Lights Out

Agfest 2014 - Advertising Tasmania's Boarding Schools

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EDUCATION
...thinking differently

CONTENTS

ON THE COVER
Agfest, Launceston from the air

Beducation -
Courtesy of Technology

AUTHOR
Dr Michael Carr-Gregg
Director
Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre

Imagine you are a student at any one of the great Boarding schools that come under the umbrella of the Australian Boarding Schools Association. It is about 6.30 am and the students are still fast asleep.

But one by one, they stir, woken by a soft vibration on their wrist, timed to start buzzing at the lightest point in their sleep cycle. They press a button on their hi-tech bracelet to tell it they're awake, and immediately plug it into their iPod, iPhone, or iPad to find out how well they've slept. After a few seconds, a graph pops up to tell them how much deep sleep they have had. They log how they feel by touching a happy or sad face on their screen. They note that many of their fellow students are doing the same as their sleep charts pop up on their news feed. They exchange messages with a cheering emoticon.

This has been the routine for many of my patients who have been wearing the strangely named Jawbone UP, a slim computer wristband, launched in November 2011, by Jawbone, a privately held audio technology company headquartered in San Francisco, California. UP by Jawbone is an activity tracker, the company's first non-audio product. It consists of a flexible rubber-coated wristband and an accompanying iPhone and Android app.
UP allows users to track their sleep, eating habits, and daily activity, including steps taken and calories burned.

The wristband is water-resistant and designed to be worn 24/7, with a rechargeable battery that lasts for up to 10 days at a time. The wristband also features a vibration motor that can be programmed as an alarm to wake users in the best phase of their natural sleep cycle, or act as a reminder when users have been sedentary too long. It retails in Australia for $149.95.

Adolescence is characterized by significant psychological and physiological development in which sleep plays a crucial role. It has consistently been shown in countries around the world, however, that as children get older they also get less sleep, often resulting in adolescents being sleep deprived. Although they are purported to require between 8.25 hours and 9.2 hours of sleep per night for optimal daytime alertness, many studies report a sleep duration of between only seven and 7.75 hours on school nights.

Twice a day my clients plug the band into their smartphone and transfer the data to the app. They tell me that there is something about seeing their stats written down that prompts them to move more and eat less. The app allows them to add 'teammates' – much like a Facebook friend stream, and seems to awaken a hugely competitive element within them. They can adjust their settings to tweet me - as their therapist - automatically when they reach a certain goal.

Logging food using the app is easy if they eat a lot of packaged food – they can scan the barcode and the app works out calories, sodium and saturated fat levels. It also provides a 'word cloud' of their most-eaten meals.

As boarders they can get rough approximations from a fairly limited library of suggestions, although UP is compatible with other health and fitness apps, including MyFitness-Pal, which has a vast database of existing foods and allows them to input ingredients from a recipe to get accurate calories. As data-entering everything you eat is a bit of a chore, my clients often joke that they are only going to eat food with barcodes from now on.

After a month of wearing the UP my clients realise that they aren't sleeping enough – research suggests 8.25 to 9.25 hours a night. The app also delivers daily 'insights' based on the student's data. At first they are quite generic, but the longer they wear it, the more targeted the suggestions, such as eating pumpkin seeds before bed to improve their quality of sleep and supplying a weblink to a study that explains why.

"The wristband is water-resistant and designed to be worn 24/7"

One of the best features is the 'trends' function. It gives two parallel timelines: how much sleep you've had, with how many steps you've taken underneath. The day they took 25,000 steps was the night they slept the best, with more hours of deep sleep; when they took only 7,000 steps one day, their sleep was reduced.

While not everyone needs to track how much they move, eat and sleep, and for some clients, for instance this device would be contraindicated for those with eating disorders,, with the help of Jawbone UP, the young people that I work with – particularly those with the high prevalence disorders such as anxiety and depression for whom exercise and sleep is part of the recommended treatment - the UP it is a useful adjunct to their treatment.. Sleep, as Shakespeare said "…is the chief nourisher in life's feast" .

One of the most useful aspects of the device is that my clients are helped to realise that they need to invest in their sleep, rather than just accept feeling tired all the time. This is what UP does best – it forces them to see the things that they already knew weren't quite right.

For what it is worth, my prediction is that in a few years time all students will have some sort of wearable device attached (or who knows, inserted under their skin) so you might as well get on board. The company has just released a new model UP24, which is the first Jawbone tracker to go wireless, which will allow my clients to sync their data to the app via Bluetooth. Only available in the US at present, but it won't be long before it hits Australia.

Investment in Boarding

AUTHOR
Simon Hill
Director of Boarding
Brisbane Grammar School

We all know how important investment in boarding is. New furnishings, facilities and infrastructure are worth their weight in gold. Apart from the obvious benefits for the boarders themselves, and the positive statement investment makes about the school's commitment to boarding, it also generates a terrific morale boost for hardworking boarding staff. Often these improvements will be a lick of paint, or new sofas for the common rooms, but just occasionally this investment will amount to a whole lot more, bringing improvements that change how the House operates. Here at Brisbane Grammar we are weeks away from unveiling our new Boarders Dining Room. It's been more than a year in the planning and has numerous other spin-offs that will benefit the boarding House as a whole. The process has been wonderfully stimulating. Here are some tips that I found to be important during the last year.

Collegiality
Being an inner city school with a compact campus, the choice of location was limited. Conversion of existing space was the only option and this would mean relocating classrooms, department offices and the loss of some car parking spaces. Communication with staff throughout the planning stage and as the project took shape was vital in order to smooth this process; not everyone is happy at the prospect of packing up and moving after years in the same classroom.

