



National Families Week

TEACHERS GUIDE





CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

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About Families Week

National Families Week, held from 15 to 21 May, aims to celebrate the vital role that families play in Australian society. This year, CatholicCare invites all schools in the Diocese of Wollongong to celebrate Family Week. This online toolkit, ***Making Moments Matter***, was developed by CatholicCare in collaboration with five student interns from the University of Notre Dame.

Making Moments Matter was designed collaboratively by an interdisciplinary group of student interns from the University of Notre Dame, Sydney Australia.

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How can teachers use our Family Week Resources?

The classroom activities for Families Week are targeted at various age groups and curricula. If the timing this does not suit your school's schedule, please feel free to use the activities another time. Making Moments Matter is designed to provide parents and teachers with ideas, activities, and resources that encourage family connectedness in the home and school community.

What are the desired outcomes?

By participating in Family Week, students will better understand the role they play in strengthening families and communities. The theme of making Moments Matter recognises the business of life and the kit aims to provide relevant resources and activities for whole school community, promoting family connectedness. After the week is over, please go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FW17> to give us feedback. Every school that gives feedback will go in the draw to win school supplies worth \$250.

Who is CatholicCare?

CatholicCare is the social services agency of the Catholic Diocese of Wollongong. Working with the whole community, CatholicCare supports people to:

- have positive relationships and connected lives;
- achieve the dignity of self-reliance; and
- realise their full human potential

CatholicCare advocates for social equality and prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable. Services include Counselling, Foster Care, Family Support Workshops, Ageing and Disability Programs and Support, Marriage & Relationship Education, Children's Contact and more. CatholicCare is an inclusive organisation committed to helping anyone in need regardless of religious beliefs.





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DAILY TIPS FOR THE HOME

Here is a tip for each day during National Family's Week, to go home via the Skoolbag app.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Compliment every member of your family.	Take a walk together.	Remember to say "Please", "Thank you", "I'm sorry", and "You're welcome."

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
When family members come home from school/work, greet them with a big hug.	Have a family night - everyone helps plan the meal & activities	Parents, spend some time alone with each of your children.	Go to Church together. Call grandparents and say "I love you"

Here are some other daily tips for families:

- Make cleaning a family project - help with dishes, laundry and garden
- Write a love note to a member of your family
- Write a love note to your grandparents
- Parents, read a story to your kids before bed
- Children, help out with chores before being told
- Make a list of all the blessings in your life. Share them at your family meal
- Pray together before bed
- At a family meal, talk about the best and worst things in your week
- Do something with your family to help others



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TECH FREE CHALLENGE

Who: Primary/ Secondary

Duration: 1 hour OR Whole day

What: Students and teachers eliminate all technology from the classroom and challenge themselves to be 'tech free' for a set amount of time. All technological devices are turned off and set aside. Teachers can add another element to the challenge by including all power based devices such fans, lights, smartboards etc..

Home Challenge: Students challenge family members to see who can go without technological devices the longest... Who will win?

Key Objectives

- Highlights the connections between the use of technology and its impact on time spent with family and community.
- Encourages students to spend more time with families and friends without the distractions provided by social media.
- Students contribute the community by reducing their use of technology/electricity.





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ROSE & THORN OF THE WEEK...

Who: Primary/ Secondary

Duration: Approx. 20 minutes

What: Students and teachers (one at a time) share the high and low part of their week at home.

Where: Anywhere other than work desks e.g. on the floor, outside etc..

Key Objectives

- Students reflect on their time spent at home.
- Builds a safe and supportive learning environment.
- Teachers take the time to take a personal interest in the students lives.
- Students and teachers become aware of what makes a students day a good day.
- Acts as a teaching tool for personalised learning.
- Students share the ritual at home to promote an open dialogue between family members no matter how busy life gets.



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GAME TIME

Who: Primary/ Secondary

Duration: Up to the teacher's discretion

What: Students bring in a favourite family game. This does not need to be a physical game, it can also be a verbal/word game. Students are then broken up into small groups where they will play each of their group members' games for a short period of time.

Optional: Families of students are invited to be involved in the games

Key Objectives:

- Students reflect on time spent with their families.
- Students spend time with peers and share cultural and family traditions.
- Students spend time after school at home playing some of the games they learnt with their families.



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3..2..1..ACTION! JNR

Who: Yr 2-6

Duration: Approx. 30 minutes - 1hour

What: Students get into small groups of approx. 4-6. In these groups, students will write down a memory with their families or community and put it in a box. Taking turns, each student will pull out a memory and try to draw or act it out to a different group within 2-3 minutes. After the group has guessed what the memory is, they must guess which student it belongs to.

