



Ironbark Ridge PS

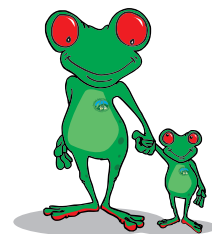
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Nurturing personal growth through inspired learning...



Newsletter 2021

Term 3 Week 9 10th September

Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful

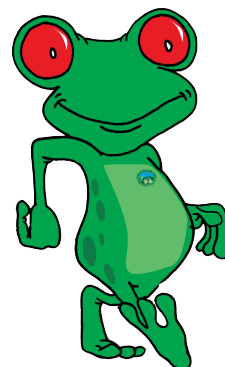
**** View our 'IRPS Events (Public)' calendar in the Parent Portal and Sentral Parents App ****

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Although working from home is now *possible* with the amazing technologies and tools our world offers, I'm sure it's not a long-term best-fit for the human race. We are naturally such social beings, with our ability to develop culture and interact through language setting us apart from the rest of the world's animal species. Are our online and virtual interactions as effective, through Zoom meetings and the 'chat' in MS Teams as they would be in person? I remain far from convinced.

Yuval Noah Harari, in his fascinating book *Sapiens*, puts the argument that the human race has been so successful on Earth due to our ability to 'gossip' (in his words). He is referring to our ability to form relationships of trust and interdependence with other people in our community. The importance of a handshake, of a pat on the shoulder, a high five, of physical contact and interaction, shouldn't be underestimated within this relationship-building process.

Nevertheless, during this time of being Ironbark Ridge Public School spread across almost 700 households in the local area it's never been more important for us to keep connecting with each other in whatever ways are possible. If Zoom is the best we can do then let's embrace it for now. Our students need to maintain their sense of belonging to the school and to each other, even though they are physically separated. We ask that you help them in every way possible to remember that we are all Ironbarkers!



Assessment

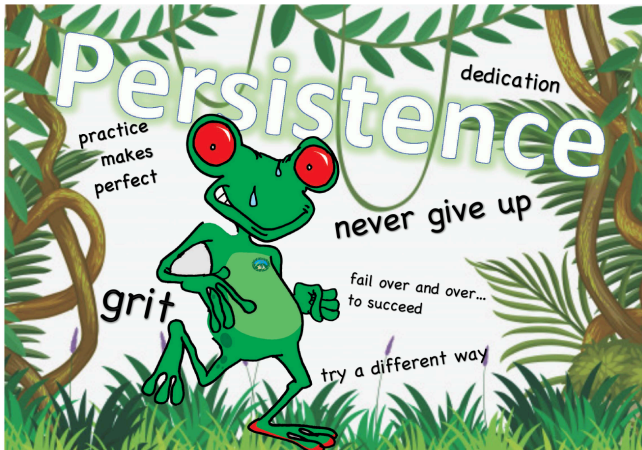
Early in Term 2 I wrote an article about the term 'Assessment', to try to dispel some myths and address the preconceptions you might have. *"Unfortunately when we hear the word 'assessment' we tend to immediately connect with the concept of tests and exams."*

The word 'assessment', in school, the classroom and educational contexts, simply means to measure. Perhaps we should focus on the verb 'to assess', rather than the noun 'assessment'. As mentioned previously, students in my class would begin the year by asking "Is this an assessment, Mr Thomson?" and I'd respond with "Everything in life is an assessment." After a while they got the picture and we began to discuss who the most important person in this process of assessment was. Initially students think it is the teacher... because they write the all-dreaded Report! Eventually we all come to realise that the most important character in the story of assessment is *ourselves*. We want our students at Ironbark Ridge to develop this 'assessment' capacity because then they will be more likely to ask for some feedback, and keen to make adjustments to their learning so they can grow and progress. They will be in charge of their learning journey!

While we are continuing to *Learn From Home* it is crucial that both students and teachers have the chance to see what can truly be achieved independently by each learner. For students, this is so they can find out what they need to learn! For our ever-assessing teachers, it is crucial in working out what to plan and design as future learning tasks. If our home attitude and understanding of assessment continues to focus on tests and exams, we will ruin the opportunity for teachers to perform *assessment for learning*, where their planning will best fit the students' learning needs. We will also miss the chance for students to experience *assessment as learning*, where they notice their own mistakes and ways they can make improvement... and ultimately control their learning journey. Sometimes our role as parent is to get out of the way and let our children fail. Scary!