Do your research
We were very lucky to have close ties with boarding schools across Brisbane who so generously opened their doors and gave up their time to talk through their dining room layouts and systems. We visited a large number of schools to share thoughts and ideas and are extremely grateful for the honest and supportive approach from all concerned.

Flow
The movement of large numbers of students through the school day needs the closest management and this is certainly true in and around dining rooms. We looked closely at how to manage this and decided on separate entry and exit doors. This reduces congestion and allows us to shut the entry door at the appointed cut-off time, hopefully improving punctuality. Two serveries also reduce queuing time. The new location required a new access point to and from the boarding house to save long walks around the boarding house (or short cuts through the medical centre). As a result a new glass entranceway to the House has been created, improving the look as well as increasing the efficiency of movement. The Boarding community benefits from the resulting landscaping changes, and a new entrance foyer will make a more memorable 'first impression' for parents.

"New furnishings, facilities and infrastructure are worth their weight in gold."

Take the chance

Making the most of this terrific investment is critical as it may be some time before the purse strings are loosened again for boarding. We asked for and were generously given the latest audio visual equipment including large screen tv's, projector and screen and a sound system. This adds versatility to a space that could now be so much more than just a dining room. Our more formal dinners on Mondays with a guest speaker will be much more impressive events than was once the case. We asked for rubberised flooring to reduce noise, honours boards, display cases to add to the boarding feel and even little perks like slushy machines were all included in the overall costing. It's often the little things that make such a difference to the overall impression.

Patience

We quickly learn the art of patience in boarding schools. Deadlines will come and go with no obvious progress, so keeping an eye on the end result rather than the short term frustrations is vital!

We all appreciate how tight finances in schools are and all too often boarding is towards the back of the queue at budget time. Boarding staff are experts at maximising what we have in terms of our staff and systems, but when that 'once in a career' expenditure does come we must make the most of it, for the benefits will be felt (and need to be felt) by parents, boarders and staff for years to come.

The Line Between Boarding
and Living on a Farm

AUTHOR
Claudia Allworth
Boarder
Abbotsleigh

It was a crispy winter's morning when we were getting ready to go back on the bus to boarding school. I wasn't really looking forward to the eight hour bus trip even though I love being at boarding school. I stepped outside just one more time before I had to leave my farm. I could feel the morning on my face making my cheeks go rosy. It made me remember the first time I left for boarding school two years ago.

I still remember saying goodbye to my friends and walking up my long dirt driveway and looking at all the dry paddocks, hoping it would soon rain. Each day Dad would take my sister and me down to feed all the sheep on our property. Every morning in winter, Dad would take me lamb checking, to check if any of the sheep and lambs were in trouble when giving birth. That was my favourite job on the farm. I can still remember the first day I saw proper rain. I was ten and we had been in a drought for ten years. The only rain that I had seen were the little showers and the rain on the TV. The little showers did not do much for the farm.

When Mum and Dad first told me that I was going to boarding school I was so excited because when I went up to Sydney to visit my brothers and sister who were in boarding they seemed to have a great time and an independence for which I so longed. But ……

I really do miss this farm. I use to enjoy looking out in the early hours of August mornings, seeing the fog below covering the valley. On some mornings when you walked, you could hear the crunch of the frosty grass breaking under your feet. That seems so far away now. We would get home from primary school at about four, often to the smell of fresh Anzac biscuits. We would help Dad move some sheep or cattle on our motorbikes, or have races up and down the driveway. Our lives were so uncomplicated. Sometimes on the weekends on a Sunday we would all go out to a paddock called Contours and have a picnic on top of the hill.

When I first started at boarding school, it was all strange and new. High School. Being away from home. Prep time, assessment tasks and at times just loneliness. At the beginning I cried in the shower where the tears were washed away with the soap bubbles……

In the winter I would always enjoy going out to the wood box and stoke up the warm fire. When I was little, this was the place that I would just sit and read in front of the dancing flames. When I got hot I would slowly move further back from the fire and would drift off to sleep and Dad would carry me into my bed. In the morning when I was woken up for school the fire would be stoked, warming up the room ready for me to get dressed. The

The Line Between Boarding
and Living on a Farm

house was so warm that when you walked outside you could feel the cold hit your face like ice stabbing your skin. The warmth of your breath would be steam on the fresh cold morning air. As we drove down to the bus Dad would test us on our time tables, which is how we learnt them.

"Hurry Up! We have to go, otherwise we will miss the CountryLink bus for school." Mum's voice pierced my thoughts.

I said goodbye to Dad, and then Mum took us to Wagga Wagga to catch the bus back to school. Now I've got used to going back to school each term, it gets better and better. I am really excited because I to see all my friends again and have a lot of fun, do interesting things, learn a lot, do lots of sports and activities….. but at the same time I am losing my parents and my land again.

I glanced back at the dry farm one more time as the car drove off, leaving only dust in its tracks.

