

# The Rockhopper Toolkit:

## Finding your Feet During Times of Change

### What is the Rockhopper Toolkit?

The Rockhopper Toolkit is a learning resource to support the social-emotional wellbeing of primary school students during the on-going Covid-19 pandemic. Taking inspiration from rockhopper penguins, the toolkit takes a fresh, fun approach to learning how to adapt to change and uncertainty.

The Rockhopper Toolkit is drawn from the highly successful Seasons for Growth psycho-social education programs, which support children, young people and adults to learn about and adapt to change and loss in their lives. Like all Seasons for Growth programs, the Toolkit is underpinned by research evidence about what works best in supporting children through difficult times, including the most recent advancements in resilience science. Reflecting a quarter of a century of knowledge and practice wisdom, the Toolkit helps to ensure young people's experiences of the pandemic are listened to and recognised.

The year 2021 coincided with the 25th anniversary of the first Seasons for Growth program. To mark this milestone, the toolkit continues to be made freely and universally available.

### Who is the Rockhopper Toolkit suitable for?

The Rockhopper Toolkit is a universal, psycho-social education tool, suitable for children aged approximately 6-11 years. However, it does not replace professional mental health and / or social services support for those who need it.



### How can the Rockhopper Toolkit be delivered?

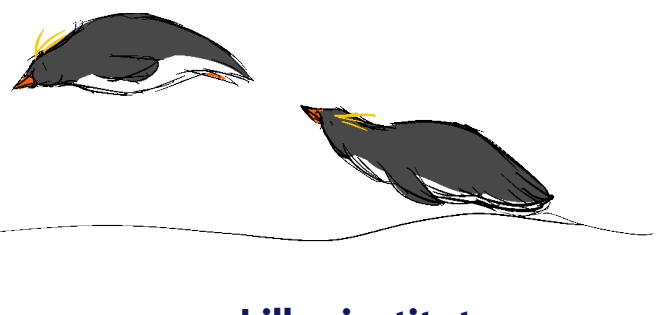
The Rockhopper Toolkit has been designed to be easy to implement by teachers or other support staff in schools, delivered through a series of three short videos:

**Session 1** Meet the Rockhoppers;

**Session 2** Happy Rocks and Challenging Feelings;

**Session 3** Making Friends with Frustration.

It is important to remember that social-connectedness is a critical component of wellbeing and resilience. Facilitating the session and discussions in a safe, fun and empathic learning environment is as critical as the content itself.



# What needs to be prepared ahead of the Toolkit sessions?

## Key to successful delivery is a space equipped with:

- \* A laptop or computer connected to a projector or smart board capable of displaying the video files;
- \* Internet connection and permission to access YouTube;<sup>1</sup>
- \* Comfortable seating. Children will need access to a desk and a pencil or pen for Sessions 2 and 3.

## Session 1 requires:

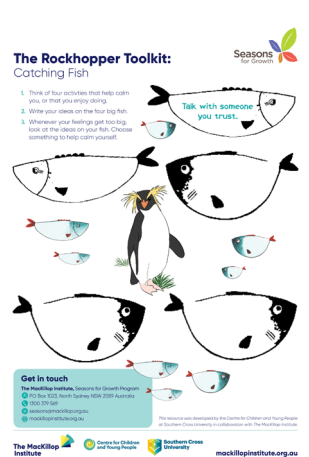
- \* The above equipment, nothing else

## Session 2 requires:

- \* A soft ball
- \* A copy of the 'Happy Rocks' and 'Fishing Rockhopper' templates for each student (downloadable here).



If time and resources allow, you could bring extra creativity to the template activities. For example, making rockhopper and fish mobiles, a rockhopper display in the classroom, or go for a short nature walk to collect special stones (if the collection of stones is permitted).



## Session 3 requires:

- \* One copy of the Rockhopper Puzzle (downloadable here). Print the puzzle template onto thin card and cut out each puzzle piece. Identify a space in the classroom where the puzzle pieces can be moved around and seen by all of the children (for example, with magnets on a whiteboard, or Blutac on a blank wall). Keep the puzzle pieces hidden from the children until required in the session.
- \* A small piece of scrap paper for each student (1/4 A4 size is about right).
- \* A small strip of fresh paper for each student (about 1 cm wide and 20cm long).
- \* Sticky tape
- \* A small amount of water in a suitable container (such as a plastic bin, bucket or large wooden bowl). (N.B. The children will be asked to put their scrunched-up pieces of scrap paper in the water. You may want to place the bowl / bucket on a waterproof surface. You will need to dispose of the wet paper afterwards).



 The sessions include links to Youtube clips of real rockhoppers filmed for the world-renowned series, Penguins: Spy in the Huddle and BBC Wild Patagonia. The clips have been carefully selected for suitability and are shown on the copyright holders' official channels (e.g., BBC, PBS Nature).

<sup>1</sup>There are no advertisements during the short clips but, as is standard on Youtube, an advert may appear before the video clip begins. You may wish to cover the projector for a moment while the advert plays and then fast forward to the relevant starting point if required (indicated in the sessions).

*This resource was developed by the Centre for Children and Young People at Southern Cross University in collaboration with The MacKillop Institute.*

## Get in touch

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