

Lights Out

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Masculinity in the 21st Century: Part 1

The Personal Evolution of a Professional Educator

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I imagine my grandfathers to have been **Men 1.0**.

My paternal grandfather - Walter Percival Thurber - was a self-taught engineer. These were slide-rule days that relied more on being clever than computer-literate. He was also a decent enough artist that he was able to forge a counterfeit diploma attesting to his non-existent degree and land a job with Water Services Laboratory, where he worked for more than 30 years.

My maternal grandfather - Henry Austin Lederer - came from a wealthy German, Jewish family that lost almost everything in the Great Depression. Back in the days when family connections or influential letters earned young men a spot in a top college, Austin attended Williams College, married a waspy belle from Virginia, and binged on bananas for a week so he could make weight for the US Navy.

They might have had neurotic habits, panic attacks, or identity crises, but it seems unlikely. As Men 1.0, I imagine my grandfathers to have had clear visions of themselves as breadwinners, soldiers, and patriarchs. They were not caricatures of masculinity, like Lou Farrigno's *Incredible Hulk* or R. J. Reynold's *Marlboro Man*. Their brand of masculinity had nothing to do with pecs or smoke. It had to do with knowing their place in the world.

That certainty, as illusory as Walter's formal education and Austin's socioeconomic status, was manly. It was as if their Y chromosome was all the why they needed. If they wanted something, they just freaking found a way.

Men 2.0

My father was born in 1939 and he represents Men 2.0. He may have started with the same clear idea of masculinity. But then a wave of anti-war, anti-government, anti-establishment ideas-designed to liberate both men and women-swept the country. Masculine became a dirty word to some, synonymous with sexual violence and the subjugation of women. You couldn't be a man without also being a criminal...or at least a suspect. In response, many men morphed into drumming, sensitive, egalitarian scholars.

Many men, like my dad, lost their decisive Masculinity 1.0 for a while. Neither the Hippie Love Man, nor the Primeval Cave Man, nor the Equality Guilt Man fit men like my dad comfortably. Was he bold and decisive or bashful and deferential? He alternated between taking me and my brother to *James Bond* movies and advising us to avoid the professional trap he had fallen into. He had wanted to be a priest, but became a doctor almost entirely because it fitted his socialized idea of masculinity. That included being a rescuer, a husband, a breadwinner, and a father, in roughly that order.

But when shoe-horning themselves into the Men 1.0 mould caused too much pain, and donning the Men 2.0 cloak felt drifting or disingenuous, men like my dad foundered. They got divorced, got remarried, changed political parties, found religion, eschewed religion, bought guns, sold guns, switched jobs, and started volunteering. Now they are Men 3.0, but they don't advertise it, lest their renovated masculinity come under fire, as it did in the latter part of the 20th Century.



Version ME.1

So what am I? Unmoulded from an androgynous hippie cast, I nevertheless played baseball and football and slow-danced with girls in middle school. Encouraged from a young age to buck the Boy Code, I also sang, acted, and played piano. Only when I was told, at a feminist rally freshman year, that my penis made me a potential rapist did I begin rethinking my manhood. Was I automatically, anatomically evil?

I knew in my head that I was not violent, but it took a few years to push past the strident assertion of some late-80s feminists that masculine was inherently malicious. After that hurdle, what did I become? I married a wonderful woman in 1997, had two beautiful boys in 2002 and 2004, and until a few years ago I would have told you that being masculine meant being a husband, a father, and a brother, with the freedom to pick my profession, hobbies, mannerisms, and beliefs.

Then I met my first transgender student and saw first-hand that gender identity and genetic sex really could be divergent. Years before, during a postdoctoral fellowship at a Level One trauma center in Seattle, I had realized that the presence or functioning of physical equipment was irrelevant to manhood. I understood that masculinity was a cognitive construct. Now I realised that masculinity was more self-determined than I had imagined. To some people, this was liberating; to others, it stirred great anxiety.

Even more upsetting to many of the adolescents I see clinically has been the transformation of sexual intimacy from a spontaneous pleasure within the confines of a secure attachment to an intentional process of stepwise, verbal validation, often with a near-stranger.



By their own accounts, both males and females are paying the price for the hook-up culture they have created. I can't speak for girls and women, but many boys and men have rejected their parents' advice to know and trust a person before being physically intimate with them. Then they discovered, the hard way, that physical and emotional intimacy cannot be separated.

In recent years, the teens I talk with have started to complain about repeated, verbal consent, which is necessary if you're physically intimate with someone you have not already established emotional intimacy with. *Making sure* has replaced *making love*, my male students say. And so I wonder: Is the concept of "man" equally passé? Are there Men 4.0? Will the boys you care for today become Men 5.0?

The evolving male ideal predates my grandfathers by millennia, of course. And being neither an anthropologist nor a prescriptive linguist, my focus is more on the current state of boyhood and manhood than what it shares in common with ancient civilizations or whether w-o-m-a-n is somehow less orthographically sexist than w-o-m-a-n.

Adrift

As a white psychologist, father, and husband living in a developed Western country, all I can do is share a personal snapshot of the current state of manly affairs. (I hope you'll share your views with your ABSA colleagues and with the editor of *Lights Out*.) All of the version labels I've been using, like Men 2.0, are artifices anyway. No real man has ever been so conveniently categorized. And today, more than ever, people reject any label with perceived limits or inaccuracies. I have students who have no problem being labeled as smart (even though such a construct is hard to measure and its accuracy for an individual varies widely by domain) but who detest being called a boy (even though their genitals would have given previous generations iron-clad certainty about that label).

Perhaps, then, we need to start by saying that today's boy and today's man are self-determined and label-defying. Yes, we reject the Boy Code and the Man Box. We refuse to let a stereotype or even an archetype determine our masculinity. We might not always keep a stiff upper lip, but we're not blindly sensitive either. We are selective about rejection, but what do we embrace?

I'll answer this question in Part 2 of this article series, to be published in the next issue of *Lights Out*.



Dr. Christopher Thurber is a board-certified clinical psychologist and teacher who enjoys creating original content for independent schools and camps worldwide. He has served on the faculty of Phillips Exeter Academy since 1999 and has been invited to deliver keynotes, faculty trainings, and staff workshops in North America, South America, Europe, Asia, and Australia. He lives with his wife and boys in New Hampshire.

Shaped by His Own Experience

The Ken Lord Family Boarding Scholarship – an update

AUTHOR

David Cornish
Executive Officer
Prince Alfred College Foundation Inc

In *Lights Out* issue 3 published in 2011 I wrote the story of Ken Lord and the establishment of the Ken Lord Family Boarding Scholarship for boarding students to Prince Alfred College.

Ken's scholarship concept closely followed his own experiences as a boarder at the College from 1940-44 from Balcanoona Station, 400 miles north of Adelaide. Decades later the hardships of life in remote areas remain firmly in Ken's mind, and his strong links with station life gives him a deep understanding of the challenges facing families in educating their children. It was this appreciation and desire to help which prompted Ken to pursue the concept of a scholarship.

The Scholarship is indeed generous. It covers 75% of boarding and tuition fees for a student from Year 8 through to Year 12. The first student commenced in 2010 and there are currently four students at the College and two who have graduated.

Since 2010 it has been my privilege to see the pleasure Ken has derived from his scholarship and knowing the recipients. Ken and I have worked closely to progress his ideas and the College's as the scholarship has unfolded, and I'd like to tell you how the scholarship has grown since my last article.

It soon became apparent that greater flexibility in entry was required. Offering the scholarship biennially was problematic and as Ken's financial contributions grew it became possible to offer it annually. It also became apparent that there was a need for Year 7 entry as NSW School of the Air concludes at the end of Year 6. Student entry in Year 7 is currently being considered for 2019 entry.

Promoting the scholarship has also had its challenges and has involved regional printed press and radio promotion, at events such as Broken Hill's Agfair, and through the Isolated Children's Parents' Association. In 2013 the geographical criteria for the scholarship was expanded to include the Birdsville and Alice Springs regions, and the most easterly point from where applications have been received is Ivanhoe, NSW.

The College is now working closely with Ken to ensure the ongoing meeting of his wishes, the financial sustainability of his endowment in perpetuity, and most importantly the capacity to help as many students as possible. Ken's vision to help remote students is a shining example of the power of philanthropy.

Now aged 90, Ken visits the College from time to time and always shares his birthday with Scholarship recipients and the Headmaster. He also enjoys dinner with the boys in the Dining Hall where he talks their talk, and they shine in his company. He also knows their parents and often knows more about their families than they do!

By way of conclusion, I asked Ken to describe what the establishment of his scholarship has meant to him:

'I often associate and think of the students as 'my boys' and am strongly interested in the particular areas that each one comes from. This association with PAC has rekindled in me memories of my old school, and keeps me in touch with the present school, the Headmaster and staff.'



Ken rang the historic bell at the opening of the College's new Dining Hall in August 2016. This is the first stage of the redevelopment of the College's boarding facilities and the first new dining space for boarding students since the College opened in 1869!



Past and present recipient joined Ken to celebrate his recent 90th birthday.



ABSA Welcome Avanté Australia as a New Partner

AUTHOR

Chase McDonald
Commercial Manager
Avanté Australia



We are proud to welcome Avanté Australia as a new partner with ABSA.

Avanté representative Chase McDonald was lucky enough to attend his first conference in Sydney last month, so we thought it a good opportunity to ask him a few questions about his experience at the conference as well as get a bit of background on Avanté Australia.

Q: How long has Avanté Australia been in the mattress game?

A: Avanté has been designing mattresses for nearly nine years now, along with our range of ensemble bed bases.

Q: So when you say designing, what does Avanté do that sets them apart from other mattress suppliers?

A: The difference with Avanté is that every single one of our mattresses is designed individually to achieve a particular feel at a price point. We can achieve this because all mattresses are received in pallet form.

Q: So Chase, how would you describe your experience at the Sydney ABSA conference last month?

A: Being the new kid on the block was initially daunting, and after some initial awkward small talk with some friendly delegates I was pleasantly surprised with how many took the time to visit our stand and introduce themselves so I could learn about their school, and what their needs are.

Q: We noticed you were running a competition to see who could guess the weights of the two Savant Mattresses that were designed specifically for boarding schools; who ended up having the closest guess?

A: Funnily enough, it was actually the first person to enter our competition, Mike Symons from The Kings School. We hope he is enjoying his new queen mattress and Twister bed sheets.

Q: Seeing as this is your own first person experience with boarding schools is there anything that you have learnt that you found interesting or surprising?

A: Yes, I was surprised to learn how many boarding schools are still only using foam mattresses, and even more alarmed at how often (or not so often) mattresses are replaced in boarding schools stereotypically. If I was paying a decent amount of money for my daughter to attend a boarding school, I would expect her to be issued a new mattress when she started, not to have to reuse another child's mattress.

Q: With your industry knowledge, what should schools consider when looking at replacing mattresses?

A: Any boarding school looking to replace their mattresses should firstly consider that a cheap option is often not going to be in the student's best interested long term. I welcome any school to contact me with any questions or concerns, so I can give an honest and realistic answer and help them put their considerations in perspective. At the end of the day, you get what you pay for.



Q: Do you have any recommendations or "new ideas" when it comes to supplying mattresses to boarding schools?

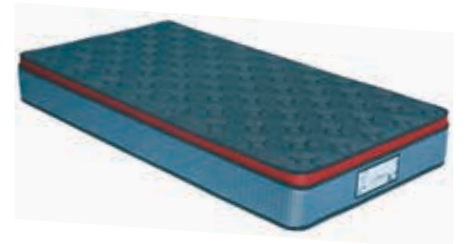
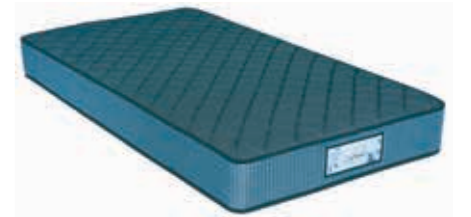
A: We believe that by giving boarders their own mattress and having it labelled with their name, it removes all pre existing hygiene issues surrounding boarding mattresses as well as giving students responsibility of a piece of property for their time at that school.

Q: What is the advantage of the "Heavy Duty Centre Zone" in your Savant mattresses?

A: Because the average person carries the bulk of their weight in the centre third of their bodies, in our opinion every mattress should have a heavy duty centre zone for longevity and correct spinal alignment.

Q: I understand there was a bit of interest in one of your products which you were not expecting?

A: Yes, we had a lot of delegates interested in our Osteo Base, which is actually the cheapest base we offer. Taking on board the comments from the Conference, we are exciting to be in the process of designing a sturdier, more commercial suitable base that still offers under bed storage.




Testimonials:

"Blackheath and Thornburgh College has been purchasing mattresses from Avanté for 3 years now. The College has found that Avanté mattresses are of a high standard and cost competitive. The team at Avanté are skilled in ensuring the right mattress is selected, and keep in contact until the product is delivered and installed. Blackheath and Thornburgh College will continue to use Avanté to source it's mattresses"

Lance Wassmuth
Business Manager
Blackheath and Thornburgh

We are extremely happy with our choice to deal with Avanté Australia in 2015. During the process of acquiring new mattresses we experienced a genuine desire from Avanté Australia to help us achieve our goals. Their products have proved to have the comfort and support that we were promised and we will be happy to continue to deal with Avanté Australia in the future.

Charlie Hansen
Plant and Facilities Manager
St Augustine's College





Why...it's Important to Keep Trying Even When it Seems So Hard!

AUTHOR
Dr Tim Sharp
The Happiness Institute



Some days, happiness seems so, so difficult.
Some days, happiness seems so, so impossible.
Some days, sadness and depression seem so overwhelming and it's hard enough to find the energy to get up and out of bed...let alone do anything meaningful or constructive.

But today I want to reassure you that even on the most difficult days, in fact especially on the most difficult days, it's well worth trying to do what ever you can to do "the right things" even if it doesn't seem like they'll pay off in the near future.

So here's 13 reasons why it's important to keep trying...

