Okay, so I know this article is not going to win me any ‘Father of the Year’ awards, but for those of us who grew up in the 1970s or 80s, what I had to witness at the local baths while taking my kid for a swim this week should convince us more than ever, that if we do not change our approach to what constitutes a ‘safe environment’ for our kids to grow up in, this generation is going to turn into a bunch of blancmanges before they hit puberty.

Back in the day when the closest thing to sunscreen was a bottle of baby oil and water only came from taps, jumping off the high board at the local baths was a rite of passage for most kids. I don’t think we were any braver or tougher than kids of today. But we were certainly more resilient. Many of us knew the total fear of walking up the stairs to the high board, out along the wobbly board to be faced with that knowledge which would be with us for a life time. ‘Gee things look a lot easier from the side lines than they are in real life.’

But somehow, one by one, eventually we all jumped, felt our hearts rise to our throats and our footy shorts or speedos disappear up our bums. And from the moment we surfaced, life was never quite the same. Some chose not to jump and learned the valuable lesson that they did not have to prove themselves; others jumped only once to learn they did not want to do it again; some kept jumping even though they hated it and others just wanted to find the next highest board.

So some 30 years later, here I am at the local pool watching my kid getting ready to jump off the high board. I think I’m more nervous than he is. But looking around, I don’t know why. There are three life guards attending the board. And from the moment we surfaced, life was never quite the same. Some chose not to jump and learned the valuable lesson that they did not have to prove themselves; others jumped only once to learn they did not want to do it again; some kept jumping even though they hated it and others just wanted to find the next highest board.

There are about ten kids in the queue. One at a time the ground monitor lets them go up the ladder to the board monitor. Some stride out confidently and jump, looking instantly for approval as they surface. Mums clap and friends cheer. Others take for ever. Standing on the edge looking down and they do one of two things.

They either jump, or they turn back and do what used to be known as the walk of shame. They go back down the ladder. The kid before my son decides not to jump and on the second last step off the ladder, he slips and grazes his knee. There are tears, there are parents, there are mates, but worst of all the board is closed while a lifeguard with a first aid kit treats a grazed knee and writes a report!

Suddenly I’m very angry and I realise what hurt me so much when reading last week’s Herald Sun. I think any of us (and there were a lot) who were abused in the 70s or 80s will get what I’m about to say here. How is it that in this world which can put three guards on a diving board at the local pool and treat a kid with a grazed knee like a war wounded soldier, we can’t get adequate support for kids in real crisis?

In my opinion the answer is this. We are not interested in solving real problems but rather in covering them up. There was a time when grazed knees, broken arms, black eyes and a sprained ankle were just part of the journey. Now they are an overblown catastrophe which leaves no room for ‘real’ issues to be addressed. Issues like the breakdown of DHS and the government’s failure to protect kids in their care. It is not good enough. It is wrong and people need to let politicians know this. Meanwhile the kid with the knee is about to be transported on a blow up medi-vac bed to the waiting chopper with 6 nurses (Ok slight exaggeration there). And my kid is next up to jump. He climbs the ladder, looks down at me, walks out onto the board, peers over the edge, looks to me again and edges forward with hesitant steps...

Does he jump? Well to be honest, I’m not going to say because it doesn’t matter. What does matter is that the kid is my hero. I love him with all that I am and more. He is my best mate and I will sit here for as long as it takes for him to jump...

But he will jump. That is a lesson in safety I owe him and one I believe has to be taught.
Every Friday the main hall seamlessly becomes the stage for Carnegie Game Show. Each week the competition becomes fiercer. Somewhere between a battle of the sexes, your Nanna’s bingo night and a Gladiatorial show down, contestants compete in events such as ‘Pictionary’, ‘What song is that?’, ‘Turning Japanese’ ‘Match the Lyrics’, ‘Whose Pants are Those?’ and ‘(Don’t) Say My Name’. While the results of Pictionary put forward a strong argument for compulsory Art lessons, other games suggest that music knowledge and lyric memorising should become a VCE subject.

Term I

With 2 camps down and a big chunk out of our DECV studies under the belt, Term 1 draws to an end. It has been a term where many of us have had to get honest around what we want to achieve in life, what we need to do to achieve it and what behaviours are holding us back. We would like to acknowledge the students for the support they have offered each other in facing and moving through these challenges.
Valley Camp

Valley Camp will run from Tuesday April the 1st until Thursday April the 3rd. Monday is a school day and students are required to attend. Thursday is the last day of term and students will be dismissed from camp on return to Melbourne. If you have any more queries in relation to camp, please contact Hannah

hannah@ce.edu.au

DECV

This term we have run a number of catch up sessions to support students in the completion of DECV work. We understand the necessity of these for a number of students who are not at the stage where they can make regular submissions. However, we also continue to focus on goal setting around regular submissions. Whilst some people work better under pressure and close to deadlines, it is also important to develop consistency around work and attendance. DECV is a framework from which we assist students in developing these skills.
Important Dates

Term 1
- Tues 1st April – Thurs 3rd April: Valley Camp
- Thursday 3rd April: Term 1 Concludes

Term 2
- Friday 18th April: Good Friday
- Monday 21st April: Easter Monday
- Tuesday 22nd April: Term 2 Commence

Birthdays

March held no actual birthdays for the Carnegie crowd so instead we celebrated two honorary birthdays from the summer holidays. Happy birthday to our oldest and youngest student.

Liam enjoyed a “cake” made completely out of fresh fruit...sugar free, egg free, dairy free, gluten free...cake free!

Josef on the other hand celebrated with an oreo ice cream cookie sandwich cake...sugar full, dairy full, gluten full and full of cookie cakey goodness!
Good things come to those who wait! Patience is a virtue.