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Dear Emmaus families,

Re: COVID-19 (coronavirus) update #11

Here at Emmaus our students and staff enjoyed another Fun Time Friday! There were ice blocks and dress-ups and dancing and more! You might have seen some of the images on our Instagram and FB pages. We are trying to keep things here as 'normal' as possible. We also hope that when our students look back on these days, they will remember them fondly and be able to share with their own grandchildren, the things that happened at school to keep them happy and learning, in the midst of a pandemic!

Here are a few ideas that might also help your child emotionally over this challenging time:

- **Be available to talk and reassure:**
Children can have big questions, and it's okay to answer them. Take cues from them and offer clear but concise answers in developmentally appropriate language. Keep the focus on what you are doing to prepare and prevention strategies that are within your control like proper handwashing and avoiding large crowds. Reassure when needed but avoid offering too frequently as this can prevent children from developing their own positive self talk.
- **Limit news exposure:**
Even when it seems like they're not listening, children pick up on what they hear on TV and radio. Hearing unfamiliar words like pandemic and outbreak can be fear-inducing. Opt for watching or listening to news reports when your child is in bed or choose to read news articles if possible. This may also include limiting our conversations about what we are hearing on the news.
- **Stick to routines and boundaries:**
Children thrive with routines and boundaries, and predictability can be very comforting in anxious times. When some things feel out of control, routines can give them a sense of security. Write your daily routine on the whiteboard or make a paper schedule together and make sure that you include fun activities in your daily routine!
- **Be mindful of your own worries:**
It is reasonable for everyone to have some level of worry but children do pick up on our feelings and notice our anxieties, and they will take cues from us. We need to manage our own anxiety, including how we might express this in conversations with our child or others.
- **Consider opportunities for exercise:**
Make time to enjoy being active together, for example, throwing a ball in the backyard, dance to your favourite song or simply enjoy a stroll in the park.

. Regular updates are being provided on the Catholic Education SA website – www.cesa.catholic.edu.au/alerts

Finally, I want to commend you all. Keep doing everything you are doing. We appreciate the social distancing in the yard and the reduced number of parents on site. Your co-operation goes a long way towards keeping our school safe. Next week we hope to be able to provide you with more information about how home learning will look for Emmaus students in term 2.

I hope you all have a safe and fun weekend,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine Gurr." The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Catherine Gurr
Principal

27th March 2020