- 1 happy and successful people focus more on the process, rather than the outcomes; so it's important to keep trying to do the right things even when the results don't seem to be coming
- 2 even if you don't achieve anything noteworthy, it feels good to try
- 3 even if you can't see the results now, making an effort will (in some not insignificant way) contribute to progress (even if it's in the medium to longer term)
- 4 and if you reinforce yourself for trying, you can enjoy at least some satisfaction and positive emotion, which can then kick-start the positivity needed to do and achieve and enjoy more
- 5 trying is better than the alternative; it very rarely helps to give up completely
- 6 even if or when you can't find the motivation or reason to do it for yourself, do it for others because your efforts and motivation will "spread" to those who're nearest and dearest to you
- 7 and further, trying sends a positive message to others that we can all, even during our most difficult times, do and try something
- 8 sometimes if you begin by "faking it", you can create your own inspiration that will then make it real
- 9 movement creates momentum; effort leads to energy
- 10 the more you do the easier it becomes; practice makes better
- 11 trying something might lead you down a path you hadn't considered which might then contribute to a positive outcome you'd not imagined possible
- 12 which suggests another important consideration; if you're going to be trying something it might, at times, be worth trying something completely different
- 13 and finally, remember, that sometimes you'll surprise yourself and something great will happen!

So there you have it; 13 reasons why it's worth trying and how through trying...good things can (eventually) happen!

Clear, Glowing Skin from the Inside Out.

AUTHOR
Ema Taylor
Naturopath and Nutritionist

Whilst there are a myriad of phenomenal skin care products on the market to help nourish and protect your skin from the outside, in order to have truly glowing skin we must start a little deeper.

Beautiful skin begins on the inside, with adequate nutrients and vitamins from food and efficient clearance of toxins through your detoxification and elimination pathways.

The liver, kidneys and intestines are our major internal detoxification organs, if any of these organs are compromised; accumulated toxins have no place else to go but our largest external detoxification organ – the skin.

So how can you support your body's detoxification and elimination pathways for beautiful skin?

WAKE UP YOUR DIGESTIVE SYSTEM: Rise and shine with the juice of half a lemon squeezed in a mug of warm water – this trick kick starts your digestion for the day and hydrates you upon waking.

EAT THE RAINBOW: Food is medicine; adequate vitamins and nutrients are essential for skin cell regeneration. Eat a wholefoods, varied diet of colourful fruits and vegetables, quality fats (coconut oil, olive oil, ghee, organic butter, nuts and avocado), proteins and complex carbohydrates such as sweet potato (packed full of skin loving Vitamin A and C).

THE MORE BITTER, THE BETTER: Add bitter foods to meals to support enzyme production and bile flow, which helps break down food efficiently and promotes bowel movements.

1. 1 tsp. of apple cider vinegar to salads.
2. Green leafy vegetables – rocket, dandelion, arugula, mustard greens, nettle.

SUPPORT YOUR BOWEL MOVEMENTS: Good quality fiber is incredibly important to ensure toxins are being excreted through daily bowel movements and not being reabsorbed by the digestive tract. Good sources of fiber include oats, quinoa, ground flax seed, fruits and vegetables.

FEED YOUR ARMY: The 'army' of bacteria in our gastrointestinal tract plays a large role in beautiful skin by eliminating pathogens and toxins, improving nutrient absorption, enhancing immunity and minimising hypersensitivity reactions. Enjoy pre biotic foods such as sauerkraut, kombucha, kefir, and yoghurt to help feed your pre-existing 'good' bacteria and think about acquiring a good quality pro biotic.

HERBAL MEDICINE: One of the best herbs to support liver, gallbladder and kidney detoxification is dandelion root. Enjoy a cup of dandelion root tea each night after dinner.

WATER, THE ESSENCE OF LIFE: Keep hydrated! Our body is made up of up to 75% water-water is vital to ensure you're flushing out toxins to keep skin gleaming and glowing. Aim to drink 1.5 litres of good quality filtered water each day.

As featured on Par Olive (<http://par-olive.com/clear-glowing-skin-inside/>).



Words by Ema Taylor
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Important Assistance from Royal Commission

In relation to identifying possible child abuse

AUTHOR
Andrew Knott
Special Counsel
Holding Redlich



The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has many activities. One activity which is of considerable importance is its program of research. I propose in this article to draw to the attention of persons with boarding house, school oversight or systemic oversight of boarding houses an important piece of research, published in 2015 on the Commission's website (www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au). Under policy and research, published research projects can easily be found.

The research to which we refer is "Hear No Evil, See No Evil: understanding failure to identify and report child sexual abuse in institutional contexts". The authors are Professor Eileen Munro and Dr Sheila Fish and the report was published in September 2015. It is approximately 40 pages in length and contains a lot of information which will be useful to persons holding the responsibilities we have identified above. An article of this brevity cannot, of course, do justice to the document but can draw attention to some particular features.

Firstly, organisational culture (a matter referred to also by the Royal Commission in its interim report). At page 6 the authors state:

"This is partly created by the explicit strategies and messages of senior managers but is also strongly influenced by covert messages that are transmitted through organisations, influencing individual behaviour. These can significantly affect the rigour with which policies and procedures are implemented".

Clearly the case studies being conducted by the Royal Commission contain examples of the phenomena described in the last sentence.

Secondly, at pages 12-13 the research identifies one extremely difficult aspect of dealing effectively with these issues:

"The situation is further complicated by the fact that benign and grooming behaviours can have some of the very same goals, and go to the very heart of what the institution is trying to achieve, such as cultivating trusting adult-child relationships. One of the observable grooming behaviours Professor Smallbone describes is creating a "special" relationship with a child. But many people have a special relationship with a teacher or other adult that has been hugely beneficial, raising their ambition, confidence and skills."

The writer puts the same point in seminars in the following terms:

"What innocent teachers do for the best of reasons is what paedophiles do for the worst of reasons."

Following the passage above the research states:

"Additionally, observing the abusive or grooming behaviours is difficult because perpetrators seek to conceal their activity, and ... are extremely cunning in how they go about this and neutralising any emerging suspicions. This includes manipulating the children and young people they abuse so that they are unable or slow to ask for help, and manipulating the adults so that they are often slow to understand or believe what is they are seeing."

Again this is consistent with both the writer's experience and that of the Royal Commission case studies.

Thirdly, it is also noted in the research that whereas those who work regularly in child protection are often quick to recognise conduct which raises a need to consider and/or investigate, these events may be a once in a career issue for a teacher or boarding house supervisor.

Accordingly there is clearly, as manifested by this research, a need for careful consideration by leaders of appropriate training. These 40 pages are well worth reading and contemplating.

Of course all of this must not result in the unjust finding of improper behaviour by entirely innocent teachers. The writer's view is that the steps that one takes by way of investigation and its subsequent processes, eg fair and objective processes, fair procedures for those the subject of suspicion, and so on, are the same whether one seeks to maximise the conviction of the guilty or minimise the risk of incorrect findings of guilt. It is the integrity and skill of the persons conducting investigations and determinations in relation to allegations which will determine the extent to which both objectives can be achieved.

Manage Boarding Anywhere...

By stepping back to move forward for personal success

AUTHOR
Tracey Shand
Boardingology



How has the school year been for you? Have you moved forward for personal success and boarding success? How about your boarders? As we approach December, a new year is a great occasion to feel excited about the fresh start that awaits us all.

But before deciding on how next year is going to be, have you ever taken time to reflect on what you have achieved this year?

In education today, performance is measured using data. Cold hard data - numbers on a spreadsheet that tell a story. But do they tell the whole story? Of course they do not because an important ingredient is missing - the human element. Working on the boarding front line means that you are dealing with the dreams and hopes of everyone in your community. It is time to look at the most important key performance indicator. It is time to go back to basics in your world.

To me, it is the loss of an amazing opportunity not to take stock of what you have achieved so far.

So, boarding professional, this is your life! Grab some paper and let's go.

Spilt your paper into months from January to December and take some time to write down some of the highs and lows of this year. Some people prefer a page for each month. Be objective - simply list them.

So, how does it look?

If you like, put it away for a few hours and then have another look - you may add something else. Amazing times, lost opportunities, disappointments and hardships are all part of life's journey. It's time to make a decision - a decision to pack all of your unwanted emotional baggage into one big case and leave it at the door at the end of this school year and close it.

Shut that door and lock it!

Now, let us take a moment to look at what really went on now by taking a step back:

- ✓ Where were you at the start of the last school year and where are you now?
- ✓ What would you have missed out on if you had achieved what you wanted?
- ✓ Do you still want the same things or have your priorities changed?
- ✓ What can you learn about yourself and what you value by the years events?
- ✓ What are you choosing to take from this year to help you move forward?
- ✓ Who are you as a result of this school year?

The lists that you have been writing are not a true reflection of the potential that you have in your life. It is what has happened in the past. We all make choices every day - and it is your choice where these events remain - in the past, or in your future. You cannot change what has happened, but you can choose your response to things.

A successful new year starts with celebrating our achievements of the last school year, a commitment to change and a really honest conversation with ourselves about our future. If you list what you have achieved since January (and it will be more than you think), this will give you a positive base to move forward and set your mission for 2018.

Before we continue, take a piece of paper and list all of your achievements using 'I' as the first word.... e.g., "I have achieved the position of Head Of Boarding", "I have qualified as a tai chi teacher", "I have learned ... ". Got your list? It's time to give yourself a pat on the back. Take some time to reflect on your list - are they all related to inside the boarding bubble? Do you have any interests outside the boarding world? It is true to say that sometimes as boarding professionals we can feel married to the job - is that you? What can you change to have a better boarding - real life balance next year?

As we enter a new school year, it's the perfect time for you to create what you would like to say by the end of the year. On a new piece of paper, draw a big box and list the areas of your life that you would like to work on, for example:

Career	Personal Life	Health
My Future	Fun	<your choice here >

There is really only one question to ask yourself:

What would you like to say by December 2018?

Come up with at least five things for each area of your life - more if you dare! Remember YOU are more than just boarding. These areas need to be for you and you only - there is no point achieving things or setting targets for anyone else. From each of these areas, take some time to look at the first three that are important to you. Remember that you have 365 days in a year, so we have plenty of time to achieve these step by step. Try now to write three small steps that you could take right now to make a difference in this area. Write your steps in the present tense - e.g., "I have", not "I want".

For each area you have chosen to work in, apply the following to be inspired:

- ✓ Is this really important to me? How will life be different when I have achieved it?
- ✓ Why do I want this so bad? How will I feel in Dec 2018 when I have achieved it?

If you are not able to answer these questions rescan your lists and choose something else. It is okay to change these areas as we need to make a commitment to change. Do your steps work? One step a day means 365 steps a year - what an amazing amount to play with!

So now it's time for action. It's as easy as 1,2,3

1. Read your list every day. Keep it in a place where you can see it. Stay motivated!
 2. Ask for help - who can help you achieve your goals? What else do you need to make this happen?
 3. Look at all of the solutions and pitfalls on your way there. Be prepared!
- Making real changes to your life is not a once a year event - successful people treat goals as a DAILY event. So, set your goals now when the boarders are away, so you can move towards the future you deserve when they get back. Let me know how you get on.



Why Setting Digital Boundaries for Children is Crucial

AUTHOR

Daniel Skowronski
Founder of YIPO Technologies

In the evolving and connected world we live in today, a growing issue threatens younger generations that can severely impact their lives if left neglected early on. Cyber-bullying, blackmailing, teen sexting and illicit image sharing among kids are now realities that parents and boarding staff are faced with on a daily basis, and you cannot forgive yourself for missing a trick when it comes to these realities.

Countless organisations are working to shed light on these problems, building awareness around the topic. The figures coming from reports and investigations are truly alarming: according to research conducted by the Bully Zero Australia Foundation (2017), 50% of Australian children between the ages of 9 and 17 years are "friending" strangers online, and 30% of them were bullied online last year. These facts are particularly disturbing if we think that, according to the same report, 70% of parents are unaware of the details of their kids' behaviour online. It's not easy to admit as parents that we are not fully aware of what our children get up to with their friends, let alone what they do on their smartphones or tablet devices.

For Generation Z and Gen Alpha kids (those born between 1996 and 2011), the right to explore innovation and technology is something that is a staple part of their lives. Technology advances made for connecting with friends, improving skills and discovering the world is easier than ever and avoiding online technology has become unrealistic for kids these days. As a result of these changes, parents have the very challenging task of teaching their kids how to recognise the boundaries in this vast and fluid landscape, where everything may seem more accessible and easier to handle.

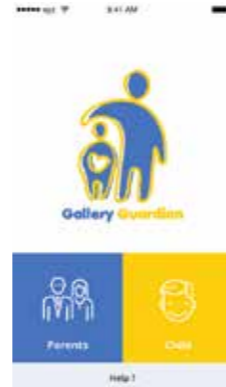
What can we do as parents or guardians to keep our children safe on their mobile devices, without intruding or invading their



privacy? How can technology work with parents to help set those fundamental boundaries online for their kids, and stop them making big mistakes that could potentially ruin their lives forever?

Trying to answer these questions as both a parent and someone who works in technology, I felt compelled to create something that would help me protect my children and their friends - that's when I came up with the idea for **Gallery Guardian**. Last July my twelve year old daughter was going to boarding school for the first time and we decided to buy her first smartphone. Since I was already aware of the risks of having a smartphone for young generations, I started immediately researching different types of "protection" apps.

Surprisingly, all I found was invasive spyware. Even if I wanted to install something similar, I wouldn't have the time to look through every email, text or photo she created or received. I realised that the technology needed to be more automated and what's out there is not really that good. Continuing my search I came across more and more articles about underage children sexting and sending inappropriate pictures of themselves. I couldn't believe that children as young as eight were participating in this type of behaviour - it's something that a parent can't really imagine.

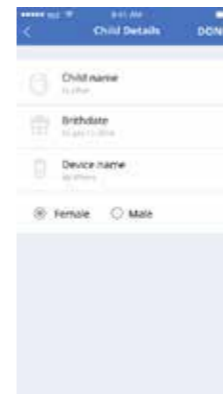


Gallery Guardian - Front Page



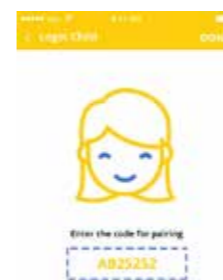
Gallery Guardian - Sign Up

Since I have my own AI Machine Language Learning company that focuses on photo and video recognition, I could perhaps create an app that swings the power back into the hands of the parents. That's when **Gallery Guardian** was born.



