Keeping in Touch

Newsletter No. 7 ● 2015

DUBBO SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
Website: www.dubbo-d.schools.nsw.edu.au
Email: dubbo-d.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Phone: (02) 5804 7000
Fax: (02) 6884 0777
Myall Street
DUBBO NSW 2830
Hi Everyone,

Term 4 has begun with a flurry of activity at DSODE…year 12 have now all but completed their HSC exams and begin the nervous wait for results that will be released just before the end of term. Some of our teachers have been involved in marking for various subjects and value the experience each year. We look forward to seeing what comes of the year’s efforts and trust that this will enable our students a pathway into their desired future.

Our executive staff have been busy already planning for 2016. We held a planning day away from the school on Monday 12th October where we assessed our progress on our three year school plan and have made changes already for next year. It was a very productive day, and it was great to witness the collaboration between our very experienced and enthusiastic executive team. I wish to also welcome our latest Head Teacher HSIE, Chivonne Gofers, who joined us at the beginning of this term. Chivonne replaces Graeme Hosken who retired earlier this year. I would also like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of relieving Head Teachers, Sally Egan and Kate Dimmick who led the HSIE faculty throughout terms 1 to 3 this year.

In our last newsletter, we mentioned the Department’s requirement to upgrade the fire safety standards in the school hostel and the possible effect this would have on not being able to run our Muster Camp. Due to the efforts of some of our committed teachers however, there has been an alternative arrangement located and the camp will go ahead. Unfortunately, the facility does not cater as well to the same numbers staying overnight as our Hostel. So for this year’s camp, we have had to prioritise overnight and long day invited students. We apologise for the inconvenience caused to some families, but we felt that it was a better option than no camp at all.

Of course, we hope that you are making plans to support the school with your attendance at our Presentation Day on Friday 11th December. It is always a great time to acknowledge and showcase the hard work and achievements of our students throughout the year. We will even put on morning tea for you. Hope you can come along. Enjoy the remainder of this term, make sure you continue to support your students in completing their work as the year draws to a close.

Regards,
Debbie Murray (Relieving Principal)
Hi everyone.

The end of 2015 is nearing - brace yourself for a busy five weeks ahead!

Congratulations to all students and families who have completed their HSC exams this year - you made it! It is such a big milestone in so many peoples lives; I hope the future brings you all the success and happiness you deserve! Year 12 will be having their graduation high tea at Taronga Western Plains Zoo on Thursday 10th December - we look forward to seeing many students and their families there.

This Term we have farewelled Mr Andrew Shannon from DSODE. Mr Shannon was with us for eight years and has gone to teach at St. Ives in Sydney; we wish him all the best in his new posting.

Next week Year 8 students will be undertaking their VALID Science assessments (Validation for Assessment 4 Learning and Individual Development). These exams are mandatory for all Year 8 students. All information packs have been posted to students; please contact your science teacher if you have not received yours yet.

Enjoy the last month of Spring!

*Jenny Donovan*
In Week 9 of Term 3, eight teachers from Dubbo School of Distance Education travelled out to Broken Hill.

Before arriving at Broken Hill, four of the teachers stopped in on the Wednesday to visit some students at their homes along the way. It was wonderful to spend time with Hiedee and Isa, as well as their supportive and welcoming families. For students who learn by distance, home visits are valuable not only for the students and their families, but also for their teachers who can benefit from a better understanding of the student and their varying circumstances. Here are some photos of the home visits.
A small workshop was also held in Wilcannia where it was wonderful to liaise with the families of Sarah and Ursula, as well as spend some quality teaching and learning time with Will.

The four teachers who drove separately straight to Broken Hill had already commenced the workshop by the time the others arrived. Students were lucky enough to engage in art practical work, science classes as well as English.

On the Thursday when all teachers were in Broken Hill, students were invited to participate in an excursion to the Living Desert Sanctuary to visit the famous sculptures in Broken Hill.

All teachers engaged the students with small segmented workshops at various sites along the track at the sanctuary. Above and on the front cover are a couple of photos of students engaging with the learning materials and having fun!