"When I first started at boarding school, it was all strange and new."
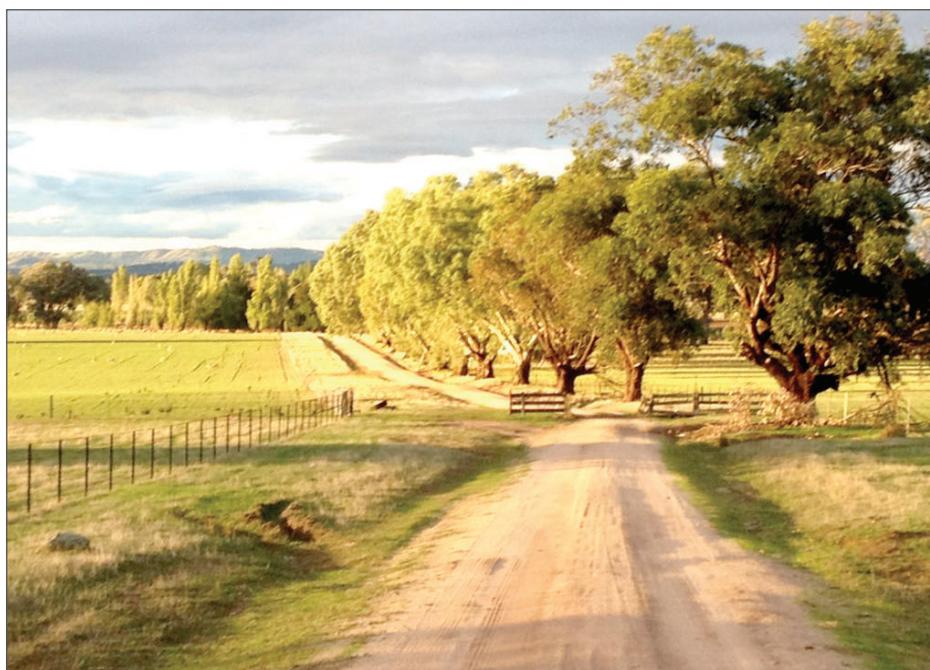
Kormilda Food Forum

Boarders Food Forum Discusses
the Benefits of a Great Breakfast for Teenagers

AUTHOR
AnneLousie Cooper
Head of Boarding
Kormilda College

This term's Food Forum hosted by Catrercare chef ,Ken looked at the importance of a good breakfast for growing teenagers.

The forum is designed to gather feedback, information and suggest requests for the boarding students' menus.

Today the group requested porridge, raisin toast and scrambled eggs on the menu to meet the growing needs of the students.

The group meet termly to test new recipes, discuss concerns and give constructive feedback to the chef and his team.

It was decided that the favourite meal of this term was corned beef, braised cabbage with bacon and fluffy potatoes.

Well done to both the catering team in their tireless efforts to feed our students well and the students who participated on behalf of the whole student population.

Watch this space for our termly themed dinners where the Mayuma Room is decorated, the food is from one country or era and staff are welcome to join us.

"Bon apetit"

Indigenous Dancers Perform
at National Multicultural Festival in Canberra

AUTHOR
Tiffany Nicholson
Enrolment and Publicity Officer
Red Bend Catholic College

On the weekend of Friday 7th to Sunday 9th February a group of Red Bend Indigenous dancers were invited to perform with the Wiradjuri Echoes at the 2014 Multicultural Festival in Canberra. There were seven stages at the Festival and the students performed on four of these at different times over two days.

The students performed with the Wiradjuri Echoes and the Tiwi Islanders on Friday evening on the main stage at the Opening Ceremony before around 3,000 people. They were among the stars that night as they performed between Monica Trapaga and Timomatic. After the performance the students had the opportunity to meet and have their photograph taken with Timomatic – a big thrill for them all.

Saturday morning saw everyone up early and back into the Canberra City Centre for their performances. The first performance was in the Pacific Islander area with the crowd showing their appreciation of the performance with an enthusiastic applause. The next performance was on the African Stage with many people who had watched their earlier perfor-

mance that day turning up to see them again. The last performance on Saturday was on the Indigenous Stage and again they thrilled the crowd with their energy and skill.

All the students had a fantastic time and represented their culture and the College with pride. They were great ambassadors and gained confidence with each performance. Their interactions with the other performers, spectators and the public whilst we were away were first class. We couldn't count

the number of times people pulled them up as they were walking around the festival to have their photos with them and just speak to them, which the students willingly did. The respect shown to staff and each other made this a very enjoyable experience for all involved.

Sunday was again an early rise and on the road to come home - all very weary (including the staff) but well satisfied with their achievements.

> "They were great ambassadors and gained confidence with each performance."

Introverts

AUTHOR
Jude Bartram
Dean of Boarding
Waikato Diocesan School for Girls

In the book 'Quiet American', author Susan Cain suggests that up to one third of people are by nature introverts, leaving another third extroverts and the final third individuals who fake an extrovert demeanour in order to have their voice heard.

If this is true I wonder about the way our introverted students would describe their secondary school years, especially those who live at school - in our boarding houses.

Definition
There is vast literature defining extroversion and introversion, from Carl Jung to St Benedict. For the purpose of this reflection however, I have used the culturally understood meanings of these terms.

Our nature is our God-given temperament and while it can be subdued, it does not change. Consider a tiger living in a zoo. While it may behave in a certain manner due to its training and surroundings, its nature is to be wild.

The introvert's nature requires calm, quiet and physical space in order to process information and ideas and they have a much smaller supply of energy for social interaction than extroverts. While extroverts find the stimulation of people and activity invigorating, introverts re-charge their batteries by seclusion; by being alone. Brain research by Jerome Kagan indicates that introverts have a physiological difference in the "reactivity" of their amygdala. Their brain requires less stimulus than an extrovert and can be easily over-whelmed.

Socially extroverts are assertive, dominant and have a great desire for company. They are often talkers not listeners and are rarely at a loss for words. Introverts absolutely do socialise but can only maintain this for a short time.

While extroverts develop their thinking and meaning through speaking, introverts have an interior focus. Introverts listen better than they talk, require time to think before they speak and may prefer to express themselves in writing. Introverts typically prefer deep, thoughtful discussion so find small talk difficult.

Introverts are not shy, anti-social or depressed and in their natural state they do not lack confidence. In a world designed for extroverts however, they are often mis-labelled and may feel displaced and stressed. These are dangerous signs for a young person in our care.

Our extrovert world
High schools are designed for those who enjoy group work and flourish in situations of high stimulation. Most schools utilise cluster settings for the layout of classrooms, shared activities and open forum discussions are widely considered to be good pedagogy.

