong in some of them, that they also became wise men.

The one who went back, made a pathway through the forest, which soon became a road for those who wanted to walk in the forest without being afraid of getting lost.

The one who went straight, became a pioneer. He visited new places and opened wonderful new possibilities for people, amazing healing plants and magnificent animals.

The one who climbed into the tree, became a specialist at finding shortcuts. People turned to him when they wanted to find the fastest way to deal with their problems, even if it didn’t lead to any great personal development.

This is how the five wise men reached their destiny.’

Briefly, this story illustrates a few of life’s realities. Stuff happens, decisions are made and certain consequences follow. Some choices are seen as ‘right’, some as ‘wrong’. Values are placed on choices made. If it is avoidable, responsibility may be denied or excuses made or the blame shifted to others. Even when the consequence is unavoidable, bemoaning the outcome or calling it unfair can follow. We learn little or nothing from the whole experience.

Children can be masters of this sort of self-deception. They also are pretty good at convincing parents that their versions of events are the true and accurate versions. This is not as outrageous as it sounds really. Children are like the rest of us. Who really wants to own up, tell the whole truth and potentially expose oneself to criticism and punishment and, what we believe, may be a lessening in the eyes of those we love? And yet that is exactly what is required in order to grow towards moral maturity and responsible adulthood.

It is the role of parents and teachers, then, to use wisdom and detachment to calmly get to the truth, have children own and take responsibility for their actions and to accept the consequence that follows. It is our role to help them learn from their choices. That’s what childhood is about – learning and growing into caring, responsible maturity. Over-protecting and defending children in such circumstances does not honour or assist their journey.

In the story, we are shown that each wise man made a choice and each suffered the consequence of that choice. The man who climbed the tree thought he was the wisest as he avoided the pitfalls that befell the others; however, it is not always those who pass trouble-free through childhood who are best prepared for what lies ahead. Each wise man was prepared to learn a valuable character lesson from his ‘mistake’ and, accordingly, became stronger and better-equipped for the future. They did not give into despair, believe poorly of themselves or give up.

I believe that we should view the mistakes made by children in the same way. Yes, we do all we can to teach children to make wise and appropriate choices but ‘stuff happens’ and mistakes are made. That’s pretty normal. To give children the idea that perfection is expected – in one’s own children or in other people’s is - is to set them up for failure and low self-esteem, to say the least. Here is a far more positive and realistic message to give children: ‘You are not perfect but you are capable, caring and resilient and we love you, mistakes and all. You will make mistakes but when you do, take responsibility for them bravely, make amends sincerely for the harm you’ve caused, learn your lesson well and move on with hope and confidence.’

In this way, good things can come, even when the road taken leads to thicket or thieves.

Have a great week everyone. I’m in residence at Santa Teresa Spirituality Centre at Ormiston and will be back on Thursday.

Glenda
It’s Another Boy
Last Friday, Beth and Justin Kipping became the proud parents of another boy, William Francis – brother to Tom and Patrick. Beth and William are both well. Congratulations!

SCHOOL FEES
March school fees are now overdue and payable immediately. Thank you to the families who have attended to their invoices promptly.

PLEASE NOTE: This year school fees are billed on a monthly basis for 10 months, February to November.

If your child/children are in the Music program, you will be billed for music costs with the first fee statement of each term. The music payment can be split over the first 2 months of the term it is billed in, if necessary.

Camp/excursion costs must be paid the month in which they are billed.

Prep Enrolment 2015 - Do you have a child ready for prep next year? Do you have friends who do? Well, it’s time to put in an application which can be obtained through the school office or online at www.stellamaris.qld.edu.au. We would be grateful if you could help spread the word. Applications, with supporting documentation, should be submitted by Friday 28 March with interviews taking place early in Term 2. It is especially important for existing families to get your forms in, so we know the number of places available for new families. Thanks everyone.

Handicapped Parking Spaces - Parents please avoid parking in the designated handicapped bays outside the office and in the parent park near the rubbish bins. These are strictly for those with a physical disability. We do have parents and visitors who have such disabilities and it is very discouraging for them to find these parks taken by parents who are not incapacitated. Thank you for your support in this matter.

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P & F WELCOME BBQ
Sunday 23rd March
Commencing at 2.00pm until 5.00pm
Free Sausage Sizzle and Entertainment Provided
BYO Chairs, Picnic Rugs, Drinks and Nibbles

Great chance to welcome new families and have a laugh with old friends,
Looking forward to seeing you there on the Oval near the Hangar.

