

Lights Out

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Symposium Under The Stars



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Ooraminna Station - photograph by Matt Officen

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In the name of drought

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Drought can be referred to 'as the silent killer slowly strangling the lives of not only the livestock that graze the lands but those families and businesses who call the Australian outback home'.

As a boarding school student at The Cathedral School in Townsville I have the opportunity to experience many different facets of life. However coming from the small western Queensland town of Winton, the reality and struggles associated with drought accompany me as I discover new horizons.

It is due to such experiences and knowledge that I am abundantly proud of where I come from and the school I attend, as both entities remain positive and continue to fight the detrimental aspects of drought.

Throughout the past 18 months I have witnessed my school influencing our broader community, including its city based families, to embrace the effort of fighting against the effects of drought. Rather than ignoring the complexities of drought, the school, its students and the Parents and Friends' Association, have been actively fund raising in order to provide practical assistance to purchase stock feed and the like for families and livestock in need. The fundraising efforts have been complemented by a coordinated approach by school management to deliver such essentials free of cost throughout the outback areas of Queensland. The essentials are delivered by staff who also provide a supportive and understanding 'ear' for rural families to talk.

I was also extremely proud to be involved last year in the 'Unite the Night' event organised by the school, staff and students to embrace and extend the drought effort to the Townsville community. It involved a very moving moment and one that will be etched in my memory for life as thousands of



In the name of drought

“The ‘Unite the Night’ event raised significant awareness and understanding of drought.”

people from all nationalities and backgrounds walked at night with only glow in the dark items along Townsville’s Strand in order to raise money and awareness for the campaign against drought.

The ‘Unite the Night’ event raised significant awareness and understanding of drought. Such aspects are just as important as financial assistance as many rural families struggle with the fact that they feel alone as the broader society does not understand drought in the same way they understand the effects of other extreme events such as cyclones.

My town of Winton continues to remain positive despite the impact of one of the worst droughts in Australia’s history. However when the town experienced the recent devastation of fire at one of its main tourist attractions when the Waltzing Matilda Centre was gutted by fire, the community was further knocked down, but importantly not knocked out!

In true Aussie spirit they are determined to rebuild a new facility that further improves the story behind Australia’s unofficial national anthem – Waltzing Matilda.

The Cathedral School’s management understood the pivotal impact the loss of such an iconic facility would be to a rural town. Accordingly it was quick to donate \$5,000 toward the replacement of memorabilia items lost in the fire. I was humbled to represent the entire school community to present Winton’s Mayor, Mr Butch Lenton, with this donation.

As I continue to experience the joy of new aspects and events in my life, one memory that will travel with me forever will be the gift of generosity and understanding that The Cathedral School community has for those people, communities and countries experiencing unfortunate times.



Girls celebrate NAIDOC week at St Hilda's School

AUTHOR
Cheryl Reddy
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St Hilda's Yalari scholars and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students relish the chance to share their love and respect of country during NAIDOC Week.

Held at the start of Term 3, NAIDOC Week is a time to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements. This Year's NAIDOC theme – We all Stand on Sacred Ground: Learn, Respect and Celebrate – highlights Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' strong spiritual and cultural connection to land and sea.

St Hilda's Middle School girls celebrated by sharing photographs of their home as visual displays of what 'country' means to them. Beautiful images of Burketown, Grafton, Hervey Bay, Derby, Redlynch and Halls Creek were screened at their assembly and saw both wide smiles and girls beaming with pride.

"We encourage all the girls to be true to themselves and their culture, to respect others and strive academically," said Head of Middle School, Mrs Susan Sanburg. "It is wonderful to see the girls growing and developing into confident young women and joining in opportunities to share their heritage with others."

St Hilda's School has been a partner with Yalari and its Indigenous Scholarship Program for ten years, welcoming between two and four girls each year into Middle School. Yalari scholars, who typically enter the program in Years seven and eight, enjoy the experiences and new friendships offered by St

Hilda's learning programs, co-curricular activities and boarding community. "Embracing challenges and opportunities, from studies in Visual Art and Science to joining sports teams or representing their Houses in plays and musicals, is key to a happy and successful transition to a new school and boarding life," said Mrs Sanburg.

Jada Davui, Hayley Edwards and Lenka Rivers are currently completing Year nine in the Middle School and are looking forward to moving to the Senior School. They have their sights set on rewarding studies in the Senior School which will help guide them in future careers.

Hayley commented: "Moving to live and study at St Hilda's from my home at Derby in Western Australia has been a big adjustment. Thanks to staff, I have been able to take advantage of a lot of new experiences and enjoy activities such as PC groups and tutorials. My favourite subject is Visual Art and a highlight of Middle School is getting involved in lots of different activities".

Yalari, based on the Gold Coast, was founded by indigenous educator Waverley Stanley and his wife Llew Mullins, to offer educational opportunities in independent schools to indigenous students. In its 10th anniversary year, it has 175 scholars studying in schools nationally and 109 alumni. Yalari draws its support for the Indigenous Scholarship Program from individuals, companies, philanthropic foundations and government departments. www.yalari.org

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Could you be a boardingpreneur or a boarding genius?

AUTHOR
Tracy Shand
Simply Boarding

Many people believe that a single individual can't make a difference in an organisation. However, if we look at the evidence – this statement turns out to be wrong. Boarding schools can learn a lot from the world of business and innovation. In business – there is the idea of an 'intrapreneur' – an employee who innovates while at work. Take Google for example, they allowed 20% of their employees work time for them to work on any project that they want. A simple idea. You allow people to work on something that interests them, and their motivation and performance will go up. Gmail, Google News and other innovations were created by passionate engineers during this time.

So, what do you think could be achieved by your passionate boarding staff?

What is a boardingpreneur?

A boardingpreneur is a member of staff who works in a boarding school who develops an entrepreneurial mindset to provide solutions to problems in boarding life. It is about those lightbulb moments that you say 'What if? Or 'What else?'. It is about the language 'Yes and ...' rather than 'No but ...'. This could be a short or long term project that will benefit everyone that works in boarding.

Innovation is the introduction of something new - an idea, process, product or method. With the new innovation of the boarding standard, this gives us an opportunity to take stock, reflect and consider an innovation that is appropriate to raising our game. So, how can you put innovation to work in boarding today?

Ask a question.

What solution could you create to a problem in your boarding school?

What are my, or my colleagues, biggest complaints right now with how we do this, and what changes might make it better?

If you have ever said, if only we ...? to a situation in boarding today.....look for ideas

everywhere – you know the saying that small things can make a big difference.

Try things out.

Asking the question is one thing, but trying to answer it is another. When solving a boarding problem, there is no substitute for first-hand experience. Take time to talk to other boarding staff about what you want to try ... no two people see things the same way. It is time to be curious and follow your instincts to make a difference – leave the naysayers behind!

Try, learn, and try again and again...

If you are trying something new, it takes time for things to fall into place. It can be hard to innovate sometimes and the outcome you predict may be very different to what happens. Start small but think big. Remember learning to walk, it did not happen the first time you pulled yourself up! Stay focussed, positive and determined and the rest will follow. If it fails, tweak it and try again. We can learn our best lessons from failure - just dust yourself off and start again.

Now, I know what you are thinking....how can we do this in boarding today - we are so busy and have houses to run. I am not advocating that you give your boarding team 20% extra time off during the week (but that would be nice) - but how about you turn your staff into boarding geniuses? The cost – one hour of time a week. The return - investment and empowerment. If you look at the idea from The Genius Hour website (<http://www.geniushour.com>), you will see how an hour a week can produce some excellent results for students, teachers and leaders. I am cur-

rently introducing this into boarding life as an independent project for both students and staff.

'The innovation point is the pivotal moment when talented and motivated people seek the opportunity to act on their ideas and dreams'
- W. Arthur Porte

What if?

What else ... ?

"It's impossible", said pride.

"It's risky", said experience.

"It's pointless", said reason.

"Give it a try", whispered the heart."

- Author Unknown

No one knows where the next great idea will come from. Your ideas can solve real boarding issues. Boardingpreneurs develop new innovative solutions to address the boarding challenges we face today. Tomorrow's boarding leaders know that to compete in a boarding world, they need to innovate – or 'evaporate'. So next time you have a challenge, pick a word from here to take action.

TRY

Try lots of ways to solve it.

SOLVE

Solve a simple everyday boarding problem.

DREAM

Dream. Record what you want. Action it!

CHANGE

What small thing would make the biggest difference.

SHARE

Share problems. Find solutions. Brainstorm and take action.

IMPROVE

Identify one way to improve boarding for you or someone else.

THINK

Take time to think – solve the opposite problem.

OPEN

Be open to ideas OUTSIDE the box.

GROW

Move forward with each step.

FLIP

Start from the end – what you want and work back.





Too many cooks don't spoil the broth

AUTHOR

Michael Symons
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The King's School, Sydney

There is an old Irish proverb that claims "laughter is brightest in the place where the food is". As a species, we love eating. Eating brings us together and gives us the opportunity to converse and consume – surely two of our favourite pastimes.

The typical student meal is presented to them on a plate; the only question they need to answer is whether or not they want seconds. Or thirds. They don't need to wonder where the food is coming from, nor do they need to ascertain the best ingredients and put them all together in a medley of symphonic taste. They simply grab a fork (and sometimes, heaven forbid, a knife) and digest.

And that is certainly the way it should be. The modern student has enough on their proverbial plate without worrying about cooking. Academic expectations, co-curricular obligations, fitness, familial duties and socialising. Where is the time to concoct a casserole? How can they squeeze in a stir-fry?

Sunday is frequently the day we think of as being the day of family dining. Breaking bread around the same table of a lunch or dinner while laughing is not merely an Australian tradition – it is truly global. The English Sunday roast. The Italian Cavatelli at 2pm on the Sabbath. Even the Germans have popularised a family Sunday brunch since the early 1990s. It's a wonderful thing. But in a boarding house, so far from home, a student's Sunday meal might be the leftover Dominos from the night before or a couple of nutritious packs of Maggi noodles.

For many years, our students have cooked their own barbecues on a Sunday. Nothing groundbreaking there. Steaks, sausages, burgers, onions, eggs, bacon – easy. Whack one (or all) of these between two pieces of bread with half a bottle of sauce – Sunday lunch done.

In addition to the above gastronomic delight, we've begun trying last year a more traditional afternoon meal in some of our boarding houses. The boys do the lot. They decide what



to cook. They decide how much they need. While we give them money, they head off to buy the ingredients. They decide who chops and dices, who cuts and slices. They put all the ingredients on the picnic tables outside in the courtyard, we get some music playing out one of the windows – and the boys begin cooking. While we supervise, it has been very revealing to see just how much certain boys know about cooking. The size of the chicken chunks, the time it takes to brown onions, the order of ingredients – they know much more than we gave them credit for.

Fettuccini Carbonara features regularly. Bolognese gets a crack. But the favourite seems to be a chicken and chorizo tagliatelle with sun-dried pesto and reggiano cheese. This was the boys' invention – and, somehow, after about 4 hours of sourcing, purchasing, chopping, cutting, dicing, boiling and stirring

– the meal is ready to feed 50. And is exceptionally tasty.

We use a large pot loaned to us by the dining hall, a camp cooker, the hot plate of the BBQ and that's about it.

