

# Wellbeing Hub Newsletter

## Video Clips of the Term – Michael Grose

<https://vimeo.com/219326386/4efcdd6c2e>



### WATCH THIS BEFORE OPENING YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL REPORT

Children and teenagers take their cues from the respected adults in their lives,

so how parents see their children's reports affects how they see themselves as learners.

## Cyber-Safety Tip of the Term

According to a new study from Pew Research Centre, 92% of teens report going online daily, including 24% reporting going online almost constantly. 56% of teens, 13-17 years of age, go online several times a day.

Given these statistics, our tip to help teens use social networking safely is:

**THINK BEFORE YOU SEND**

Think about what you are saying and how the recipient/s may feel.

## Wellbeing App of the Term

### ReachOut Worry Time

Everyone has worries pop into their head from time to time, but sometimes they won't go away and start to impact your everyday life.

ReachOut WorryTime interrupts this

repetitive thinking by setting aside your worries until later, so you don't get caught up in them and can get on with your day. This means you can deal with worries once a day, rather than carrying them around with you 24/7.



Key features of the app:

Decide on a time, place and length of time to deal with your worries each day.

When you notice yourself worrying about something, add it to WorryTime and get on with your day.

Use your WorryTime to review the worries you've added and ditch the ones that no longer matter to you.

Produced in consultation with the Centre for Clinical Interventions, ReachOut

WorryTime is based on cognitive behavioural techniques that are used by health and wellbeing practitioners to assist people with anxiety and stress.

Manage the symptoms of anxiety, worry and rumination.

*Disclaimer: may be used with or without support from a registered health practitioner, but you may wish to consult with your local health or wellbeing practitioner if you are uncertain about using it.*

## Articles of the Term

### Health Risks - Exposure to Blue Light by Cherie from Grass Roots Wellness

Did you know that the blue light that emits from electronic devices affects our sleep? This is especially true for teenagers. Studies have shown that teenagers are in fact, more sensitive to this light than adults! While all of these electronic devices such as computer screens, tablets, smart phones and tablets emit light of all colours, it is the blue that poses such a risk to our health.

Here's why. Blue light (the same light that comes from the sun) is particularly useful at preventing the release of melatonin – a hormone that is released from the pineal gland in the brain generally a few hours before bed time. This hormone helps us to reduce alertness and makes us become sleepier. It is the blue light, however, that stops the pineal gland from releasing melatonin and thus warding off sleep, and keeping us awake.

Even just a portion of the blue light that hits the eye is enough to make the gland stop releasing melatonin. So, as sleep deprived teenagers, who are more vulnerable to the effects of blue light than adults, take to their laptops and

tablets before bed this just makes it harder for them to get a 'good night's sleep'.

It is hard enough during adolescence when the circadian rhythm shifts and teens feel more awake later at night. Firing up electronic devices, or even the TV just before bedtime will just increase the awake time. The effects of this can lead to really tired and drowsy teenagers the following day who will often then turn to a caffeinated pick me up or a sugar laden energy drink which then has the potential to lead to an unhealthy cycle of habits.

The recommended amount of sleep for our teens is around 8.5 to 10 hours and many studies have shown that the blue light in our electronic devices can play havoc with our body's rhythm.

Aside from keeping us awake, other health concerns related to exposure of this blue light include:

**Digital Eye Strain:** this includes symptoms such as blurry vision, difficulty in focussing, dry and irritated eyes, headaches, neck and back pain.

**Macular Degeneration:** There is growing evidence that blue light exposure can cause permanent eye damage and contributes to the destruction of the cells in the centre of the retina.



So, now what?

There are a few ways to combat this. One is to counteract the effects of the blue light emission using;

- various Apps for mobile phones
- special screens that can be fitted to computers or laptop
- special eye ware that can be worn

Or, other actions can include:

- adjusting the brightness on your screen in the control settings
- dim surrounding lights
- increase text size on the screen
- blink more often during use
- take breaks more often

And of course the more obvious, limit the amount of time spent on devices (particularly during the night)!

Cherie Gauci is a Wellness Coach at Grassroots Wellness ([www.grassrootswellness.com.au](http://www.grassrootswellness.com.au)) and is currently teaching Yoga at Universal Balance Wellness Studio, Redwood Park, and at the Australian School of Meditation and Yoga, North Adelaide. Phone 0402321175

## Teens choosing Screen Time over Sleep Time

Sometimes it seems like devices and screens surround us. Phones, tablets, televisions, computers. They're shiny and bright and seem to be particularly good at attracting children.