Classroom Resources:

- Small pieces of paper to write memories on
- Pens/pencils
- Box
- If drawing memories, need markers and butcher's paper

Key Objectives:

- Students reflect on time spent with their families and community
- Students get to know each other better and about each person's family



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INSPIRING HERO

Who: Primary

Duration: Approx. 1 hour

What: Students research qualities about a family member or family friend who inspires them by completing a take home worksheet. The research can include pictures, quotes, or a sentence explaining why this person is inspiring to them. At school students create a collage or a drawing of their inspiring hero to share with the class.

(Click here for the resource)

Optional: Students can invite their inspiring hero to class.

Key Objectives:

- Students reflect on what qualities and characteristics inspire them in a person
- Students practice basic research skills
- Encourages students to be creative in their work
- Students spend time learning about a family member who they aspire to be like



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CLASSROOM STORYTIME

Who: Primary

Duration: Approx. 30 minutes

What: Choose from a range of recommended picture books with family themes to read with the class. **(Click here for the resource)**

Option 1: Students break off into small groups lead by an older buddy or mentor to read.

Option 2: Invite parents and carers to read to the class/small groups.

Key Objectives

- Strengthens the relationships between teachers and students.
- Narrative and storytelling stimulates the development of identity and self-awareness.
- Storytime facilitates for sharing and reflection on families (family diversity, family strengths, family issues)



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CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

MY OWN STORYBOOK

Who: Primary

Duration: At the teacher's' discretion

What: Students write and illustrate a book about their own family using the template.
([Click here for the resource](#)).

Students are encouraged to write about these ideas/themes:

- A page about each family member...their name, what they're like, their interests, what they do.
- Food my family eats
- Things my family does together (traditions, practices)
- Where my family lives
- A day in the life of my family
- Who is Jesus' family?

At the end of the week students can read their book to the class in a shared storytime session and are encouraged to take the book home to read to their families.

Optional: Older students can create their own storybook design e.g. comic book

Key Objectives:

- Students can reflect on their own families and some of the issues and strengths within families
- Sharing these stories with the class provides an understanding of the diversity of families from within the classroom community



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CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

MY JOURNEY JNR

Who: Primary

Duration: Approx. 15-20 minutes at the end of the class/week.

What: Students choose a prompt. Students then create a journal entry by drawing or writing a response to the prompt. This activity can be taken home. **(Click here for the resource)**

Classroom Resources:

- Pens, colouring pencils, workbook

Key Objectives:

- To help students gain an objective perspective on their relationship with their family, friends and their community.
- Practice creative and emotional writing skills
- Stress relief and make time to reflect.





CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

MY HEALTH, OUR HEALTH JNR

FIRST AID

Who: Primary

Duration: Approx. 45 minutes - 1 hour

What: Students learn the basic concepts of physical first aid using the resources.
(Click here for the resource)

Key Objectives:

- Help students learn about the importance of first-aid, and of being ready in case of emergencies until help arrives.
- Students should gain an understanding that there are vulnerable people within our community that may need our help, including younger siblings and grandparents.
- Students should test their knowledge and share what they have learnt at home.





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FAMILY INTERVIEW

Who: Primary

Duration: Approx. 30 minutes to share answers

What: Students take the worksheet home and ask their parents or other family members the interview questions. Teachers can give the students the opportunity to share their answers in class the next day. Students are encouraged to reflect on what they find surprising or completely new in their family members answers.

(Click here for the resource)

Optional: Suggest to students that they ask their parents to interview them with the worksheet also.

Key Objectives

- Encourage communication between family members
- Students will have the opportunity to develop communication skills
- Students can reflect on each member they interview and have the opportunity to learn something new
- Sharing the answers in class will reveal the diversity of families in the classroom community



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CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

Who: Primary

Duration: Approx. 10 -15 minutes

What: Teachers read out a Christian Guided Meditation Script provided to the students. The meditation has a Christian focus and aimed for primary ages students.