Gallery Guardian - Child Register

Gallery Guardian is an App designed to help parents and carers protect their kids when using a mobile device: The parent or carer can receive an alert if the child creates or receives illicit images. Using clever software and algorithms, it lowers the risk of minors being exposed online but at the same time has been designed so that it does not violate their privacy as the App never reveals the illicit images that have been detected.



Gallery Guardian - Child Pair

My goal is to give parents peace of mind knowing that their kids, as well as their kid's friends, are protected without spying on them, whilst at the same time helping to set clear boundaries about what should and

shouldn't be sent or received on mobile devices and the consequences of crossing those boundaries. **Gallery Guardian** is a simple and transparent solution for a global problem, and one that addresses the real issues such as cyber-bullying, blackmailing, teen sexting and unwanted content like nudity or partial nudity that's evidently on the rise among minors.



Gallery Guardian - Child List



Gallery Guardian - Alerts

Gallery Guardian uses a unique and innovative visual recognition technology. Once the App is installed on both a parent and a child's mobile device, **Gallery Guardian** is able to scan all images stored on the child's camera roll and will alert the parent if any suspicious images are detected. It is then up to the parent or guardian to take the appropriate course of action. **Gallery Guardian** also provides access to online resources, helplines and sites such as Child Wise that advise parents

on how to approach their children about their use of online media and how to keep them safe whilst setting appropriate boundaries. So if a parent is worried about how to speak to their child regarding these issues, great resources are also at hand.

Gallery Guardian has recently launched on the App stores, and we have been overwhelmed by all the positive feedback from parents who consider it an easy and smart tool that makes them feel like they have the ability to guide their kids online. Our motivation as parents is fuelled by the growing concerns and challenges we're faced with on a daily basis, especially when it comes to major issues like cyberbullying, sexting and blackmailing. Our aim is to work with communities, teachers and parents to build a strong alignment and understanding about online safety among children: trying to turn technology from facilitating our greatest enemy to making it our greatest ally.

Check out our website:
<https://www.galleryguardian.co.uk/>
Follow us on Twitter @GalleryGuardia
Facebook: facebook.com/galleryguardian



Understanding Cultural Diversity in Boarding

AUTHOR

Lesa Fowler
Head of Boarding
St Margaret's Anglican Girls' School

Cultural diversity and celebrating difference greatly enriches boarding life and helps students become true global citizens. Culture is defined as 'a body of learned beliefs, traditions, principles and guides for behaviour that are shared among members of a particular group' (Zion & Kozleski 2005). Culture is not just about food, dance, dress, music, language and art. Culture impacts how individuals see the world and engage with it at the subtlest and deepest levels.



Each school and boarding house has its own inherent culture. The embracing of cultural diversity brings with it many benefits that can impact every aspect of boarding life. All students are equal beneficiaries of the invaluable experiences that are generated by having a range of different cultures living in a close-knit community. Students from varied backgrounds share common experiences of growing up, of working together as a team, and dealing with stressful issues. Young people read the same novels, dance and listen to the same popular music. To truly prepare our students for life, we need to ensure, when they leave the safety and security of the boarding house, they are equipped with the right tools and experience to be globally competent.

Globally-minded students are curious about and engaged in the world and all its exciting opportunities. They are increasingly able to investigate the world beyond their immediate surroundings,

understand their own and others' cultural perspectives, communicate across differences, and take actions to improve conditions (Burrige & Chodkiewicz 2008). In a boarding house, there are many issues faced by a culturally diverse community. Culture shock, performance pressure, attitudes and assimilation are but a few of the hurdles some students need to come to terms with. International students are particularly vulnerable to transition problems because of extreme emotional reactions to separation from home, the loss of family and peer relationships, and the need to start a new life in an unfamiliar setting. These are aspects of boarding that all students contend with, and therefore share with those students from a different culture.

Understanding cultural differences is paramount for both boarding staff and students. Engaging both staff and students in accepting differences is the first step to ensuring all students are an integral part of the boarding community. Teaching students to recognise, analyse and articulate diverse perspectives – including those with which they personally disagree – gives them the skills they need to understand a range of issues. Staff and students need to understand that culture shapes a person's sense of who they are and where they fit into their family, community and society. Developing cultural sensitivity and competence can be challenging, but it is also an exciting opportunity for students to expand their knowledge, skills and beliefs. Drawing on cultural diversity to explore underlying attitudes can broaden student learning experiences and better prepare them for life in a more culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse society (Burrige & Chodkiewicz 2008).

Staff need to communicate with students regularly and with consistently high expectations around how they should be interacting in a culturally diverse community. The aim must be to create a foundation for safety and respect, so relationships among diverse groups of individuals can flourish (Henze, Norte & Sather 2002). We must help all boarding students recognise their

own cultural differences and work towards understanding the values of different students.

Being aware of the different cultural groups within the boarding house and having a thorough understanding of the differences which exist between different groups is essential. Acquiring background knowledge of where students come from and some understanding of their customs and cultural beliefs is a positive and powerful step in developing greater understanding. In order to achieve an authentic cultural sensitivity, everyone within the community must have a willingness to accept cultural nuances and be able to put their own views to one side.



The successful transition of all boarders is vital in ensuring all boarders feel safe and secure in the knowledge they are in a place where they can share their thoughts and feelings. Students from all backgrounds need to have the opportunity and time to share where they come from, their family, the school they came from and some of their family traditions. Students who can identify differences about their family and school experiences, soon realise that everyone has a different story, whether they are from Roma, Longreach or China. Understanding some of the cultural differences will allow them to be more accepting of some behaviours that they perceive as unusual.

It is crucial to explore with students the idea that everyone brings a different insight and this will help everyone to broaden their horizons. Boarding house staff have an important role in creating an environment where all students are given opportunities and the freedom to ask questions. For those students in which English is their second language, it is often necessary to repeat



instructions and ensure they understand expectations. Gently encouraging these students to move out of their comfort zone is the key to assisting them to try new things and actively engage in boarding house activities.

There are many and varied strategies staff and students can utilise to ensure the smooth transition of culturally diverse students. Firstly, and most importantly, orientation cannot be the singular intervention. Within a broad-based and personalised program of welcoming activities, the focus should be on support messages that convey caution and routines. Rules should be kept to an essential minimum to avoid anxiety. When conveying rules, it is important they are repeated so that students fully understand expectations. A continuous emphasis on developing a socially supportive community is essential. It is natural when students first arrive, to cluster with people from their own culture or language groups or from the same area in Australia, so students must be encouraged to make connections outside the group they initially feel comfortable with.



One of the barriers to this can be the lack of confidence in English and this can often make it hard to make friends. International students may encounter 'language shock', realising their mastery of formal English hasn't prepared them for fast-paced, colloquial or academic language. The amount of work required to read, write, listen and communicate in another language must not be forgotten. A strategy which can be employed in a boarding house is to have students spend time with others to help them understand slang and colloquialisms. It is also important to speak with the girls about the importance of personal space

and body language. Communication styles vary from culture to culture and can often be misinterpreted. In Australian culture, there is often an emphasis on content, whereas in other cultures, context is stressed. This means that in these cultures the same word can take on different meanings, depending on the setting and circumstances. Another difference that must be recognised is that often their language can be more indirect and rely more on non-verbal cues. For those students who have English as a second language, staff and students should ensure questions asked are understood, and not just answered in the affirmative to show agreement. Giving them time to translate and understand what they have been asked before they answer is important. Providing written instruction as well as verbal instructions is a helpful strategy. Boarding staff who clearly understand these differences will help to ensure communication is interpreted correctly.

There are many other strategies that can be employed to ensure both staff and students of all cultures interact and live together in harmony. All students bring their own prejudices, values and beliefs to a boarding community, so we must strive to ensure all members of the community are culturally sensitive. Students should be encouraged to speak about their culture so that all members of the boarding community understand each other and are more accepting of differing views or are aware that misunderstandings can happen easily if we don't understand cultural nuances. Providing these opportunities in informal and formal situations helps to break down barriers.

If staff and students have visited or lived in another country where English



is their second language, they are more likely to be sensitised to the experience that international boarders are having, as opposed to those who have little experience of living in a foreign country. Empathy and a genuine interest in helping the girls to assimilate is essential. Moving to another country to attend school is very courageous, even more so if English is your second language.

Cultural diversity in boarding schools does bring its challenges and it's important for staff to be role models for the students. Staff must ensure that every girl, no matter where she is from, feels equally valued as a member of the boarding community. Cultural diversity training for boarding staff enhances their understanding of where students come from and how they can best assist them. Encouraging all girls to broaden their horizons and open their minds to becoming global citizens is a crucial role that the boarding house must play. These experiences will prepare the girls to flourish in an ever-increasing global world.

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Lights Out

Building a Skills-Set for the 21st Century

AUTHOR

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According to *The Future of Jobs Report* compiled by the World Economic Forum last year, an estimated 65% of children today will end up in careers that don't yet exist.

We've already seen that shift happening with job titles like 'social media manager' and 'mobile app developer' that no-one had heard of ten years ago, and the use of descriptions such as 'disruptor', and 'changemaker' indicate that, in the workplace of tomorrow, standing out will be more important than fitting in.

The conundrum is that those future careers and job skills will be created by the current generation of school students – so how do we prepare them to not just qualify for these yet-to-be-invented work roles but to make them up as they go along.

"The skills valued most highly by tomorrow's employers will be cross-sector attributes like big picture thinking, creative problem-solving, evidence-based decision-making and entrepreneurship," says Professor Terry O'Neill, Executive Dean of Bond Business School.

"Whether our children end up working for an employer, setting up their own business or driving innovation as a systems developer, they need to be prepared to adapt to new technologies, retrain in new skills as required, embrace new systems of leadership and management and to think outside the box."

While a Bachelor of Thinking Outside the Box hasn't made the tertiary options list (yet!), Bond University is getting ahead of the curve by ensuring all students have the opportunity to build this skills-set for the 21st century.

Earlier this year, the University launched an Australia-first co-curricular Transformer program specifically designed to develop creativity, encourage exploration, enable innovation and enhance the Gold Coast university's trademark entrepreneurial experience. Offered in three stages on a fee-free basis, the Transformer program gives students from all Faculties and Bond University College an opportunity to develop new systems, solutions and processes in response to an issue of their own choosing.

Unlike traditional business incubators that focus on commercialising a specific enterprise, Transformer encourages students to explore better ways of doing things, generate change and solve problems across a broad spectrum. It could relate to social welfare, environmental issues, economic improvements, technology, health, sport, art, law - any project, big or small.

"Our students are passionate about a wide range of issues and the dedicated co-working Transformer space brings them together with like-minded classmates, researchers and academics from all Faculties to explore innovative ideas and solutions that address an identified area of need," says Transformer coach and Assistant Professor from Bond's Medical program, Dr Christian Moro.

"It also provides access to a structured learning framework of staff and expert coaching sessions every day, interactive sessions for individual training and development, and guidance from industry experts."

"As a coach, one of the highlights for me is the teamwork aspect. When I was at uni, most of my interactions were with students within my degree but here we have groups of students from the Faculty of Society & Design linking up with a PhD researcher from the Faculty of Health Sciences & Medicine and others from Business, Commerce and Law.

"It's been fascinating to watch them instantly forming groups with others from such a wide range of experiences, working together to come up with ideas and formally presenting them to an expert panel."

Former Saint Ignatius' College Riverview student now in his final year of a Commerce/Law double degree, Jack Ryan was one of almost 100 Bond students who signed up as soon as Transformer was launched.

"That first week, there were all these ambitious students ready to unleash their ideas and hoping to build an amazing team," he said.

"Over the following months, we all learnt to develop those ideas through a structured teaching program in an innovative environment that encourages ambition, persistence and confidence."

"But probably the most important lesson for me is that success doesn't just rely on a great idea; it's about investigating and researching and considering all aspects of that idea - looking at alternatives and understanding what the end user really wants."

"Above all, it's about putting together a team of like-minded, committed and talented people who can help you make it happen."





Getting the Balance Right

Staff to Student Ratios and Duty of Care

AUTHOR

Jezlyne Ghanimeh
LLB(Hons)/BPsychSc

The parental supervision of children raises constant questions of dependence, independence and interdependence, and the balance between these is perpetually changing.

While not the parents of boarders, boarding staff act 'in loco parentis' and have a duty of care that exists in place of the parent. The use of this phrase does not indicate that boarding staff must literally act as parents, but instead resonates the distinct professional duty of care required to help shape students into productive members of society.

A pivotal component of this duty of care is to provide adequate supervision to boarders, which not only promotes their safety, but maintains a secure, supportive environment with professional, caring relationships that nurture and develop all children.

Staff to Student Ratios

Staff to student ratios become an important tool in considering how to best implement adequate supervision, and provide a measurable and meaningful indicator of a school's performance of duty of care. The growing awareness of the importance of increased supervision is evidenced by recent educational statistics indicating a steady decline in teaching staff to student ratios across all Australian schools in the last 15 years.

In 2016, the Australian Bureau of Statistics reported the average ratio across all Australian schools as reaching an all time low of 1 teaching staff to every 13.7 students. Independent schools recorded the lowest ratio of 1 staff member to every 11.8 students, with Government schools at 1 to every 14 and Catholic schools at 1 to every 14.4. The quoted ratios include both day and boarding schools and appear quite impressive, yet tend to be misleading as they merely indicate the number of adults on campus (in a teacher-related capacity) relative to the number of students enrolled.

A more realistic ratio specific to Australia boarding schools was reported by the Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Council (IECC) as 1 staff member to every 25 boarders, the usual ratio on which most boarding schools operate.

The "Ideal Ratio"

To date, there has been no universal commitment to a minimum standard ratio in Australian boarding schools, which leads us to question:

What exactly is the ideal ratio?

This question becomes difficult to navigate with little documented literature or discussion on the topic. However, it is clear that what defines 'adequate supervision' involves a complex consideration of a multitude of varying factors, in which a one-size-fits-all approach would oversimplify a complex calculation.

Adequate supervision in boarding schools varies according to the number of high-need students enrolled, whether or not the school is situated in a remote location, the complexity of weekend and after school programs facilitated by the school, the number of younger students enrolled, as well as the experience of the staff themselves. Student to staff ratios are also impacted by the gender of the boarders, as well as the time of day - just to name a few.