WHO OWNS ME…PLEASE??!!
One book ordered from Bookclub Issue 1 is still awaiting its owner. If it is yours, please see Mrs James (via Office). Issue 2 orders will be delivered this week. Please check the orders to see that you have EVERY item ordered. If not, please contact Mrs James immediately.

ABSENTEE LINE: 54098989
All absentees to be notified by 9.30am

Dear Parents/ Caregivers,

In looking for a story about Compassion, the Virtue for this fortnight, I came across the following letter from Archie’s story – Philippines:

A place where I belong:
For most of Archie’s life, he lived with his parents and nine siblings in a one-roomed house beside a flood-prone river in the Philippines. In 2012, a resettlement program supported by Caritas Australia helped Archie’s family move to a safer house and take part in skills training.

No words can describe how happy we were when we moved to this beautiful place. It was a dream come true.” – Archie

Archie’s family lived on a steep river bank in a one roomed home beside the Plaridel River in the province of Bulacan, the Philippines. Whenever strong rains or typhoons hit, the river rose and people were evacuated. Typhoons wreaked serious damage.

“Our roof had holes in it. So when it rained, it was like we were having a shower,” he said as he explained that whenever strong rains hit, the houses had to be evacuated for higher ground. Caritas Australia has changed our lives. We are so thankful and happy that we are living in a safe community. I can see myself being able to send my younger brothers and sisters to school. Thank you Caritas Australia.”

After Archie’s family had been relocated, on Friday 8 November 2013, Super Typhoon Haiyan (local name Yolanda) struck the Eastern Visayas islands of Samar and Leyte in the Philippines, causing widespread devastation. Archie and his family now live on the island north of the typhoon-affected area, and are safe and well. Staff from the local Caritas Malolos are assisting the Caritas Filipinas Foundation or NASSA (the National Secretariat for Social Action-Justice and Peace) in their response to Typhoon Haiyan.

Now 19, Archie experienced severe flooding three times, including September 2009’s Super Typhoon Ondoy.

“After this typhoon, our house looked like it had been torn apart by a wild beast. Mud covered every wall and corner, the plywood walls were dismantled, the roof was gone and the posts were bent.”

In August 2012, an emergency resettlement program supported by Caritas Australia helped Archie and his family resettle into permanent and secure housing away from the flood prone river.

“We are now confident and secure in the knowledge that we will not be devastated again by natural disaster,” said Archie. “We are so much happier.”

Through the program, Archie’s mum learnt to make bags and he learnt to make candles which they sell to earn an income. But, as he left school halfway through his first year to assist his family, what he’s most excited about is studying under Caritas Australia’s Alternative Learning System and increasing his future prospects.

Donations for Stella Maris’ Caritas Appeal are rolling in thick and fast for which I thank you and your children. In Term 2 on 9th May, we will hold our Walkathon to continue our support of this wonderful appeal to make life easier for children and families around the world. Sponsorship cards will be sent home in the last week of Term One. Your support in encouraging your child/ren to gain sponsorship over the holidays would be very much appreciated.

God bless,

Judith.
**MUSIC NOTES**

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Music speaks what cannot be expressed, soothes the mind and gives it rest, heals the heart and makes it whole, flows from heaven to the soul.” ~ Author Unknown

TIP OF THE WEEK - Always play MUSIC? No matter what you have to practice each week, treat everything as music. This includes scales, studies, ensemble music, and solos. Everything you play is important so don’t go into autopilot!!

MUSICAL NEWS - Last week all students wishing to audition, sing, or be a part of The Wizard of Oz were invited to prioritise their choices. Permission notes were also sent home last week for students wishing to formally be a part of The Wizard of Oz, to be performed in October 2014. Please return these forms by **Wednesday 26th March**, not the due date listed on the note, as this was an error on our part. If your child did not receive a form last week, please see Mrs Durrer ASAP.

Auditions will begin this week and will be complete prior to the end of Term 1 – students are to check the space outside the Music Room for more details at the end of this week.