Successful Learner Habit... Persistence

Persistence is critical in students overcoming new and difficult learning challenges. We all know the importance of practice and repetition in achieving mastery of a skill.



Students should be trying to develop the habit of not giving up, recognising times when they are stuck and using a different technique to solve a problem, of noticing even the small improvements and gains despite continued difficulties. Successful Learners will keep going with the knowledge that they are capable of success if they are willing to fail, fall over and still get back up to have another go. A slight change in technique might be all that is separating us from mastering a new skill.

While *Learning From Home* our young learners must adopt the motto of our local AFL club, the GWS Giants... "Never Surrender!"

Book Character 'Parade'

Next week we will celebrate Book Week at Ironbark Ridge PS. The power of books to take us into imaginary worlds and to expand our minds with new knowledge and ideas is something we hope all Ironbarkers get the chance to experience and love. Next week we should all model the joy of getting our noses back into a good book – relaxing, but also setting a great example for our children 😊

A fun event we usually hold during Book Week is our amazing Book Character Parade. Given that our students will be marching around their own homes in costumes this year we wanted a chance for them to be a part of a virtual parade. Students should wear their favourite book character costume to their morning class meeting at 9am and show it off to their friends. Maybe they'd like to bring their favourite book to the class meeting to show and briefly talk about? Please also make sure you take a photo of them in a suitable pose and upload it as a comment to the Facebook page that morning, or email your image to the school address:

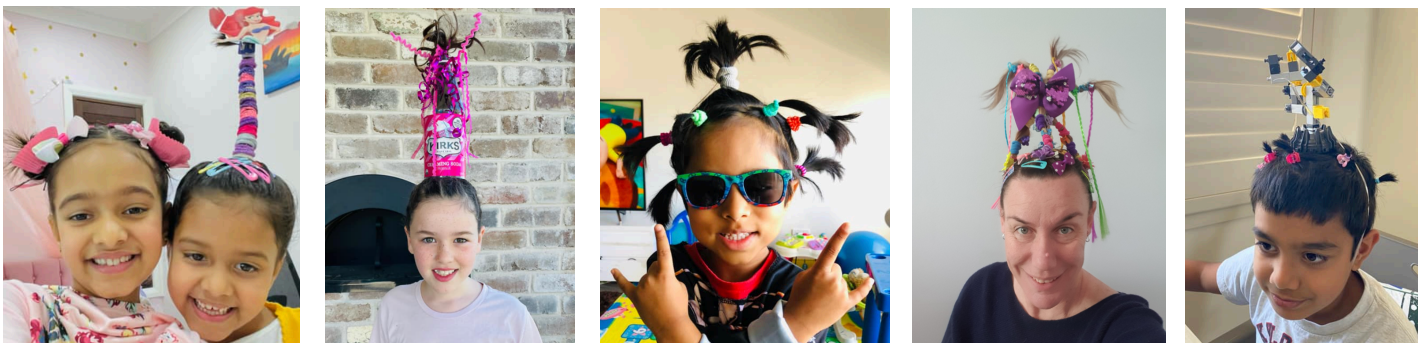
ironbarkrg-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Our wonderful Book Week team will construct an online slideshow/video of the whole school for you to enjoy as we reach the holidays – perfect viewing on the big screen in your homes. Check out our team's flyer later in this newsletter...

You make me feel like dancing!

The importance of exercise and active lifestyle in maintaining both physical and mental wellbeing is well researched and evidenced. Watching our 375 participants in this Wednesday morning's Crazy Hair Disco was such fun! Plenty were there to see their friends and have a laugh. Many young dancers saw the opportunity to get fit and expand their skills in dance. Ridgy the Frog tried hard but found a lot of the moves that Milo, our wonderful LIVE dance instructor, showed us very difficult... but that doesn't worry Ridgy. Getting better at dancing every time is Ridgy's goal and I'm sure everyone agrees Ridgy is improving with practice!