Once it's done, the boys ring the house bell and, like moths to a flame, the boys come at speed. They sit outside and go hell for leather. We boarding masters purposely extricate ourselves from the situation but it is very rewarding to listen to the banter emanating from the courtyard. Long after the meal has finished, the boys linger around the table, laughing and chatting. There are no phones or computers, no tablets or television. It is just the enjoyable old-school discussions that are such a good thing. And too rare a thing, more's the pity.

I have to admit that the laughter and banter dissipates somewhat when the word 'dishes' is mentioned, but, as far as a Sunday activity goes, the boys love it. I even had a boy send me a photo over the recent break of him in the kitchen, cooking his parents a meal for their wedding anniversary. The menu? You guessed it – a chicken and chorizo tagliatelle with sun-dried pesto and reggiano cheese.

As you can see from the photograph, we did find ourselves running out of cutlery one Sunday afternoon, but the laughter certainly was the brightest where the food was.



The secret to having a well adjusted international boarder

AUTHOR
Hayley Hall
Senior Residential Assistant
Prince Alfred College

“make sure
you take
note of your
international
boarders’
achievements and
celebrate them”



At Prince Alfred College (PAC), my role is to look after our cohort of international boarders. We have 35 international boarders out of a boarding community of 138 boys, originating from a range of countries such as China, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Cambodia, Canada, Malaysia and Thailand to name a few.

International boarders have a unique set of needs, namely on top of the normal challenges faced by any boarder, having their parents overseas and being exposed to a new country and culture makes adjustment to boarding life a lot more complicated. One of my goals, when I started in this role in 2014, was to work on the integration of international students within our boarding community. A year and a half into the role, I have been analyzing our current international boarders and trying to work out and answer the question, ‘what makes a well-adjusted and well-integrated international boarder?’ and ‘what is the secret behind those international students who seem to excel in boarding versus those international students who seem to really struggle?’ Having studied some of our most successfully integrated boarders, a few key factors stand out that I would like to share with you in this article.

These key factors are by no means exhaustive and of course, with human beings being so unique, they are not intended to be a ‘one size fits all’ solution, but merely an exercise in looking at what my most well-integrated and well-adjusted international boarders do and how we can encourage other international students to model some of their existing behaviors, the hope being that, for those of us who work in boarding, we can look to improve our existing international boarder’s experience of boarding life, by modelling best practice from existing well integrated international students.

Factor #1 - English Speaking Skills

I have noticed a direct link with the level of English speaking skills that the international boarder arrives with and how quickly they adjust into boarding life. The better their English speak skills are, the easier they find the transition. Now whilst this might initially seem really obvious, it is worth making note of and seeing how you can help your own international boarders develop their language skills.

Think about the international boarders in your boarding community; what can you do to help those whose English speaking skills are limited? Can you organise extra English speaking classes? Can you bring in private language tutors? One way in which I help my international boarders develop their language skills is by encouraging them to participate in our weekend boarding activities. At PAC we organise boarding activities every weekend. Activities range from golfing, to paintballing, to movie trips to cooking classes. A condition of being an international boarder is that each international boarder must agree to do at least one boarding activity a weekend. This ensures that they are mixing with other non-international students and improving their language and social skills. This is one way that we help to develop our international boarders’ language skills.

Therefore, ensuring that your international boarders have a high level of English speaking skills is one factor that is vital when wanting to ensure a smooth transition into boarding and ensure that they become well integrated.

Factor #2 – Playing a sport (or at least being positively engaged in an extra-curricular activity)

I have noticed that those international boarders’ who are actively involved in an extra-curricular sport tend to be much better



The secret to having a well adjusted international boarder



becomes and the more they will contribute to the boarding community in the long term. However, instilling confidence in someone takes time, patience and daily praise for their achievements, no matter how small. Think about how you could build up the confidence of your international boarders? At PAC we celebrate their 'risk-taking' ability. What I mean by this, is that we remind them just how brave they have been travelling to a new country and experiencing a new culture all to embark on their educational journey. We admire them for their courage and remind them to continue to take on the challenges that face them daily when they are adjusting to boarding life. By celebrating how much they have done just by enrolling at PAC, we begin to build up their confidence to face the many challenges that may lay ahead.



international boarders' have a real passion for table tennis, basketball and badminton. Some of our international boarders also really excel in music. Finding out what their interests are and helping them make connections with the relevant coaches or teachers who run those sports or activities really helps the boarders to integrate and become well-adjusted members of the boarding community.

Therefore, encouraging your international students to get involved in a sport or extra-curricular activity, is another vital part of ensuring their successful integration into your boarding community.

Factor #3 – Confidence

The more confidence an international boarder has, the easier the transition into boarding

Therefore, make sure you take note of your international boarders' achievements and celebrate them. Achievements might include getting an academic award at school or being selected to play in a team or even something as simple as completing homework on time or having a tidy room. Find things to praise them for and begin to build their confidence and self-esteem and remember that the more confident they are, the better and smoother their transition into boarding life will be.

I hope you have found this article useful and it has got you thinking about how you can help to improve the integration of your own international students in your boarding community.

integrated and well-adjusted into our boarding community. At PAC we are an all-boys school, so my analysis has been on male international boarding students, however my assumption would be that the same would be true for girls who partake in a team sport or an extra-curricular activity such as drama, dance or music. Being part of a team, attending practices or rehearsals and being part of the extended community really helps a student to feel at home.

When I first started in the role of looking after international boarding students, we tended to have a big issue with a lot of our international boarders partaking in hours of online gaming. They enjoyed this as their past time and would spend hours at their computers. However, with the expectation that boarding students engage in weekend boarding activities and working more closely with the school P.E. teachers, we have seen a positive shift of boys coming off their computers and engaging meaningfully in sports. I would suggest that you try to find out the sports that appeal to your international boarders. At PAC our



Compass Group is re-shaping its Education business brand to market.

No longer to be known as the operating brands of LAPG Education or Scolarest, where multiple brands have created marketplace confusion, Compass in Australia is pleased to announce the launch of Chartwells, an already established Compass education brand. It has been re developed and tailored to suit the unique requirements of our Australian education market and reflects our continued quality focus and commitment to innovative, tailored food solutions.

Chartwells has already been 'soft launched' to some of our Education sites and throughout the rest of the 2015 calendar year will transition this brand to all sites.

WHY CHARTWELLS?

Not only is it an evolution of the three brands, it has global success and reputation as a true leader to the Education market.

Chartwells represents a merge of the key features, philosophies and proven credentials of our successful operating models whilst demonstrating a genuine commitment to innovation and best practice.

WHAT CHANGES?

It is a change in our operating brand. This does not however change the way we operate, drive continuous improvement and innovation or mean any change to our people on site or within the management team.

It is simply time to consolidate the three brands that have operated within our Australian market to one - and offer our clients a very clear brand proposition and a focus on adding value to our partnerships.

BENEFITS

We have taken the opportunity to identify a new brand personality consistent with our philosophy of boutique service, tailored solutions and a high quality food and customer focus.

With the re-branding comes new staff uniforms for our people on site, new point of sale merchandising and ticketing, a new style function approach and consistently branded and identifiable promotional posters and site insignia - the sort of things representative of any successful brand.

OUR INSIGNIA

A prominent design feature of our new personality is our 'whisk', which many of you will be already be familiar with. It represents excellence and leadership whilst underlining our commitment to our craft.

This exciting next chapter in our business is all about ensuring that we continue to create innovative and workable solutions that are designed to evolve with the market.

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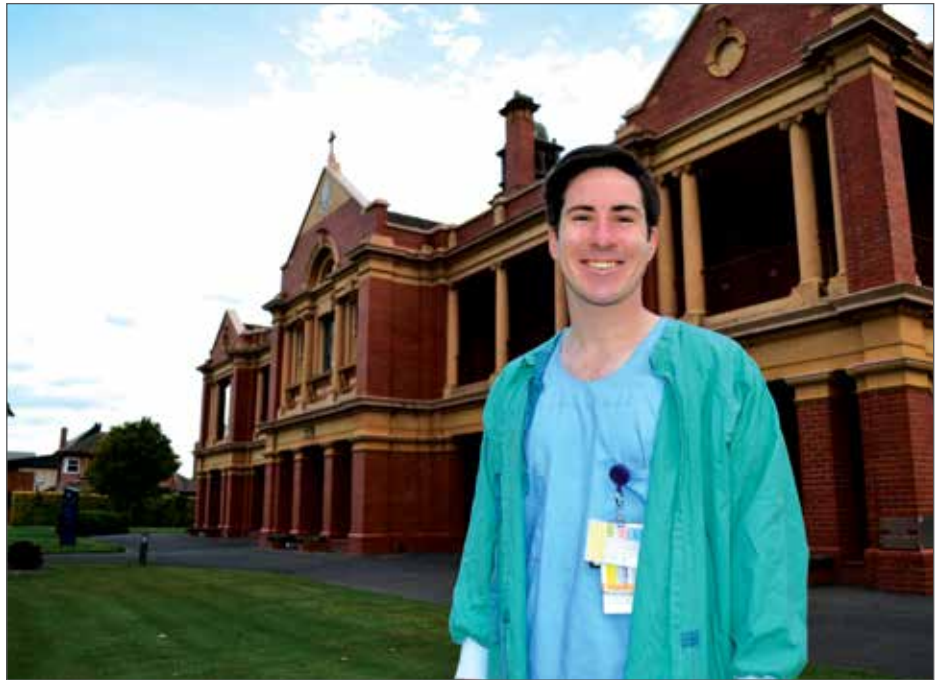


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How did we get here? What's more, why are we here..?

AUTHOR
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It's a very interesting question I encourage you to ask yourself. Each person's journey into working within a residential setting is unique. For some, they may have fallen into it; others may have taken a more complex route. My way into boarding was as a boarder. The majority of us reading this article are from boarding schools, however for those working in hostels or similar institutions the ideas raised here are just as important and relevant. So then, why do we do what we do and why do we do it?

To borrow an expression from Richard Stokes I was one of those "kids from the bush". When I was born both mum and dad realised that Cowra had limited educational opportunities and so they enrolled me at St Ignatius College, Riverview. Although at the time I was only a drooling baby, my parents had made the single most influential decision in determining my future.

When I was 5 I began to learn piano and showed a great interest in singing, my parents were very excited by my interest in the arts. This love and passion of mine still exists today, and I am fortunate to be able to express it. When not working as a housemaster, I run the Choral Program here at St Patrick's College Ballarat. Unfortunately in my small regional centre I was bullied for my love of singing and music. I was often called names such

as "gay" and "poofter", at the time not realising what those highly offensive terms actually meant. This bullying was primarily because I was different. Where others showed a great deal of interest in Rugby League, I wanted to sing.

When at age 12 I finally went to boarding school we were assembled and the expectations of the College were explained to us. It was that moment many would recall, when you first understand what it means to be a part of your college community, in this case what it meant to be a "View Boy". The part that I took the most interest in was the Choir Director telling us that he would be holding auditions on Friday that week for the College Choir and Chapel Choir. Friday simply couldn't come soon enough!

To my great surprise, there were about 150 students (out of a year group of 210) trying out for the choir. What a change! No longer was I stigmatised as the outsider, there were others who shared my passion and were impressed to hear of what I had achieved in my life so far. My audition went well, and the following week my name made it onto the notice board with the list of other successful candidates. My self-esteem was at an all time high! I had made friends, I was singing with many of them and enjoying not only making music but discovering the joy of Rugby Union; another



How did we get here?