An example of the complexity was acknowledged by the IECC when it argued that for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to be successful in boarding school, student to staff ratios must be modified to reflect 8-10:1, "in recognition of the high demand nature of the special care and interventions needed to successfully transition these students". This quickly reveals how the neat and tidy idea of a universal ratio would fall short in reflecting the intricate duty of care required from each individual boarding school.

Building Your Ratio

In order to meet its duty of care, each individual school must therefore build their own ratio that reflects the structure of the school, and the needs of their individual boarders.

In building this ratio, the following factors should be contemplated:

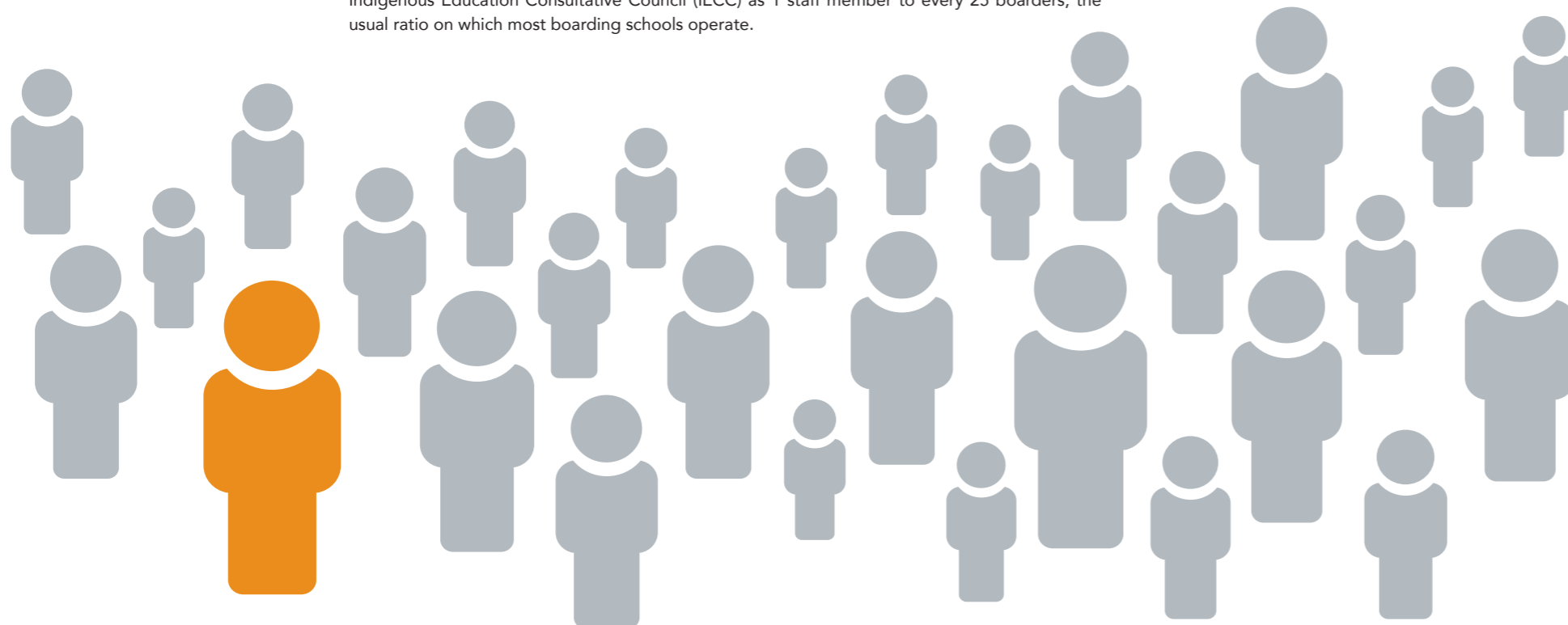
1. Experience, position and qualification of staff - whether staff members are Head of Boarding, Boarding Supervisors, Gap Assistants, University Students and whether staff members hold current First Aid qualifications;
2. School facilities and sight lines of staff - whether students are located in multiple buildings, how many different buildings students have access to, and how many different areas need to be staffed;
3. Gender of schools - whether school is co-ed or single sex;
4. Location of school - whether school is remote, metro or has access to medical services;
5. Extra-curricular student activities - considering the extra supervision required for sports and swimming (including transportation to any external sport), studying and homework, meal preparation and cooking, cleaning and laundry;
6. Student backgrounds - considering individual characteristics of students themselves including the number of students with high needs, physical, behavioural, social and/or mental disabilities, at-risk family or cultural backgrounds, and the number of international students;
7. The time of the day and time of term - considering what supervision is required immediately after school, at bedtime and after midnight, and whether students are in exam periods or returning after holidays; and
8. History of previous incidents at school - considering the minor and critical incidents that have occurred in the past, and the supervision measures that are required to prevent similar incidents occurring in the future.

Where To From Here?

Reviewing and reflecting on student to staff ratios in Australian boarding schools is an ongoing task, involving the consideration of many intertwining factors that are perpetually changing. With supervision being a fundamental component of a school's adherence to their duty of care, it is not a task to be taken on lightly.

While not a comprehensive list, the above factors provide a measure for each school to review their current ratios and assess how their duty of care is being satisfied. The establishment and negotiation of staff to student ratios seems to involve 'different rules for different schools' and the calculation of the individual ratios can be difficult to get correct.

Therefore, it is suggested that a national minimum recommendation for staff to student ratios - that is factor specific - would assist Australian boarding schools in building a ratio, and would provide a level of confidence in the calculation of what supervision is required to best reflect the needs of Australian boarders in their unique context.





Ex-Boarder Perspective: I Crashed

AUTHOR

Ken Swan
Director
The Wealth Academy

Where were you a boarder?

I was a boarder at a school in Brisbane. I received an AIEF scholarship. I loved the school. We were really cared for and looked after.

What financial learning experiences did you have at school?

I didn't receive any so it is definitely a problem.

Why is it a problem?

When I moved from school boarding and then out into the real world I had no idea about budgeting, planning ahead, rent and so on.

I crashed. I didn't know how to save. One time I gambled all of my money away and couldn't pay the rent. I learned a tough lesson.

I had no preparation for this from my schooling.

Should a boarding school (any school) provide financial education?

From my perspective, it is essential. Boarders won't realise how important it is while they are still at school, but when you have to fend for yourself, as many boarders will, the world changes very quickly.

What are some of the things you should have learned?

The main topics are:

- How to do your tax
- Ideas for how to transition from the boarding school or home into living independently
- Budgeting methods and tools
- How to save and plan for the future, and
- Renting.

There are so many things to learn so quickly, it is not fair to leave school without this knowledge.

What other problems did you have when out of school?

One of the biggest issues is that boarding at school is very structured and planned, but if you board at a university it is unstructured with lots of distractions. It is tough. I had to leave.

I hear about lots of ex-boarders who are having problems with gambling. They lose heaps! Many of them also spend their money soon after pay day and struggle to make ends meet until the next pay day.

Do you worry about your financial future?

Definitely. I worry about how I am going to afford a house. Most young kids worry about their financial future. Why wouldn't they?

I want to save but I also want to have a social life. It is hard.

What are your recommendations for boarding schools?

- 1 Implement a financial life skills program for boarders that has an activity every week. Make sure it includes transitioning activities.
- 2 Make sure all students participate.



Josh Drahm, ABSA staff member and ex-boarder, has strong views about the importance of financial learning.



gnibl (pronounced 'nibble')

Partnering with you to make a difference

AUTHOR

Nicholas Volpe
Founder
gnibl



Imagine it's 2025.

The government predictions are correct. 75% of the Australian population are either overweight or obese. The figure for children under 17 years of age has worsened from the 2017 figure of 1 in 4. Healthcare costs have skyrocketed while healthcare benefits have decreased.

This is not science fiction. It's already upon us and is affecting every Australian in increased taxes and Medicare and a decrease in healthcare benefits. And even if one is not personally afflicted by one of the many illnesses caused by being overweight or obese, someone in your family probably is or will be.

How did Australia become one of the fattest nations in the developed world? In spite of the fact that so much good work is being done by government and various NGOs, the obesity graph is still rising.

What can we do?

First we have to recognise that this is everybody's problem and that anyone in a position to make a difference should be doing so. Government alone cannot solve the problem. Only public and private partners working together can reverse the trend. Schools are in a unique position to play a role.

This is when gniBL comes into the picture. We can help schools make a difference in a simple and practical way. But solving the problem is not as simple as it seems. There are three reasons:

1. Confusion - it is not easy to navigate the often conflicting messages around what is healthy and what is not;
2. Deception - marketing and advertising on wrappers often impart partial truths rather than the whole truth about a product.
3. Snacking is an impulsive activity and because it constitutes 30% of our calories is the reason it contributes so much to the problem of obesity.

What is GniBL?

GniBL is guided by a value and that value is health. Health is the reason we set up the company and it's the value that informs everything we do. Our entire range is vetted by a well-known Australian dietitian who worked closely with both the Healthy Kids Association and Nutrition Australia.

Every product in the range is curated for:

1. Ingredients
2. serving size
3. its contribution to one of the five major food groups.

What is more, we work to transform snacking from an impulsive activity to a mindful activity. We educate young people to think before reaching for a snack. Nutritional Message Cards are provided for display alongside each type of snack thereby empowering students about how that snack fits into a healthy, balanced diet.

Where appropriate, we can also supply the range through a state-of-the-art touch-screen, menu-driven vending machine. These American-made touch-screen units are quite unlike the normal vending machine. There is nutritional information, a shopping basket (multi-vend) facility, special offer facility, and a touch-screen menu system catering for dietary needs like "gluten-free", "dairy-free", "source of protein" etc. The units are also wheelchair-friendly, a first for Australia. In Sydney, we offer the machines at no cost, and we install, maintain, and restock them free of charge. For schools further afield, arrangements can be discussed.

In August, we exhibited at two conventions - the Healthy Kids Association Expo at Olympic Park and the ABSA Leaders Conference at the International Convention Centre in Darling Harbour. As a result, a number of schools have joined the group of schools that are now making a difference with gniBL.

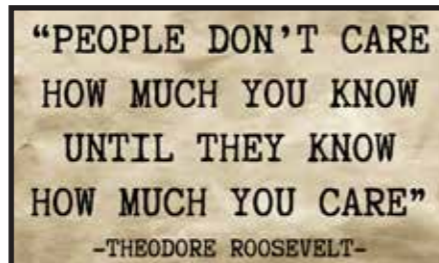
gnibl - let us partner with you to make a difference.



It ain't What We Do, It's the Way That We Do It

How to avoid becoming another brick in the wall

AUTHOR
Serena Lewis
Director of Literacy
The Kings School



My father has always said that I was facetious - it is perhaps not the most endearing quality but it is one that has held me in good stead. There are occasions when a flippant quip is just what is required to make someone really think. A few years ago, I sat, sipping wine at my parents' 40th Wedding Anniversary Party. I engaged in the expected chit-chat. It was inevitable that I would be asked, "So, what is it that you do?" I was prepared for this - it is the most popular of polite conversation openers. My response, "I am a teacher." The next question was delivered more as an assumption; "Oh how lovely! Primary School?" Clearly my sunny disposition had thrown them. "Actually, no. High School." Following the quick swallow and the 'knowing' smile came the next question; "So what is it that you teach?" And I very nearly played along and gave them an answer that would have allowed for the conversation to follow the polite and predictable pattern. But I didn't. Instead I answered, "Students."²

There you go, my father was right - I can be facetious.

There is an important pedagogical point to this little anecdote. I love reading and I always knew that I would be an English teacher. If I am honest, my passion to teach sprung from my passion to share a love of books and inspire this love in others. I wanted to be an English teacher. The emphasis was on the subject rather than the teaching. That was a long time ago. I now recognise my role as a teacher is less about teaching books and how to write, and more about teaching my students how to learn. I realised very early on that I could not do this effectively if I did not really know them. If you have never read it, I urge

you to take a look at Ian Gilbert's 'Why do I need a teacher when I've got Google?'¹ It's a brutal title and his book is full of hard hitting truths about the importance of engaging through fostering positive relationships, but like all great educators, he does it with humour! Teaching and learning are synonymous. Better teaching leads to greater learning. Greater learning leads to better teaching. As teachers in an ever-changing world, we have a lot to learn. Yes, of course, we should engage in a lot of research regarding best practice but this is not the only kind of learning.

Here I hope you will excuse a small but very relevant deviation. Learning is a messy and unpredictable process. We try to harness and shape it through standardised testing but ultimately every child is unique and will learn differently. This holds true, even when the circumstances are in our favour; when the students in front of us are well-fed, content and happy. Now throw in to the mix unsavoury domestic situations, hormones, social media, recreational hazards, and these differences are magnified. How easy life would be if individual differences did not exist. How many educational conferences and courses suggest they have all the answers? Therein lies the danger; 'It's important to be critical consumers of educational research...What works in education is incredibly nuanced, and there are relatively few absolutes.'²

Whether you love or hate what he has to say, John Hattie and his meta-analysis for Visible Learning has grabbed the world of Education and shaken it to its core. If nothing else, he's got us talking openly about teaching and learning and what this should really look like. He's made us question pedagogical gimmicks and methods that have been thrust upon us under the guise of 'quick fix' solutions. He's made us aware of the dangers of being lured into galloping gung-ho alongside exciting new pedagogical initiatives without question. For me, most importantly, Hattie has reminded us of the importance of relational learning. 'It is teachers who have created positive teacher student relationships that are more

likely to have the above average effects on student achievement.'³ In a 21st Century world where assessment data threatens to become more important than the learning experience itself, it is our responsibility to transform our classrooms into learning utopias where risk taking, experimentation and creativity become second nature. This is the most important kind of learning for us as educators. If we want to create change, we need to show that we care.

Google can inform students. Our role is more important. We must nurture independent learning; equip every student with the confidence and resilience to self-actualise. How might we do that? We must create an environment where risk-taking is the 'norm' and making mistakes is as important as 'getting it right'. How? We model it. We demonstrate strategic vulnerability and empathy.

English may be compulsory but some will never love poetry or Shakespeare. So I learned that I could be far more engaging than my subject; I could lift my students and make their day so that they looked forward to spending time in my company even if that meant analysing a text from a Marxist perspective. Dragging horses to water and watching them stubbornly dehydrate is not my idea of fun but it is amazing how much better that water tastes when it has been sweetened with silly stories and good humour. Most students do not need to be dragged if you're asking them about how their game went at the weekend or how their Visual Art project is going since the family cat decorated it. Learn from your students. Who are they - beyond a 'student'? What matters to them? What makes them 'tick'? Time spent getting to know your students and allowing them to get to know you, has a huge impact on their willingness to want to learn from you.