While we differentiate based on learning styles or academic need, teacher trainees and practitioners in New Zealand classrooms routinely use group techniques in the classroom despite it being completely discordant with the nature of the introverted students in the class. Reading cues, body language and struggling to find their opportunity to become involved is exhausting for introverts. High school forces them to participate in the world in an unnatural way which may leave them feeling out of place. The problem is compounded for boarders because in the fast, loud world of boarding school I doubt that introverts are able to find the solitude that they require to revive their sapped energy after six hours of high stimulation in the day school. Instead of being able to retreat and recharge, introverts in boarding are surrounded 24/7 with a context that is often equally as draining and socially stressful.

Further to this there is an observable message perpetuated throughout many boarding schools that the model student is gregarious, can cope with change and is socially confident. By their very nature introverts lack these traits in a public context so this unstated but clearly evident standard coupled with a day school that does not easily meet their learning needs may make high school for an introverted boarder a highly taxing environment.

American professor Brian Little writes that people flourish in "settings that are concordant with their personalities" and believes that children stop learning when they feel emotionally threatened. If it is true that their brain chemistry is different than their extrovert peers then no amount of pretence or trying to change will allow an introverted student to fit comfortably into this mould.

Labels
The student who generated my concern for the introverts in boarding houses once received an end of year report where all of her day school teachers made a similar observa-

tion. "Helen needs to become more involved in class discussion, Helen is reluctant to participate, needs to develop her skills of relating to others, has a close but small group of friends. Helen is quiet."

Helen is quiet but repeated comments of this type send a message to an introverted student that there is something less desirable in their nature, something to be overcome.

Shy, slow, head in the clouds, boring - it is very easy to see how as a society and within our school system we have created an environment where the traits of introversion have a negative association. And surely one of the most dangerous things that we can do to a teenager is allow them to believe that there is something flawed or inherently wrong with them simply because of their temperament and the manner in which their brain works.

Of the handful of boarders who just don't 'make it' I wonder how many are simply introverts who never really found their place. As the adults who influence culture in our boarding houses I believe that we must provide an environment that allows them genuine respite and to create a truly inclusive space that allows all our boarders to flourish, to feel safe and to feel at home.

Small changes
Over the past months our boarding team have begun to review our processes with the aim of providing an environment that better meets the needs of our introverts. We have done this to counter-balance the day school environment that we cannot influence as easily.

We deliberately change rooming combinations with our girls each term. Instead of finding out their room mate on the first night back, I could announce the new combinations much earlier. While this means I have to cope with the vocal and unsolicited opinions of my extroverts it would also allow the introverts time to come alongside their new roomie and build those desperately needed connections before they come together for a term.

In the busyness of boarding it is easy to use the house meeting to gather the opinions of the dorm, but on reflection, whose opinions are we really getting? The fast thinking extroverts who absorb verbal information quickly, process it and have the poise to articulate in

"They are often talkers not listeners and are rarely at a loss for words."

a public setting. We may also hear from those who take on an extrovert demeanour in exactly these types of situations in order to get their voice heard. Our reticent introverts will never contribute in a public setting though, which means that if we continue to use this forum for collecting ideas and feedback - they have no voice in the life of boarding.

I have begun to use our message board with much more purpose. Let them all know, in writing, what opportunities are available for their input and offer a variety of ways to communicate with staff. Email, one on one, post-box or a small group forum - these are all simple mechanism to widen the range of ways that students can contribute in boarding.

Another common method for talking to children is the casual 'pop by my office after dinner' option. This too will un-nerve an introverted child and prevent them from communicating well. Instead I now write a detailed note for these girls with an invitation to meet up when they are ready in order to allow them time to process and a genuine chance to contribute.

While better supporting the needs of the introverts in boarding we also help our extrovert children by teaching them to slow down and allow for the input of their introverted peers. I intend using a temperament survey for the girls, early in year, to allow them all to learn about their own nature as well as those around them. The book 'The Temperament God Gave You' by Art and Laraine Bennett is very helpful with this type of activity.

Understanding the needs of introverts will help them to flourish. It is not an excuse when they require solitude in order to restore themselves after a long day. Give them opportunities to self-select and allow them to sometimes opt out. Occasionally letting students sit out a team bonding event can have a greater positive impact for them than my perceived negative impact on the whole.

We are considering other options for beginning of year induction activities too. Girls can get to know their room mate by going for a walk together or working on a puzzle rather than our old favourite tying their legs together for an afternoon. Brand new year 9 girls could walk around the school by themselves, reflecting on what they have absorbed so far in their new school rather than sit in a circle, throw a ball of string around and call out what they remember. These are simple but deliberate changes that we believe will significantly enhance the experience of our introverts in boarding.

High Stakes
Many introverts describe themselves as creative with a strong attachment to their emotions. Composers and poets who feel deep joy and beauty are often introverts and also deeply feel negative emotions such as doubt and fear. Teenage introverts can be susceptible to depression. This, added to the sense of displacement that they may experience in our school system, means that these children may be at risk in boarding and currently they receive no specific attention or intervention.

I worry for our introverts because research indicates that people who supress negative emotions eventually express them in harmful ways; cutting and self-harm, truancy, depression. By making deliberate, small changes in my systems and activities, I can hopefully reduce the feeling that they are different or that there is something wrong with them.

Introversion is not a flaw; it does not need to be fixed. We need to allow sufficient room in our environment for these students to feel rested and accepted and balance is needed to make it fair to all students. I believe that we do better by all our students when we foster a culture where the girls acknowledge and appreciate their differences and learn from us how to get the best out of each other, together.