Miss Elwell would like to thank all students who attended the Broken Hill workshop, as well as students and their families for letting us into their homes so graciously. A very big thank you to also to Miss Carney, Miss Carter, Mrs Faulkner, Mr Hart, Miss Phimmachanh and Mrs Walters, all of whom dedicated many hours towards organising the field trip and presented wonderfully engaging workshops once there.

Miss Elwell
We value relationships within the community

The Boy at the Top of the Mountain by John Boyne

This is another unforgettable Second World War novel by John Boyne, of The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas fame. It follows the story of a seven-year-old French boy, Pierrot.

His alcoholic German father, after being badly affected by the First World War, dies under a train. His mother dies soon after of pneumonia. Left an orphan, he is sent to an orphanage run by two unmarried sisters. His life in the orphanage is bearable, but this all turns when his Aunt Beatrix contacts the orphanage to request he be sent to her in Austria.

She just happens to be Adolf Hitler’s housekeeper at the Bergdorf, his holiday house in the mountains. Pierrot grows up in this environment, under the tutorage of Adolf Hitler himself. We can only imagine what this could do to a young boy, but I will not give away anymore – you need to read it for yourself!

Horace the Baker’s Horse by Jackie French and Peter Bray

Horace is a very big horse with an even bigger heart. Every day he pulls the bakers cart and helps Old William, Big Bill and Young Billy take bread, buns and other doughy delights to all the people in the town.

But when a terrible flu makes everyone sick, who is going to deliver the bread to hungry families? Written by Jackie French and based on a true story told to her by her grandmother, Horace the Bakers Horse captures a time when horses were part of everyday life.

Set in 1919 during the Spanish influenza epidemic, it tells the story of how, when the baker and his family are struck down by illness, Horace sets off on his well-trodden round to deliver bread to the townsfolk all by himself.

Ranger’s Apprentice, The Early Years 1: The Tournament at Gorlan by John Flanagan

Before they became the most famous Ranger in the land and the hard-working Ranger Commandant, Halt and Crowley were young friends determined to change the world. The scheming Baron Morgarath is drawing other power-hungry knights and barons to his banner. King Oswald is wasting away and, if gossip can be believed, Prince Duncan is causing havoc in the north. Halt and Crowley set out to find the prince, uncover the truth, and re-form the weakened Ranger Corps. Once-loyal Rangers are scattered across the country, and it will take determination, skill, and leadership if they’re to come together as one. Can the Rangers regain the trust of the Kingdom, or will the cunning Morgarath outwit them at every turn?
**Freddy Tangles: Legend or Loser** by Jack Brand and Tom Jellett

What would you rather do, tell Sid he smells or tell Principal Brody he smells? That’s easy. I would tell Mr Brody. No one is scarier than the bully Sid Malone, and now he’s coming to get Freddy.

Luckily, Freddy’s got a plan. Laser beam eyes. If he stares at a white wall for long enough and wants it bad enough, his eyes will start to shoot laser beams. On second thoughts, he might need a back-up plan! Freddy’s friends are in danger too. But what can Freddy do when he’s even afraid of his little sister? (Well to be fair, she is totally evil!) He has to find a way to rescue them all from Sid.

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**At my Door** by Deb Fitzpatrick

When a little girl named Mei is left on the doorstep of Poppy’s house, the mystery surrounding how and why she is there starts. Why would anyone leave their own little girl with strangers? Poppy and her brother Harry live a normal, happy and healthy life with their Mum and Dad. They don’t have much to worry about. There is always food on the table and always someone to take care of them. So the fact that others are not quite as fortunate as them really resonates in young Poppy.

Poppy’s family do everything they can to look after Mei for the short time she is with them, but when Family Services take Mei to a foster home, they all have very mixed emotions. Will Mei’s parents eventually be found and will they be able to take care of her? This is something that Poppy will be thinking about always. This is a beautiful story about realising that not everyone is as lucky as some.

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**Mister Cassowary** by Samantha Wheeler

City boy Flynn is taken to Mission Beach by his Dad to ready his Grandad Barney’s banana farm for sale. Flynn has never been north before, even when his Grandad was alive, and the last thing he wants to do is to be stuck in the middle of Woop-Woop with his Dad who thinks he is too young to be trusted with anything!