What's more, why are we here...?

“I encourage each of you to reflect on how you got here and why you are here”

passion I carry to this day! Within six months I travelled to England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and France, singing in places such as Bath Abbey and La Madeleine as the head boy of the college choir. What a change six months at Riverview had had on me.

One character that I have an inordinate amount of respect for is Mr Chris Farnsworth, previously the Year 9 Housemaster at St Ignatius College, Riverview. Mr Farnsworth held a no nonsense approach with all of the boarders in his care. He was firm, but always fair. This influence was so profound that today, when working with boarders, I often ask myself “what would Mr Farnsworth have done”.

Like so many of my contemporaries I travelled abroad. When I finished my time in Ireland I returned for further studies to Wagga Wagga, NSW, where I read Radiography at Charles Sturt University. Whilst most of the students with whom I studied were working in hospitality, I discovered Mt Erin Boarding School, now attached to Kildare Catholic College. Over the next four years as I continued my studies, I developed my technique as a boarding master significantly, and on a number of occasions, including for a term, deputised as Acting Head of Boys Boarding.

At the end of my time in Wagga, I was engaged to Monica, now my wife and we moved to Sydney to start out in our professions, Monica as a Registered Nurse and me, a Radiographer. I was incredibly fortunate to secure a position at St Vincent's Hospital in Darlinghurst (the hospital where Kings Cross

ER is filmed). “Vinnies” would arguably be one of the best hospitals in Australia. I found myself working with the best resources, some of the most accomplished staff in the radiography world, and regularly developing cutting edge techniques. During this time, I was also a boarding master at St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, and completing my Master of Theology from the University of Notre Dame, Australia.

As time progressed I found myself increasingly looking forward to working with the boarders at “Joeys”. One evening when I was talking with Monica, I had an epiphany; my calling was to work in education, with boarders. So in 2014 I took up the post of Housemaster at St Patrick's College, Ballarat and I haven't looked back.

I encourage each of you to reflect on how you got here and why you are here. Fundamentally, what is the pedagogical approach within your boarding house? This appears to be a largely untouched area full of research possibilities (particularly within the Australian Boarding School's context) that I intend to address as I complete my Master of Social Science degree through the University of Strathclyde.

How then does that translate into our approach or flavour in which we carry out our work? I think my pedagogical approach to boarding is one fostering, above all else, fairness and consistency tempered with genuine care for each student as Mr Farnsworth showed me all those years ago.

It is important that we remember the opportunities that we foster for each and every one of our boarders, whether like me it was the opportunity to sing in the Chapel Choir and tour the world, or for some the new and sometimes foreign experience of sharing their environment or having regular healthy meals. I encourage you to reflect upon how you came to work in boarding and what sort of pedagogical approach you have and why. I believe it is important that we question why it is we do what we do and to always look for ways we can improve.

If we can provide for just one student what was given to me as a boarder, then our career in education will have been a great success.

So, how did you get here and why are you here?



How to build a culture of student leadership in boarding

AUTHOR
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“Schools with boarders are at such an advantage in many ways”

Some recent visitors to The King's School prompted reflection on how best to develop leadership skills in residential students. These visitors, all the way from South Africa, were considering how best to incorporate a student leadership program into a school that had never had one before. They felt leadership offered a wide range of opportunities to focus on a values/character based program. It certainly is an exciting initiative and perhaps one that may sound relevant to issues grappled with in your own residential student programs of recent years. Increasingly schools are looking for the value added programs, beyond traditional academic and co-curricular offerings, to create a competitive advantage or differentiate themselves from like schools. This article considers leadership education as culture, with the capacity to add real impact in the boarding context.

When considering, introducing or refining programs of student development in boarding schools there are clearly many options. To even consider such programs and curriculum, we are acknowledging the important role that schools can and should play in developing good people. With all the various offerings available, the obvious question in response is “Why focus on Leadership?” Leadership as a term has the capacity to excite and engage on a wide range of levels and is a skill or capability that is an easy sell to our students. Tell them they are doing a Life Skills or Values program and they will cringe. Yet tell them they are doing a Leadership program and they are yours! Leadership is something we all have an opinion on and for those of us gainfully employed, our capacity to lead is often the path to career progression. For our boarders, having leadership capacity, confidence and experience can provide them with a ticket to further success, both career and life wise! However, leadership education in schools and increasingly boarding contexts needs to be much more than attending a class, reading a book or completing a course. A clear focus on leadership in schools and boarding houses can be a wonderful way to promote affirming values and good character in a manner which appeals to young people.

However, in discussing leadership with anyone, it is apparent that leadership is a concept with more definitions and ideas attached to it than any other. Therefore, I would argue that our approach to leadership development in students has to be intrinsically linked to specific school context for it to be truly ef-



fective. At the heart of an aspiration to build a culture of student leadership is a desire to promote and celebrate aspects such as initiative, resilience, accountability, achievement, excellence and importantly the emergence of a culture which promotes a “servant” ethos. What wonderful attributes to have evident in the individuals and groups which comprise and co-exist with a school residential community. However, it is the notion of servant leadership, attributed to the author Robert E. Greenleaf that is particularly powerful in schools and in turn boarding houses, where the traditional hierarchy of leadership is turned upside down to acknowledge that in the 21st century, the role of a leader should be to enrich the experience and opportunities of those who follow. So whilst there are many leadership plans and models in place across schools, the focus should be on finding one relevant to your specific needs and your existing culture.



How to build a culture of student leadership in boarding

Would you then consider your existing approach to student development. Are there specific programs in place for boarding students or are these more school based? The reality is that the time offered by the boarding experience should indicate that there are some great opportunities to provide differentiated programs and offerings. Whilst I have no doubt there are many wonderful existing programs in your schools and boarding communities, these are often run by consultants and organisations who present a generic package to all schools. These programs can be amazingly effective, yet they are often expensive and not always tailored to the needs of individual schools. The next question may be to consider, "So why a focus on culture - we are doing leadership classes/courses?" My argument would be that leadership programs work best when they are embedded into the culture of a school (particularly the intimate environment of boarding) rather than merely existing as "add-ons," to existing curricular or co-curricular offerings. In this sense, residential leaders need to consider what is distinctive about the values of, not only their school, but also their boarding setting to reflect on what they actually hope to achieve through the development of leadership capacity in students.

There is no doubt that schools are complex entities and when residential components are added, the complexity of a whole range of factors is multiplied. Therefore it is vital to consider what type of values, skills and capabilities you want to see emerge in your students, tailored specifically for them. A focus on culture here allows you to understand the unique and distinctive identity which exists just below the surface of the relationships in your boarding house. What is valued? What do students talk about in groups? What behaviours are tolerated and sanctioned? These elements and more are the dominant culture of your residence. Culture may be defined as the guiding beliefs which characterize a group. In fact, the term ethos, which we often associate with culture, is the Greek term for character. Alignment between our culture and the type of leadership we wish to promote and develop is essential in the process of developing a leadership program for students. If the values and beliefs of leadership are similar to the values and beliefs which guide our culture and ethos, I would suggest that there is a good basis for building a leadership program rather than merely doing a leadership course.

A focus on culture allows us to consider what student leadership should look like in all aspects. By including a focus on leadership in all of our endeavours in a community, we promote the pursuit of excellence in a whole range of ways. When all are engaged in the pursuit of excellence, which I consider to be the very best individuals and groups can be, we develop a culture where achievement is expected and celebrated. The pursuit of excellence acknowledges that in a residential community, there is a diversity of students and skills levels but also promotes a very that individually and together people can achieve their personal best. In a residential community this culture is one where the growth of students - socially, emotionally, morally, intellectually and physically - can be both measured and reported upon accordingly. These elements in a boarding context may have been seen to be intangible and imprecise in the past, yet when we consider them as central to the development of leadership skill and capacity they become more tangible in nature. The promotion of the pursuit of excellence means that achievements and behaviours of any kind can be communicated and celebrated within the group, thus building and further strengthening the guiding values of the culture. The positive influence and expectation established by this approach can nurture excellence and the pursuit of personal best rather than merely celebrating achievement.

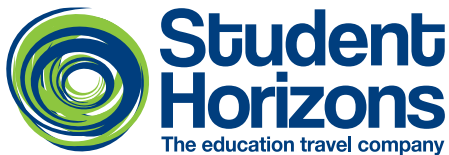
Finally, expecting and celebrating behaviours associated with the values of servant leadership can enrich a residential culture in many wonderful ways. Behaviours associated with this approach to leadership rather than traditional authoritarian and autocrat responses promote aspects such as the willingness to put others first, openly express care and concern for others and the construction of positive relationships in both vertical and horizontal student year level groupings. These are culture building behaviours and values which can guide the emergence of leadership capacity at all levels.

Schools with boarders are at such an advantage in many ways than those without a residential component. The boarding context provides a rich environment and daily setting to establish and celebrate the values and behaviours which in turn build a culture. A focus on developing student leadership, not through additional enrichment courses, but through harnessing and celebrating the best of students themselves is a powerful way to create culture. The best change within a school is driven by students rather than staff. Getting our students to see themselves as leaders, regardless of whether they hold a formal position, through their actions and care for others, is entirely compatible with the broad ethos of a boarding philosophy.



ABSA boarding staff travel to South Africa as guests of Student Horizons

AUTHOR
Jamie Wansey
Owner – Managing Director
Student Horizons



Student Horizons South Africa Inspection Trip – Pilanesberg National Park

“The 2015 South Africa Inspection visit

demonstrated
Student Horizons’
professionalism,
organisation
and local
knowledge”

How can we realistically expect young people growing up, or older people for that matter – that have already ‘grown up’, to have a balanced point of view if they only have one field of view?

Growing emotionally intelligent, tolerant, global citizens requires travel, to see first hand different fields of view and by doing so broadening their horizons.

On the 3rd July, Heads of Boarding from Brisbane Boys' College, The Scots School Albury, Saint Ignatius' College, Riverview and St Patrick's College, Ballarat departed Sydney for South Africa as guests of Student Horizons (the educational travel specialists and exclusive travel sponsor of ABSA). Joining the four ABSA representatives were staff from six different New Zealand schools. Jamie Wansey (Student Horizons Managing Director) and Richard Gorrett (Student Horizons Programme Development Manager) were delighted to be leading the group in showcasing the huge diversity in experiential opportunities that South Africa offers all ages.



Loftus Park – Home of The Blue Bulls

“The 2015 South Africa Inspection visit demonstrated Student Horizons’ professionalism, organisation and local knowledge. From start to finish the trip ran smoothly and we were treated to some amazing highlights. I have returned convinced that not only is South Africa a safe destination, but one well worth visiting with a school group who will enjoy it and learn a lot at the same time.” **Michael Holland (Director of Boarding – Brisbane Boys’ College)**

Student Horizons' investment in staff inspection trips is a demonstration of the commitment they place on the most important aspect of any overseas school experience, that being the safety of the students and staff participating on the trip. Inspection trips allow school staff to risk assess a destination first-hand and are an ideal way to gain personal knowledge of what a particular destination may potentially offer their students.

Travelling through South Africa comes with some risk. In fact travelling anywhere in the world today comes with some risk. The controls put in place by Student Horizons to mitigate risk for their groups travelling to South Africa, or any other destination, on a school tour is never compromised. Robust planning, effective processes and good people, competent in their roles are what help to provide successful outcomes.