The Subscription Economy
Supporting Boarding Fee Payments

AUTHOR
Joanna Redfern
Debitsuccess

There's a new kid on the block in the business world; one that's driving growth, cultivating long-term customer relationships, and providing a win-win-win for consumers, businesses and society. That new kid is the subscription economy and it's here to stay.

Driven by customer demand for convenience and flexibility, recurring models are being embraced by businesses of all genres to grow sales and deepen customer loyalty. Everything from music and education to healthcare, beauty treatments and even airlines are now offering subscription payment models.

Recurring revenue models have exploded over recent years, estimated to be a $300 billion market in America alone.

And it seems that new kid is making a difference with a number of boarding schools too. It's a smart move in today's evolving – and increasingly pressured – consumer economy. Simply giving boarder families the ability to pay for fees via a regular, online instalment plan, rather than in a large lump sum, creates a reliable way of guaranteeing cashflow for your school throughout the year.

The subscription economy is rewriting the rules of business. Managing permutations and combinations of different pricing tiers, charging models, billing frequencies and product bundles is complex – that's where technology partners make the systems work seamlessly and profitably.

One technology partner leading the charge as the engine of the subscription economy is Australasian company Debitsuccess. Davin Miller, Debitsuccess Australia Chief Executive Officer says the subscription economy is transforming the business landscape.

"People have less time, more purchasing options, and increased pressure placed on their spending dollar so recurring payments are more convenient than large, one-off payments, provide reliable cash flow and ultimately increase business," says Davin.

"Our unique service model for managing recurring payment adds value to any business or industry entering the subscription economy and successfully translates into many scenarios."

Debitsuccess specialises in end-to-end management of recurring payments via direct debiting customers' bank accounts or credit cards. Initiating over 22 million transactions, worth more than $1 billion annually, it has forged an enviable reputation as the leader in recurring revenue management.

There's no doubt the new kid on the block is here to stay – and as more businesses embrace the subscription economy, it's worth considering if it makes sense to offer a payment plan model for your boarding school.

As the only full-service payment solutions provider in the market, we offer a range of benefits. From signing up new students to payment processing to credit control, we can look after the full spectrum of billing support, all managed by a professional call centre. This offers greater flexibility, consistent cashflow and a full credit control system, saving you time and money so you can focus on what's really important – your students and your school.

With a solid payment solution and extensive support, it makes sense to offer your boarders a payment plan model through Debitsuccess. Get in touch with us today to discuss how we can help you with your billing administration – we're here to help.

For more information visit:
www.debitsuccess.com

Boarder Captains Come Together

AUTHOR
Pamela Hodgetts
Head of Boarding
Somerville House

"They come together to share a meal and enjoy fellowship in a casual atmosphere."

Each year the Boarder Captains of Somerville House look forward to their annual dinner and once again played host to Boarder Captains from Brisbane and Ipswich. They come together to share a meal and enjoy fellowship in a casual atmosphere. Facilitated by the Senior Chaplain, the evening is an opportunity for these young leaders to discuss their vision for the year as well as make new friends.

They come together not knowing what to expect, but at the end of the evening there is a flurry of phone numbers being exchanged as well as promises to keep in touch.

In an adjourning room the Heads of Boarding are also enjoying some fellowship and the opportunity to welcome new members of our fraternity. The opportunity to discuss all manner of subjects from leave to activities cements the bonds between schools as together we strive to offer the best boarding experience to the young people in our care.

Somerville House look forward to welcoming the Boarder Captains again in Term 4 as they join for a farewell dinner and celebrate their year of unique leadership.

New Principals & Heads of Boarding

Brisbane
Boys' College

Michael Holland commenced as Director of Boarding at Brisbane Boys' College in January after spending eight years in Perth. He spent four years at Aquinas College as Director of Gibney House and four years as Director of Boarding and Head of Senior Hall of Residence at Guildford Grammar School.

Since attending Nudgee College as a boarder, Michael has had a passion for boarding schools and is committed to ensuring each boarder has the best possible experience of residential life. Michael focuses on relationships as the key to creating a boarding community where everyone can thrive. He enjoys getting to know the boarders outside of the classroom and has a particular passion for rugby coaching but takes an interest in all areas of the College life that boarders can be involved in.

Another significant area of interest for Michael is professional development, both personally and for all of his boarding staff. He sees education as a lifelong journey, always on the lookout for ways to improve the way he manages the boarding house. He is also keen to provide a variety of opportunities for boarding staff to develop their skills.

Apart from overseeing the care of the boarders at BBC, Michael is also teaching English and will assist with the Under 13 Rugby Program.

Michael and his family are very happy to be back in Brisbane after eight fantastic years in Perth and he looks forward to meeting members of the extended BBC community at the many rural visits planned for the year.

Michael Holland
Director of Boarding
Brisbane Boys' College, QLD

Scotch
College

The high quality boarding life for students at Scotch College Adelaide has been reinforced with the appointment of a new Director of Boarding. Graham Duffy has already settled in at the picturesque Torrens Park campus in Adelaide's foothills after a distinguished teaching career to date in Australia and his native South Africa. With a Master of Education from Flinders University to his credit as well, Graham is excited to join Scotch to oversee the management of the world-class Rosevear Boarding Precinct.

"I am humbled by the opportunity to work at Scotch College Adelaide which is widely regarded as one of the finest schools in Australia," said Graham, 42, who has moved to Scotch with his wife Jill and three young children. "It's been a real pleasure to walk into an extremely well functioning boarding facility on such superb grounds and meet so many good young people."

Graham says his Director of Boarding role will be to continue developing students and helping them make their time at Scotch as enjoyable and beneficial as possible.

"My focus will be to enhance the already strong culture of the Scotch College boarding house and the caring and friendly environment that exists," he said. "I will be working to further strengthen relationships between staff and students and to foster a positive atmosphere for learning and personal growth."