But when Flynn meets local girl Abby and two lost baby cassowaries things become interesting. What does Abby know about Grandad’s mysterious death? And why does Dad refuse to talk about it and seem so scared of the cassowaries? Did this dinosaur-like bird kill Grandad? Time is running out and Flynn and Abby need a plan. Can Flynn solve the mystery before it is too late for the cassowaries? A thrilling and heart-pounding adventure for animal lovers everywhere.
Greetings from the Library

New Books to Borrow

**Wombat Wins** by Jackie French and Bruce Whatley

Forget Rio and the Olympic games in 2016; for us it will be about a wombat… winning. Yes, Mothball has become an athlete, albeit a little accidentally.

In her never-ending quest for carrots, Mothball stumbles upon children at the local school competing in their school sports. And despite her somewhat limited physique and lack of training, Mothball manages to go home with a gold medal. Why puff and pant when you can eat, sleep and scratch?

**Sing a Rebel Song** by Pamela Rushby

It’s 1891. Maggie McAllister and her family are caught up in one of the most dramatic events in Australia’s history: the Shearer’s Strike. The trouble that erupts between the Shearers Union, the pastoralists and the government has never been seen before on the quiet streets of Barcaldine.

Maggie plays her part in the Union’s struggle in no small way herself, through her writing. Her friends, a local pastoralist family, do not see things the same way, and for Maggie, singing a rebel song may yet have heartbreaking consequences.

Happy Reading!

*David Strain* – Teacher Librarian

(02) 5804 7023
david.strain@det.nsw.edu.au

**Photographic and Digital Media**

These photographs are the work of Remy and Luka in Year 10.

The boys appropriated the work of contemporary Australian photographer Petrina Hicks in a very clever postmodern way.

Left: *Email the Bouquet* by Remy

Right: *My Lady Bug* by Luka
Information for Childcare and Schools

There is an outbreak of whooping cough (pertussis) in NSW, mainly affecting school-aged children.

Coughing spreads the infection to others nearby. Whooping cough can spread to anyone at home, including younger brothers and sisters. Whooping cough can be especially dangerous for babies.

Whooping cough starts like a cold and progresses to bouts of coughing that can last for many weeks. The infection can occur even in fully-vaccinated children. Older children may just have a cough that is persistent and may be worse at night.

- Children with these symptoms should see a doctor.
- If your doctor diagnoses whooping cough in your school-aged child, please let the school know and keep your child at home until they have taken five days of antibiotics. Keep coughing children away from babies.
- Whooping cough vaccines give good protection against infection but immunity fades with time. Check that all your children are up to date with their vaccines, due at 6 weeks, 4 months, 6 months, 4 years and 12 years of age (offered to all Year 7 students through the NSW school-based vaccination program). A booster is also recommended at 18 months of age.

A booster dose of vaccine is also recommended for adults that are in contact with young children, such as school staff and parents. Pregnant women are recommended to have a booster dose during each pregnancy and this is funded by NSW Health. Those who are new parents or carers of babies should consult their general practitioner about appropriate immunisation.

Your local public health unit can provide advice about whooping cough on 1300 066 055

School to Work Program

The School to Work Program forms part of the NSW government commitment to provide quality current careers advice that support students to make a successful transition from school to post school education, training and employment.

A team approach is encouraged in implementing School to Work initiatives in schools. This helps ensure that career development and vocational learning activities are integrated across the school, enabling students to access opportunities to build their career awareness and support their career planning.

A Transition Adviser is a teacher from the school who works as a member of the school Career and Transition Team. This teacher undertakes to be trained to support targeted students to plan their transition from school, working closely with other members of the team and relevant people from beyond the school.

Beth Beatty recently completed the training in Sydney to join the DSODE team that includes staff members Karyn Burgun, Tim Quayle and Pete Holland.
Welcome to Term 4! We welcome Stephen, Evie-Lee, Mekia and Braxton to our class and hope you enjoy your time enrolled with us. We are not sure where this school year has gone, it’s hard to believe we only have 7 weeks of term left before we break for Christmas and the summer holiday. By now most of our pre-schoolers are experiencing transition days to Kindergarten in their local communities and feedback indicates these experiences have been positive and helpful. Transition programs are really important as they allow the children to become confident and comfortable in a new environment and certainly set them up for a smoother transition to school.

