



Woodlands International College

Junior College Newsletter

4 October 2019

Dear Woodlands Family,

The pressures our children face.

I was chatting to my teenage son recently, and he said, “Dad, you had it easy in your time. Life is much harder for a child now.” Of course I denied that strongly to him, but when I began to think about it, I suspect he was on the mark!

Today’s child is exposed to, and expected to participate in, many more activities and sports than I was at the equivalent age. I played soccer and cricket at primary school (girls played netball only...), and I loved sport. There was a little athletics, swimming and tennis, but really on a minor scale. We had one practice a week and one match. We still got home by the late afternoon (probably only twice a week), in time to do the very little (if any...) homework we were given. Activities like choir, drama, debating, music, karate, moto-cross, coding, robotics, etc., etc., were not part of our world. Mostly, our mothers were available to fetch us from school and give us lunch and their full attention for the rest of the afternoon (and I’m from a working class, government school background). That all seems very strange in today’s times of two working parents and aftercare (a concept which never existed in my time). In today’s world, two full-day working parents and aftercare are essential!

Anyway, back to the other pressures our children have to cope with. Extended and advanced academic programmes, where the Maths work my grade 11 son is doing is the exact same Maths I did at University! Our children have enormous pressure on them to achieve at a high level. What about the pressures social media bring? Imagine having to navigate Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp groups, YouTube, and probably many other social media platforms? Today’s child feels a need to “be involved”, “be part of the world around them”, which doesn’t mean actually being physically present. The world is also very aware of the increasing menace of cyber-bullying and its consequences.

Wow! Add all that up! Huge academic pressures, pressure to be more involved (over involved? ☺) in activities, social media pressures...
Short answer: today’s child does face huge pressure!

So remember, never, ever, give up.

Dr G Pienaar



We are sure you will notice the change in layout of our Newsletter today and in the coming weeks. We have tried to respond to your ideas in terms of making our Newsletter more user friendly.