“My inspection tour with Student Horizons was an outstanding experience. I was so impressed with the professionalism of the tour leaders and



ABSA boarding staff travel to South Africa as guests of Student Horizons

the quality of the programme. The tour was well planned and took us to a range of accommodation and potential experiences for our students. Most impressive of all was the flexibility of the company to tailor the experience to individual needs. This, along with the emphasis on safety gives me great confidence to engage with Student Horizons for future overseas tours for my students." **Adrian Lawrence (Head of Boarding – The Scots School Albany)**

In a short amount of time a huge amount was accomplished and experienced, including Pretoria, Pilanesberg National Park, Apartheid Museum, Cape Town, Township Tour, Table Mountain, school visits, Stellenbosch vineyards and so much more.

"As an inspection tour, the highlights were the variety of experiences. A good range of accommodation and activities and above all the flexibility to modify the programme where needed. Nothing seemed to be too much trouble." **Adrian Lawrence (Head of Boarding – The Scots School Albany)**



Meeting the South African women's cricket team!



School inspection visit – Cape Town

The planning for our next Inspection Trip in April 2016 is well underway and the destination will be South America.

As part of the partnership between Student Horizons and ABSA there are places on the Student Horizons South America inspection trip for representatives from Australian boarding schools.

If you would be interested in hearing more about this or would like to discuss a potential overseas trip that you are interested in organising please do get in touch with Jamie Wansey, jamie@studenthorizons.com.au (Managing Director, Student Horizons).

For more information about organising your next tailor made international sports tour, educational trip or volunteering expedition visit www.student-horizons.com

Why South Africa? By Jamie Wansey (Owner of Student Horizons)

As far as touring destinations go South Africa has to be a destination that everyone should visit at least once in their lifetime, in my opinion. I was fortunate to spend one of the most memorable and influential years of my life between school and university as a sports assistant in a large private school in Jo'burg and also as an English teacher in a rural farm school in Tzaneen. The two completely different volunteer service based placements opened my eyes to the diversity in culture, people, language and geography that South Africa is renowned for. The disparity in wealth between the privileged (mainly white) kids at St John's Prep School and the black kids in the rural farm school broadened my horizons immeasurably. South Africa was my first experience of a developing country and on reflection this experience, at this age, had a profound effect on the way I perceived my own life back home and the world as a whole. Interestingly, the reality of what the country was actually like compared with what I was expecting was very different – a reason why I believe travel is a critical pillar in a young person's development; travel breaks down barriers and prejudices making us more tolerant of different cultures, views and opinions.

So, for me South Africa is a special place. No surprise, I guess, that over the last 13 years I have got a great sense of satisfaction in successfully sending hundreds of students and staff to South Africa on sports, cultural and educational tours, knowing that they have gained in a similar way that I have. Whether you end up taking a sports group, Concert Band, History class or a group of students studying Geography, South Africa's rich diversity is hard to beat. The trip will undoubtedly inspire, educate and make your students think. Quite possibly your students may well return from South Africa with a new perspective on life and it's difficult to put a price on that.

Case Studies:

St. Mary's College, Ipswich New Zealand Netball and Choral Tour

In September this year, St Mary's College Ipswich will tour the North Island of New Zealand. They will be hosted by a number of girls schools playing host to their netball teams and providing suitable choral exchanges. In addition to school exchanges, the St Mary's choral girls will participate in choral workshops facilitated by NZ choral clinicians and the netball girls will attend coaching sessions with former Silver Ferns. A variety of cultural and adventure excursions will be sure to top off a great touring experience for these girls.



St. Ignatius' College, Riverview New Zealand Cricket Tour

In December this year St. Ignatius' College will tour the North Island of New Zealand taking in Auckland, Tauranga, Rotorua, Hamilton and Cambridge.

Playing a number of 1 day 50 over matches against the likes of Sacred Heart College, King's College and Hamilton Boys' High School they will be suitably challenged by their hosts.

Billeting with host families coupled with a variety of cultural and adventure activities will round off a great experience in NZ for these lads.



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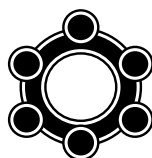


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Between busy schedules, homework and sporting activities, kids need quality sleep to ensure they can be mentally and physically ready for the demands that each day brings. Studies show that lack of sleep can affect concentration and decision-making, and can impair the ability to consolidate learning that occurs during the school day.



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Quality and innovation

Putting the books back on the shelf..

AUTHOR
Conrad Mathias
St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, NSW



**“The
temptation
is that action
means progress”**

Those of us with a few books and a few book shelves will know the experience of putting a quantity of books back on the shelf, only to have them collapse into an unmanageable heap – usually just out of reach. The books are different in size, weight, and shape and refuse to behave uniformly. The impulsive thing to do is speed up the process. It only makes it worse.

It can be similar with public speaking. I have warned many a youngster about to embark on some vocal task, or making a speech in front of the school, about the dangers of speeding up your delivery. This commonly happens when you make an error – leave out something, or stumble over a pronunciation. The impulsive thing for many speakers is to speed up your delivery. It only makes it worse.

And so it can be with events in boarding life. Students make errors, judgement stumbles, and unexpected excursions in tension situations (which often sneak up on you – you just don't see it coming). The temptation is that action means progress. Something should be done immediately, and quickly.

It's true enough that sometimes we have to move quickly to mitigate some situations, but more often than not our staunchest friend is time. The resolution of problems with students (and sometimes staff) is often helped by giving it time. Many a potentially tense situation has been alleviated by telling the student to go away and think about it for ten minutes. And it doesn't have to be quantified. “We'll discuss this later....” serves just as well.

Time is instructive, and resuming dialogue is made easier by putting some distance between events and the necessary discussion about how things are going to be handled in the future. It also empowers our students to self-correct which is a much more lasting lesson than one which might be imposed by us.

So putting the books back on the shelf should be done slowly – like the books, our charges are of different size, weight and style. Going about it without haste will ensure there's a place for everyone on the shelf and they will all live happily alongside each other and us despite their differences. Festina lente.



Ethics, law and the boarding house

AUTHOR
Andrew Knott
Special Counsel
TressCox Lawyers

**“the
values that
members
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ethics”**

When speaking to boarding house staff about legal issues it is common for us to make the point that although compliance with the details of legislation, employer policies, codes of conduct and so is critical, there is a deeper issue. That deeper issue is that the law and the procedural requirements imposed on staff are ultimately designed to ensure that certain basic (and uncontroversial) principles relating to integrity, the welfare of staff and students and so on, are complied with. In that context it is important that the values that members of the profession have internalised are consistent with established professional ethics (reflected in the law) and that a staff member's 'instincts' should lead such persons to reflect in appropriate circumstances on whether they should take certain action, such as passing on information. It is those who lack these instincts or internalised values of the profession who are most at risk of engaging in misconduct or omitting to engage in appropriate conduct such as mandatory notification. The details of the imposed obligations must be complied with, and fully so, but the deeper issue is critical.

In its interim report in mid-2014, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse touched on this issue with its emphasis on the importance of culture, that is the creation in both administrators and those being administered of a culture facilitative of creating a safe environment for children.

We have recently become aware (though it was published in 2007) of a most interesting short book (200 pages) entitled 'Ethics and Law for Teachers' by Kenneth Crook and Derek Truscott (Nelson Education, Canada). The authors were an academic psychologist and a retired lawyer who had had a substantial practice in this area. The key paragraphs in the preface are as follows:

'This text evolved out of the realization that there was no single Canadian text that covered both ethical and legal principles for teachers, despite the fact that the understanding of such is a core element in a teacher's education.'

'Both types of texts have their place and purpose, but it is our view that teachers in training ought to be presented with an opportunity to appreciate the interconnectedness of ethics and law.'

As correctly stated by the authors, there is large literature on education law and a large literature on educational ethics. What is valuable about this book is the manner in which it seeks to approach the issues in the manner indicated above. The approach and the general principles, are equally applicable in the boarding house.

The first chapter is entitled 'An Introduction to Professional Ethics'. That is followed by basic descriptions of the development and organisation of education in Canada, an overview of the legal process, a chapter on teaching as a profession and then chapters which deal with specific issues. Those are 'Private Life, Public Role', 'Negligence', 'Teacher/Student Boundaries' (absolutely critical and the subject of many cases handled by us), 'The Rights of Students', 'Discipline and Punishment in the Classroom', 'Controversy in the Classroom' and 'Diversity, Equity and Fairness'.

The final chapter then draws a lot of the issues together under the title 'Ethical Decision Making'.

Although this book is eight years old and although it relates to Canada, it is of considerable relevance here given that its rationale is to attempt to show how the law flows out of the ethics and how ethical awareness is the foundation for legal compliance. In addition to that, there are sufficient substantial similarities between the Australian and Canadian legal systems which make the text appropriate for Australian readers.

While few boarding house staff would wish to read the book, many educational leaders and particularly those engaged in the mentoring of staff, may find the book a very useful consciousness raiser and source of ideas.



Symposium Spectacular!



Creativity at Geelong Grammar School

AUTHOR
Tim Patson
Coordinator of Creativity and Innovation
Geelong Grammar School, VIC



Creativity and Innovation – Tools for the Future of Learning.

Geelong Grammar School has developed an international reputation for leading educational change through the implementation of its Positive Education Program. Pos Ed, as we now call it, has been infused throughout the school over the past eight years, and is now being diffused out from GGS, both nationally and internationally, through the Positive Education Institute. The Institute offers training courses, conference presentations and publications in addition to teaching the subject of Positive Education at the school.

The next stage in our journey to adapt to the rapidly changing education landscape is via the lens of creativity and innovation. The post-secondary landscape is changing at a frantic pace in both the employment and education sectors. Employers throughout the world are calling for creative and innovative thinkers and practitioners in the workforce. Independent schools have a responsibility to prepare students to flourish in this new uncertain world. One of the keys to being a valuable resource for any organisation is the ability to solve problems in not only novel, but useful ways. A second key skill for the future is the ability to work collaboratively, without ego. At Geelong Grammar we are developing and implementing new strategies of teaching and learning, based on the application of non-subject based skills and knowledge, rather than just the acquisition and regurgitation of knowledge for a specific subject.

While much of the current education discourse focuses on the idea that technology is our future, individuals cannot expect to thrive without passing through the eye of human interaction. Boarding school gives a unique opportunity for students to form productive relationships. The outdoors provides very valuable experiences which are translatable to any context. The following exercise is an example of collaborative creative problem solving.

Group Creativity in an outdoor problem solving setting.

Subjects – A group of 11 boarding house students, randomly selected from a group of 70. There were six groups in total, numbers ranging from 11 to 12 in number.

One group was observed for the duration of all tasks. At the pre-briefing, the instructor told the group that these tasks were not about winning, but about trust. They were asked to focus on this word for the day. No other groups were given this instruction.

Task 1 – The group was sent to complete a series of ten puzzles. These puzzles involved group cooperation, creative thinking, and application of the devised solution to achieve an outcome. The puzzles were also physical in nature, requiring physical as well as mental collaboration. Each group were given ten minutes to solve each puzzle, with scores being allocated according to group cooperation, effort, and ability to complete the task with all members of the group involved.