Dancers & Backstage – **Monday @10:45am** in the Music Room – bring your lunch with you

Dorothy, Tin Woodman, Lion, & Scaracrow – **Tuesday @10:45am** in the Music Room – bring your lunch with you

Wicked Witch and Good Witch – **Wednesday @10:45am** in the Music Room – bring your lunch with you

Speaking Roles – **Thursday @10:45am** in the Music Room – bring your lunch with you

Thank you to all our very enthusiastic students!

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC NEWS - We are working to finalise assembly performance date, but in the meantime we have many wonderful events planned for the year and look forward to your support. Please mark these dates in your family calendar. Further dates will be advised soon and additional info will come closer to each date.

**Date Claimers –**

28 March – Percussion Lunchtime Concert - Music Room at 10.45am
23 June – Sensational Strings Workshops and Concert at Stella Maris
16 to 19 June – SOIREE WEEK in the Hall at 5pm and 6.30pm
28 July – Sunshine Coast Choral Workshop and Concert at Stella Maris
31 July – Grandparents Day in the Hall (performing groups to be finalised)
8 August – Percussion Lunchtime Concert – Music Room at 10.45am
15 August – QCMF (Choirs, Band and Strings) in Brisbane
October – The Wizard of Oz Musical
5 November – Singing Soiree in the Hall at 6pm
6 November – Speech and Drama Soiree in the Hall at 6.30pm
13 November – Bonza Band Bash at Siena

Any changes to enrolment in instrumental, singing or speech and drama tuition needs to be advised this week to avoid additional charges. Ongoing enrolment in this program is dependent on full payment of each school account, or a regular direct debit or payment plan to cover fees by the end of each school term.

If you have queries regarding anything musical – please feel free to catch up with us before or after school, by contacting us in writing or via email.

Musically Yours,

Inez Durrer
Classroom Music Specialist

Todd Wynyard
Instrumental Music Coordinator

idurrer@bne.catholic.edu.au
twynyard@bne.catholic.edu.au

### Principal’s Awards

20 March 2014

Samuel Fing, Millie Portors, Connor McEvoy, Ava Hickson, Annabel Davis, Niamh Wall, Ruby Somerville, Rory Thompson, Tom Holzer, Nate Smith, Maya Nichols, Jimmy Potter, Nicholas Nikov, Makayla Jarrott, Bella Laurie, Tahlia Penn, Xavier Sutton, Ryan Hollis, Joseph Cruise, Breony Ansell, Bridget Fuller, Kyle Cazey, Martha Simpson, Tyler Quaili, John Tuxworth, Imogen Small, Alina Robins, Samantha Murray, Shelby Mills, Sabrina Delgado.

### Football News

Stella FC is still looking for players for the U/10 teams. Girls born ‘03, ‘04 or ‘05 and boys born ‘04 or ‘05 are eligible to play in this age group. See a member of the Stella FC committee, our Facebook page Stella FC or our website Steffalac.com for more information. All players who are registered are in the draw for a $100 voucher from Rebel Sport!

### Tuckshop News...

**HELP NEEDED**

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### Ingredients Roster

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FANTASTIC RESPONSE TO THE INGREDIENTS ROSTER. WE HAVE SUFFICIENT UNTIL NEXT TERM.

NEXT GROUP AFTER THE HOLIDAYS WILL BE GROUP 4.
SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS.

Is it two years since your last Student Protection Training?
Are you going to be a new parent helper at Stella Maris?
Are you going to be a volunteer but are not a parent or relative?

All parent helpers and volunteers must attend Student Protection Training before they are able to work in classrooms. In order to organise the large numbers expected, the next training day will be held on Wednesday (19th) with hourly sessions conducted between 12noon and 4pm. All registered volunteers and helpers’ names are kept on record at the front desk. Anyone not an employee must register at the front office and sign in. This is an Occupational Health & Safety requirement as well as important for student protection. Children are taught the adults with the lanyards are safe adults to be with. If any child sees an adult who is not a teacher without a lanyard they must tell a teacher so that the teacher can then redirect that person to the front office.

All these processes and responsibilities have your child’s well-being at their heart. It is helpful if you have read the Volunteers Code of Conduct and the Volunteers Student Protection Handbook before you come to training. These are available on our website.

“Safety and security don’t just happen, they are the result of collective consensus and public investment. We owe our children, the most vulnerable citizens in our society, a life free of violence and fear.” (Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa)

Christine Craig - Guidance Counsellor/ Psychologist
email: c craig@ bne.catholic.edu.au

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