We hope everyone can join us again early next term for a final online disco before students return to learning in their classrooms 😊



There were a lot of very crazy hairstyles out there in Ironbark Ridge homes on Wednesday... even at Ms Withers' place!

R U OK?

This Thursday 9th September was the annual reminder day to check in on your friends and family and see how they are going. Are you OK?" can be a question, when honestly and patiently asked, that opens a great conversation about how our loved ones are feeling, especially during this time of lockdown and uncertainty. Ask your friends and family this weekend. Remember that stress is not necessarily a bad thing, with social research showing a direct link between high stress levels in employees with high meaning/purpose occupations. When we care about something we usually get more stressed by it!

Our sensational School Psychologist, Kristina Maggio, shared the following resources with us all:

For primary school students -

- R U OK? day video - <https://vimeo.com/594515979>
- How to be a good friend and ask R U OK? video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEKhTSagJ3I>

For parents/carers -

- Attached is a general R U OK? conversation guide
- Also attached is a shorter, four page poster guide on asking R U OK?
- Tips on how to stay connected during lockdown <https://www.ruok.org.au/stay-connected-in-lockdown>

Holidays

In a week we will take a well-earned break for a fortnight's holidays, returning to *Learning From Home* on Tuesday 5th October. Although none of us will enjoy a trip away or a day at the beach it's still important our students can refresh and recharge for Term 4. One way to allow this to happen even though we are still all at home will be to make a change in our daily and weekly routines. With time on screens currently very high for our children, less time spent on devices will be good too! Family time is the big winner with this lockdown, so be creative and help your children to enjoy their holidays together.

Perhaps some Ridgy the Frog craft??

Look out for colourful chalk Ridgys on the footpaths around your local area... and maybe some creative young artist could construct one in a local park from natural fallen materials for passers-by to enjoy!

Hehe!

Yours in the pure fun and wonder of learning,

Nick Thomson
Principal



DEPUTY PRINCIPALS' REPORT

Parents we want to thank you for another week of supporting our student's learning. As we continue to engage with technology for a few more weeks, a focus for our students is to remain safe when online.

Positive Behaviour for Learning When at Home

Our Ironbark Ridge students understand and are immersed in the language and expectations of Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL). It is an educational process that brings together the whole-school community to improve social, emotional, behavioural and academic outcomes for our children and young people. Being safe, respectful and responsible is attached to every aspect of our behaviour and learning at school. The language and understanding of PBL can easily be transferred to the home context, especially with the increased use of technology during learning from home.

How can I be safe, respectful and responsible during learning from home	
Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintaining privacy by not sharing my name, address or information with others onlineOnly sharing my passwords with my parents.Telling my parents or someone I trust if something online makes me feel uncomfortable.
Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Always being respectful to others online.Only using kind words.Only sharing information if I have asked permission.
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Joining the morning zoom online with my teacher to check in and know what is expected from my learning each day.Asking questions if I do not understand. I will need to be patient until my teacher can respond to my request.Doing my best in every task.

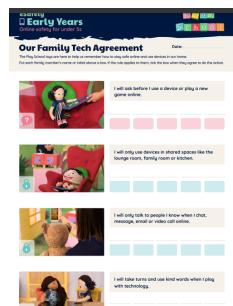
Cyber Safe Families

Along with the current restrictions and children engaging in increased screen time, it is crucial that parents are fully informed and can support their children to navigate the technological world. The eSafety Commissioner has many useful resources available for parents and carers, including Parent Webinars to learn how to help your child develop online safety skills. These webinars are designed for parents and carers of young people.

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/webinars>

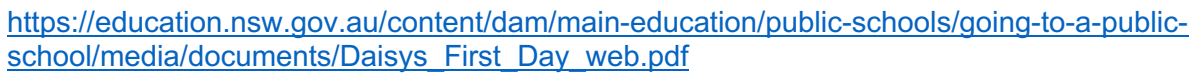
Webinars include topics such as eSafety's parent guide to popular apps. Parents can learn how to help young people safely use popular apps, including TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube. In Term 4 the eSafety will be conducting a parent guide to digital technologies and mental health and a guide to online gaming. Well worth registering! The eSafety Commission has also released an online safety kit for parents and carers, including evidence-based suggestions and trustworthy links to support you in staying informed and keeping your children safe online.

https://www.esafety.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-01/Our%20Family%20Tech%20Agreement_0.pdf



A further resource that may be helpful for your family is a Family Tech Agreement, a downloadable document and guide to help your family when online.