'What the teacher is, is more important than what he teaches.'
(Karl A. Menninger)

Thinking Points

How do you feel about the following statements?

- Education is too important to be taken seriously.
- The future of school may not involve the 'act of schooling'.

*Independent Thinking Website. Gilbert, I.
<http://www.independentthinking.co.uk> accessed June 2017.*

It is not about what we teach. It is about who we teach and how we teach it. So I will continue to answer the question, 'What do you teach?' with my facetious answer 'Students!'. As I play Pink Floyd to my students, promising them that in my classroom, they will never be a brick in the wall, I know that they will make me that same promise. I am not a brick in the wall. I am a teacher of students, who happens to teach English.



Mrs Serena Lewis – BSc (First Class Hons)
Serena has vast experience in teaching within the UK (A level in GCSE, English Literature, Language and Psychology). Former Head of English and Language, with a responsibility for teaching and learning across a co-educational Derbyshire school, Serena was on the Opinions Panel for England's lead Examination Board (AQA) working with schools in the Midlands region, embedding literacy skills across the curriculum. She has taught at Knox Grammar School and currently teaches at The King's School where she is the whole school Literacy Coordinator. Serena completed both the 'Leading from the Middle' and 'Leadership Pathways' qualifications with the UK National College of Teaching and Leadership.
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¹ Gilbert, I. (2010). *Why do I Need a Teacher When I've got Google? The Essential Guide to the Big Issues for Every 21st Century teacher.* Taylor & Francis.
² Frey, N., Fisher, D. and Hattie, J. (2016). *Visible learning for literacy, Grades K-12: Implementing the practices that work best to accelerate student learning.* Corwin, California.
³ Hattie, J. (2013). *Visible learning: A synthesis of 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement.* Taylor&Francis, London.

Ready for Lift Off

ABSA Space School Expedition 2018

The way of life in 20 years' time will be dramatically different to what we experience today. Will our children require a driver's licences, will it be a cashless society, will robots ever perform surgery and will humans make it to Mars? All these innovation ideas are possible through a combination of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and many dedicated individuals.

A workplace revolution is on the horizon and different learning experiences are needed to adequately prepare the youth of today for the challenges of the future. Seventy five percent of the fastest growing occupations in Australia will require STEM related skills and an expected 50% of current jobs will disappear as reported by the Office of the Chief Scientist of Australia. The change of pace in technology over the next three decades will eclipse any of the technology seen in the last five thousand years.

Providing the youth of Australia with the tools to build the skills for future success in their chosen field, students can and will be at the forefront of this exciting era. The significance that they learn and master critical transportable skills to successfully navigate the fast-changing landscape shaped by automation, robotic, artificial intelligence and globalisation. Empowered with the critical STEM related skill set, students will not only become the capable and competitive job seekers, most importantly, they will become the innovative job creators.

Actura is the exclusive Australian partner of Space School International Study Program providing the ultimate out of class STEM learning solution to students. It is designed to empower students for success within STEM related settings in one of the world's most profound and inspiring STEM environments – through space exploration and science in conjunction with NASA.

The architecture of the Space School International Study Program is inspired by the 'Seven Survival Skills' by Dr Tony Wagner and Sean Covey's 'Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens' to empower students for rapid change. The program expands the mind, encourages drive and instills curiosity with the spirit of exploration.

The 'Seven Survival Skills' are not only relevant in academia but also can be taken as life lessons.

- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- Collaboration & Teamwork
- Leadership & Responsibility
- Initiative & Entrepreneurialism
- Effective Communication
- Accessing & Analysing Information
- Curiosity & Imagination

Students are immersed in enriched and exclusive space science activities to explore the multi-facets of STEM. Students will also learn and engage in an inspiring personal and leadership development program to truly empower them for future success.



There are two expeditions running for two weeks each, one for Junior students in years 7, 8 and 9; and the second for Senior students in years 10, 11 and 12. Each program has its own unique activities and learning outcomes providing students with critical life skills for personal success through hands on problem based learning, tied with immersive NASA coursework.

Junior Space School program location is in Houston, Texas and Huntsville, Alabama, USA. It integrates culture, space, science, medicine and marine life for high impact learning experience. Students will get to know what it takes to become a scientist, flight commander and astronaut by taking part in mission simulator training. Students learn about space travel, the development of space-related technologies and are lead through several simulated missions. This

program is focused on providing relevance to, and inspiring passion for, STEM through exposure to space and broader 'earth' science exploration. Every step of the way they are guided to build skills in goal setting, project planning, critical-thinking and problem-solving.

Senior Space School is the MBA for Youth. It takes place in Houston, Texas, USA. With greater program depth, students have incredible access to NASA. They visit areas not accessible by the public; and engage directly with NASA experts to design and plan their own space mission within a given budget. An immersive program that enhances their individual leadership, project management, resource allocation crisis management and team work skills.

One of the highlights of the programs is the guest speakers from NASA; scientists, engineers and astronauts whom truly inspire and motivate the students. Their stories are passionate and emotive, it is amazing how their path to where they are now has come about. Recent guest speakers have included Dr Leroy Chiao, a former NASA astronaut and International Space Station Commander; Ms Amber Gell who is a team leader for NASA's new spacecraft for Deep Space Exploration; Ms Heather Paul an engineer working on NASA's spacesuit life support system design and many more insightful speakers to foster new levels of collaboration, teamwork and to expand the student's interests in the field of science and management.

The students return from the Space School International Study Program motivated, inspired personal growth and a greater comprehension of the numerous fields within the scientific community. The most important investment we make is in our future and the future of our children.

"Space School has helped me achieve many of my goals. I wouldn't have even dreamed of meeting friendly professionals or visiting amazing venues that have helped me experience and learn new topics. The activities have been very fun and educational, introducing me to new learning techniques and broadening my thoughts. The whole experience has greatly inspired me to reach for my goals and that there are no limits of what you can achieve. I would recommend Space School to anyone who is not afraid of taking risks."
Student Mehr - St Margaret's Victoria

Partnering with The Australian Boarding School Association, the dedicated ABSA Space School Expedition will be launching in 2018. Several member schools are participating with many students joining the expedition after attending the information evening sessions. There is no minimum student number required for schools to participate in this wonderful program. Students will not miss out if their school was not able to form a group of 17 Junior students or 21 Senior students.

Participating schools include:

Queensland - John Paul College, Toowoomba Grammar School, Toowoomba Anglican College & Preparatory School, Concordia Lutheran College and Whitsunday Anglican School.

New South Wales - All Saints' College Bathurst, The Scots School Bathurst, Kinross Woleroi School Orange, Calrossy Anglican School Tamworth and Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School Tamworth.

Victoria - Huntingtower School and The Hamilton and Alexandra College.

Don't miss out on this once in a lifetime opportunity for students.

To join or for more information on the **ABSA Space School Expedition 2018** visit: www.actura.com.au/absa email: enquires@actura.com.au or call: 1300 3030 370



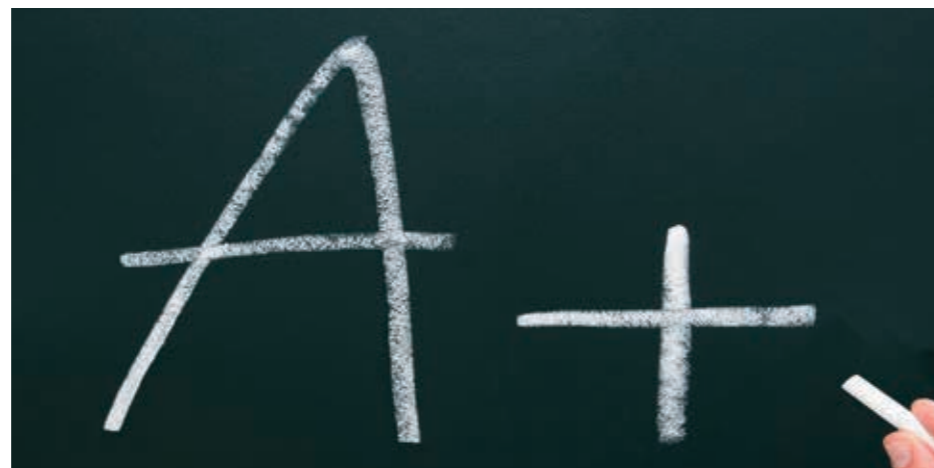
Make the First Impressions with Parents Count

AUTHOR
Mark Vincent
Director of Insight Plus

There is an old saying, you don't get a second chance to make a positive first impression. Your first dealings with prospective parents are crucial if you are to secure an enrolment. Your ongoing dealings ensure positive word-of-mouth endorsement. And we all know that the marketing of a boarding house is primarily driven by favourable perceptions and word-of-mouth (or mouse). These tips will help you form that positive impression.



1. When you first meet them, greet parents enthusiastically. Make eye contact. Thank the person for contacting you, seeing you or coming in. Then tune the world out and them in.
2. Focus on immaculate appearance. Appearance adds to a parent's confidence that you are professional. There is an old saying that is worth repeating: 'The way you dress affects the way you are perceived and the way you are perceived affects the way you are treated.'
3. Body language reflects attitude. Lean forward and you show interest. Slouching or leaning back indicates disinterest or boredom. Nod, smile, use open gestures and look like you're thinking about how best to serve their needs.
4. A smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks. Twenty-two muscles in your face are capable of producing over 1,000 expressions but only one expression has the ability to relax people regardless of culture...your smile. In private and in front of a mirror say the word 'great' in the following ways - soft, angry, loud, sexy, Jerry Lewis style. Next time you meet a parent, say 'great' under your breath three times. Amazingly it will force you to smile.
5. Use eye contact. People who really listen always look into the other person's eyes. They concentrate all of their emotional energy on the other person. People who do not have good eye contact get labelled 'shifty-eyed'. If eye contact doesn't come naturally, make a point of determining the colour of the parent's eyes before your meeting ends.
6. Ask for and use names. Unless people suggest you call them by their first name, use Mr, Mrs or Ms. Err on the side of formality.
7. When meeting a parent, do not focus on how you feel; focus on how you can make them feel better about themselves. Acknowledge something about them; elevate their mood with a light-hearted quip (but you don't need to be a comedian); find common ground; enlighten them with an interesting fact or observation.
8. Look for common ground with parents. We like people who like us. The more common ground between people, the greater the chance of business being transacted.
9. Retain a sense of humour. The most important personal asset in all communication is the capacity to laugh at yourself or the situation. Tell amusing stories at your own expense. It shows you don't take yourself too seriously. People remember your approach.
10. Listen intently. Everyone needs to be heard. You have two ears and one mouth so try to listen twice as much as you speak. Be interested more than interesting. Ask questions and listen to answers.



Your Boarding School is unique, but is your #SchoolMarketing?



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RAAF Base Amberley Visit

AUTHOR
Carole Ward
Head of Boarding
Ipswich Girls' Grammar School



Wednesday the 23rd August was a warm winter's day in Ipswich and a perfect day for a group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from Ipswich Girls' Grammar School to spend the day at RAAF Base Amberley at the invitation of Chaplain (FLTL) Joe Ward. Chaplain Ward is the husband of Carole Ward, Ipswich Girls' Grammar School's Head of Boarding.

The day started with an Acknowledgement of Country at the F-111 Memorial at the main gate to the base. The acknowledgement was delivered by ACW Natasha Budda-Dean, an Indigenous woman and uniformed RAAF member. Natasha was accompanied by Miss Zeminda Donnelly who is a Defence Civilian and Indigenous Liaison Office. Zeminda stayed with the girls for the duration of the visit.

The girls were then presented with bags containing T shirts, baseball caps, USB dog tags and other military themed items by Defence Work Experience before hopping on a bus for a tour of the base.

First stop was to 36 Squadron – home of the mighty C17 Globemaster Heavy Lift Aircraft. The girls were given access to one of these amazing aircraft and got a pilot's eye view from the cockpit. The loadmaster, who is also a female member of the RAAF, demonstrated how vehicles, pallets and personnel could be loaded into the giant hold of the plane, there was much discussion about the size of it when compared to football fields and basketball courts. The girls were particularly excited about getting into this aircraft as they see them in the sky over Ipswich on a daily basis. They were even more impressed when they were told how many female pilots are at the helm.

From there they walked across the apron to 33 Squadron where the KC-30 Multi Role Tanker Transporter has its home. Here the girls learned how this massive aircraft refuels other aircraft in mid-flight, transports VIP personnel and how the flight crew keep everyone safe. Many of the girls thought a career as a crew attendant in the RAAF sounded really appealing with endless gourmet food and international travel.

Lunch followed with briefings from various Airforce personnel who came over to spend time with the girls as they picnicked in the shade.

After lunch, it was back on the bus to the Air Traffic Control Tower where the girls were briefed on how air traffic is monitored and managed. Many of the girls were fascinated by the many radar screens and moving shapes on the screens – all marking the flight of aircraft in the Brisbane air space. Most agreed that this was a stressful job, not for the faint hearted.

Onward to 23 Squadron Firefighters and their enormous firefighting trucks. Again the girls were able to climb up into the cabs and look out from a fire fighter's perspective. This section is right on the taxiway, and they were fortunate to see a number of Super Hornets and American Harriers taxi out and take off. Up close and very personal as they waved to the pilots and jammed their fingers in their ears against the incredible noise of the jet engines. Even the ear plugs they were issued couldn't adequately block the roar.

The highlight of the day followed as the girls were bussed over to The Security and Fire School where they were introduced to the Military Working Dogs and the incredibly cute and feisty puppies. 27 Puppies all learning how to work in various disciplines in the military. After spending some time playing with the puppies and exclaiming over how cute they were, the girls were given an awe inspiring demonstration of what these dogs are capable of once they have completed their training. Formidable, fierce and faithful, they won the hearts of the girls.

The final stop was to the Security and Fire School Auditorium for a presentation from Defence Force Recruiting and Defence Work Experience on careers in Defence and the Indigenous programs available to students.

The girls had an exhausting but memorable day, and many who had not considered a life in Defence came back to IGGS with a new career plan.





