

30 May 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week we have celebrated Reconciliation Week. Our College has a strong connection to First Nations story, and we actively seek opportunities to deepen our connection to Culture and Community during this week and also across other times of the year. It has been wonderful this week to hear the sounds of Culture, to smell the smoke from the fire pit and to see the smoke pass over the College, knowing that it has healing and cleansing properties. Seeing the fire burning reminds us of our Smoking Ceremonies and the welcome that greets newcomers to our school. Our PE classes have played cultural games, Chemistry classes have wandered the gardens identifying plants and their medicinal properties, teachers have embedded First Nations perspectives in their teaching and students have had fun with competitions that have strengthened their understanding of historical events.

Our First Nations students began the week with an excursion to Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative where they gathered with Community to reflect on the trauma of the Stolen Generations and the power of 'sorry' to begin the process of Reconciliation. Participating in the Community Smoking ceremony was significant for our students and their allies. Spending time on Country at the You Yangs brought the Spirit of Bunjil near, resetting our students through connecting to the land and skies and their shared time together. It is important for wellbeing and personal identity that our First Nations students have opportunities to connect to Country and their Community.



Next Tuesday June 4 at 10am, we will hold our 2024 FIRE (Friends Igniting Reconciliation through Education) Carrier Commissioning Ceremony where we will welcome eight new FIRE Carriers. The role of a FIRE Carrier is to promote respect, fairness and inclusion for First Nations peoples. FIRE Carriers are leaders who share passion for learning about First Nations culture and history, are committed to sharing knowledge and they promote Reconciliation within and beyond the school community.

During the Commissioning, the FIRE Carriers will share the Covenant that they have written during their year of tenure. The Covenant reflects the school commitment, led by FIRE Carriers, and sets a path for future school actions which serve to nurture relationships between Australians. It is a significant achievement for our first FIRE Carriers to have articulated their commitment and, if you are able, we encourage you to join us for the Commissioning via the livestream link that will be sent on Tuesday morning. We anticipate the event to go for approximately 25 minutes.

Two community events that may be of interest to families are:



Journey on Wadawurrung Country Exhibition

This [exhibition](#) is on May 28th – June 16th at Grant Pavillion Torquay.

Journey through Wadawurrung Country from the perspective of Wadawurrung People, through imagery, sounds and their reflection of their life journeys and deep spiritual and strong connection to the land. Visitors will learn, listen and gain deeper understanding of the people and Country they live, gather, work and play on.



Reconciliation Week in the Park

At Johnstone Park in Geelong, a [FREE event](#) where everyone is welcome, from 10.00am - 3.00pm.

The day includes *Market @ Rec in the Park* - showcasing local First Nations artists creations, which are for sale.

[Iona Yarning Wood For Sale](#)

Since the building of Iona College began in 2019, there has been a need to clear trees so that a growing number of students can be accommodated. Throughout this process, we have been mindful of our impact on Wadawurrung Country, and consequently have embedded ritual and practice in recognition of the presence of these First People who cared for this land long before our school was built.

At the heart of the College grounds, is our Yarning Circle which honours the age-old practice of yarning used by First Peoples for thousands of years. We know that yarning circles are places of story, celebrating, sharing, learning and belonging. They are places where culture is preserved and passed to new generations. They are places of listening, where relationships are formed and strengthened.

The 'Iona Yarning Wood' project brings together the land on which the College stands and the tradition of yarning, by selling the wood that has been cut in the process of building our school. We hope that the purchase of 'Iona Yarning Wood' inspires people to gather with family and friends around the warmth of the fire. In this gathering, we encourage an exploration of 'Yarning questions' and in doing so lead you to celebrate, remember, learn and preserve stories for future generations.

We invite you to enter the spirit of story-telling that has existed for First Peoples for so long by purchasing a bag of Yarning Wood via the Canteen – Fundraising – Yarning Wood for \$20. Purchases can be collected from Reception on a date that suits you – please enter this detail at the Canteen Checkout.

Each bag of wood is sold with firelighters and a set of 'Yarning questions' written by our First Nations students and FIRE Carriers. The wood is a mixture of gum and melaleuca. Burn time for each bag of wood is 3+ hours. Proceeds of the sale of this wood will support Wadawurrung Community initiatives.