There is excitement in the air as we begin to plan for our Kindergarten enrolments for 2022. Due to the current restrictions, we ask that you please contact our friendly office staff either by phone or through our school email if you need any assistance completing the application or enrolment process.



As a result of the most recent advice from NSW Health regarding the duration of COVID-19 restrictions and the return to school plan, the Opportunity Class Placement Test scheduled for 6 October 2021 has been delayed. New testing arrangements for students will be announced by the Department of Education in the near future.

Creative Arts News

KINDERGARTEN CAPERS

Congratulations! We have almost made it to the end of a full term engaging in online learning. As a teacher/parent team we have learnt how to navigate new technologies and routines to enable the success of our kindergarten students and ensure that they have been able to continue their learning journey from home. We have been so proud of the commitment and persistence shown not only by our littlest learners but also by their amazing support team who have been there to help and encourage them each step of the way. While the online journey will continue into term 4, we can begin to look forward to bringing the learning back to the classroom and being together again.

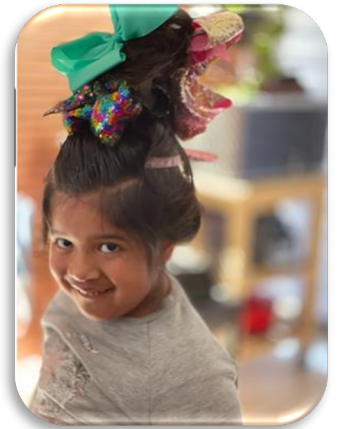
This week we had our *Crazy Hair Disco* over zoom, giving the kids an opportunity to connect with their peers through dance and fun. It was wonderful to see the creative hair styles our kindy kids rocked and the fun they had on the day. We hope that it provided a break from the normal routine and encouraged our families to take some time to be silly and de-stress.

Week 10 brings us to Book Week at Ironbark Ridge. This is a week we celebrate the books that we love and stories that inspire our imaginations. On Wednesday we encourage all our students to dress up as their favourite book character. Traditionally we would have a parade at school to show off our wonderful costumes. While we may not be together to do this, the show will go on and a virtual parade will be created from photos sent in from home. We look forward to seeing the creative costumes in Wednesday morning class zooms! Kindy teachers will be busy creating their costumes over the weekend.

As this is the last newsletter for the term we would like to wish you a happy and well-deserved break. We hope it gives families an opportunity to rest and reset ready for Term 4.

Stay safe!

ES1 Teachers



STAGE 1 SNIPPETS

We have had a creative time online learning as we head to the end of Term 3. Stage 1 used these creative skills for our science task. We have been learning about the different materials around us and their properties to create a safety device for poor clumsy Humpty Dumpty. The students then tested them out with a Humpty Egg Drop!



Ridgy held another fantastic Zoom disco and this time we had the chance to show off our crazy hair! Our Year 1 and 2 students did not disappoint with some amazing hairstyles and dance moves.



Our Ironbark Book Week celebration is next week Wednesday, 15th September. Students are encouraged to come to their class zoom meeting dressed as a book character of their choice. Please don't feel the need to order costumes – be creative and use what you already have at home. We would also love to have photos sent in to share in a virtual parade!

All our Stage 1 teachers are so proud of the Successful Learner Habits being shown by our students during online learning, and the dedication families are displaying to support their children. We thank you for your love and guidance during such a difficult time.

Stage 1 Teachers

STAGE 2 SNIPPETS

We hope all the Dads, Grandfathers, uncles, stepdads and carers had a lovely Father's Day last Sunday and you were able to get out, enjoy the sunshine and relax with your family.