The following ideas for encouraging reading will be helpful for the remainder of this term and during the holiday period. We encourage you to provide multiple opportunities to foster your child’s interest in reading and reading practices. If we encourage interest in reading we are setting our children up for success when they begin to learn to read independently in Kindergarten next year.

Below are ten tips to encourage reading. Reading is a complex skill which takes years for children to master. Interest is the key – the more curious children are about the written word, the greater the chance that they will want to learn how to read. Think about how you can incorporate some of the following practices into your daily routine to give your child the best start for Kindergarten.

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**Artist of the Newsletter**

Our Artist of the Newsletter is Hugh who has been busy with his preschool work.

Hugh worked through the Feelings unit and created a mask and a hand puppet with big smiles.

**Well done Hugh!**
Ten Tips for Encouraging Reading

1. Take every opportunity you can to read to your child. Try to make story reading part of the routine of going to bed. Children who are read to frequently soon learn the language of books, just as they learnt the language of speech from their parents.

2. When reading to your child, encourage them to turn the pages and discuss what’s happening in the pictures. Let them read the story back to you – ‘reading’ the pictures is fine.

3. Listen to your child and encourage them to relate experiences to you. It is often said that ‘good talkers make good readers’, so ensure your child knows that what they have to say is important.

4. Enrol your child in the local library and encourage them to borrow books of their own choice.

5. Let your child see you reading. Children model themselves on their parent’s behaviour.

6. When reading a story together, use your finger as a guide running along the words and sentences. This helps develop left to right orientation.

7. Take your child to interesting places – zoos, farm and so on – to develop language about the world we live in.

8. Encourage children to identify pictures of newspapers and magazines.

9. Draw your child’s attention to the words on signs, advertisements and food packets, telling them what is written as well as pointing out the differences in the visual symbols which lead to differences in meaning.

10. Buy your child books and not simply for birthdays and special occasions!
Return of resources

As we are getting closer to the end of the school year please begin to collect and return resources you have enjoyed throughout the year. We need to have all resources returned to school by the end of November so that we can return them and organise our equipment for 2016. By doing this, it also makes it easier to organise your refunds early in the new year. Thank you in anticipation for the return of your equipment.

2016 Enrolments

Dubbo School of Distance Education Preschool is now taking enrolments for 2016. If you know of a family in your area with a preschool student that may be eligible to explore preschool via distance we would appreciate you passing on our details. They can contact the school on (02) 5804 7000 for an enrolment package.

Birthdays

We wish Hugh a very Happy Birthday for the 5th November.

We hope you have a very special day!

Satellite Installation

The Distance Education Technology Infrastructure Unit is now planning for the installation of satellites into homes of preschool students continuing their education with Distance Education in 2016. If you have enquiries about this process please talk to your child’s teacher. You can contact the Technology Help Desk on 1800 338 737 to discuss specific planning for installation in your home.

Term 4 Camp

Thank you for returning your RSVP to our next P-6 camp. We have had a good response so we are busy planning lots of fun activities for a full camp week from Monday 23rd - Friday 27th November. Amongst other things, the children will enjoy a water safety swimming program each day at the RSL swimming pool. This will be perfect timing before our hot summer holiday which is bound to involve some time swimming! We really look forward to seeing those of you who will be attending. Please talk to your teacher if you have any questions about the Term 4 camp.
This newsletter marks the half way mark in Term 4. Students will still be working hard in the classroom but we do recognise that in a few weeks, the intensity will ease as the wind down to end of term takes place. All students should be working hard until the end of Week 8. The last 2.5 weeks will consist of non-return activities. Over the next few weeks we ask you to please return any resources that you have finished with so they can be utilised for other students.

Claim the Dates

Last satellite lessons – week beginning 16 November

Presentation Day – 11 December

Last day Term 4 – 16 December

Enrolment Variations for 2016

Do you know of a family who is considering enrolling at DSODE? Are your own circumstances changing for 2016? These changes can include stopping travelling, moving to a new school, coming home from overseas. If you answered yes to either question, could you please contact Jenny Ballhausen as a matter of urgency to advise her so we can take it all into account when we begin to plan for 2016.

As I need this in writing, I would appreciate the information via email:

jennifer.ballhausen@det.nsw.edu.au  Thank you.