Creativity at Geelong Grammar School

**“The tasks
set were
challenging, but
not impossible”**

Puzzle 1 – The group initially rushed through the bush, and, for the first few minutes, attempted to solve the puzzle as individuals, without reading the instructions (at each station there was a plaque giving the requirements and desired outcome of the task). For the first task only, staff instructed the group to read the plaque, and that touching the ground was not permitted in any tasks which had cables or logs above the ground. The group accepted this restriction without question.

The group then entered a loud and robust debate about possible solutions. Some demonstrated their solutions physically on the apparatus, other students called out possible solutions. The eventual solution to this problem came from one student with whom the others agreed. There was no vote, just a strong sense of consensus. The leadership of implementation was given by the unofficial “leader” of the group, the House Captain. This role was not challenged by anyone in the group.

Of key interest was how the House Captain, once having led the solution to start, then resumed his place as a team member, happy to receive suggestions and instructions from any other member of the group as the problem was solved. The group was obviously proud that they had created and implemented a solution in a relatively short time frame (this problem took around 7 minutes to solve).

Puzzles 2-10 – As each stage progressed, the group ran to each station, but stopped upon arrival and read the plaque thoroughly. There was, as the stages continued, a longer moment of silent thought by all of the group, before discussion began. At all stations there were both verbal and physical demonstrations of possible solutions before the students arrived at a consensus. Each member of the group offered opinions. There was no hierarchy based upon year/age level. There was no hierarchy based upon height, strength, or physical ability. A true sense of selfless collaboration developed within the group. In one puzzle, a solution was arrived at which proved, after four minutes of attempted execution, to be a false trail. The group did not argue or panic. An alternative solution was devised and implemented at great speed, not with a sense of urgency, but with a sense of purpose. The group were very proud to have overcome the obstacle of failure, and headed

to the next obstacle with increased optimism.

By the time the team had arrived at the final obstacle they had developed a method of positive and collaborative problem solving with no staff intervention. Having mastered a method of problem solving, the group then set a new objective, to solve and implement in the fastest possible time. At one puzzle station they solved the problem quickly. Rather than rush to the next station, the group decided that they would see if any other solutions were possible, as they had plenty of time. They found two other solutions within the time limit.

Task 2 - The aim of this task was to complete an obstacle course in the fastest possible time. There was some similarity between the problems posed in Task 1, but they were not the same. The group was shown around the course by an instructor and the aims for each puzzle were articulated, but not the solutions. The group completed their observational round with a number of solutions in place.

At this point the instructors left for lunch and to collect the rest of the groups for the timed run. The day was warm and it was suggested by the supervising teacher that the group rest and drink water while waiting for the others to arrive. After a brief discussion the group decided that they would rather work their way around the course again, stopping at each station until they found a solution which they believed would give them the fastest time. This process was slow, systematic, and highly focused. They found increasingly efficient and creative solutions which utilized the strengths of every member of the group. No one appeared to feel that they were a weak link, merely that they would each have a role which they needed to do to complete the task.

The race began, each group being timed. The observed group's supervising teacher was put on supervision at one of the stations, where they observed all groups at work. Each of the other groups solved this station in a slightly different way. There was a lot of shouting and encouragement, but few appeared to have a plan which they were executing as a group – solutions appeared to be individual. If team members were struggling there was immediate help, either in the form of shouted encouragement, or in a number of cases, physically lifting those who struggled through the station. In one case, one student carried

Creativity at Geelong Grammar School



four others through. His group colleagues looked on, presumably because he was doing such a good job. No one offered to help him.

When the final group (the group given the goal of trust) came through, their approach was in stark contrast to the groups which had preceded. The strongest members went first, each with a support person with them to ensure that they completed the station. These four students then crouched on all fours so that the other members could walk on their backs without having to hold their full body weight on a metal bar. There was some verbal encouragement, but no shouting. The group then ran to the finish line to complete the course. They completed the course in 9'50". The next fastest group was 12'20", a difference of 32%.

Discussion

What were the reasons for this large difference in time? It was suggested by other groups that the winning group were more athletic. Others said that having the house captain gave this group an advantage. I would argue that the difference was in the types of creative thinking shown by all members of the group, and that they were given the term "trust" as being the overall aim of the exercise.

The first creative choice was made by the house captain. Rather than showing leadership by demonstrating and expecting others to follow, he always stood within the group, occasionally making suggestions, but also listening thoughtfully to others. He also encouraged with kindness if an error was made in the solving process.

The second creative choice was made by the group. During the evolution of solutions, there was positive feedback about breakthroughs, and non-judgmental (in terms of vocal tone) observational feedback about obstacles which needed to be solved differently. This attitude allowed ideas to be developed quickly. The positive affect generated by finding solutions in shorter and shorter time frames motivated the group to strive for increasingly efficient problem solving methods.

Key creative ideas, such as the stronger members being on all fours to allow weaker members to use them as a bridge, or kneeling to create a step, became the default starting method of problem solving at stations which involved strength and height. They also evolved the process of one member advising and encouraging at the beginning of each station, and another member encouraging and congratulating at the end of each obstacle as individuals completed the task. This method removed some of the fear associated with some of the more strenuous or high obstacles. This process was arrived at implicitly rather than explicitly, but remained in place throughout the challenge.

It was also noteworthy that the group accepted the constructed reality of the task. Once rules, such as no feet touching the ground at some stations, were given, the group stuck to the parameters. This is an essential aspect of creativity – it can occur within a framework. It is often said that creative thinking happens "outside the box". It would be more profitable to suggest that searching for creative solutions within a framework may, in fact, lead to more focused solutions. For example, the students in this project could have used a cherry picker or a forklift to traverse some obstacles, but this was not possible in the environment at the time. Rather they utilized existing resources in a creative way.

It is clear from the above observation and discussion that group creativity flourishes in an environment of trust, where egos are sublimated for the common good, within a

proscribed framework. The tasks set were challenging, but not impossible, if the group shared their talents and strengths.

In summary this was a successful exercise in creativity and problem solving. Following the event, the major points of discussion between the students were not the differences in time, but rather the examples of creativity and camaraderie which they demonstrated. This example of creativity in action may be a good example for other students.

At Geelong Grammar I am collecting examples of creative and innovative thinking throughout the education sector. These examples may be from Kindergarten to Year 12, across all subjects, curricular and co-curricular. If you have an example in your school, would you please contact:

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What were you thinking?

AUTHOR

Michael Donahue
Communications and Development Manager
The Rockhampton Grammar School



We're all guilty of saying that to a young person and nobody wants a student to get hurt, but what will kids learn if we don't give them opportunities to make mistakes, asks Mike Donahue.

When I was four I thought I was Evel Knievel and I have the scars to prove it. At any age, though, we can be reckless, make mistakes and do dumb things. The wounds can be emotional too. That's just the way we are. It's built into our developing brains and especially active among teenage boys and girls.

And it's necessary – even evolutionary – to any teenager's learning according to leading child expert, Dr Christopher Thurber, a staff psychologist at Phillips Exeter Academy, the 234-year-old boarding school in New Hampshire (USA).

A father of two adolescents himself, Thurber told an audience of 30 educators, housemasters and mistresses at The Rockhampton Grammar School, Queensland's largest boarding school, to acknowledge and make the most of the educational value of the dumb stuff that adolescents get up to.

"We want kids to take responsible risks. Those experiences could become some of the most meaningful and powerful learning experiences of their lives," he explained during a May workshop.

The Harvard educated clinician contrasted acceptable risks to the downright stupid and dangerous behaviours many teenagers undertake - much of which is produced on ubiquitous smart phones and uploaded to instant YouTube and other social media audiences.

"Children plan these as media activities. There is always someone videotaping, another one directing and the kid who eventually ends up

getting hurt. They're obviously thinking on some level but not thinking enough or at all about the consequences of their actions."

Mindless accidents at school (that don't end tragically) should provide opportunities for learning mindfulness according to Dr Thurber. Boarding schools provide a rich environment in which educators and children can turn unfortunate outcomes into positive experiences.

In contrast to day students' often fixed, time-constrained, outcome-focused interactions with teachers, boarders can interact with supervisors and dorm leaders during unstructured or free time, when adolescents may be more likely or prone to doing something dumb or impulsive. Therefore, boarding supervisors (who enforce reasonable safety parameters) play a critical role in a child's development.

Rockhampton Grammar School Boarding supervisors Stewart Norford (Boys) and Dorothy Skilling (Girls) believe conversations among staff about the consequences of improper or imprudent student behaviour are crucial to the overall care of the 365 children, aged 11 to 18, in their charge.

"A lot of our children's time is structured and supervised but we probably connect with the boys and girls best during those small windows of opportunities when they 'switch off'. Sometimes we catch them and other times we purposefully take a step back but the idea is to always help them change impulsive actions to more thoughtful actions," said Mrs Skilling.

"You can ensure those post-accident life lessons last," Thurber explained as he presented hypothetical conversations between students and supervisors to workshop attendees.

He reminded boarding staff to question themselves, not just the hurt or injured student or students.

"Will you listen and be compassionate? Punish and lecture? Scream and shout?" he asked.

A lot of smart stuff, Dr Thurber argues, can come out from something dumb, if you work at it.

Like discovering as I did, at age four, that pedal-powered fire trucks don't necessarily fly.



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These 3 words describes the guiding principles behind all that we do here at Student Horizons. As specialists in organising international sport and educational tours for schools in Australia and New Zealand, our goal is to provide students with an unforgettable overseas experience that is safe, well coordinated and beneficial for their personal growth. By **challenging** students to **discover** their strengths, our desire is to see them **achieve** greater self awareness and confidence.



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How the presence of a father figure is important in a child's health and wellbeing

AUTHOR
The Fathering Project



Research into parenting has mostly focused on mothers or families' role in bringing up children. However there is mounting evidence that shows a father or father figure's presence in a child's development stages as being vital to a child's mental health and wellbeing.

A meta-analysis conducted by The University of Western Australia showed that father engagement positively affects social, behavioural, psychological and cognitive outcomes of children. High level of father involvement in a child's life have been linked to:

- High levels of cognitive and social competence
- Increased social responsibility and capacity for empathy
- Positive self-control and self-esteem
- More positive interactions with siblings
- Fewer school adjustment difficulties and better academic progress
- Reduce incidence of crime, alcohol and drug abuse
- Decrease in risky sexual behaviour
- Improved health behaviours

Professor Bruce Robinson, 2013 Western Australian of the Year and founder of The Fathering Project, has completed significant research into the role and importance the father figure has on childhood development. Bruce said, "fatherless children are twice as likely to drop out of school".

Bruce also provided thought-provoking statistics coming out from the United States:

- 71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes – 9 times the average
- 75% of all adolescent patients in chemical abuse centres come from fatherless home – 10 times the average
- 63% of youth suicides are from fatherless homes – 5 times the average



- 90% of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes – 32 times the average

Whilst many great non-for-profit organisations and government agencies are out there providing help and support to those affected by domestic issues within Australia; The Fathering Project is a non-for-profit organisation which takes the prevention approach where the organisation works with respective companies, organisations and schools at preventing the problem from erupting.

The Fathering Project's vision is to give every child in Australia the opportunity to have an effective father figure. This can be achieved by inspiring and equipping fathers and father figures to engage positively with their kids.

The Fathering Project prides itself on its Schools' Program. For the past two years, the organisation has worked with government, catholic and independent schools to build a strong community of support-

ive fathers and father figures, known as the "Champion" Dads group. Increasing numbers of School Principals are seeing the value of involving fathers and father figures in their school community. Our research shows that leading edge schools have a strong ethos on building these "Champion" Dads into their Parent Councils as volunteers. When provided with the right support and a comfortable environment, Dads can then come together and effectively organise key school community activities.