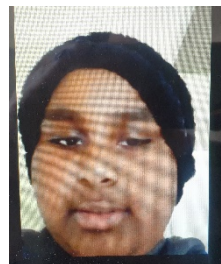
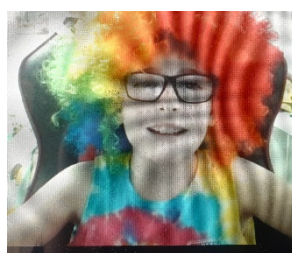
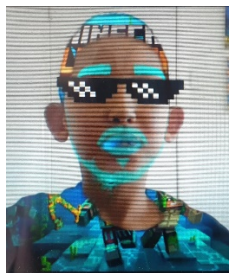
The last fortnight has seen many Stage 2 students watching and cheering on our Paralympians. 4Wow were excited to write letters of encouragement to their Paralympian pen pal, Tiffany Thomas-Kane. Tiffany competed in the swimming and IRPS's cheering, and letters did their job with Tiffany winning two bronze medals. Such an amazing achievement.



This week Stage 2 participate in an eSafety Webinar that taught children how to stay safe on the internet and when gaming. Some of the points highlighted included: never sharing personal information, making usernames random or generic, taking regular breaks from gaming, telling a parent if something is not right online, how to report bad behaviour and to always be responsible when online. These are all valuable lessons during this lockdown period when technology and the internet are a big part of our daily lives.



On Wednesday we had a lot of fun at our IRPS Crazy Hair Disco. We got out of our chairs, got our heart rates pumping and boogied to many popular tunes. We loved seeing all the crazy hair styles too. Thank you to all those who joined the zoom and got involved.



Book Week

Next Wed 15th September is our Online Book Parade. Students are encouraged to dress as a book character of their choice. Please don't feel the need to order costumes – be creative and use what you already have at home (or maybe even reuse a costume from last year) We look forward to seeing the students dressed up and guessing what character they are.

End of Term

With just 1 week till the end of term, the Stage 2 teachers would like to congratulate all our students for making it through 10 weeks of online learning. They have worked hard, amazed us and also made us very proud in this difficult time. Thank you also to the parents for all the support you have given your children and the teachers. We couldn't have done it without you.

Please make sure you take time in the holidays to rest, relax and recharge. And spend some down time with your family.

Wishing you a happy & safe holiday period.

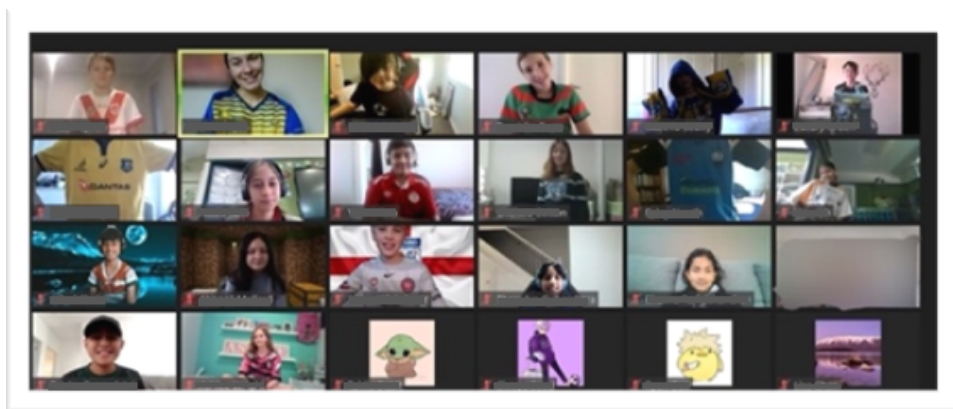
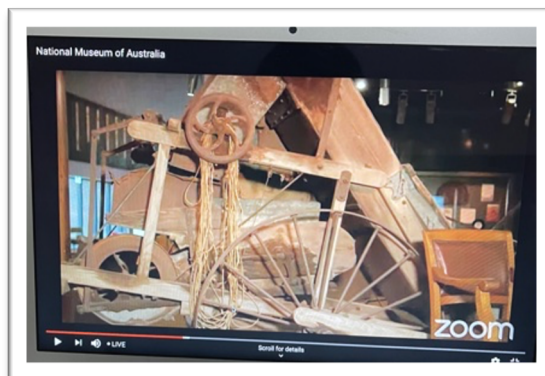
Stage 2 Teachers