Communications

Using email has become the most effective way to communicate with our students, supervisors and families. It is important that you keep the school informed of your preferred email address (supervisors and families) for us to use. Students will be communicated with using their DEC Portal address. It is also imperative that emails are checked on a regular basis. Ideally, students and supervisors should log on daily to check for any updated information and communications. For our satellite students this can easily be accomplished by logging on to a lesson a few minutes early to access your emails. We also advise that you need to ‘empty ‘ your mail box as it does have a limited capacity and this term in particular, I have had a few emails bounce back due to ‘Full Mailbox’.

Sight, Hearing, Speech, Physical Tests

It is recommended that a child’s sight and hearing is tested on a regular basis – at least once every two years should be aimed for. If a child has attended the Before School Screening, we then recommend children should be tested at the end of Years 1, 3, and 5. However there are times when it should be done on a needs basis.
**Sight:** If your child is regularly rubbing their eyes, squinting, moving a book in and out attempting to focus on the page, complain of headaches or fuzziness on a page or that the letters look funny or you have any concerns that something is not quite right, you should have their eyes and sight assessed as a high priority. Here in Dubbo, we are fortunate to have a number of optometrists that bulk bill for the assessments including Burgan & Brennan (6884 3088) and Morrisons Family Eye Care Centre (6882 6633).

**Hearing:** If your child is not hearing you give instructions, gets confused with multiple instructions, appears at times to have ‘selective deafness’, may be experiencing some speech problems or you have general concerns, their hearing should be tested to ensure there are no issues.

**Speech:** There are certain milestones that children should be reaching during their speech development. By the age of five, children should be confident pronouncing p, m, h, n, ng, d, k, y, w, b, t, f, g, zh, l, sh, ch, s, j, z, r. By 6 years, all of these + v. By 8.5 years, all of these + th. If you have any concerns with your child’s speech or others (outside the immediate family) have difficulties in understanding them, please consider having their speech assessed. Speak to Jenny about your concerns, she will advise who can assist in organising an appointment in either Dubbo or perhaps a centre nearer to your home.

**Physical:** If you feel your child is at times clumsy or awkward with their large movements (running, jumping etc) or have difficulty with their fine motor skills (eg writing, threading, picking things up) then an assessment by an Occupational Therapist should be considered to ensure age appropriate development. Speak to Jenny about your concerns, she will advise who can assist in organising an appointment in either Dubbo or perhaps a centre nearer to your home.

Your GP or Community Health Centre is also an excellent source of contact to discuss any concerns you may have with your child/children’s development.

**Food For Thought**
At our last satellite assembly, the following poster was shared (next page). The students (mostly K-2) understood its meaning and requested a copy of it. It might be something that many families might find interesting……..

Have an awesome week and don’t forget we are only a phone call away if need be

*Rebecca, Melissa, Hayley, Sarah, Averil, Amanda, Kristina, Vanessa, Mel, Leanne, Mel and Jenny*
### Of a Primary Concern

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<tr>
<th><strong>Successful People</strong></th>
<th><strong>Unsuccessful People</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Read every day</td>
<td>Watch TV every day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compliment</td>
<td>Criticise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Embrace change</td>
<td>Fear change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forgive others</td>
<td>Hold a grudge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Talk about ideas</td>
<td>Talk about people</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continuously learn</td>
<td>Think they know it all</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accept responsibility for their failures</td>
<td>Blame others for their failures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have a sense of gratitude</td>
<td>Have a sense of entitlement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set goals and develop life plans</td>
<td>Never set goals</td>
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Year 12

Hope the exams have been going well. Your next step is to ensure that you have your preference list of courses for UAC and that you have the course that you want to be considered for the Schools Recommendation Scheme (SRS) as the first preference by Midnight 30th December, 2015. The SRS process will only consider your number one preference for early entry to university. Below is the list of universities that accept students via the Schools Recommendation Scheme. (Remember the UNE early entry application that some of you completed is separate to this process).

- Australian National University
- Charles Sturt University
- Griffith University
- La Trobe University
- Macquarie University
- Southern Cross University (are also using their own STAR early entry program)
- University of Canberra
- University of New England
- University of Technology-Sydney
- University of Western Sydney

You can have as many as nine preferences and as few as one preference and you can change your preferences as many times as you like for free. You must have your preferences for the main round offers in by midnight of Wednesday 6th January, 2016.