We are grateful to our Maintenance Team, Finance Team, FIRE Carriers and VET Active Volunteering students who have been busy working on this project. It has been wonderful to have a team of helpers to design the logo, write the story and 'Yarning questions', paint the bags, and split and bag wood. To get to the point of selling our 'Yarning Wood' has been an incredible team effort and we are enormously proud of all who have participated in the project.

We would love to see a photo of your yarning experience. Take a photo and tag us on Instagram [ionacollegegeelong](https://www.instagram.com/ionacollegegeelong) #ionayarningwood



Celebrating the Feast of St Columba

We will celebrate the Feast of St Columba next Friday June 7 (the actual Feast Day is Sunday 9th). A Catholic feast day is a day when we remember and celebrate someone who is important to our faith and, for our school, this is St Columba. Pope Francis suggests that "saints are not supermen who are 'born perfect', but rather are ordinary people who followed God with all their heart" and St Columba was one of those people.

St Columba was courageous. He left Ireland in disgrace after causing a bloody family feud because he illegally copied the Gospels and wouldn't give the copies back. He climbed into a currach, which is a little boat like the one on the base of our Iona Cross, and he paddled his way to the Isle of Iona. He built an Abbey and from there, he led his 12 followers to spread Christianity throughout Scotland, England and mainland Europe. It was hard to share faith in his time, a little like now, yet, he courageously did.

To celebrate St Columba, we are having a bush dance! Parents and Carers may have fond memories of "heel, toe, heel, toe, slide, slide...", but youngsters may have missed the fun and a bush dance is a lot of fun. Dancers need courage, just like St Columba. The bush dance will take place during the school day and students should wear their Sports uniform.

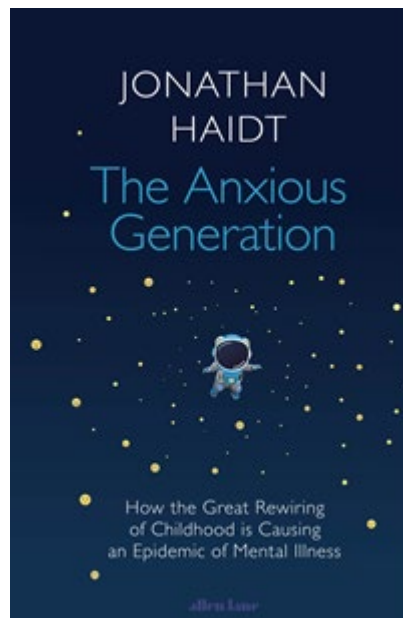
A great read for parents!

Jonathan Haidt a social psychologist based in the US has written a great book that I highly recommend. The *Anxious Generation* highlights how phones, high speed internet and social media have seen a decline in behaviour and mental health of our young people. It is a confronting read looking into the latest statistics and research around adolescent mental health and the use of social media by young people. Mental health is in decline (despite so many amazing programs and supports in the wellbeing space) and as parents and educators we are looking for ideas and strategies to reverse this trend.

He calls it '*The Great Rewiring of Childhood*' and proposes four norms that he wants society to adopt:

- No smartphones until high school
- **No social media until 16**
- Phone free schools (Iona locks phones away for the duration of the school day)
- More independence, play and responsibility in the real world.

Please if you get a chance have a read or watch him discuss some key points in this Daily Show interview. [Jonathan Haidt - "The Anxious Generation" | The Daily Show \(youtube.com\)](#)



Ms Kylie Power
Deputy Principal Wellbeing

Save the Date- Consent Labs Online Parent and Carers Workshop Monday 24 June

A huge thank you to Francesca from Consent Labs who facilitated our sessions with students this week. These workshops are crucial for fostering a safe and respectful school environment. During these formative years, students are developing their identities, forming relationships, and navigating social dynamics both online and in person. It is essential that we (parents and the College!) equip our students with the knowledge and skills to understand and respect personal boundaries. Educating our students about consent helps prevent misunderstandings and reduces the risk of harassment and assault. These evidence-based sessions promoted mutual respect, empathy, and communication, empowering our students to make informed decisions about their own bodies and relationships. Students were engaged in the sessions and appreciated these important discussions. We hope this leads to a broader culture of respect and safety not only in our College community but in the wider community.