Graham says the co-education boarding house is currently evenly split between male and female boarders who are all benefitting from a first-class learning environment.

"Scotch's popularity among families is based on more than the outstanding learning atmosphere it provides to girls and boys, but its broader aim of developing students as happy, successful and well-rounded young people," he said. "This is particularly evident among boarding students, who not only enjoy a diverse and dynamic curriculum incorporating a balance between core and elective subjects, but a supportive home away from home environment which provides a sense of community through mentor and peer support."

Graham Duffy
Director of Boarding
Scotch College, Adelaide, SA

Barker College

Phillip Heath commenced as the ninth Head of Barker College in January 2014. He had previously been Head of Radford College in Canberra. Mr Heath is also the current Chairman of AHISA, the Australian Heads of Independent Schools Association.

As a thriving school approaching its 125th anniversary in 2015, Barker College continues to provide a positive climate for learning. Students are at the heart of our work. At Barker we aim to provide a framework for young people to experience the best that the future offers – more than that, to become people who shape this future rather than merely people who consume it.

The Barker Boarding Community holds a special place in this exciting new world. The future increasingly calls on us to be collaborative in finding solutions, to be community-minded in sharing resources, and to be enriched by challenging experiences that offer opportunities for critical thinking. The Senior Boarding experience at Barker College is a supreme fit: nourished by the deep traditions of our wonderful history and yet energised by an audacious sense of our shared future.

Phillip Heath
Principal
Baarker College, NSW

Attributes of a Good Bloke

AUTHOR
Evan Shillabeer
Head of Boys Boarding
Pembroke School

A "Good Bloke" is;

• A person that makes a good decision and commits to it.
• A person who is honest.
• A person who respects others, and acts to earn respect.
• A person who participates actively in and out of School.
• A person who is true and can be trusted.
• A person who is loyal.
• A person who accepts reasonable criticism.
• A person who is humble.
• A person who stands by their mates.
• A person who is not intimidated by the crowd and "sticks up" for the little guy.
• A person who is courageous.

Worthwhile promises,

• I will not stand for any bullying.
• I will stand up and say something when I know something is wrong.
• I will not isolate anyone; we will put our differences aside.
• I will try and involve more people, especially if they are in need.
• I will make people feel welcome and at home.
• I will remain calm and composed in my interactions.
• I will show respect and compassion to everyone in the boarding house.
• I will show some self-respect and be true to myself.

Productivity, Creativity and Noise

AUTHOR
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Walking through the corridors of a boarding house of an evening, I find students either working at their desks or gathered round discussing issues and ideas. I often wonder whether these discussions are relevant to the homework or assignments set by teachers or whether simply discussing events of the weekend, a Snapchat comment or the latest post on Instagram.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory in psychology proposed by Abraham Maslow in his 1943 paper "A Theory of Human Motivation" in Psychological Review. He argued that once our physiological and safety needs were met our need to connect and belong was crucial if one was to increase there level of self-esteem/confidence to eventually become creative and able to problem solve.

Creativity expert Sir Ken Robinson argues that creativity is the crucial 21st century skill we'll need to solve today's pressing problems. Creativity generally refers to thinking outside the box, being imaginative or coming up with original ideas. He argues that collaboration leads to creativity, which is often missing in our education system. However, recent research by architecture firm Gensler found that open plan offices (or in our case student work areas), that have been created to promote creativity could actually be harmful to our ability to work productively and indeed collaboratively.

Open plan offices or study areas may be advantageous for businesses in the Silicon Valley or for senior students studying for their final exams. But is it beneficial to junior students in boarding?

Diane Hoskins, CEO of Gensler, surveyed more than 90,000 people from 155 companies across ten industries and found that "knowledge work" consists of four modes: focusing (individual work, involving concentration and mastery of a particular task), collaborating (working with others to achieve a common goal), learning (acquiring knowledge of skill through education or experience), and socialising (interactions that create trust, common bonds and values, collective identity and productive relationships).

The research found that a significant factor for effectiveness and productivity is in fact individual focus work and not collaboration. Sacrificing individual focus for the pursuit of collaboration has actually reduced the effectiveness of both.

Collaboration is good for creativity but too much noise can interrupt workflow.

Is silence the answer?
In research conducted by the University of Illinois, participants were asked to brainstorm ideas for new products while listening to different levels of background noise. The data

"Collaboration is good for creativity but too much noise can interrupt workflow."
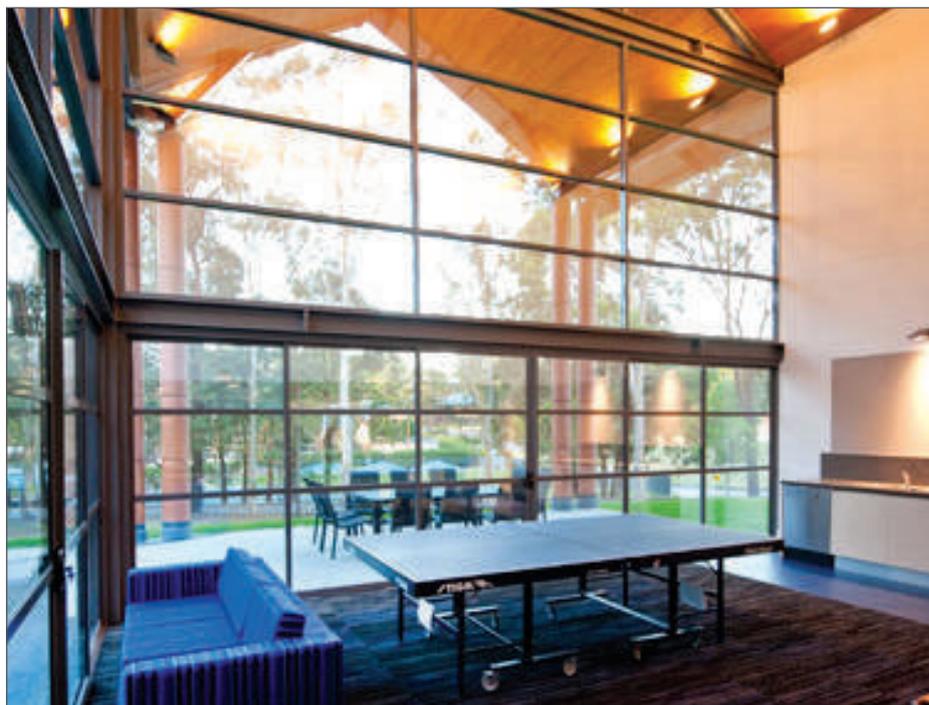
suggested that the 70 decibels provided by the buzz of a café was the optimum. A quiet environment of 50 decibels and a noisy one of 80 decibels (for example a blender) were less desirable.