If you have not applied to UAC yet and want to go to university you must have your UAC application in by 5pm Friday the 30th November, 2015. If you are not eligible for an ATAR but would like to go to university in 2016 please contact me, as there are pathways to university for non-ATAR students.
If you are thinking that you want to go to TAFE next year you need to be discussing your enrolment and the course you want to do with TAFE now as popular courses will fill up fast.

If you would like more information about different careers try the myfuture website or the Jobjump website for further information. The school’s login for the Jobjump website is ‘Dubbo School of Distance Education’ and the login is ‘magpies’.

Alternatively you can contact Mr Quayle on (02) 5804 7079 or email him at timothy.quayle@det.nsw.edu.au

**Apprenticeships and Traineeships**

Make sure you are checking local papers and approaching potential employers for positions. Check any apprenticeship providers in your town, for example in Dubbo, Skillset. Once you find a provider you need to register with them so that they can support you in finding an Apprenticeship or Traineeship.

If you need assistance in finding apprenticeship or Traineeship please do not hesitate to contact me.
It is hard to imagine that we are now almost at the middle of Term 4 and Christmas will be here before we know it. Term 4 is a particularly busy time for teachers, parents/caregivers and students, with the finalising of the school year and all the festivities and social functions. It is no wonder that at this time of year busyness and stress can drain all your energy levels! In considering this, it is important to look after your mental health.

October is Mental Health Month. You may wonder why this is so important. If you consider that in any given year 20 per cent of the population is currently experiencing mental health issues and 45 percent will experience issues in their lifetime, it is definitely a serious issue that affects our community and one we need to talk about and understand. Mental Health Month aims to raise awareness of mental health conditions. It focuses on people connecting and asking questions like ‘Are you OK?’ It also stresses the importance of looking after yourself and thinking about how you are feeling at the moment and about accessing support if it’s required.

The following tips to improve your mental health have been recommended by EPIC’s Mental Health Consultant Georgia Watson:

- Identify stressors in your life and consider what help you can access to reduce stress levels
- If you need help, reach out to someone you can talk to, such as: family, friends, doctors, counsellors and helplines
- Undertake healthy, self-care activities, such as: regular exercise, getting enough sleep, healthy eating, taking prescribed medications and mindfulness activities (yoga or pilates).

Please take the time to consider these tips, especially during this hectic time. If you would like to read more information about mental health you might find some of these sites useful.

- [www.mentalhealth.asn.au](http://www.mentalhealth.asn.au)
- [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)
- [www.blackdoginstitute.org.au](http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au)
- [www.reachout.com](http://www.reachout.com)
- [www.biteback.org.au](http://www.biteback.org.au) (great for teenagers)

You can also call the NSW mental health hotline on 1800 011 511 to access their 24 hour service that connects you with the care you need.
The LST continues to meet every week to discuss referrals and review the progress of students who require learning support. If you have any concerns about your student’s engagement and progress with their school program, including their mental health, please discuss them with the relevant student adviser or subject teacher.

Please also consider the importance of being on track with scheduled lessons, being organised in completing course work and maintaining regular communication with your Student Adviser to discuss any concerns. Most importantly, remember to maintain regular breaks and reward student success, no matter how small.

The Learning and Support Team would like to wish all the students at DSODE a successful Term 4.

Kristina Powell / Julie Messner
Learning and Support Teachers
World Fisheries Day on 21st November focuses on awareness of overfishing, habitat destruction and serious threats to sustainability of our marine and freshwater resources.

National Recycling Week
With the festive season on the horizon consider what you purchase and how you recycle in your home or workplace. Check your shopping list to see if you can buy gifts made from recycled materials. Make old Christmas cards into this year’s gift tags.

How to recycle your e-waste?
Check with your local council to see if they provide a collection point for your e-waste. Items that can be recycled include:

- Computer monitors
- Televisions
- Scanners
- Printers and faxes
- Copiers, DVD and video players, keyboards and mice
- Laptops
- Telephones
- Electronic games and joysticks
- CDs and DVDs
- Cameras and video recorders