WeChat

The App with a purpose

AUTHOR

Caralyn Dea
Director of International
Education & Boarding
Toorak College

Trying to understand our Chinese students can be like trying to understand flat pack instructions from IKEA. We think we finally understand our kids and then suddenly we find half a dozen left over screws and we quickly work out that we have no idea. Our cultures could not be more polar opposite in every facet of life. As Westerners we drink cold water and Chinese drink warm water. We are told as children to play outside and get some fresh air and sunshine, yet our students have been brought up in an era in China where the air is so polluted they are told to stay inside. They believe any skin shade darker than pure white is embarrassing because you 'look like a peasant'. Understanding and keeping up with our Chinese students is challenging to say the least, then throw in their social media!

China is a fast paced society that are early adopters of everything. They have some of the world's most stringent censorship laws yet they also have one of the world's, if not the world's most powerful social media App, WeChat. Living in China in 2014 introduced me to WeChat. Being a foreigner means that some of the capabilities are limited, but none the less it was a powerful App back then, and now is even more so. For the uninitiated WeChat is FaceBook, Instagram, EBay, Twitter, SnapChat, PayPal, BPay, ApplePay and more rolled into one and our students are masters at it. I can hire a share bike using the QR Code scanner, rent an apartment, pay my bills, transfer my Grandmother some money, give out red packets on New Year's, show off where I am travelling, talk about latest research, buy gifts, set up my own 'store' and pay for my purchases at pretty much every Chinese vendor using WeChat Pay (Debit and Credit Cards are almost obsolete now). We can be contacts in under half a second because we scan QR codes... none of this archaic searching for a friend! It is the App of all App's and it is only getting more powerful.

There are many Australian products that are highly sought after in China. Australia is viewed as fresh, clean, healthy and safe which inspires many Chinese to purchase products made here, especially those that are easily sent through the postal systems. Vitamins, cosmetics, baby formula and other health food products are on top of the hit list for many Chinese. Many students have set up their own stores on WeChat to earn some money on the side. When there is a sale at Chemist Warehouse for example they post on their site that they have a particular type of Vitamin that they can supply. People contact them, transfer the money and the student sends it to them. One of my girls had one such store and was making about \$1000 - \$1200AUD per week from her store. Sadly, when she moved to Toorak her business became all but void because she didn't have the access to the shops that she had when she was at school in Sydney.

Goods in China are not as cheap as you may think. There is a huge misconception that China is cheap, and while some goods are cheap, the Government has put a 30% tax on what they consider 'luxury goods'. I happened to meet the head of Hugo Boss in Shanghai and he said not to bother buying anything in China but to wait until you are in Duty Free on your way out of your home country. It was simply too inflated on the mainland. Hence this kind of store on WeChat can earn our kids big dollars.

How is it that we can even attempt to keep up with the speed at which things are changing in China? Aside from friends still living there and feeding me information there are a few ways that I stay plugged into China's rapid change.

- Use a WeChat account. As I said, as Non-Chinese we are at a slight disadvantage because some of the features are disabled (no WeChat pay or money transfers, and sadly no red packets on New Years!) but get on it and learn how to use it and see what the kids are seeing (and posting).

- Pages on FaceBook and Twitter. Despite the Chinese firewall plenty of information still gets out to the West. Search for "China Law Blog", "That's Online", which has affiliates "That's Shanghai and That's Beijing", "Shanghai Expat", "101 East - AlJazeera", "The Economist, Asia", "The Wall Street Journal Asia". Some of what is posted is purely for entertainment and some of it is really informative. You will have to scroll through some panda videos to get to the good stuff.

- Talk to your kids and find out what they do on it? How many of your kids have stores that they sell through? I know that my girls were reluctant to speak about it at first because they didn't know what my thoughts were on their different enterprises. After a while they opened up and now I get frequent eye rolls when I can't do something followed by lessons so I can mostly keep up with them. The thing they are most upset about is that I cannot receive red packets because I am a Laowei (Foreigner).

It is important to keep in mind that despite how well you know your Chinese students they are active on WeChat and within many of its features including Stores. Forbidding them to keep their store or to be active on it will only make them go underground even further. If we are armed with the knowledge on what is happening and keep abreast of the App's advances we can collectively put in structures to keep our kids safe. Which for all of us is the most important part of our job.





Boarding School to Rowing and Back Again

AUTHOR
Hannah Vermeersch
Olympic Rower

Hannah was guest speaker at the recent WA State Conference dinner and her story caught our attention as one everyone would enjoy.

If it weren't for boarding school I don't think I could have achieved what I have. My journey began like many young boys and girls across Australia. In Year Eight I was sent to boarding school to begin my secondary education. I grew up on a farm 700 kilometres from Perth. I was excited about the prospect of going to a big school in the city. I had no idea of the opportunities I would be given or exposed to. As a youngster I loved anything to do with sport and at home most of my time was spent playing tennis, netball, swimming or running around outside. In my first week at boarding school we had tennis trials, volleyball trials and the swimming carnival, so to say I was in my element was an understatement. During my first year away at school I indulged in more sport than you

can possibly imagine. However, it wasn't until Year Nine that I was first exposed to rowing competitively. Rowing was a sport that I had tried in Year Eight but wasn't that keen on. It was during my parent teacher interviews that this changed. My maths teacher was also the Year Nine rowing coordinator and to him I was well suited to rowing because of my height and long levers. So, after some deliberation I decided I would give it a go.

What I loved about rowing at school was how it brought people from different social circles together.

It didn't matter if you were popular, musically talented, a boarder or day student because when you are put in a rowing boat together you needed to try and make it work regardless. For me rowing was a way of bridging the gap between day students and boarders. My rowing experience was not that successful at school. I don't ever remember winning a race, but that was probably the best thing that could have ever happened to me. It is a great delight for my sisters who also rowed at school to remind me that they have both won pennants for school rowing and I haven't. Due to my competitive nature it meant that I was going to do this sport until I could win a race. In saying that I believe that you learn more from your losses than from your wins

and this has been evident throughout my career.

During school I was also identified by the West Australian Institute of Sport as someone who would be well suited to rowing. I took this opportunity up and this is when I started to row at a local rowing club as well as school. I attended the National Rowing Championships while in Year 11 and 12. During Year 12 I was asked by an ex-PLC student if I would like to row with her to try make the Australian Junior Rowing Team. We were put through our paces and after several days of racing the team was announced and I had been named in it. One of the main reasons I made the team that year was because of the independence and resilience I had learnt from the PLC rowing program, but also my time in the boarding house. Boarding taught me how to work with people from all different backgrounds, it taught me time management, responsibility, leadership and the list goes on. These are all skills which are essential to earn your place on a rowing team.

That year we went on to win a gold medal at the Junior World Championships, which was something I was not expecting at all. I missed a total of six weeks during Year 12. The school and boarding house were very supportive of me during this time.



They too knew this was an opportunity too great to give up. It was amazing to see and experience the support of the teaching staff, boarding staff and students from school. It makes me realise that it really is like having an extended family.

From then on I went on to be in the Australian Rowing Team every year from 2009-2015.

Of all my rowing experiences 2012 is definitely considered a highlight. At the ripe old age of 19 I was the youngest member of the Australian Rowing Team at the London Olympics. I was part of the Women's Eight that went on to come sixth. This experience taught me what is required to be a senior athlete and it also gave me a taste of what an Olympics is like.

In 2013, I went on the race at the Under 23 World Championship in a four, which also competed at the Senior World Championships, which was a very successful campaign. This four comprised of four girls who were all from the country. The stroke of our four went to boarding school in Ballarat, our three seat went to boarding school in Geelong, our two seat grew up in Manjimup and I sat in the bow. The fact that we were all from the country was so unique. I firmly believe that country kids

are tough as nails and this four was a prime example. We raced every race as if our lives depended on it. We were never the strongest or biggest crew, but we certainly knew how to give it a good crack. As a crew, we loved that we were considered the tough kids from the bush and our country bond is what brought us together. This four filled me with so much pride. Each one of us were and still are so proud to be from different rural areas around Australia. It also meant that our parents could talk about farming business while we were racing! Of all my rowing memories, this bond that we had purely because of where we grew up will stay with me forever.

Rowing has been such an important part of my life. It has taught me so many things. I am so grateful that almost 13 years ago my parents decided that boarding school was the best option for me and my siblings. If I hadn't have gone to school in Perth I can guarantee I would not have been exposed to the opportunities that I have been exposed to, and most likely would not have achieved the things I have.

It's funny how after five years in boarding school and seven years on the national rowing team, I have found my way back to PLC in a different capacity. Last year in March I began working on a casual basis

in the PLC Boarding House. As a student, I will openly admit I thought I would never come back. However, I am so grateful of the opportunity to be able to work alongside some of the best boarding staff in the country! To me this has become more than just a job. It's about seeing these girls develop and make the most of the opportunities they are given. Initially I didn't really know what I could bring to the table as an employee, however I quickly learnt that I can contribute a lot. As a staff member, I am constantly thinking back to when I was a student and the things that I appreciated about the staff, while I was boarding. For me the simple things are the most important. The girls appreciate it when you bake something for them, take them for a drive past the beach, go and watch them play sport, do their dishes, help them tidy their rooms and that's only naming a few things. I also think that what the girls enjoy most about my company is the simple fact that I started out just like them, a girl from the country who was excited to try new things. I believe I am a daily reminder to these girls that if you set your mind to something, anything is possible. For me rowing was never on my radar. I had barely seen the sport before let alone tried it, yet rowing has taken me across the world and given me life skills that I will be forever grateful of.



The Heart of the College

AUTHOR

Ms Tiffany Lloyd
St Joseph's Nudgee College

Taken from Nth Degree published by
St Joseph's Nudgee College

When the bell rings each day at 2.55pm, more than 1500 boys scatter in a myriad of directions. Some dive into awaiting cars and buses, while others race out the gates on foot.

However, there is a group of boys who make their way to the centre of the College at days' end. They are the boys who live and breathe Nudgee College. They are our boarders.

For a short while after school, the campus falls quiet as boarders retreat to their rooms to get ready for the afternoon ahead of them. For some, this may involve Rugby training at the Flats, while others could be heading to the Cleary Building for an individual music lesson or group ensemble practice. On those rare weeknights when a boarder does not have an extra-curricular commitment, you may find them engaging in a touch football match on Wilkes Oval, or chatting with friends in one of the Boarding Village common rooms.

Year 12 student, Sam Nugent is a local boarder from Brisbane's northern suburbs who reaps the benefits of living on campus.

"It's really convenient when I need to get to training after school," he said.

As the sun sets and stomachs start to rumble, the boarders head to the dining room. After filling up their plates at the servery the boys settle into table groups of six or less, chatting happily in a way reminiscent of a family enjoying their evening meal together. The Boarding Village courtyard also accommodates dinner time festivities, with Houses often holding spontaneous barbecues. The boys often cook the barbecues themselves, learning another valuable life skill in the process.

In the evenings, the campus falls quiet again as boys settle into classrooms in the Learning Centre for their nightly study program, referred to as 'Reach for the Stars'. This year, Dean of Boarding Mr Christian Oneto is emphasising a focus on academics, and he praised the College teachers who made themselves available to help students in the evenings.

"We are so fortunate to have such dedicated teachers here at Nudgee College who are willing to support our boarders in their learning," he said.

It is not only weeknights that are filled with activities for Nudgee College boarders. On weekends, in addition to weekend sport and cultural activities, boys are given the opportunity to head off campus for one of many planned outings by the College's dedicated Recreation Coordinator Mr Josh Rigg.

From trips to South Bank, to rugby matches at Suncorp Stadium, to one of the Gold Coast theme parks, and everything in between, boarders are never left saying "I'm bored".

While the College Boarding community is known for being a hive of activity, the most important part of being a boarder, brought up by every boy who is asked, is the relationships formed.

Year 9 student from Winton Injarra Harbour has been boarding since he was in Year 7, and said that you become best friends with your boarding mates.

"After the first week in boarding, you feel like you have known all the boys since you were five years old," he said.

Assistant Head of Boarding, Mr Graham Moore, who came to Nudgee College at the start of 2016, reiterates this strong connection among the boys.

"There is a real sense of community, and they appear to genuinely love coming back for a new Term to see each other again," he said.

Year 10 boarder, Joe Stark summed up the experience of boarding at Nudgee College perfectly.

"I like the atmosphere of boarding," he said, "it feels like it's the heart of the College."

A day on the plate of a boarder

Breakfast

French crepes and berries
All breakfasts include toast, spreads & cereal

Morning Tea

Vegetable soup and bread rolls
All morning teas include fresh seasonal fruit

Lunch

Brioche pork rolls
All lunches include sliced meats & salad bar

Afternoon Tea

Greek yoghurt with fruit

Dinner

Portuguese chicken and saffron rice
All dinners include fresh seasonal vegetables, salads & sliced fresh fruits

Dessert

Assorted cheesecake



ABSA Leaders Conference 2017



Photo Flashback





Why I Bought a Weber: and the Importance of Customer Service

AUTHOR
Mel Kettle
Communications Expert



I've been thinking lately about my experiences as a customer.

My husband and I recently bought a new BBQ. A Weber if you're wondering. Our old BBQ, that was my first purchase when I moved to Queensland over 17 years ago, finally quit. Inconveniently BEFORE I cooked dinner, but that's a separate issue...

Anyway, we had been talking for a few weeks about replacing it and decided to wait a couple of months. It was winter, I was travelling a fair bit, we weren't really going to be using it much until probably late September/October.

Then, one day in July, I was waiting for a client outside a new-ish outdoor store that sold funky looking furniture and Weber BBQs. I knew nothing about Webers, except you need to use coals to cook with them. Or so I thought. Not a feature I was seeking #takestoolong Anyway, I was a bit bored so I went in. The sales assistant (who turned out to be Ben, the owner of the store) immediately made me feel welcome. I explained about our dead BBQ and asked if could he tell me a bit about the Weber. Apparently called a Weber Kettle. Yes, I giggled.

My interest escalated when Ben started to tell me about the cooking with gas range.

Within minutes of his non-salesy sales pitch, I was convinced a new Weber was what we needed, and we needed it NOW.

So, what convinced me?

