2016 Open Day

Supporting your child through adolescence
Adolescence – A Sensitive Period
Teenagers should leave home while they still know everything!

“When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years” (Mark Twain)
Perspectives on meaning..

Social adolescence

Not a child, not yet an adult

Age and stage development

Adolescence .... on the way to something else...

Biological Adolescence

Emergence of diverse young adolescent learners
Early Adolescence
Changes that are occurring....

- Highly peer orientated, closely linked to family
- Egocentric
- Experiencing diverse cultures and technologies and a far more complex and uncertain world
- At the broadest range of stages of physical, social, emotional and intellectual development
- Stages of awkwardness and clumsiness due to growth spurts
- Continued brain development
- Changes in sleeping and eating habits and energy levels
- Young adolescents are often sleep deprived
- Proper nutrition and quality rest are crucial for the developing brain
Characteristics of the Adolescent Brain

• More prone to risk taking due to lesser ability to resist impulses
• Underdeveloped ability to take moral responsibility
• Less able to understand/anticipate consequences
• Increased social self-consciousness increases vulnerable feelings – social anxiety
Key Characteristics of Resilient Children

• Being socially competent
• Having effective problem solving skills
• Being autonomous
• Having a sense of purpose and future
Ways of developing resilience in children

• Caring and support
• High expectations
• Encouraging participation
Parent / PBC Partnership – unlocking the potential of every young person

• Setting high expectations – for learning, conduct and participation
• We need to establish an environment or culture that allows kids access and support, where they can feel secure and enjoy success
• Trusted guidance – “they are looking for real life role models and mentors who not only know the way, but also go the way, and can show the way”
• This generation are looking for a guide not a map e.g. encouraging participation and setting challenges – the “Why”
• A range of options and opportunities for students to be involved in - explore, participate and make the most of these to enrich learning
Some practical strategies for families

- Be the Parent – not the friend
- Set family goals e.g. Ask yourself “what do I want my kids to get out of this year?” - ref: Optima Plans
- Be well organised and have set routines
- Stay connected to our school / teachers
- Have a sense of humour
- Be vigilant – notice things
- Alter social activities to maintain engagement
Some practical strategies for families

- Certainty not severity
- Model appropriate language, attitudes and actions
- Criticise the behaviour but support your child
- No to alcohol / drugs
- Monitor internet / technology usage
- Negotiate social activities (i.e. parties / Thursday night shopping problems/no roaming streets)
- Supervise homework system
- Program balance – study / chores / family time / personal recreation time