(Click here for the resource)

Resources

Website

- [Information on Christian meditation](#)
Useful website that provides more information and resources on Christian Meditation

Books:

- "Meditation with Children" by Laurence Freeman
- "Coming Home: A Guide to Teaching Christian Meditation to Children" Ernie Christie [*available at the resource centre in Wollongong*]

YouTube

- [Laurence Freeman youtube talk](#)
- Author and Priest Laurence Freeman discusses the benefits of Meditation

Key Objectives:

- Students have time to reflect and relax during the week, and distance themselves from technology and distractions
- Reduce the level of stress in the students' lives

The Christian focus assists with making a deeper connection to religious beliefs





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MY MOVIE

Who: Secondary

Duration: Approx. 90 minutes to watch movie (during home time) and 30 - 45 minutes in class

What: Students choose from a list of recommended family themed films. Students can use prompt suggestions provided to complete a written explanation about how and why they can relate to the story and/or the characters in the film. Students can be as creative and honest as they like and are encouraged to watch the film with their family and discuss the similarities and differences at home. **(Click here for the resource)**

Key Objectives

- Students identify with relevant characters and family situations
- Students are given a creative and honest platform to express how they feel about their family
- Encourages family time in the household
- Students can showcase writing skills without an assessment criteria



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MY HEALTH, OUR HEALTH SNR

PHYSICAL FIRST AID

Who: Secondary

Duration: Approx. 45 minutes - 1 hour

What: Students learn the basic concepts of physical first aid using the resource.
(Click here for the resource)

Key Objectives:

- Help students learn about the importance of first-aid, and of being ready in case of emergencies until help arrives.
- Students should gain an understanding that there are vulnerable people within our community that may need our help, including younger siblings and grandparents.
- Students should test their knowledge and share what they have learnt at home.





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MY HEALTH, OUR HEALTH SNR

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Who: Years 10-12

Duration: Approx. 45 minutes - 1 hour

What: Students learn the basic concepts of mental first aid using the resource.
(Click here for the resource)

Key Objectives:

- Introduce students to some common mental health issues and how to help friends and family who may be developing or experiencing mental health problems
- Students should gain an understanding that there are vulnerable people within our community that may need our help, including family members and friends.
- Introduce students to common mental health problems, and show them that there are simple and effective ways we can all help each other.



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MY JOURNEY SNR

Who: Secondary

Duration: Approx. 15-20 minutes at the end of the class/week.

What: Students choose a prompt to complete an ongoing journal. Each student can journal through modes of drawing or writing responses to the prompts provided.
(Click here for the resource)

Option: This activity can be taken home

Classroom Resources:

- Blank exercise book or visual arts diary
- Pens
- Coloured pencils

Key Objectives:

- To help students gain an objective perspective on their relationship with their family, friends and their community.
- Practice creative and emotional writing skills
- Student stress relief tool



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FAM-OLGY

Who: Secondary

Duration: Home time, discussed after in class for approx. 30 minutes - 1 hour

What: Teachers give the questions provided to students to take home to interview different family members, focusing on family history. Students may then bring findings to class for a short discussion on what they learned about their family.

(Click here for the resource)

Key Objectives:

- Students learn more about their family unit, how it's similar or different to how their parents grew up
- Students engage and connect with their family, reach other to extended family
- Spend time with family with the intent to learn more about the past





CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Who: Secondary

Duration: Approx. 10 - 15 minutes

What: Teachers read out a Mindfulness Guided Meditation Script to the students. These scripts have a focus on Mindfulness and aimed at secondary school students.

(Click here for the resource)

Resources:

Website

- [Guided meditation recordings](#) - Short (daily) mindfulness meditation recordings, targeted at teens

Suggested Apps students can download

- [Smiling Mind](#) - app/website with mindfulness meditation tools aimed at improving individual's mental health and wellbeing
- [Headspace](#) - app/website, meditation made simple through on-the-go training for your mind.
- [Stop, Breathe, Think](#) - app/website, meditation app focused on developing and apply kindness in your daily life through the process of; stop, breathe, think.

Key Objectives:

- As more students experience stress during school it is important they have time to reflect and meditate to calm themselves bringing them back to the present
- Students are also time-poor so it is important they can relax and have time to de-stress
- Students learn the importance of taking time for themselves, especially with the stress of exams and assessments



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CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

3..2..1..ACTION! SNR

Who: Secondary

Duration: Approx. 30 minutes - 1 hour during a class

What: Students will get into groups of 4-6. Each student pulls out a slip of paper which contains a family issue or type of family - and either draws or acts it out to the rest of the group, who have 2 minutes to try and guess it. Examples include single parent, foster care, and divorce. Each student takes turns to draw/act out a slip of paper until they are all finished. The class comes together and discuss possible solutions to improve the family issues. **(Click here for the resource)**

Resources:

- Box
- If drawing, need markers and butcher's paper
- Cut up list of family types and family issues provided in the activity resource kit

Key Objectives:

- Students learn about the different types of families in society
- Students learn about prominent family issues faced in our society
- Students identify ways to solve these problems and take them home to their families
- Promoting Catholic Care's Families and Communities program