Quiet environments allow students to focus too much on a task at hand, which can hinder creativity. This is why it is better to walk away from a problem when you can't solve it and re-address it after some time out. When faced with creative tasks, a bit of distraction is beneficial, however; when the work demands attention to detail, quiet environments win out.

As educators, we are continually wanting our students to focus, collaborate, learn and socialise, and the designs of boarding houses and in particular workspaces should endeavor to accommodate this. A combination of private studies, breakout spaces, common rooms and outdoor meeting areas, will create an academic environment that is either better than or, at minimum, replicates the home environment.

You will be Known for your Footprints
- not your Fingerprints

AUTHOR
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Acting Dean of Students
The Scots PGC College

Have you ever done an internet search on your name? Were you pleasantly surprised; a little disappointed or horribly shocked? Your digital footprint is the legacy that is left behind in the vast digital environment. It is a trail of what you post online, have searched, clicked on, liked, tweeted and sites you have joined. Are you aware that your IP address (a numerical code that is specific to the device you are using) is also recorded? For most of us who pre-date the World Wide Web and the internet (or can still remember the VIC-20 Commodore Computer) our digital footprint might only date back some 25 years. Unfortunately, many of our boarders have digital footprints that pre-date their births as parents posted images online of their prenatal scans. As the digital world of tablets, smart phones, social media and information sharing become a part of our boarders everyday lives, there is a need to ensure that they understand how their online actions create their personal digital footprint.

Employers are now using external recruiting agencies to find suitable employees for their business, cutting out the middle man of HR and streamlining the recruitment process. Many of these agencies simply perform an online search of a candidate's name to see

> **"Your digital footprint is the legacy that is left behind in the vast digital environment."**

what type of digital footprint they have. There are thousands of stories of people failing to secure a job because of a poor digital footprint. Most often this occurs due to a post, a photo, or a like, that took place during their secondary schooling or whilst undertaking further studies - usually many years prior to applying for the job. As boarding staff we are tasked with ensuring that our boarders develop life skills that will allow them to engage and cope in an ever changing world. We must therefore encourage our boarders to fully understand their responsibilities as a digital citizen, and ensure that their online behaviour creates a positive digital footprint.

There is endless literature on teaching digital citizenship in schools and how to create and maintain a positive digital footprint. I have listed below some strategies that I will incorporating in our College's Life Skills Programme to assist the boarders in understanding both digital citizenship and digital footprints.

• Encouraging boarders to attend afternoon "Internet Cafe" session on campus. These sessions will run for 30 minutes and are based on collaborative learning. Boarders will bring their digital device to the session where boarders and staff with similar interests will share how they use their device, talk about new apps they are using. This will assist boarders to understand how to better use their device for both social and educational purposes.
• All Year 12 boarders will develop a Linkedin account. Staff will then assist the boarders with the maintenance and use of this account listing personal achievements, goals and objectives.
• Boarders will be assisted to develop a Digital Portfolio. This is very useful for boarders involved in the arts or technology.
• Boarders will be educated on the positive use of Twitter in setting up a Professional Learning Network (PLN).
• Infographics (or Piktochart) will be used throughout the boarding houses as a way of educating boarders about digital citizenship and digital footprints.

The most important aspect of this learning process is to ensure that boarding staff role model positive and responsible digital citizenship. As we all know, adolescents are most likely to mimic the behaviour of adults. For many staff, it is likely that they will not have the same depth of digital literacy as some of the boarders in their care. Therefore it stands

to reason that the educational processes outlined may well need to be taught to both staff and boarders.

Like many boarding communities, at SCOTS PGC College we use Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to assist us in communicating with parents and the wider boarding community. I am always conscious of what I am posting and the digital shadow that this will create for the boarders who appear on these social media pages. What is your boarding school's digital shadow saying about your boarders?