The aim of The Fathering Project's "Champion" Dads program is to inspire men with tips and resources to get involved with their children, especially in their school communities. The Fathering Project provides leadership and support to the groups and encourages them to take the lead as champions to run activities and encourage each other to be better dads for the sake of their children.

"The Fathering Project is brilliant and inspires me as a Dad," says Justin Langer AM, former Australian Cricketer and current coach of Western Australian and the Perth Scorchers.

There are so many helpful resources on the Fathering Project's website. The weekly tips work as a tool to provide fathers with ideas on how to involve themselves in their child's life. These tips are not based solely on research but also ideas provided by fathers and father figures themselves who experience positive outcomes when engaging with their kids.

To receive our weekly tips or find out how The Fathering Project can work with your school to create The Fathering Project's "Champion" Dads group, simply log on to <http://www.the-fatheringproject.org> or you can call 08 6488 3182 or email admin@thefatheringproject.org.

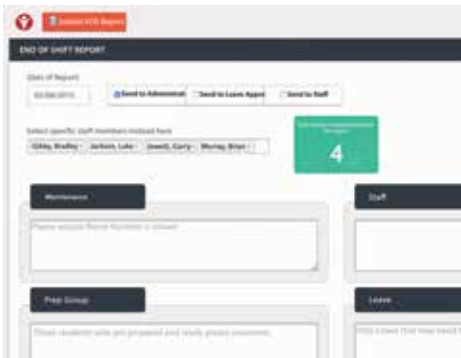


Flexible and integrated end of shift reporting

AUTHOR
Garry Jowett
Director, Business Manager
Reach School Boarding System

Reporting activities and significant events for each shift in boarding schools using day reports or shift reports is common practice. This is often done using tools which do not enable boarding staff simple functionality to capture, share and recall important information. Transferring relevant information to individual boarder records where appropriate can also be a timely and manual task.

The latest new feature in the REACH Boarding School System addresses this by providing flexible and fully integrated End of Shift reporting module. Staff can easily design their own reports and recall historic shift reports at the press of a button. The module also provides an integrated recording mechanism which automatically updates student records when a student name is identified into any end of shift reports.



Design your own report.
What is clear is that each school has their own way of writing and recording End of Shift reports. No two schools do it the same way so providing a flexible report creator which enables users to create and name report sections is a great starting point.

Users can create as many sections to a REACH End of Shift Report as needed. Adding or removing sections is as simple as a click of a button and sections can be named whatever the user wants.

Importantly, each section can also have a descriptive placeholder which displays in the content area on empty reports. This allows managers to set instructions or guidelines for the content that they want reported in each section, prompting staff for relevant input as they are writing the report. The placeholder descriptions can also be used as a useful reminder to draw attention to specific areas of focus at times when there may be a specific focus being placed on some behavior or activity in a boarding house.

The power of integration.
Collating and capturing information for any report or form is just the starting point of its usefulness. The real power of End of Shift reporting in REACH is the simple sharing of information and the integration of relevant material into other record keeping and reporting modules.

Easy report distribution.
Sharing End of Shift reports in REACH is as easy as the report writing itself. Reports can be distributed automatically to any individual staff member or to groups of staff members simply by assigning them to the circulation list. When submitted, all recipients will receive a notification alert in their REACH inbox with link to the report.

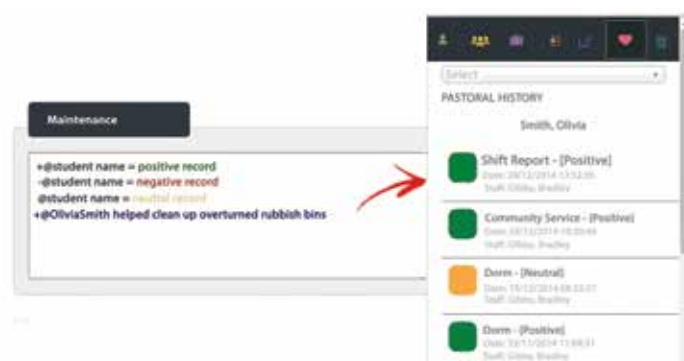




Flexible and integrated end of shift reporting

Automatically update student records from shift reports.

One of the most beneficial elements of REACH's end of shift reporting is its automated integration with the individual records of boarders. Whenever an individual boarder is named in an end of shift report a unique record is generated and stored in the student's pastoral records to note that they have been named in an End of Shift report. You can also set a category of behaviour for that record as it is recorded to student records as a positive, negative or neutral note.



Student records are automatically populated when an end of shift report is published. When users go to view or print individual student reports they will also see all references to that student from historic end of shift reports, with their category of behaviour identified.

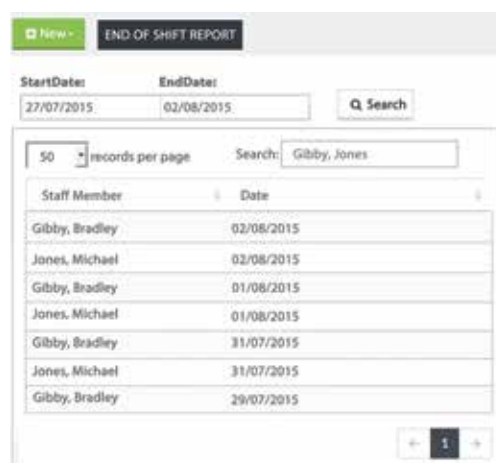
Easy recalling and recovering End of Shift information.

The final part of the REACH End of Shift reporting module is an ability for simple and rapid data recovery. Finding, viewing and reporting historic End of Shift reports is just a matter of setting your search criteria. You can search all report by date, narrow your search to names of people or even select wildcard words as your search criteria.

Any pastoral note in student records that is automatically generated by a mention in an end of shift report also functions as a pathway to open that end of shift report. Simply clicking on the pastoral note record will open the end of shift report into one of REACH's multi-tasking tabs for viewing.

REACH also provides a seek and find reporting mechanism for end of shift reporting that allows users to set specific search criteria for historic end of shift reports. Users can search for historic reports by date range or by any specific inclusions such as staff involved or students named. Searching by a student name for example will generate a report summary showing any reports where that student has been mentioned for the identified date range.

The End of Shift reporting module is now live and available at no additional cost to existing REACH subscribers. Like all features in REACH this feature will receive continuous development based on feedback and requirements from users.



REACH is a business partner and supporter of the ABSA and is available for all boarding schools to access for a FREE TRIAL. Visit www.reachboarding.com for more information.

Bleachers Revolution

AUTHOR
Heather Pariseau
Bleachers Corporation

Growing up is an incredible journey filled with new experiences, and wonderful possibilities...

*Bleachers makes these moments accessible to all...
...and builds relationships that will last a lifetime*



One of the greatest concerns to parents sending their children to boarding schools thousands of kilometers from home is how to manage the long distances... and how to bridge the physical and emotional separation.

While eager to provide the best possible education to their children, families cannot attend all of the events in which their children participate.

The Bleachers Corporation has played a key role in solving this challenge for American parents at some of the most prestigious, most respected private schools in the United States. Through a partnership with ABSA, the Bleachers platform will now be available to schools across Australia.

Bleachers is the first and only live and on demand HD video streaming network for the private school market. It's a secure, proprietary, state-of-art, video platform – that is without competition.

Bleachers enables leading schools and institutions help families to celebrate the most important moments in young people's lives, bridge the gap when families are unable to experience those moments together, and strengthen connections between schools, students, families, alumni, and the broader community.

"My son had the good fortune to attend a top prep school. Unfortunately, the school is 1200 miles from home. Bleachers has provided my family with the opportunity to watch his games online. We have not missed any!"
- Parent, The Lawrenceville School

With Bleachers, parents, grandparents, relatives and family are always connected to activities at school. They can watch their child's sports, performing arts and all-school events on their computer, tablet or smartphone. Anytime. Anywhere. Bleachers cameras are controlled remotely... which means no work for the school, enabling Bleachers to capture any event... sports, performing arts, special events and classroom activities.

Bleachers HD cameras record, capture and deliver their child's most important school moments into an archived database. So parents never miss a moment.





Bleachers Revolution

Bleachers Founder Sam Klein perhaps explains it best, "We are passionate about the schools and their needs because we are involved in such an important part of people's lives. We developed this platform and focused on the private and independent schools to fulfill a need.... a need for families to connect with their children and for children to connect and share with their families and friends."

"We pride ourselves on the strong relationships we have established with the school leaders and providing them with a service that enhances the overall school experience for students, faculty and families."

Now, even if you can't be there in person you'll never miss a single event – whether you see it on a live feed while across the conti-



nent or experience the magic of watching on-demand with your child sitting next to you, amazed to see themselves in action.

Bleachers is creating a new standard for selecting a private school – and creating a new competitive advantage for those schools that feature Bleachers.

"I'm very excited. (Bleachers) is the next best thing to being there... I appreciate this app more than you will ever know."
- Parent, The Ethel Walker School

The Bleachers platform is a tool for connectivity. Creating a way for parents to engage in their child's full educational experience, beyond just a phone call.

REACHing the Standard

Simplify compliance and reporting with REACH Boarding School System.



Australian Standard

Reporting and monitoring mechanisms are currently being developed in collaboration with the ABSA to assist and simplify compliance to the new Australian Boarding Standard.



www.reachboarding.com



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Dealing with Difficult Parents

Working in schools can be stressful!

These articles are intended to help the great people who work in schools reduce stress and increase satisfaction.

6 Key points

LISTEN FIRST

CREATE TRANSPARENCY

TALK STRAIGHT

CONFRONT REALITY

RIGHT WRONGS

CLARIFY EXPECTATIONS

Men build too many walls and not enough bridges

Sir Isaac Newton

Dealing with difficult or demanding parents can certainly add to the stress of working in schools. Whilst staff in schools have the needs of multiple students to consider, most parents are only advocating for a small number of students, their own children. That's understandable!

Keeping the scale of the problem in perspective is important. What is known as the 80 / 20 rule generally applies. 80% of problems will come from 20% of parents. In most cases an even larger percentage of issues will come from an even smaller percentage of parents. This is not intended in any way to trivialise the issues. However keeping it in perspective is important. Whilst dealing with difficult parents may take a lot of time and energy, helping to resolve issues and keep the parents on side (where possible) is beneficial.

A further complexity is that most parents are responding to information that is second hand. They are generally responding to what they are 'told' happened. Seeking clarity about the facts therefore needs to be a priority before concerns can be truly resolved.

A relationship of trust between the school and the home is important and benefits the student. I have found the advice in Covey's great book *'The Speed of Trust'* (2006) to be particularly useful and relevant. Covey advocates behaviours that build trust. Whilst the behaviours aren't 'rocket science', using the relevant behaviours in dealing with 'difficult' parents can not only resolve issues but also build the trust that can lead to issues being less likely to occur again.

LISTENING FIRST is always a good idea! - At times when we are faced with a confrontational parent we immediately get defensive and start to counter attack. This is particularly the case when the parent raising the issue clearly hasn't got all of the relevant information. Before correcting or jumping to a defensive mode it is usually best to really listen to ALL that they have to say.

