How is Your Start to the Day?

Each year, the school counsellors collect data on the students that we see for counselling. The data includes information on the issues that students present with, the severity of the issue, how long and when students are seen. The data is collected on a weekly basis and then analysed each term for trends.

We have been collecting data now for five years and there have been some trends in terms of the types of issues that students present with. The major reason we see students is for family related matters but the gap has been narrowing over recent years with the rise in anxiety, reflective of the increase globally.

Anxiety impacts our students in numerous ways, from having difficulty getting to school or class, going on excursions or camps, asking questions in class, making public presentations or speeches or sitting tests or exams.

One of the things I often speak to students about is that we all feel anxious from time to time and that it is ok. There is a great relief that comes from normalising and validating the feeling of nervousness or worry that can afflict us. Ron Rapee, an international expert on emotional health from Macquarie University says that anxiety is only a problem when it interferes with our life.

I also like to introduce students to the inverted u hypothesis that says that a moderate amount of anxiety or arousal is beneficial for performance. It is only when we have extremely low anxiety (laissez faire) or extremely high anxiety (overwhelmed) that our performance suffers.

I am sure we can all think of times when we have been in one of these three emotional states and how we felt afterwards. With sports carnivals, camps and a range of other activities scheduled for this term, It is so important that we do not give our children an out at the first sign of anxiety and that we help them through it.

The article below has a number of strategies to follow should you have a child that is having difficulty with separation anxiety. If you find that these strategies aren’t working or if you need further support, please contact one
of the school counsellors or your local GP for their expert advice and guidance.

PI Insights-SeparationAnxiety.pdf