

25 July 2024

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Dear Parents/Carers

We are excited to announce that as part of our partnership with KidsXpress, Batlow Technology School is funding and commencing a program this term called Sunshine Circles®. This program will be conducted as a whole class activity and group sessions will be scheduled weekly in each of the primary classrooms.

The Sunshine Circles® program is focused on strengthening and supporting the development of social skills and emotional wellbeing through play and connection, creating trusting relationships and a warm classroom community. It is an adult-led program that is structured and interactive, aiming to improve self-regulation, attention, learning, social skills and support the development of a healthy sense of self.

All Sunshine Circles® sessions will be facilitated by KidsXpress and co-facilitated by your child's classroom teacher and SLSO. Each session will involve a range of games, songs and playful activities, ending with a small, healthy snack. We will also spend some time at the beginning of each session doing 'check ups', a nurturing activity that can involve gentle hand touching, while attending to the unique qualities and needs of each student. This activity supports children to feel safe and cared for, while fostering empathy for their peers. Healthy, safe touch is integrated into many games and activities, such as hand-clapping rhymes, hand stack games and group challenges. Repeated experiences of giving and receiving gentle, safe touch is crucial for brain development, co-regulation, self-regulation, establishing body boundaries, and increasing self-awareness.

At the commencement and conclusion of the program, each student will complete a short survey and KidsXpress will also maintain written records of each session. The information collected is essential for measuring the program's effectiveness and tracking overall student growth and development.

We hope this program will be enjoyable, fun and a valuable process for all primary students in our school. Parents/Carers are encouraged to connect with Erin Butler and Lisa Pannell from KidsXpress at any time before or during the program. If you wish to discuss this letter, the program or have any questions or concerns, please email Erin directly (erin.butler@kidsxpress.org.au). She will be happy to arrange a convenient time for a phone discussion or a meeting at the school.

If you **do not** wish for your child to participate in this program, please send in a note to the school office by **Friday 2nd August 2024**.

Yours Sincerely

Michelle Wainwright
Principal