CREATE TRANSPARENCY by correcting misinformation or providing further information that the parent wasn't aware of. This should be done in a calm manner. Be aware of your own tone and body language.

Covey highlights the importance of the 'sweet spot' with each of the behaviours. The fine balance between too little and too much of each behaviour is clearly evident in the next behaviour, **TALKING STRAIGHT**. It is important that we are honest and upfront with the parent. We need to get the balance right by being equally aware of being too soft - eg sugar coating or political spinning, as well as being too blunt eg harsh, abrupt or aggressive. The key is conveying our message calmly and clearly so they have accurate first hand information.

If we are at fault, the best thing that we can do is **CONFRONT REALITY** and **RIGHT WRONGS**. Blaming others and making excuses are unlikely to build trust. Confronting the situation, admitting where we have made a mistake and endeavouring to genuinely address it are far more likely to be helpful.

CLARIFYING EXPECTATIONS is the next step. Both parties need to be clear on what happens next. Keeping these commitments is vital to building trust.

Ultimately we can **only** control our own behaviour. We can't control the behaviour of others. Whilst it is impossible to resolve ALL difficulties, applying Covey's behaviours that build trust is usually helpful.



Steve Francis MScM, BEd, DipT

Steve Francis is an expert in work-life satisfaction and is the author of three books, *'Time Management For Teachers'*, *'A Gr8 Life...Live it now!'* and *'First Semester Can Make or Break You!'*. He was a Principal for 20 years. Steve lives in Brisbane with his wife and two school aged children.





How it is done in the West

AUTHOR
Richard Stokes
Executive Director
Australian Boarding Schools Association

One of the great pleasures of my role for ABSA is getting a chance to meet with the many Principals and Heads of Boarding from around Australia at their schools. Over the past three years we have had the chance to look over nearly 140 of our member schools and learn about how each one approaches boarding. Please don't panic if you haven't yet had a visit - you are still on our list!

One of the most amazing discoveries was the wonderful facilities, both school and boarding, at the Western Australian Colleges of Agriculture, and in the photos on this page I have highlighted WA College of Agriculture - Harvey. The College is situated 144km south of Perth, just outside the town of Harvey, and was first set up in 1953 in the old hospital and surrounding buildings and land which serviced the Second World War Italian internment camp. A completely new campus was built just out of town at Wokalup and this opened in October 2012, accommodating up to 128 boarding students plus a small number of day students. The 920ha site has 35ha irrigated for perennial pastoral and horticulture, and the remaining farm is used for extensive grazing, including dairy and beef cattle and sheep. Students are also able to bring their own horses to the College.

The new facilities for the school are remarkable - including excellent dining and recreation facilities and flexible dormitory spaces allowing the number of girls and boys to change without compromising security. The Trade Training Centre is one of the best I have ever seen, and covers the areas of Automotive, Construction (including carpentry and joinery, bricklaying, grand work and landscape gardening), Furnishings (particularly furniture making), Metals and Engineering (including sheet metal work, machinist and mechanical fitting and boiler making).

Head of Boys Boarding Bernard Murnane, Head of Girls Boarding Lorene Nepe and Principal Neale Armstrong spent the afternoon showing us around the new College not long after it opened, and very proudly described how well the whole college was operating. The WA Colleges of Agriculture are often overlooked as excellent boarding facilities in the west - if you are ever in the area look them up and visit!



Empowering our students to shape their own success

AUTHOR

Holly MacCue

Personal Leadership Expert & Director of
Future Focus Training & Development



www.futurefocustraining.com

“The
workshop
made me
realise I can do
anything I put my
mind to...”



What does it mean to shape our own success?

It is first and foremost about recognising that our thoughts shape our actions, and our actions shape our reality, which ultimately this means that any successful outcome starts with us as individuals.

This requires a strong level of self-awareness to know what is important to us; frequent self-reflection to understand how we are tracking, and the personal responsibility to continuously improve. Most crucially it comes down to unlocking what I call our ‘Inner Winner’ to develop an empowering mindset that supports us in a sustainable way.

Why is this so essential for our young talent today?

Research shows that 80% of our success comes down to our mindset. In a world of incredibly fast-paced change, these skills will only increase in importance as our young talent eventually enter the workforce, so it is vital that we equip them now.

Personal Leadership is an essential life skill that enables us in so many ways and impact all areas of our lives. It helps us to create compelling goals, to know how to maintain our focus and balance under pressure; to feel equipped to face setbacks and challenges

constructively, and to feel confident stepping outside of our comfort zones.

How do your programs help to equip staff and students?

The way I work is in complete partnership with the school, to ensure that the programs are entirely tailored via a two pronged approach:

- Empowering students to shape their own success in a sustainable way by helping them to unlock their ‘Inner Winner’.
- Enabling staff to facilitate a positive, holistic learning environment for students to thrive now, and in the future.

My signature student program ‘Personal Leadership for Success’ uses the world-leading success tool ‘Goal Mapping’; a whole brain achievement system that encourages student’s own self-discovery. Interactive learning sessions focus on practical application of the personal leadership techniques brought to life in the creation of their own ‘Goal Map’.

The Staff programs focus on vital coaching skills and communication techniques that they can use to support the students, and ensure the longer term implementation. Coaching conversations are crucial to foster independent thinking; relieving staff from ‘problem solving’ for each individual student, whilst in parallel building student capability to independently arrive at their own solutions.

What has been the impact of this work at Pymble Ladies College?

Deanne Elliott, Director of Boarding at Pymble explains; “The work with Future Focus Training has been extremely rewarding in relation to our desired outcomes for students and staff. The impetus for introducing such programs in Boarding derived from the College Strategic Plan – ‘Towards 2020’ and specifically aligned to the signpost for ‘Personalised Education.’

For my team it has accelerated their personal and professional growth, raising their awareness towards their own capacity to support the students at a deeper level, and as a result, their engagement with the girls is of a different quality. They now have a far better understanding of the insights behind different styles of behaviour and communication, which means that they can work around these more flexibly to assist with day to day issues such as conflict resolution and stress



Empowering our students to shape their own success



management.

Crucially, the staff have started to value their role differently, as they clearly see how this contributes to the overall vision of a personalised education for each girl in their care.

For the students, the programs have been an innovative enabler in the Boarding Houses. I can see first-hand that individuals are thinking differently, and how these personal leadership skills are enhancing their well-being and their self-confidence.

Overall, the programs have helped individuals to define their own pathway, and to challenge themselves using a language and a framework that the wider community understands. Partnering with Holly as our external facilitator has provided the level of expertise we required to make deep and enduring change aligned tightly to our College Strategic Plan 'Towards 2020' while providing the flexibility that is required for staff and students in Boarding".

"The workshop made me realise I can do anything I put my mind to...I will believe in myself, and it will help me to balance all aspects of my life" - Year 11 Student, Pymble

How can other schools achieve similar outcomes?

Above all, by encouraging a culture where there is space to consistently question and to self-reflect as this is ultimately how students become self-directed. Coaching conversations are a powerful enabler for this; ensuring greater flexibility for staff to support students as part of a holistic well-being approach. In addition:

- Equipping students with simple but powerful goal setting frameworks.
- Celebrating successes, and providing permission to do this. This is the way in which students learn what actually works for them, and the strengths to leverage this knowledge for growth.
- Helping students to embrace setbacks, and to instead view these as enablers to continuous self-improvement, by asking them how getting things wrong can help them learn how to get things right.

"The success of our approach at Pymble has been as a result of intentionally embedding every component within the overall strategic framework of the school, and ensuring that the staff are enabled to implement this approach to 'personalised education' each day.

To ensure lasting impact of any program, it requires a commitment to professional learning for staff in order to enable changes over the longer term, and identifying the right facilitator to partner with the school culture to help deliver the content" - Deanne Elliott, Director of Boarding at Pymble

What might happen if we don't work on shaping our success?

Many of us fall into the trap of believing things happen 'to' us and there is nothing we can do about it. Our self-confidence becomes dependent on external factors of which we are not in control. We then see hurdles as road blocks instead of opportunities, and we may not even attempt new things that could bring us valuable experience.

My passion for this work derives from my personal experience as I never received any personal development throughout my education. Combined with my natural perfectionism and my 'worry genes' this was a recipe for disaster. When I later entered the corporate world I very quickly struggled to cope with the pressure and pace, resulting in illness and burn-out. I know first-hand the importance of learning these techniques at an early age and wish to ensure our young talent have the opportunities to feel equipped and confident as they enter new chapters.

A brief description of the programs you offer.

All programs are customised to the needs of the school, and can be delivered via modular, one day or half day formats.

- Personal Leadership for Success: Learn the 7 Principles of Success and the unique 'Goal Mapping' technique to translate goals into inspired action.
- Coaching for High Performance: Learn how to empower others to reach their highest potential.
- Unlocking Your Talent Insights: A unique combination of the DISC Communication and Workplace Motivator Tools to empower staff.
- Personal Leadership Booster Sessions: Focused deep-dives packed full of practical tips and techniques.
- Relaxation & Meditation: Promote balance and wellbeing.

For further detail please go to:

www.futurefocustraining.com/schools

Personalised learning support in a boarding environment

AUTHOR
Jack Goodman
CEO & Founder
YourTutor

*The Story of 29
Independent Schools,
2750 Boarders, and
Broadband Technology*

June 2015 marked the conclusion of a 2-year, multi-million dollar project of the National Broadband Network. Its purpose was to Pilot and evaluate 11 technology services designed to deliver learning outcomes over fast internet connections. YourTutor was selected by 29 boarding schools and their students had more than 13,466 thousand interactions. Here's a summary of the outcomes.

When BEESS do more than just buzz.

In early 2013, the Association for Independent Schools of NSW and Independent Schools Queensland collaborated on a successful application for a multi-year Commonwealth grant under the Broadband Enabled Education and Skills Services program (BEESS). The project - called Transforming the Digital Supply Chain - provided substantial funding for upwards of 89 independent and boarding schools to evaluate a range of next-generation technologies and services. 29 schools elected to implement YourTutor, and over the course of the next 24 months they, as well as the program organisers, learned an enormous amount about the value and impact of live, on-demand learning support.

Addressing the needs of boarding schools, students, and families.

YourTutor is a tech-based online learning support program that's been more than a decade in the making. It's designed to provide on-demand, one-to-one assistance for students by connecting them with a professional tutor any time they have a question about their study, homework, an assignment or upcoming exam. Think of it as a direct connection for students to tap into Australia's wealth of teachers and university experts.

YourTutor's relevance to boarding communities was clear to the coordinators of the project, and to the 29 schools that agreed to pilot the service. They could see the potential of YourTutor to:

- Meet rising parental expectations of personalised learning support for their children in boarding.
- Assist boarding staff to ensure prep time is used as effectively as possible.
- Provide a safe, trusted, transparent and accessible option for the provision of one-to-one tuition.

In April 2013, the first of the 29 participating schools started leading the way, deploying YourTutor to their students, including thousands of boarders, and observing the impact

of the program on learning outcomes.

Results of the pilot: Indicators of impact and success.

