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**From the SCHOOL-LINK COORDINATOR**

**Term 3, 2016**

Welcome to the School Link newsletter for Term 3, 2016!

*School Link is a state wide initiative of NSW Health. The coordinator's position is based within the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) which locally has teams in Tamworth, Armidale, Glen Innes, Inverell, Moree, Narrabri and Gunnedah.*

## Speaking Up for Great Wellbeing

### SistaSpeak



Moree Secondary College

In some late breaking news the SistaSpeak and BroSpeak cultural and mentoring workshop programme at Moree Secondary College has won the Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing category in this year's Mental Health Matters Awards.

The 10 week programme has a strong cultural focus and is designed to inspire and motivate

young Aboriginal women and men about the importance of education. At the same time it tackles a range of social issues head on including grief and loss, mental health, nutrition, alcohol (and other drugs), sexual health,

gambling and self-esteem by utilising community members and local experts from a number of partnership agencies, including Pius X Aboriginal Medical Service, Healthwise and Hunter New England Health.

*Please Circulate to:*

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- School Counsellor
- Welfare Staff
- Copy placed in Staffroom
- Distribute electronically to colleagues

### BroSpeak



Moree Secondary College

The award is wonderful recognition for an innovative programme developed from the ground up by Aboriginal staff at the school; staff who serve also as strong and positive mentors.

Janine French and Angela Heath will collect the award on behalf of the College at the Mental Health Month Launch and Awards ceremony next month at State Parliament in Sydney.



Noshing up on fruit smoothies at BroSpeak

## RUOK? Day September 8

Something we're never too young to learn is that asking "are you ok?" can make a difference - and it's a message R U OK? wants to take into every classroom.

By giving teenagers the confidence and skills to start conversations regularly and with real care, they can be the generation that transforms the way we look out for anyone struggling with life.

RUOK? Day is celebrated across Australia every year on September 8. It's a great day to promote positive social and emotional wellbeing in schools and workplaces. For specific resources for secondary students see Classroom Toolboxes at [www.ruok.org.au/365-day-resources](http://www.ruok.org.au/365-day-resources)

One school with plans across the day is Warialda High School which will host a whole range of special activities + a parent night with Rachel Downie, the developer of the Stymie anti-bullying programme.

### Who will you ask?



A mate?



Your sister?

A conversation could change a life. Start one today.

**RUOK? DAY**



Attendees: STORM training at Farrer Memorial AHS

## Visit to Moree Hospital by NBSA Students

The Northern Borders Schools Association is made up of 4 Central Schools close to the Queensland Border: Boggabilla, Mungindi, Collarenebri and Goodooga.

Recently students from NBSA spent a week in Moree looking at career paths and we were pleased to host a group at the hospital. Students met staff across a number of professions including nursing, administration and mental health and learned how they came to be in their current role.

These were outstanding young people and hopefully a number of them will one day be working in a hospital near you!



NBSA students and staff at Moree District Hospital

# The Hardest Question

It's the one conversation you never want to have and the one question you hope you never have to ask: "are you having thoughts about killing yourself?"

But sometimes it can also be the one question that most needs to be asked. And how would you ever begin to prepare yourself for something like that?

In an ideal world the need for the conversation would never arise. In a slightly less than ideal world it would involve a GP, a school counsellor, or other mental health clinician. In the real world, especially in the sometimes complex world of adolescents, it might involve people like you. You might be the one who can get them safely to the help they need.

Here's where Headspace School Support can help. Among other great services they provide intensive training to school welfare and executive staff around assessing suicide risk, safety planning and postvention using the STORM (Skills-based Training on Risk Management) programme, developed by the University of Manchester in the UK.

This month staff from 4 Tamworth schools completed the 2 day programme at Farrer and we're hoping now to roll this out into other centres across the region. If this would be of interest to staff at your school please contact Traci Prendergast at Tamworth Regional Office (for DoE schools) or myself for Catholic and Independent schools.

*What we all strive for as parents, guides, teachers and support personnel is happy, healthy children who make a positive contribution to the community. STORM training assists in the development of skills which help to facilitate this.*

Charles Colclough

Head Teacher Welfare. Farrer AHS



If you have any feedback, information or details of upcoming events you'd like included in School Matters, or if you'd like me to help your school in any way please give me a ring, or drop me a line at: [Bruce.Winter@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Bruce.Winter@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au)

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