- I told him we weren't ready to purchase for a couple of months and he completely respected that - he also didn't walk away with total disinterest, but valued me as much as a customer he thought was going to buy right there and then, and yes, there were quite a few other people in the store.
- He asked thoughtful questions to find out what my problem was - beyond not currently having a BBQ. He wanted to know how often we would use it, for how many people in our family as well as how often we entertained, where it would be located and how much space we had for a BBQ, and he based his suggestions on my answers.
- Ben's product knowledge was excellent, largely because he had owned a Weber for many years.
- He was extremely passionate about Webers, BBQing and cooking in general.
- He shared recipe ideas with me that had me salivating.
- He didn't try and sell us the most expensive model - or the smoker that I almost drooled over... possibly because he heard me tell my husband that would be a good future gift idea!
- And finally, he didn't make too many bad jokes about my name!

This all took about fifteen minutes, at which point my client turned up so I thanked him and left.

The next day I returned with The Accountant and, as they say, the rest is history.

Why is this important? Well, customer service is critical - 58% of customers won't give a business any repeat business if they have had a bad experience. Conversely, friendly customer service can make you fall in love with a brand.



What can you learn from my Weber shopping experience?

- Don't discount a parent who isn't ready to enrol immediately. The enrolment decision takes a lot of time for some people - and often, the more expensive the decision, the longer the time.
- Get to know the real problem and any surrounding issues. For me, yes, it was the obvious problem of not having a BBQ, but another issue is that we are moving into an apartment in the next year or so, so I wanted a BBQ that took up a lot less space than the large four burner that carked it.
- Don't crack too many bad jokes at the customer's expense (should be obvious, it's not!)
- Don't assume gender stereotypes - again, should be obvious... Again, it's not. #sadface When selling a BBQ, don't assume it's the man's domain. Mine cooks scrambled eggs and that's about it. And not on the BBQ!
- Share stories and authentic experiences - Ben shared his recipes with me. That had me thinking about what I could cook on my Weber. I immediately stopped focusing on what sort of BBQ to buy, and instead started focusing on how quickly I could BBQ a steak and what salads I would serve with it.

As my friend Dr Emily Verstege says, "humans buy with their hearts, not their heads". Ben connected with my heart as soon as he started talking about food. Yep. It can be that simple.

How can you improve your service to better connect with your parents' hearts?

Mel Kettle is a communication expert. She knows that one of the biggest challenges facing business is how to clearly communicate with staff and customers. People do business with people they know, like and trust. Mel works with organisations to help them drive trust and long-term value to their business through authentic and effective communication via their marketing and customer service channels.



Boarding: a 'Rare Kind of Freedom'

AUTHOR
Libby Purves OBE
well known English Author

This article first appeared in the UKBSA Magazine 'Boarding School' and is used with their kind permission

Boarding often suffers a bad reputation these days. You'd think the huge Harry Potter saga would have mitigated it, with all those tales of warm friendships, flowering maturity, responsibility and exciting learning, not to mention high-jinks and Quidditch matches and sneaking out for butterbeer. Maybe it has softened the idea, for a few. But a lot of writing and middle-class conversation gives the impression that it is a crime against family life. People carry on as if modern boarding was Dotheboys Hall or a particularly grim first act of Annie, with sobbing mites cringing from a drunken and abusive Miss Hannigan. Or if they're not alleging emotional abuse, they're painting boarding school as a luxurious nursery for emotionally stunted toffs, conditioned by the outdated needs of Empire to "send their children away" instead of loving them so that man that can pass on misery to man, as Larkin said, deepening like a coastal shelf.



You know that isn't true, because you're reading this. You know there are stimulating, pastoral, open-hearted, useful and decent schools, and children who thrive at them. You know that even in the bad old days of grim iron beds and corporal punishment, some of them made lifelong friends and came through it laughing at the worst bits. But you also know - and we all have to admit - that the "survivors" stories are sometimes true. There have been some awful schools, because there are some awful people. I should know: I spent three fearful terms in a South African convent where nuns lashed out with rulers and threatened us with hell, and you washed in icy water at dawn before a breakfast of inedible sloppy mealie-porridge. I became expert at faking illness just to get a night on a less lumpy mattress.

Moreover, we should remember that in the 50s and 60s - perhaps a bit later in some places - children at home too were far more likely than now to be ignored, scolded, misunderstood, hit, seen-and-not heeded. Schools - which today accept mobile phones and parental visits and numerous exeats and flexi-boarding - were inevitably affected by this bygone childrearing culture. So face it: the voices of a generation of survivors of bad boarding cannot be dismissed. Nor can the experiences of more recent boarders who were unhappy, because of their own nature and family circumstances or simply a school quite wrong for them.

That sounds a bit downbeat. But if we are to talk about the benefits of the boarding school experience, it is crazy not to accept that it has sometimes gone wrong, even today, or been inappropriate for particular children at particular stages. Good schools accept this, and don't bang the drum with exaggerated optimism, promising universal happiness for all temperaments. When - having been let down badly by a pastorally hopeless day school - we took our shy eldest at twelve to Royal Hospital School for interview, the then headmaster and senior master interviewed him thoughtfully, kindly, and perceptively. They told him plainly about the idiosyncrasies of the place and its atmosphere. He met other pupils, and decided it might suit him. After a couple of uncertain months - at one point we had a frank three-way conversation with him and his kind housemaster, drilling down into all the things which bothered him - he settled, and became notably pastorally kind and responsible himself towards the younger children. Later his sister joined him.



But at no point did any of us - staff or parents - fool ourselves that there was no risk of it failing. Some kids don't take to boarding. Some families don't suit it. Some schools don't fit certain individuals (one teenage friend of mine was utterly miserable, misbehaved and got expelled from another school but had a great time at my Kentish convent). As to ages, there are some eight-year-olds excited and happy and confident as boarders (often weekly or flexi) but other kids who at thirteen or fourteen are really not up for it. Just because it's Dad's old school, or fashionable, or suited your friend's child, or would be really convenient for high-powered dual careers, that doesn't mean it's going to work.

But it does work, very often indeed. If you have hurled the magazine across the room in disgust at my cautious negativity, be assured that I am only doing it because, in approaching any kind of educational or life decision, everyone's head should be clear. A good choice is a thoughtful choice. And advocates for good boarding can only speak out convincingly if they accept the caveats. Only then can we say that it gives developing young people a rare kind of freedom: a maximum chance for intellectual, sporting, artistic and dramatic development without endless car journeys or smoggy struggles through the London Underground. Only then can we talk about the opportunity for self-development which comes with community living: the give and take and rueful acceptance of diverse (often awkward) companions who are not of your blood or neighbourhood or taste...

Only then can we point out how tediously limited life can be for young day pupils growing up in busy, work-obsessed homes, with tired parents leaving too much to an au pair or nanny. Or how liberating it can be to exist, and negotiate relationships and triumph inside a world which is not controlled by your close family and their views and circumstances. We can point to the way that a good boarding school, with its bustling daily human reality, can be an antidote to the danger of leading a weird, lonely social life through screens and



social media. We can point to the way that relations of adolescents and parents can be cheerfully improved when each gets a few weeks' break from the other. And, of course, when the teenager him or herself has experienced the onerous irritations of responsibility for younger ones. We can point out that a secondary boarder who moves on to University will find it less intimidating to be in a hall full of strangers far from home, and may have a firmer grip on how to feed and care for themselves without mum.

We can say that when boarding is good - and more often than not it is - it offers a pretty good first step out into the wider world. And, by listening to past and present voices, we can help schools to make it that good.





VR in Education

AUTHOR

Simon Noakes
Managing Director
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ABSA website provider

"Virtual reality was once the dream of science fiction. But the internet was also once a dream, and so were computers and smartphones."

Mark Zuckerberg



It's getting harder to distinguish science fiction from reality. Already, we have many "futuristic" concepts within the consumer market. Driverless cars are in production. We hold actual Artificial Intelligence (AI) in our hands every day, with Siri (Apple), Alexa (Amazon), Home (Google) and Cortana (Microsoft) assisting us on mobile devices. There are even plans in place to colonise Mars within the next 10 years!

Virtual Reality (VR) is another sci-fi trope that has moved into the limelight. In recent years, we have seen competition really firing up between top tech companies (Microsoft, Apple, Google and Facebook for example) for dominance in the market.

But how does VR fit into education? There have been many discussions about the role of technology in education, in the past, but does VR have a vital part to play in the future of schools?

Most importantly, how will VR affect teachers? Will it prove an aid in the classroom or will it replace teachers all together?

VR in education

The application of VR in the classroom has been met with the usual mix of praise and trepidation, when it comes down to education technologies. On the one hand, it has plenty of solid applications in education (in principle) but on the other hand, it is too disruptive to the very tried and tested learning methodologies of today.

These fears stem from a common place - VR is too new to have solid grounding as to why it is a benefit to learning. However, if we look beyond pure statistics, and apply true thought and innovation to how VR (and AR / MR / AI) can be effectively used in the classroom, some exciting new realms open up.

VR pros

- VR as a learning tool is immersive - it transports pupils into learning environments they have interactivity with
- It offers pupils a new learning methodology; one that is active and highly engaging
- VR has few limits - it can broach any subject in new and interesting ways
- Visual, interactive content is more likely to be retained as knowledge over traditional text book study
- It removes the need for actual classrooms - offering remote access to billions of people across the world (often with just a mobile device and a VR viewer, like Google Cardboard)
- It also removes the language barrier - it is easy to have different languages programmed into the VR simulations
- Can be tailored to suit pupil's level of learning
- Can help address personality issues, such as shyness
- IT IS INTERESTING!!! Pupils of all ages will likely find something to enjoy from VR, plus it removes that sense of being school work

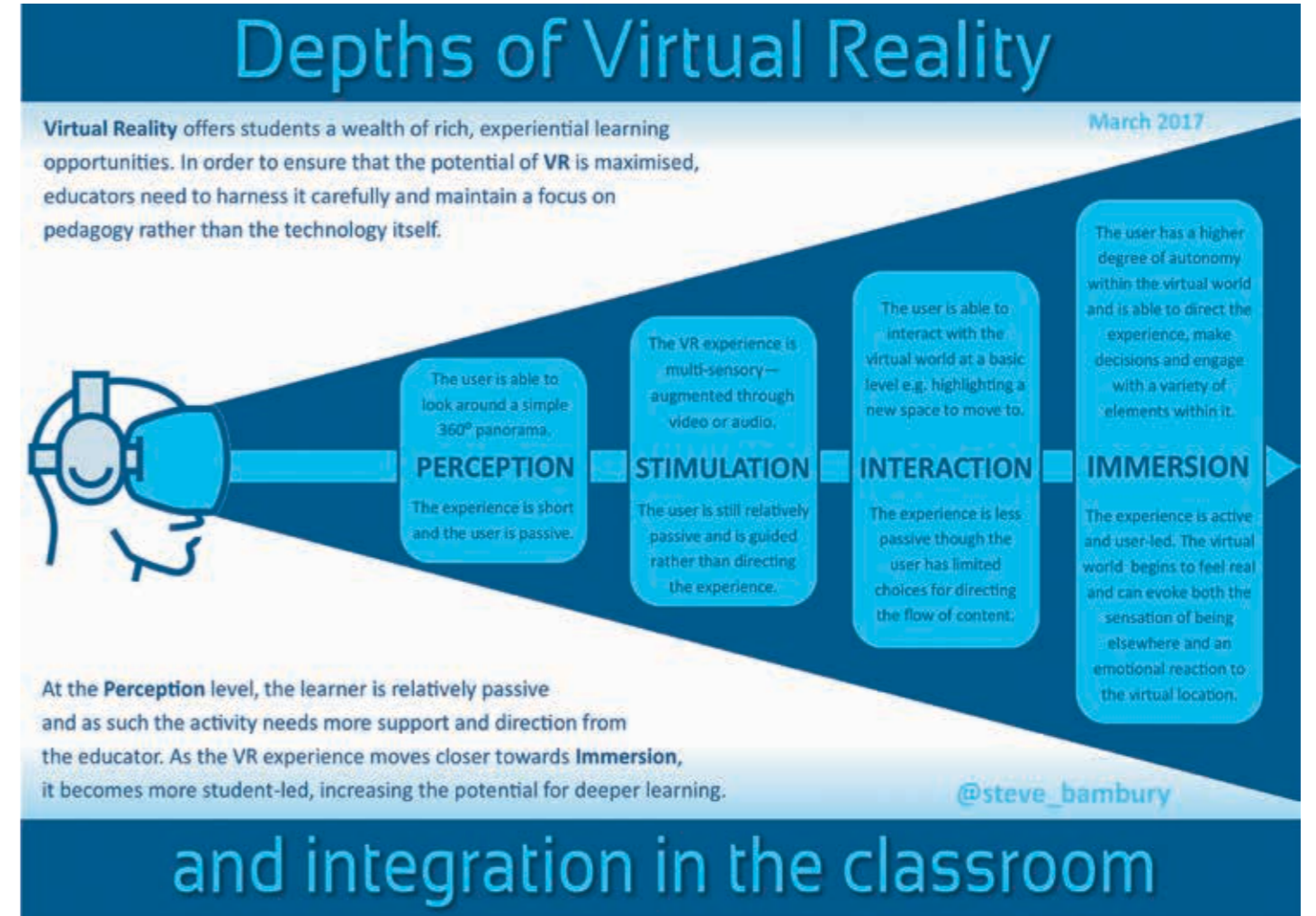
VR cons

- Untested waters, so hard to quantify its actual impact on learning
- Learning becomes reliant on functionality - technology, as we all have experienced at one point or another, has a knack for going wrong at inopportune times
- Unknown impacts on pupils' health - concerns can be linked with issues such as addiction to the virtual world and a deterioration of human connectivity
- Currently, can be expensive (though costs will undoubtedly go down once VR becomes more mainstream)
- Teacher's aid?

So, can VR replace teachers? For us, the short answer is no.

"The act of teaching isn't just imparting what's in your head to a captive audience. Teaching is a performance, it's reading the room and working it. This is where technology really falls short." ~ Harpreet Purewal, journalist for The Guardian

The use of technology in the classroom should never reduce the need for great teachers. Instead, it should require great teachers to properly facilitate its use in the classroom and make it a key part of pupils' education.



VR - still early in its development and implementation - will be a hugely beneficial tool for teachers, we have very little doubt about this. However, it can never reach pupils in the same way a teacher can. It lacks humanity at its core - and this is what all great teachers have.

Examples of VR in schools

VR is still a baby, but forward thinking schools are already using it as a source for great education.

