During the Year 9 Life Skills Programme, students spend time reflecting on their emotional health as well as their online safety. Students begin to develop strategies and skills to assist them in dealing with the various situations they will encounter academically and socially, and in preparation for the commencement of Senior School.

YEAR 9 FIELD STUDIES PROGRAMME

The programme is a memorable experience for Year 9 students and is reported to be one of the most exciting and challenging aspects of a student’s time at Trinity.

Attending our Field Studies Centre has provided each student with the opportunity to be intellectually challenged by a rigorous academic programme and physically challenged by the adventure programme. Our Year 9 students returned having adjusted to living in a close knit and interdependent community, and equipped with cleaning and food preparation skills and an ability to care for their belongings.

We hope that all Year 9 students enjoyed their time away and were able to form new relationships, develop their independence and appreciate the beautiful outdoor surroundings.
MENTAL HEALTH

Year 9 students participated in a life skills component on ‘mental health’ this year. Lessons were based on a secondary school programme provided by beyondblue. The programme aims to educate students on the effects of adverse life events by building protective factors through the teaching of life skills, within a supportive and safe environment. Information was provided at an introductory level and focused on increasing awareness, identifying strengths and promoting emotional well-being and social connectedness. The programme has been developed in an attempt to reduce and prevent depression in young people. Information on depression and anxiety is addressed in greater detail with students in Senior School.

A brief summary of each topic is provided. We encourage you to discuss with your son the different components and skills he has learnt with your son.

1. IMAGES OF ADOLESCENCE

This session reviewed the variety of images of adolescents that exist in the media, in advertising, in schools, families, and the community. Students discussed the impact these images can have on the perception people have of adolescents and the way they interact with them.

Being represented in certain ways or choosing to portray a particular image can give different messages.

Stereotypes can be a useful way to categorise our world and they provide some clues about how we expect certain people to behave. They allow us to make sense of our world and to reduce large amounts of information about people into more manageable chunks. They also tell us about our own group membership. However, they can create prejudice and they stop us considering people as individuals.

Stereotypes may make it difficult for individuals to behave in ways they would like or to try different things (e.g. gender stereotypes).

2. ME, MYSELF AND I

SELF-CONCEPT & SELF-ESTEEM

This session aims to increase students’ awareness of their own self-concept with a view to identifying and promoting positive aspects of self. Students begin to think about the characteristics that define them so they may increase self-awareness. A positive self-concept is important for psychological health. Increased self-awareness is the foundation for learning to promote more positive aspects of self and learning to accept our less positive characteristics or, alternatively, for taking steps to change these.

Having high self-esteem (in other words feeling good about yourself, accepting yourself, feeling confident, and liking yourself) is related to feeling good generally, and to positive mental health outcomes. Students will be introduced to the idea that self-esteem may change from time to time and that it is possible to build up self-esteem. Self-esteem is made up of several domains of self. Some of the broad self-esteem domains for young people are social, school, personal characteristics, family, and interests/sports. These domains form an individual’s overall or global self-esteem. Different domains tend to be more important for some people than others. By having students identify positive personal characteristics, it is hoped they will see that all domains have some value and that taken together they make up the unique individual.
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Having high self-esteem (in other words feeling good about yourself, accepting yourself, feeling confident, and liking yourself) is related to feeling good generally, and to positive mental health outcomes. It is therefore important for students to recognise some of the factors which may influence self-esteem.

In particular, the way we think about ourselves can have a major effect on how we feel. For example, having unrealistic expectations can lead to a mismatch between ideal self and self-concept and reduce self-esteem. Self-talk (internal statements we use relating to/describing the self) can have a powerful influence on self-esteem.

By becoming aware of how self-talk can affect self-esteem, and therefore general well-being, students may begin to monitor their own use of self-talk, and begin to use more positive self-talk and self-praise to build self-esteem. This session will convey the idea that self-esteem can be enhanced or reduced by self-talk, and will encourage students to begin monitoring their own self-talk and its impact.

4. PLANNING FOR EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Students consolidate their knowledge and use of strategies which promote emotional wellbeing.

Students have reflected on strategies that were personally useful and have worked on an individual plan for maintaining emotional health using the strategies reviewed.

It is hoped that a focus on planning and overcoming obstacles will enable students to effectively implement their new skills and knowledge in an attempt to successfully confront difficult situations and challenge unhelpful thoughts and behaviours.
CYBER SAFETY

We encourage parents to visit the new and updated website for the Office of the Children’s eSafety Commissioner https://esafety.gov.au/education-resources/iparent. There are many useful resources for parents addressing areas including balancing online time, gaming, cyberbullying and social networking. They also have services which receive and address complaints regarding inappropriate content and serious cyberbullying.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Office of the Children’s eSafety Commissioner can deal with complaints about cyberbullying material that seriously threatens, intimidates, harasses or humiliates an Australian child (under the age of 18).

Examples of the complaints that have been acted on include:

- Serious name calling and nasty comments – for example, comments that incite suicide, outing, or sexually threatening language.
- Fake accounts or impersonations.
- Offensive or upsetting pictures or videos.
- Hacking of social media accounts (potentially due to password sharing).
- Hate pages.

Complaints can be made by a child, their parent or another responsible person the child has authorised to make the complaint for them.