STAGE 3 SNIPPETS

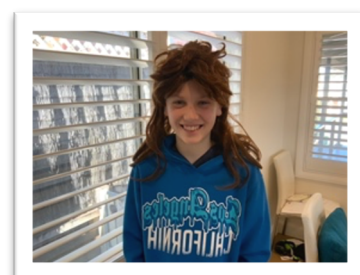
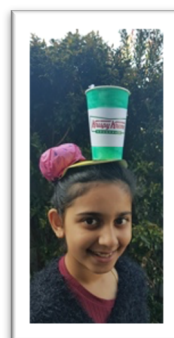
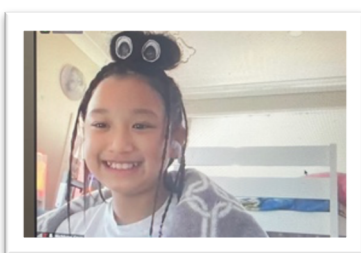
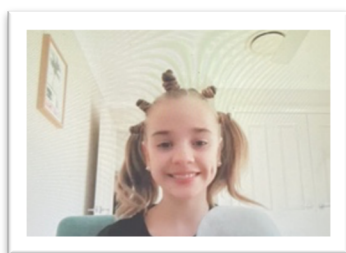
We are nearing the end of Term 3 and oh what a different term it has been! On behalf of all the stage 3 teachers, we would like to send out a massive thank you for all the continued support we have received from our Ironbark families during such a challenging time. The students have now completed 9 weeks of online learning and we could not be any prouder of them for continually using their successful learner habits to navigate through each day.

Week 8 saw many events and activities taking place. During the week, students had access to range of virtual Canberra excursions and learnt about all the different things Canberra has to offer. On the right, is a snapshot from the National Museum of Australia.

On the 3rd of September, was Jersey Day and a lot of students wore their favourite sporting teams colours or jerseys to support discussion around organ donation. Below is 6A wearing their jerseys during their morning zoom.



This Wednesday, it was fantastic to see so many crazy hairstyles for our Crazy Hair Disco! Students got to see each other over zoom and participate in lots of dancing. How fun! Check out some of the hair creations below.



A reminder that next Wednesday, the 15th of September, is our **book character costume day**. Despite there being no parade, students are encouraged to come to their morning zoom dressed in their costumes, as this is where they will be able to show off their designs. Students will be asked to upload a photo of their costume to Google Classroom so that their teacher can put a PowerPoint together to share.

The holidays are a great time to rest, relax and recharge. Please stay safe and enjoy some down time with your family. We can't wait to see you all refreshed and ready for Term 4!

Stage 3 Teachers



VIRTUAL BOOK CHARACTER PARADE

**BOOK WEEK THEME
OLD WORLDS, NEW WORLDS, OTHER WORLDS**

Week 10 - Wednesday 15th September

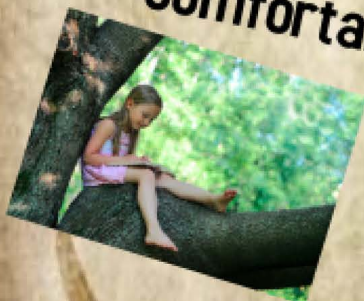
**Please be in costume for class Zoom
Teachers will remind you.**



Dress up as your favourite book character



**Read a book in a favourite place - up a tree,
by the fire, curled up in a
comfortable chair - your choice!**



**We will let you know where to upload a photo
of yourself reading your favourite book or
dressed up as your favourite character.**

LET'S DO THIS

Know the facts! COVID-19 vaccines

What is the Delta variant?

The current outbreak in NSW is due to the Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus.

The Delta variant is estimated to spread more than twice as **easily** as the original virus, which puts your family and friends at greater risk if you are infected. The Delta variant can also cause more severe illness:

- The risk of needing hospital care for people infected with the Delta variant is around double that of those infected with the Alpha variant.
- Compared to other variants, people infected with the Delta variant are more likely to be admitted to hospital, including to intensive care.

What COVID-19 vaccines are available?

Three vaccines are currently approved for use in Australia: the Pfizer (Comirnaty) vaccine and the AstraZeneca (Vaxzevria) vaccine are available now. The Moderna (Spikevax) vaccine will be available soon.