JESS Dubai are one such school. Under the guidance of Steve Bambury (Head of Digital Learning & Innovation), they are making headway in how VR can be used in the learning process. Check out Steve's model above for using VR in the classroom:

In Australia, several schools and universities are beginning to see the virtual light at the end of the tunnel.

Schools in Queensland, for example, are taking part in a new VR trial, to help introduce the dangers of alcohol and drugs to young learners. The first school to trial the VR game, called Perfect Pour, was St Mary's Catholic College in Cairns.

The idea is for pupils to attend a party in the virtual world; with all the real-world pressures of drinking to fit in. Pupils are able to actively make decisions, such as whether or not to drink, and experience "first-hand" the dangers of drinking excessively or misusing drugs. This application of VR enables a "learning by doing" experience

in a subject that was previously incredibly difficult to do so in.

Another example of VR innovation in learning is from The University of New South Wales. They have introduced a world-first VR suite within their School of Mining Engineering. This revolutionary introduction allows pupils a new, immersive experience that truly goes beyond the textbook.

With great teachers, VR will no doubt prove an incredible tool for schools. Its applications are still new to learning, but we fully expect VR in education to continually evolve and introduce new, amazing experiences for pupils the world over.



Leading Change

AUTHOR

James Thorpe
MEd (UQ), GDipEd (UQ), BA (UOW)
Housemaster, The Kings School



Do you need to do a student leadership culture health check at your school? If so, what does a good example look like? By clicking on *MHS Spell* one will see that the answers are visible. This performance usually takes place during the annual home and away Rugby Union fixture between Hilton College and Michaelhouse (both schools only educate full boarders).

Have a clear school vision

Etched in stone at Michaelhouse, the Anglican Diocesan College of Natal (MHS), is this quote from former Head Boy, Ben Parham: *"If a boy walks so tall that he cannot stoop to help those that have fallen, then he knows nothing of the spirit of Michaelhouse."* Many educational leaders have rightfully identified academic excellence as essential for any school's vision, no matter the context in which they may be situated (di Monaco, 2008). In its simplest form, a school is, at its core, a teaching and learning environment where essential skills are non-negotiable and must be taught. This then begs the question: What differentiates various school experiences? Schools, such as the one described by Parham, are places that students never forget! The fabric and culture of the cloisters and quadrangles seep into the very DNA of the boys and staff, becoming everlasting. It is increasingly clear that these schools are the institutions with 'added value'. This is not PART of these schools' vision; it IS the vision. (Seldon, 2011).

This then is a critical component. Research indicates that academic success alone, or in isolation, is only part of a broader holistic approach to education and without all-round skills, young people may not be as prepared for the impending future (Jennings, 2016). This very brief example of one student-inspired character development programme (war

cries), contributing to a certain culture within a single boys' boarding school, shows what can add value to a boy's educational experience, complement academic engagement and further improve health and well-being (Pascha, 2017). Using Martin Seligman's (2012) PERMA Model, as a Positive Psychology framework, one can easily see that this activity connects with positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishments.

Maximise your location, identify your values and write your own story

In order to lead cultural change, it is essential that your school is able to articulate its own unique story (di Monaco, 2008). What was the audacious goal of the founder? Why was the location selected? Is there a story of courage that can be built into the culture of the staff and students? For example, according to Reverend Alan Smedley's Centenary Thanksgiving Service (1997, in Michaelhouse chronicle CENTENARY EDITION):

Religion and education should go hand in hand that he [James Cameron Todd] named the school MICHAELHOUSE. MICHAEL representing religion - being the biblical name of the Archangel who triumphed over evil, usually depicted by a dragon; and HOUSE symbolising education. And then of course the School motto, QUI UT DEUS - WHO BUT GOD, was adopted. This being the Latin version of the Hebrew MICHAEL. MI-CHA-EL - WHO BUT GOD (p. 32).

Michaelhouse (MHS) has built a reputation for academic, spiritual, cultural and sporting excellence. Situated in Balgovan Valley, Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa, the School has become one of the country's finest all-boarding, boys only educational institutions. Steeped in tradition, with Christian values at its core, MHS has been assisting in the development of young men of good character since 1896. Of the many different character development programmes the School has to offer, analysis of the School's *MHS Spell* provides the observer with a visible example of student leadership. It also emphasises the School's boarding culture and how the *Spell* activity itself contributes to individual and collective character development through boys engaging with something bigger than themselves (Pascha, 2017). Many 'like' schools around the world attempt similar fanfare with significantly less success. Why? And, how can this culture be created?

Provide leadership opportunities for students

According to an extract from the Michaelhouse Chronicle 1997 Centenary Edition, British cannon as well as schoolmaster, James Cameron Todd, founder of Michaelhouse, was quoted as saying, in the first issue of Saint Michaels' Chronicle,

A boy's connection with the school is not severed when he leaves but lasts throughout life. I mean that his whole tone, moral and spiritual as well as intellectual, is largely determined for life by his school; and that to his dying day he will be different



from what he would have been if he had been at any other school. Every school has its own character or engraved stamp which impresses on each of its members however they may differ from one another. Hence the old boys of a school necessarily form a brotherhood wherever they may be (p. 1).

Todd's discerning comment provides an insight into a clearer understanding of a school's purpose and what it can and should look like (di Monaco, 2008). From a theoretical perspective, in Coaching Leadership, Robertson (2005) argues that some key principles and ideas around leadership approaches begin with the interface of theory and practice through providing support and challenge in leadership development and creating structures that will help leaders continue their development unassisted. Each of these components can be seen in the collective experience that the men of Michaelhouse engage in during their various war cries, especially the fact they are largely unassisted by staff. Four students from The King's School, on exchange to Michaelhouse, noted that,

"The boarding experience was nothing like I have experienced. It was amazing and it helped develop character and leadership."

"The all boarding community was a different experience for me and it assisted in developing my character as I was constantly surrounded by new people from different cultures."

"Boarding. All the routines were amazing and sticking to the routines helped me become more of a leader."

"Their boarding is unique in the fact that it is an all boarding school, which allows for more school spirit and camaraderie between the boys."

"It was obvious at Michaelhouse the great school spirit they had."

In conclusion, what are the takeaways for your school? We can't expect all schools to start offering boarding as a solution to leading change in student leadership culture; however, we can continue to search for ways and means of creating a tightly knit school community. Some of the key components have already been mentioned:

- outline a clear school vision/strategic plan;
- utilise your location;
- establish your values to articulate your story and
- create meaningful programmes for your students.

You might get to the point where they develop opportunities themselves, such as the student driven *MHS Spell*.

Questions

Has your school clearly articulated a vision, purpose and outlined a strategic plan? Has the leadership team established a deep and meaningful understanding of the values your school wants to champion? What leadership systems, operations and programmes have been provided for your students and is there sufficient autonomy for them to demonstrate this?

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James P. Thorpe

MEd (UQ), GDipEd (UQ), BA (UOW)

James was educated at Michaelhouse, the Anglican Diocesan College of Natal. He has taught at St Kentigern College and St Kentigern Boys' School (New Zealand), the Anglican Church Grammar School (Churchie, Queensland) and The Southport School (TSS, Queensland). Within these schools, James has held a number of leadership positions: academically, pastorally and in the sporting context. An English teacher, Assistant Boarding Housemaster, Officer of Cadets, Cricket and Rugby Coach at The King's School, James has been an active committee member of the National Boys' Education Conference (NBEC), a King's School initiative.



A Guide for Students & their families Graduating from Primary School Andrew Fuller

Congratulations on graduating from primary school. It is a great achievement and you should feel proud of what you have done.

This paper is written to help you and your family think about what we can do over the next few months to help with the next stage of life.

Let's get the Number One worry out of the way first

Most graduating primary school students worry that they won't make friends at their new school. So before we talk other ideas, find out who else is going to your new school.

If no one you know is going to your new school, think about who you want to remain in touch with from your primary school and how you are going to do that.

Making new friends

Going to a new school is a chance to make new friends. I'm going to guess that your friends now are mostly people you didn't know when you started school. When you finish school it will be just like that- you will have a whole lot of friends that you don't know now. So you are about to meet new friends.

You want to know the hardest thing about making friends?

Saying hello. I suspect you know how to do this even though you might feel uncomfortable saying hello to people you don't know.

When you start at a new school you have a choice- you can either get to know one or two people or lots of people.

I would like to suggest that you consider getting to know lots of people in the first few days at a new school. I know it can feel cool to sit back and only speak to people who speak to you but over the school break it is worth getting used to saying hello to more people.

Go up to someone you don't know and say hello, my name is... Ask what's your name? Repeat their name and start a conversation.

You want to know the second hardest thing?

Knowing what to say. Having a few standard questions can be useful. Some examples are
What do you do for fun?
Where are you from?
Do you have a favourite sport/ computer game/ youtube clip?

It might feel hard to believe this but everyone feels a bit nervous on the first few days of a new school. People are as worried about what you think of them as you probably are about what they think of you.

By being brave and talking to people you not only help yourself, you help others.

Seal the relationship

Now you've broken the ice and said hello and you've had a bit of a chat, now its time to seal the deal. The next day go up to that person and say, "hi, (use their name) how

are you?" I know this probably sounds really basic to you but just being friendly gets you a lot of friends because people like people who like them.

You are ready for this

It feels weird doing new things at first and you are ready for this move. All of the time you have spent at primary school has been preparing you for this moment.

Know the layout

Visiting your new school and knowing where things are will help you to go on the first day will help a lot. Most schools have open days for graduating primary school students. Make sure you go. If you still feel worried visit the school again with your family. Your holidays are too precious to waste them worrying and things you don't need to worry about.

Have a learning adventure

Over the holidays have a learning adventure. If you can get your family involved. Find something you are interested in and learn more about it. Read books, watch videos, and visit places with your family. This is a really good time to remind yourself that learning is fun and when you are interested you can learn anything.

Planning and decision-making

Get involved in planning events over the Christmas/ summer time. Success in school relies a lot on your ability to plan effectively.

Try

I recently asked a really top scoring student for his recipe for success at school. He answered, "try". He explained that so many people feel scared to try to do their best. If

you try, you will certainly improve and probably amaze yourself.

Mistakes are the way we all learn

Learning is like in science. In science we come up with our best idea. We call that a hypothesis. Then we conduct a series of experiments to work out if that is indeed the best idea or if there is a better idea. In science there are no mistakes. There are just experiments that help you to get to better ideas.

You will make mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes. That is how we learn. If you feel too scared to make a mistake you can't be creative and you can't be the genius you truly are.

Not every one will be your best friend

You are not going to like everyone and not everyone will like you that much either. Be as friendly as you can be but don't get too upset if a few people don't seem to want to be close to you. That should be ok. Focus on the people who like and appreciate you.

Have fun and be adventurous

Over the next few years, you can have some of the best times in your life. Set out to enjoy yourself as much as you can. Try to amaze yourself with what you can achieve at school, in making new friends, in learning new things and in becoming an even more wonderful person.

Andrew is the creator of Student Transition and Resilience Training (START). His most recent book is "Unlocking Your Child's Genius"

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www.andrewfuller.com.au



New Head of Boarding

The Scots School Albury



Scout Symons
Head of Girls Boarding, Wilson House
The Scots School, Albury, NSW

Scout is the new Head of Girls Boarding at The Scots School Albury and a new member of the Scots community. Scout was attracted to Scots because of the opportunity to work with young people and to assist in developing World Ready' students.

Scout fell in love with boarding as a career when she began working at St Hilda's Boarding School on the Gold Coast as a Supervisor. From there she was inspired to empower young women and threw herself into the role. She then took on the position as Head of Girls at Nexus International School in Malaysia. This international experience gave Scout the inspiration to lead boarders and create positive boarding communities.

Her academic background is in Law and Social Science majoring in Government and Policy. Scout is planning to continue her studies by doing a Masters in Teaching in 2018.

Scout is a passionate sportswoman and has taken part in a number of competitions such as Malaysia's Strongest Woman, where she pulled a 4-tonne truck. Scout spends a lot of time at the gym and outdoors getting involved in many types of sports. On top of this Scout enjoys helping others and is a committed Rotarian.

Scout plans to help boarders at Scots with whatever they need – be it school work, co-curricular activities, sporting and fitness goals (truck pull?) or community service. Scout hopes to contribute to a positive culture of self-belief and confidence here at Scots.

From the Chairman



Pauline Turner
Chairman

The writing of this article coincides with the biannual ABSA Leaders Conference held in Sydney's beautiful Darling Harbour. Dr Thurber was an engaging presenter who has a sound background in the American boarding world. He challenged everyone to consider the future of boarding and engage with the public perception of boarding to assist in our thinking as we move into 'Positive Change' for boarding into the future. To build our knowledge of public perception; all the delegates were sent out into the winter sunshine for an afternoon to ask the public what they thought it meant to be a boarder and what they thought boarding was. This was a challenging and eye-opening experience for everyone.

As I reflected on the comments from the public it was interesting to consider in the same year we held the first National Boarding Week as an Association how can we better work to educate not just our school environments but the wider community to the positive impact a boarding experience has on young people.

Today's boarding schools are made up of young people from all walks of life and the experience is more positive and engaging, encouraging students to build not just independent attitudes but develop their inner strength and resilience for the future. As an Association we have so many good stories to tell from across our great continent and abroad. I am encouraged looking into the future of boarding that there is every reason to expect our boarding schools will continue to grow and develop into communities that make a profound difference from the past century.

That time of year is with us again for senior students to say farewell. As staff who have cared for and nurtured these young people may you all find moments to reflect with your senior students on the memories that boarding has given them and find the time to share these experiences with your boarding houses. In celebrating the end of their boarding lives both joy and sadness meet. We learn not just from the successes but the trials both staff and students have experienced together. May the celebrations bring you all joy as you look at the work of your hands and be thankful for every student with whom you have walked the journey of a thousand miles.

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AUS

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Annual Conference for Boarding House Staff
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31 Jan - 2 Feb 2018

Annual Conference for Deputy Heads
and Heads of Boarding
Manchester

13 Mar - 14 Mar 2018

Marketing and Communications Conference

1 May - 3 May 2018

Annual Conference for Heads
Brighton

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We plan to feature two schools each edition. All you need to do, is write a brief article (400 to 1000 words) and send us some high resolution photos

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by 1st February 2018