



CONNECTIONS

STUDENT WELLNESS CENTRE

2023 HANDBOOK

OUR MORAL PURPOSE

Our moral purpose is to foster positive relationships so that all learners can *flourish* and feel a sense of belonging at Centenary State High School.

OUR CONNECTIONS TEAM

Our Connections Team consists of two Guidance Officers, a School Psychologist, a School Chaplain, a School-Based Youth Health Nurse, and our therapy dog and happiness hound, Betty Centenary.

The Connections Team provides a free, confidential*, developmentally and culturally appropriate service for all young people attending Centenary State High School.

	<p>Sandi Wright</p> <p>Years 8, 10 & 12 Connections WH.03 swrig273@eq.edu.au</p>	<p>Guidance Officers provide support to students across all year levels, including: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• advocating for students and providing individualised support to manage mental health and wellbeing issues• undertaking counselling when appropriate• referral to external services as necessary• conducting psychoeducational assessments• engaging in complex case management processes with students, families/ carers, school staff and external stakeholders• providing support with SET planning and career counselling.
	<p>Nicole Trembath</p> <p>Years 7, 9 & 11 Connections WH.02 ntrem1@eq.edu.au</p>	
	<p>Lucinda Ware</p> <p>School Psychologist Connections WH.04</p>	<p>The School Psychologist works to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• support students who present with mild to moderate issues, including mental health concerns e.g., anxiety and depression; personal relationships; stress; and trauma and crisis• collaboratively engage with school staff and other external supports as appropriate.
	<p>Chappy Emma</p> <p>School Chaplain Connections WH.01 ehauk1@eq.edu.au</p>	<p>The School Chaplain works to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the wellbeing of students and the school community• Provide students and staff with social, emotional and spiritual support, provide an additional adult role model in the school• Enhance engagement with the broader community including parents
	<p>Sarah Kelly</p> <p>School-Based Youth Health Nurse GS.29 nurse.centenary@health.qld.gov.au</p>	<p>The School Nurse can support young people by education them around: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• healthy eating and exercise• body image• sexual health• mental health• personal and family problems• relationships• smoking, vaping, alcohol and other drugs.

OUR HAPPINESS HOUND

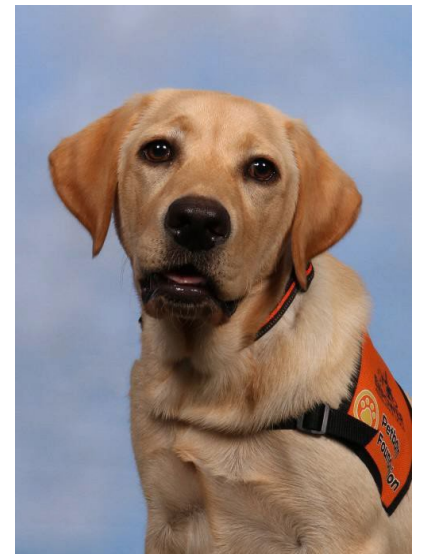


Betty Centenary joined our Connections Team in Term 2 2023. Betty has been ethically bred, with specific breeding traits including high compliance and a stable and robust temperament, ensuring she is able to adapt comfortably to new and ever-changing environments.

Betty completed her initial training as a therapy dog with Empower Assistance Dogs. This organisation continues to provide ongoing accreditation for Betty, and support and training to her handlers, Gayle and Nicole.

There is an abundance of research to support the use of therapy dogs in schools, to support academic learning and emotional and wellbeing support. Betty works with our Guidance Officers to: -

- reduce stress, anxiety and feelings of loneliness by offering unconditional love, comfort, and a non-judgmental presence, to improve emotional wellbeing
- elevate students' mood, increase relaxation and promote a sense of happiness, thus creating a positive and calming atmosphere at school, helping students to feel more at ease
- alleviate stress from academic pressures and personal challenges through the act of petting Betty (research shows that petting a dog is known to lower cortisol levels, a hormone associated with stress)
- serve as a catalyst for social interaction among students and support staff
- improve focus and attention in the classroom and improve cognitive abilities, leading to better academic performance
- involve students in her care, and to teach responsibility and accountability, empathy and compassion
- support student attendance.



Our Connections Team are aware that not everyone likes dogs, may have an allergy to dog hair or saliva, or may be scared of dogs. Please be sure to let our Team know if we need to remove Betty from our office space during your visit.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE VISITING CONNECTIONS



Our conversations are confidential*, *except if we are concerned for your safety, or the safety of someone else, or if you give us permission to share information.* We will not speak to your parents/ carers about our conversations except if we have these concerns, or you provide us with permission to share information.


Our service is opt-in, meaning that you can choose whether you would like to speak to one of our Team members, and you can withdraw your consent at any time.

We require written consent to work with you over an extended period of time. Depending on your age, you or your parent/ carer can provide this consent.

We provide a non-judgmental, free, inclusive and culturally sensitive service to students of all ages and genders.

OUR REFERRAL PROCESS

Our goal at Connections is to ensure that all students who want to access mental health, wellbeing support and career counselling, can easily access this support. We accept referrals from students, parents, teachers and external providers (with consent) using a range of modes.

GUIDANCE OFFICER	SCHOOL CHAPLAIN	SCHOOL NURSE
<p>Option 1 – use QR code in diary (page 4) outside school hours to make a referral</p>  <p>Option 2 –complete a referral from the school’s Sharepoint page</p> <p>Option 3 - email GO directly</p> <p>Option 4 – ask your HG Teacher to email the GO</p> <p>Option 5 – visit Connections before school, or at AM or PM break</p>	<p>Option 1 - referral through GO</p> <p>Option 2 – visit Connections before school, or at AM or PM break on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays only to see the School Chaplain</p> <p>Option 3 – email Chappy Emma to arrange an appointment</p>	<p>Option 1 - referral through GO or School Psychologist</p> <p>Option 2 – visit the School Nurse at GS.29</p> <p>Option 3 – email Sarah to arrange an appointment</p>

All referrals to access the School Psychologist are managed by the Guidance Officers. It is expected that the school does NOT manage a waitlist. Students have weekly or fortnightly appointments with the School Psychologist, based on needs, and generally engage in 8 – 12 sessions. No Medicare Card is required.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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