If you find convincing children to put down their iPhone or tablet to be a challenge, you could be dealing with a screen time addiction. At least, that's what Dr Chris Seton, a leading paediatric and adolescent sleep physician from the Woolcock Medical Institute believes.

[Dr Seton featured on ABC Radio Melbourne](#) last month, suggesting that screen time for children could in fact be as addictive as heroin. It's a scary thought and at the very least some children's obsession with screen time is certainly a concerning behavioural issue.

A major concern is the resulting sleep deprivation, with children using devices when they should be sleeping.

[Government health authorities refer to sleep research](#) that suggests teenagers require around 9 to 10 hours of sleep

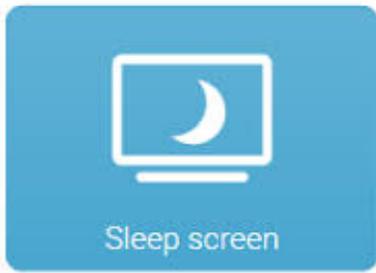
each night. Even 30 minutes of extra sleep (or 30 minutes less) can have an impact on a young person's mood, concentration, academic performance, physical reflexes and memory.

At Resilient Youth our 2016/2017 [survey data](#) shows 48% of Year 7 to 12 students self-report that they are not getting at least 8 hours sleep each night.

And 68% of year 7 to 12 students report using technology between 10pm and 6am. I think we know where those missing hours of sleep are going...

The attachment young people have to devices is strong, but there are things we can – and should – try to break the habit of living life through a screen and hopefully improve other areas of children's lives as a result.





### 5 Ways to Reduce Screen Time

1. Make bedrooms no-screen-zones
2. Model the behaviour and set a good example
3. Put limits in place for screen time
4. Screen time shouldn't be a reward
5. Highlight alternative activities

## The Secret of Behavioural Change in Kids

The **Golden Way Partnership** Parent Support Group was once again hosted a community event presentation with the well-known speaker **Mark Le Messurier**.

Mark, who is an Educator, Counsellor, Parent Coach and the co-author of the social skills programme called "**What's the Buzz?**" spoke to an audience of over 220 community members, including parents and teachers on a relevant community topic: "**The Secret of Behavioural Change in Kids**".

Mark spoke about three key issues:

#### ***There is a reason for your child's behaviour:***

Our child's 'acting out' behaviour is trying to tell us something! We need to look past the behaviour (symptom) to work out what is driving it, instead of simply reacting to the frustration it may be causing.

caught up in them and can get on with your day. This means you can deal with worries once a day, rather than carrying them around with you 24/7.

#### ***How behaviour works:***

Children develop behaviours (either positive or negative) when they feel it is being rewarded. Children stop behaviour when they feel it is not being rewarded. It can be our inconsistent approach and sometimes our misunderstanding, over what reward really means, that confuses them!

#### ***It takes an intelligent plan to manage kids wisely:***

Changing behaviour is really tricky, especially when these behaviours are comfortable and give us a sense of identity. Mark highlighted that new brain research confirms that how we live, how we love our children, interact with them and regulate our own lives has a big influence on how our children's brains develop and grow. Mark encouraged us to change behaviours together, to support each other, to track progress and reward new behaviour – this grows new brain pathways. 'Just do it' DOESN'T work. The secret to behaviour change success lies in OUR capacity to review whether what we are doing is actually working for our children and if not, then maybe change our approach, so that it benefits positive family/school/future life.

#### **Some other strategies offered were:**

- Being able to **CHOOSE** your battles wisely
- When a problem arises, **STOP** what you are doing...
- Come to them, look at them, **CALMLY** use their name, **BRIEFLY** state the problem and what you want them to do.
- If you judge it wise, state a possible negative consequence.
- **ENCOURAGE** them to make good choice (the opposite to making a threat).
- **WALK** away (as you do show your confidence in them).

- PRAISE your child after they have responded POSITIVELY.
- Matter-of-factly, deliver a negative consequence and MOVE away.
- REMAIN calm – limit your words – do not be drawn into their chaos.

Our next speaker at GGHS is DR. JUSTIN COULSON whose topic will be **“9 Ways to a Resilient Child”**. The date of this presentation is 22 September 2017 @ 7.00pm. Registration for this event will be made available nearer the date.

If you were unable to attend Mark Le Messurier’s presentation but would like to be on the email list for further presentations or parent group involvement please contact Sandy Rawlings (GGHS) on 82826400.

## Useful Websites for Parents and Teens

- [www.reachout.com.au](http://www.reachout.com.au)
- [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)
- [www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au)
- [www.headspace.org.au](http://www.headspace.org.au)
- [www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)

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