Do COVID-19 vaccines actually work?

Yes! Australia can rely on evidence from around the world showing that vaccines are very effective against COVID-19, including the highly contagious Delta variant.

Two doses of a vaccine:

- Reduces the chance you will be infected with COVID-19 by around 60% - 80%.
- Gives you around 90% protection against hospital admission or death from COVID-19 if you are infected.
- Significantly reduces the overall spread of COVID-19 to others.

COVID-19 is very dangerous and spreads quickly. Even if you don't have symptoms or get sick, you can still pass the virus on to others. Vaccination will protect you and help reduce the spread. Getting vaccinated also helps to protect your family, your friends and your community.

Have COVID-19 vaccines been developed too quickly to be safe?

No! COVID-19 vaccines are built on decades of research, with scientists from around the world working together to ensure no scientific testing or approval steps were skipped.

All the vaccines available in Australia have been approved for use by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). The TGA checks vaccines for safety, quality, and effectiveness.

I'm young and healthy, do I still need to get vaccinated?

Yes! Over half of those with COVID-19 in NSW are under 40. Many young people have been admitted to hospital and even intensive care because of COVID-19. You should get vaccinated to protect yourself, your family and friends.

COVID-19 spreads easily, and the Delta variant spreads more than twice as easily as the original virus. It can also cause more severe illness in those that get it. Vaccination will help protect you and those you love.

Should I get vaccinated even though I could still catch or spread COVID-19?

Yes! COVID-19 can cause severe disease and death at any age but is particularly risky for older people and those with existing health conditions. Two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine gives you around 90% protection against hospital admission and death from COVID-19 if you are infected. It also helps reduce spread to others.

Severe COVID-19 can lead to a person needing care in hospital, and for some, intensive care is needed. If lots of people need hospital care at the same time it could put a lot of pressure on hospitals and the health system. Vaccination helps to limit the number of people with severe disease who need hospital care, helping to keep hospitals open for those who need them for other reasons.

Are there dangerous ingredients in COVID-19 vaccines?

No! The TGA considers the safety, quality and effectiveness of every component in a vaccine before it is registered for use in Australia. Components in the available COVID-19 vaccines are listed on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods. The components vary depending on the type of vaccine but may include:

- a piece of genetic code (mRNA), or
- a very small dose of a weakened virus and a piece of genetic code (DNA), or
- a protein component of the virus
- a substance to boost the immune response (an adjuvant)
- a small amount of preservative
- sterile saltwater (saline) for injections.

None of the COVID-19 vaccines approved in Australia:

- contain egg or animal products
- can affect or interact with your DNA in any way
- contain anything that can track you
- are unsuitable for people based on religious or faith requirements.

Does the risk of a serious side effect mean I shouldn't get vaccinated?

No! All the COVID-19 vaccines approved in Australia have good safety profiles and millions of doses have been given safely, protecting people from COVID-19.

All medicines have possible side effects, but the chance of a severe side effect from a COVID-19 vaccine is extremely low. Compared to the risks of getting COVID-19, the benefits of the vaccines are clear.

The protective benefits of vaccination against COVID-19 far outweigh the potential risks. It is recommended that people 12 years and over get any COVID-19 vaccine available to them as soon as possible. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are approved for those aged 12-17 years old, and all three vaccines are available for people aged 18+.

Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I am pregnant, breastfeeding, or trying to get pregnant?

Yes! You can get vaccinated if you're pregnant, breastfeeding or trying for a baby. There is no scientific evidence to suggest COVID-19 vaccines affect fertility. If you are pregnant, you should get vaccinated now.

Pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. Vaccination reduces the risk of severe disease and helps to keep you and your unborn baby protected. The vaccine cannot give you or your baby COVID-19.

Will I need to get a 'booster' shot?

Maybe. Studies are underway to better understand how long the vaccines will provide protection against COVID-19, as well as how well they protect against new variants of the virus. This evidence will help to inform whether a booster (or third dose) will be needed to maintain the best possible protection against COVID-19.

How do I book?

Book now online - www.nsw.gov.au

Call to book: 1800 57 11 55 / Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS): 131 450