



“Creating the Future”

In the August edition of Aurora, Irene Dixon shared some wonderful practical advice in the article ***How can I help a grieving child?*** She stated that “[following significant loss]...children’s/adolescents’ sense of safety, meaning, control, self worth and trust is rendered fragile, leaving them feeling disconnected and powerless with shattered self esteem and a pervasive sense of fear and anxiety. In order to restore a healthy psyche it is imperative that their assumptive world is restructured to allow them to successfully integrate their loss.” She stated further that “as they lack sufficient language and processing skills they are not able to express their feelings as well as adults and so need to be regularly provided with opportunities and support to express their grief...expression in keeping with their age eg play, drawing, and writing [should be encouraged].”

Seasons for Growth, is an educational program designed for children, young people and adults to assist them in managing and understanding the effects of significant change, loss and grief in their lives. Using a set of well-crafted resources, and a Companion who facilitates small peer groups, the program provides a safe and creative way to explore feelings, memories, loss and grief. The core intentions of the program are the development of resilience and emotional literacy to promote social and emotional wellbeing.

Irene also stated in the article that the “vitaly important role of parents, guardians, families, peers and other support persons in both acknowledging and supporting children’s/adolescents’ grief, cannot be overestimated in achieving healthy outcomes for them.” Participants in the ***Seasons for Growth*** program find themselves growing in confidence and trust through the acknowledgement and support they receive from others in the group.

We are pleased to announce that the ***Seasons for Growth*** program gained recognition during New South Wales Public Schools Education Week: ***“Creating the Future”*** (1-5 August). Thornton Public School nominated the program for an award. **The most important factor considered in the selection criteria was evidence of improvement in the teaching and learning environment at the school and/or student learning outcomes overtime, as a result of the contribution of the program.** The ***Seasons for Growth*** program won the Director-General’s Regional School Achievement Award.



Thank-you...

to Thornton Public School for nominating the ***Seasons for Growth*** program and to all ***Seasons for Growth*** Companions across our community for your ongoing commitment and dedication to supporting Children, Young People and Adults through the ***Seasons for Growth*** Program.

*The ***Seasons for Growth*** program in the Hunter region is co-ordinated through funding from the Catholic Schools Office and the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. The program is educational in nature and supports children, young people and adults who have experienced significant change or loss in their lives.*

To learn more, please visit www.mn.catholic.org.au/diocesan/seasons.htm and www.goodgrief.org.au