At the conclusion of the pilot in June 2015, the project had delivered 13,466 one-to-one learning experiences to the students at the participating schools. Because every interaction is recorded - for quality and student safety - and because students are provided with an opportunity to leave feedback after every interaction, YourTutor generated an enormous amount of data for the project. Among its results:

- Students spent an average of 16 minutes during each of the interactions with the tutors.
- Students gave an average rating of 4.1 out of 5.0 for their interactions (Scale: 5=excellent, 4=very good, 3=good, 2=fair, 1=poor).
- Maths was the most popular subject, representing 47% of all queries.
- English was next most popular, representing 22% of all queries.
- Year 11 students were the heaviest users, followed by year 12 and year 10.
- Peak usage occurred between 7pm and 9pm, Sundays, Mondays, and Wednesday.

While the data speaks for itself, a further analysis of the impact of the YourTutor project is being conducted by researchers at Macquarie University as part of an evaluation of the entire TtEDSC program.

For students who are stuck, a new pathway for a quality learning outcome.

How, exactly, does YourTutor work? Students must bring their question or problem to the subject-specialist expert. The system dynamically matches each student to the best expert available at that moment. 90 percent of the time, students wait less than 5 minutes, and often less than 30 seconds.

Once in session, the online tutor guides, prompts, and questions the student's own learning, adhering to stringent ethical standards, evidenced by this student's dismay: "Rubbish. Didn't give me the answer".

These engaged students and thousands like them saw the benefit:

"Really helpful. It helps to hear from a person and not text in a book." - Year 8, Carmel Adventist College





Personalised learning support in a boarding environment

“For the first time in history, schools can guarantee parents that their child has access to one-to-one, personalised learning”

“The tutor was helpful and did not do it for me but showed me the methods of which to use.” - Year 11, Seymour College

“It was really helpful as the tutor worked through each step of the problem with me, and didn't just give me the answer but made me work through it.” - Year 12, PLC Armidale

“I figured out how to make my business report a lot stronger, the tutor was very helpful and talked me through everything.” - Year 11, St Catherine's School

“It was very helpful and I'm not stressing about my exam anymore.” - Year 9, Trinity Grammar School, Kew

Trusted, personal academic support for boarders.

For the schools and boarding houses, it means even more than convenience: It's about safety.

Rather than try to find local tutors or resources for an after-hours homework centre, or risk untrusted and potentially unsafe on-site visits to campus, boarding communities can now access the best, highest-qualified, and trusted support every time.

For the first time in history, schools can guarantee parents that their child has access to one-to-one, personalised learning – for every unique moment of frustration, point of enquiry, or engagement, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, no matter the student's location, nor the tutor's.

Growing the school's culture of enquiry-based learning.

Principals, deputies, teachers, and IT managers at the 29 schools used YourTutor to further develop students' thinking skills and build on each school's culture of enquiry.

Because the heart of the YourTutor service is this opportunity for students: when you're stuck and frustrated, how can you best use that moment to learn? These are the 24/7 moments - for every student - that are least expected and when help is most needed.

Jack Goodman is CEO and Founder of yourtutor.com.au, comments to Jack invited at info@yourtutor.com.au or more data is available at yourtutor.com.au/boarding.



Take one step today to build your tomorrow

AUTHOR
Tracy Shand
Simply Boarding

Every day as boarding professionals we are meeting the needs of others. From wake up to lights out, there is not much time to invest in your development. So, when you get a space, take the first step today by trying out one of the activities to help build your tomorrow.

WATCH the TED talk by Smart Kids and Adults.

Why you will fail to have an amazing career?
By Larry Smith.

Larry points out the reasons why ... so are you ready to listen? Curious, give him 15 mins!

What can adults learn from kids? By A Svitak (age 15).

We can learn so much It's time to listen and be inspired.

UNDERSTAND how your personality could define your career.

Did you know that there are 4 types of personalities? Which one are you? It's time to find out. Take time to do a free personality



“They say
knowledge is
power”

assessment. There are many online ones, such as DISC. Once you have done the assessment, take some time to look at how you interact with others and use the strengths of your style.

INCREASE your capital.

They say knowledge is power. What is your knowledge doing gap? What one step can you take to reduce it?

CHOOSE one 'thing'.

In our busy boarding lifestyle, what 'one thing' do you have to develop yourself for the next stage in your life? It is not about time, it is about motivation. We have 168 hours a week, so having a couple just for you leaves plenty for everyone else! Go on, have a look and identify your one thing. It can be something that you have always wanted to do or to clear time to learn more.

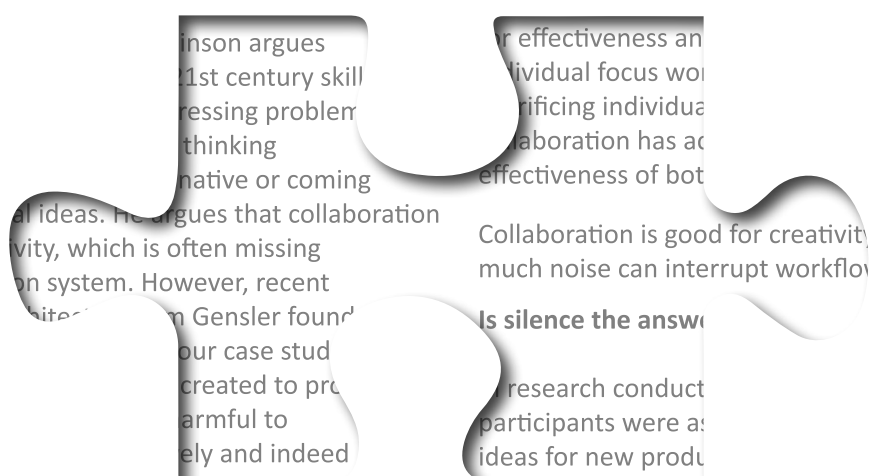
CREATE your boarding bucket list.

Bored on duty? Well, it is time to ask you one question. What do you want to do before you leave boarding?

As the ancient Chinese proverb says, 'The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step'. Take some time today to step back and work out what your first step will be to creating the life that you want.



Is there a piece missing from your boarding house?



Find your missing piece here:
yourtutor.com.au/missingpiece

New Principal

PLC
Perth



Kate Hadwen
Principal
PLC Perth, WA

Appointing a new Principal is a tremendous responsibility for any School Council. PLC has a one hundred year history of outstanding leadership that has built a strong foundation for the College as we embark upon our second century and an exciting future. To select the successful candidate, the PLC Council initiated an international search. The position attracted a large and strong field of candidates from Australia and overseas and the Council appointed Kate after an extensive process.

Kate is a respected educator who has pursued a career in education inspired by her own love of learning and her passion to empower young people to step outside their comfort zone and to flourish in our increasingly complex world. Kate's background includes teaching and leadership roles in Junior, Middle and Senior schools, research and lecturing in the tertiary sector, and National project management in school-based pastoral care programs. Kate also has outstanding academic qualifications having completed a Bachelor of Teaching (1996), Graduate Certificate of Education (2006) and Master of Education (2007) majoring in Educational Leadership. She has just completed and submitted her thesis for her Doctor of Philosophy from Edith Cowan University (ECU).

Kate comes from a country background and attended boarding school from an early age with her two sisters. She has lived and worked in Western Australia previously and together with her husband Matt and their children, is looking forward to returning to the West. She is thrilled to be joining the PLC community and looks forward to supporting the PLC vision. In her words: "My commitment to the PLC community is to support each girl to be the very best she can be. I want every girl to leave PLC bursting with confidence, trusting in her ability to make wise decisions, to influence the world around her, and have an understanding of how to bounce back in the face of adversity; I too, am looking forward to learning and growing within the PLC community."

Council is confident that Kate's inspirational leadership will ensure that PLC continues to build on its reputation as one of Australia's leading and innovative girls' schools. We expect a very smooth transition when Kate joins us as Principal in Term 4 this year. Beth and Kate are already collaborating to plan for a seamless handover to achieve the best outcomes for the College.

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A Word from the Chairman

AUTHOR
Garth Wynne
Chairman
Australian Boarding Schools Association

**“I wonder
how these
aspects of
character are
being
demonstrated
by our
boarders”**



When one enters the Walters residential community here at Christ Church Grammar School, one immediately sees in the foyer an extract from the School's mission that states simply 'learn to live with others'. I would imagine that this is certainly the most important element of what so clearly happens within the Residential Communities of all our ABSA members. If nothing else happened within these organisations I know it would be hoped that our boarders, through the myriad of opportunities that they are given, will have come to know themselves, be able to respect the needs and circumstances of others and by so doing be well prepared for the journey of life ahead.

It is also vital that within this context our boarders develop 'character'. Recently I have read a book by Andrew Hammond entitled 'Teaching for Character'. In this book Andrew focusses on what he believes to be the much needed outcomes of an educational experience. Like us all,

I am always looking for different ways to consider what we value as outcomes of the residential experience. Andrew identified seven character traits and attitudes that he believed made learning optimal and I would suggest that these provide us with an interesting way of judging the outcome of the residential experience of our students. These were:

Grit	courage and tenacity in the face of adversity and the resolve to commit to long term aims
Adaptability	being able to embrace uncertainty and adapt and modify to accommodate change
Optimism	the ability to respond positively to negative criticism and 'bad news'
Self-control	being able to regulate our emotional responses to the actions and conditions around us – we cannot control circumstances or others' actions, but we can control our reactions to them
Empathy	an awareness and understanding of others' feelings and needs
Discernment	being able to distinguish between fact and opinion; knowing that what is happening and what we think is happening may differ, depending on how we see things and how we feel at the time
Trust (Participativeness)	Understanding that we all depend on others in one way or another; recognising the benefits of trusting and being trusted within a team

I wonder how these aspects of character are being demonstrated by our boarders at this time and whether they provide a lens by which we can judge the invisible curriculum of the boarding house? I leave this for readers to ponder . . .

It would be most remiss of me to not highlight in this particular edition of 'Lights Out' the wonderful outcome of the publication of the Boarding Standard for Australian Schools and Residences. This set of standards sponsored in their development through Standards Australia (SA) by the membership of ABSA provide a guide for the industry that is truly exceptional. For the first time in Australia those who provide residential services for school aged children have a voluntary standard to which they can aspire. ABSA's work in the future is to complement these standards with a range of other resources. There can be no understating the leadership of the Executive Director, Mr Richard Stokes in this project. Richard has been the driving force in a complex process of consultation managed by SA but very reliant on his attention to detail and knowledge of boarding. He deserves the wholehearted congratulations of every person working in the residential communities of Australian schools.

Coming Events

AUS

12 - 13 March 2016

Taking the Reins Conference
Bond University

7 - 9 September 2016

EduKATE Plus Conference
Gold Coast

25 - 28 September 2016

ABSA National Conference
Gold Coast

Duty of Care Workshops

Check out www.boarding.org.au for details

USA

3 - 5 December 2015

TABS National Conference
Boston

2 - 5 February 2016

TABS LAB: Reslife Leadership
St Andrew's School, Boca Raton, Florida

17 - 19 April 2016

TABS-NAIS Global Symposium
Long Beach, California

UK

22 - 23 November 2015

SBISA Annual Conference
Lancaster Royal Grammar School

4 - 6 January

Annual Conference for Boarding House Staff
Cheltenham

27 - 29 January 2016

Annual Conference for Deputy Heads and Heads of Boarding
Brighton

10 - 11 March 2016

Marketing and Communications Conference
Warwickshire

3 - 5 May 2016

Heads Golden Jubilee Conference
Manchester

NZ

May 2016

Annual Conference
Queenstown

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All you need to do, is write a brief article
(400 to 1000 words) and send us some
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Send all files to:

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by 1 February 2015.