Following on from our work with students we are offering an **online parent and careers session** on June 24 at 6:00pm. We encourage all parents to attend so that we continue to lay the foundations for healthy interactions throughout their lives.

Only 46% of Australian parents feel comfortable dealing with online risks their children face. Many parents feel that talking to their children about topics such as online safety, dating and consent is difficult. By attending this session we aim to:

- Explain best practices and evidence-based research that underpins ConsentLabs programs.
- Explore age-appropriate consent and respectful relationship education.
- Assist parents to start meaningful conversations with their young person with practical strategies and tips to assist you.
- Provide an opportunity to partner with the College to ensure a broader culture of respect and safety in our community.

[Please click on this link to sign up for this important event](#)



Maths at Iona

This week at Iona we are celebrating National Reconciliation Week. In line with this theme, I'd like to introduce you to First Nations Artist, John Patten.

John Patten is a Bundjalung and Yorta Yorta man with Anglo-Celtic ancestry, living in Melbourne Victoria, Australia. He was born and raised in Bundjalung Country, on the Clarence River, around the towns of Grafton, Yamba, and the remote Aboriginal community of Baryulgil.

Can you see the ideas of geometry, typical to Indigenous Australian art, in this painting?
As a family, you may like to discuss this artwork in relation to mathematical ideas, such as:

- What patterns do you see?
- What shapes do you see?
- How do nature and mathematics come together in this painting?
- How are parallel lines/curves used in this mural?
- Where else is mathematics present in John's painting?



I hope you all have a great week and keep looking for mathematics all around us!

Ms Lou Keating
Learning Area Leader Numeracy

Senior Football

Iona College's girl's football team showcased their skills at the GISSA Senior Girls Football Carnival held at St Joseph's Football Club on Thursday, May 23. Despite facing off against schools with stronger and more experienced Year 12 students, our Year 10 and 11 students competed fiercely. While they encountered initial setbacks against Sacred Heart and St Ignatius, the team rallied for an exhilarating victory against Christian College. Their perseverance led to Iona finishing 5th overall out of 7 competing schools. Coaches Andy Walscott, Tom Chalkley, and Jennie Gray praised the team's unity and determination displayed throughout the three matches.

The best players across the three games demonstrated outstanding skill and commitment to the team. Isabella Dunne showcased tenacious attack in the midfield, while Evelyn Calvert made huge defensive efforts at full-back and executed long clearing kicks out of the backline. Luca Fraser, the captain, led by example, dominating contests all over the ground. Mia Peselj exhibited quick and clean ball movement out of the midfield, while Alyssa Bromley's strong tackles and contests were instrumental throughout the day. Eady Sims showed impressive determination in her approach to the ball.. Additionally, Sophie Nolan was recognised as Iona's best player for her exceptional goals and efforts at centre-half forward.

Results:

Game 1 – Sacred Heart College 10.7.67 defeated Iona College 0.0.0

Game 2 – Saint Ignatius College 4.10.34 defeated Iona College 2.0.12 (Goals: Sophie Nolan, Millie Ludlow)

5th place play off (shortened game) – Iona 1.0.6 defeated Christian College 0.1.1 (Goal: Sophie Nolan)



ExSight Goal Ball Inclusion

On Friday May 24, students from Year 9 Recreational Pursuits and Year 10 Active and Able had the opportunity to participate in the ParaSport of Goalball with Rob and Callum from ExSight Sport.

Feedback from Rob and Callum highlighted the students' remarkable enthusiasm and positive demeanor. They praised the students' energy and optimism, acknowledging their impressive skill level, rapid understanding of the game, and willingness to engage despite challenging conditions.

Students noted the following highlights:

- being able to wear the blinding goggles
- actually having the opportunity to simulate being blind while playing a para sport.
- just a new experience and going way out of my comfort zone
- putting on the goggles and having a crack
- getting to play goalball and been showed how to play by pros
- Fun, very confusing and unique
- Highlight was trying to stop the ball and realising my hearing isn't the greatest
- Thought it was going to my head instead it hit my toes
- They are a group/ community of people who are very helpful and excited to share their views on the sport
- Rob and Callum are very good at communicating and will be good at any school



Year 9, 2025 Online Information Night- Update

Please note this event has been cancelled.

Tasty Treats for Geelong Viqueque Friendship Schools

Along with other Geelong Schools, 'The Month of May for Timor Leste', is a time to raise awareness and funds for GVFS so that they can support one of our closest neighbours by improving educational outcomes. You can help support this cause through the 'Cans for Scholarships' initiative or the Timor Routley's Pie Drive! 25% of total school orders made through the [Pie Drive Fundraising link](#) go directly to the GVFS Scholarship Program! These scholarships support young people to attend school. Order and pay through the online portal and you or your young person can collect your delicious goods at Iona on Thursday afternoon, June 6!



Addams Family Combined School Production

Tickets Still Available!

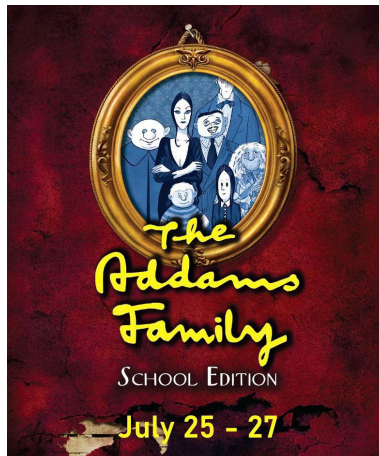
Don't miss out on the Combined School Production of The Addams Family!

Session Times:

- Thursday, July 25 at 6:00pm
- Friday, July 26 at 6:00pm
- Saturday, July 27 at 1:00pm and 6:00pm

Get your tickets now through Geelong Arts Centre - <https://geelongartscentre.org.au/whats-on/> and search 'The Addams Family'

Come and support our talented young performers in this fantastic show!





Term 2, 2024 Dates to Remember

Date	Event
Monday 15 April	Staff Professional Learning Student Free Day
Tuesday 16 April	Term 2 Commences for Students
Wednesday 17 April	Year 7 - 11 Cross Country
Thursday 18 April	ANZAC Day Commemoration Service - Formal Uniform
Thursday 25 April	ANZAC Day Public Holiday
Monday 29 April	Year 12 2025 Information Night - 6 pm Resource Centre
Thursday 2 May	Year 7 & 8 Digital Tattoo Information Parent Session
Monday 6 May	Year 11 2025 Information Night - 6 pm
Thursday 9 May	Music Soiree
Monday 13 May - Wednesday 15 May	Year 7 Camp 1 - Phillip Island
Wednesday 15 May - Friday 17 May	Year 7 Camp 2 - Phillip Island
Monday 20 May	Year 12 2025 Selections Due in
Friday 24 May	Year 11 2025 Selections Due in
Monday 27 May	Year 10 2025 Information Night - 6 pm Online
Monday 27 May - Wednesday 29 May	Year 8 Camp 1 - Lake Dewar
Wednesday 29 May - Friday 31 May	Year 8 Camp 2 - Lake Dewar
Monday 10 June	King's Birthday Public Holiday
Tuesday 11 June	Year 10 2025 Selections Due in
Friday 14 June	VCE Unit 1 Ends
Saturday 15 June - Sunday 23 June	Year 10 Central Australia Experience
Monday 17 June	VCE Unit 2 Commences
Tuesday 18 June	General Achievement Test (GAT) VCE Unit 3 and 4 Students
Tuesday 18 June	Year 7 Immunisations
Monday 24 June	Consent Lab Parent & Carers Online Workshop
Friday 21 June - Wednesday 3 July	Year 10 Indonesian Language Study Tour
Friday 28 June	Year 9 2025 Selections Due in
Friday 28 June	Term 2 Concludes - 2:05 pm
Monday 15 July	Staff Professional Learning Student Free Day
Tuesday 16 July	Term 3 Commences for Students

Thanks for your support.

Damian, Kylie and Melissa