It would be great to hear from other boarding schools about what you do in relation to teaching your boarders about digital citizenship and digital footprints. Please feel free to contact me on twitter @BoardingSPGC or Greg.Wacker@scotspgc.qld.edu.au to share your ideas. I hope to develop a blog in coming months titled "Student Digital Welfare - the promotion, education, maintenance and provision of a conducive digital environment by educational intuitions, and provide students with the relevant knowledge and understanding of their rights, responsibilities and social well-being within this digital environment". I hope to generate through this blog ideas and discussion on this very important topic within education and boarding.
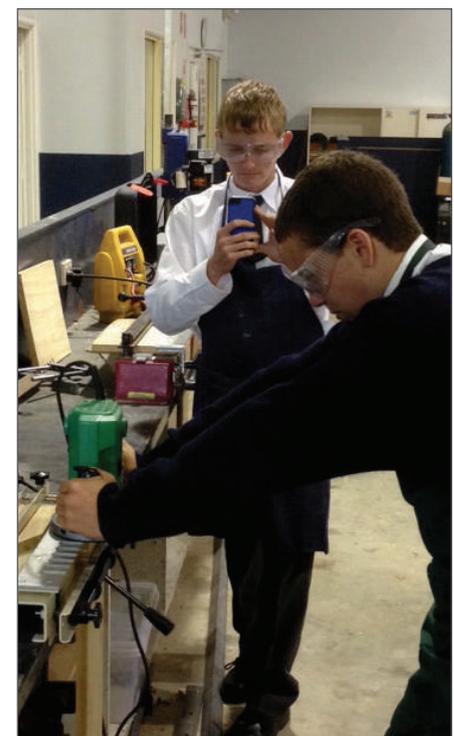
Top 5 Tips
for Dealing with Challenging Students

AUTHOR
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Communications Expert
Prince Alfred College

Working in a boarding community is one of the most rewarding jobs and can also be one of the most challenging; all at the same time! The students are the reason why most people work in boarding. The opportunity to inspire, mould and educate the next generation is too good an opportunity to pass up. But within that realm of opportunity lies the challenging students. These are the students who really test your love of the job. The assortment of challenges you may face with these challenging students can vary from day to day. As a communication expert and as someone who works full time in boarding, I thought I would share with you my five top tips for dealing with challenging students.

What do I mean by a challenging student?
A challenging student is someone who really challenges you with their behaviour. Maybe they are a student who regularly gets in trouble. Maybe they are a student who you just don't seem to have made a connection with. Maybe they are a student that some people might refer to as a bad apple.

How were these tips created?
These tips are based on my 10 years of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) communication training and have been tried and tested on thousands of students over the years. When going through the top tips, keep a challenging student in mind and see if you can implement the tips with them.

Top Tip 1: Rapport, Rapport, Rapport
Before you can change any situation or hope to have any positive affect with a challenging student, there must be rapport first. Rapport is the common ground between you and the student. It is a connection between you and the student. I often say rapport says to a person you are like me and I am like you and when people think they are like each other they tend to like each other. If you have no rapport with a student you will not be able to help them. When I taught NLP practitioners to work with clients, I would explain that 80% of the work they would do with their clients would be to help the client to feel comfortable, relaxed and to trust them. Essentially 80% is building rapport. Without this, their ability to work positively with the client would not be possible. Now it is important to note, there is a huge difference between having rapport and being the students' best mate. You can still communicate hard and important lessons and have rapport with a student, but rapport must come first. So if you have

a challenging student in mind – ask yourself; when was the last time you had a general get to know them conversation? What effort have you made to find out about them today? What do they like? What don't they like? What are they really good at? What makes them smile? Why not make the effort to have a chat with them in the dining room today? Or make it your mission to find out something about them that you didn't know? Just by taking this small step, you will start to build rapport with them. Once you have rapport, and only once you have it, can you hope to make a positive difference with that student.

Top Tip 2: Our Beliefs = Our Reality
What we believe becomes our reality. If we believe we can do something, it will happen. Henry Ford once said; whether you believe you can, or you believe you can't, you are absolutely right. So, if we believe that a student is challenging and perhaps we even feel a bit fed up with them, this will affect our reality and our experience of that student. Our beliefs, whether true or false are self-fulfilling prophecies. We each behave as if our beliefs are true and therefore continue to support them with our actions and our words and as a result they become true. So keeping that challenging student in your mind now, ask yourself; what do you say to yourself in your mind when you see them? Perhaps you think oh no, not her! Or perhaps you think, I just know he is going to cause trouble – it might feel shameful to admit it, but whether you like it or not when this thought goes off in your mind, you will unconsciously communicate this to the student on some level. Moreover, by thinking these thoughts, you look for some action or behaviour from the student to support your negative belief about them. Your belief about that student becomes your reality. This is why rapport must come first, followed by your ability to hold different beliefs about that student in your mind. Find out about them, get to know them, create a rapport with them and begin to have different beliefs about them. Change your beliefs about them and you will start to notice how your interaction with them will begin to improve.

Top Tip 3: Everyone is doing the best they can with the resources they have available
This is probably one of my favourite principles and one which I live by. I like it because it gives everyone a chance. If you have a challenging student, don't just write them off. Don't give up on them. Just accept that right now, with the information, experience, education

> ## "Rapport is the common ground between you and the student."

and learnings that they currently have, they are doing the best that they can. When you do this, you begin to feel much better about that student. But don't just stop there, keep going as there is more work to be done. If their current behaviour isn't what it should be, then it is your job to help them and give them more resources. Empower them with new resources to make better choices, to make better decisions and to grow as a person. So what do I mean by resources? Maybe they need more confidence? Maybe they need more love? Maybe they need more discipline? Get to know that challenging student and find out – what resources do they need right now in order to make better choices? Once you've worked out what resources they need, set about helping them to acquire them.

Top Tip 4: Accept the person, change the behaviour

When we accept the person and set about helping them to change their behaviour we empower ourselves and them. Many years ago, when I was first introduced to NLP, one of my trainers explained this principle to me by saying, "he's not a jerk, he's just acting like a jerk!" This really made me laugh and has helped me to remember this principle ever since. So remember, a challenging student isn't their behaviour. They might be displaying rude, aggressive or difficult behaviour, but that isn't them as a person. That is just their current behaviour that they are displaying in that moment. I'm sure if I asked you right now if you have ever behaved in a way that you regret you would say "yes". And I'm sure that wasn't you as a whole person, it was just your behaviour in that moment in time. Since then you have changed your behaviour. This is exactly the same with your challenging students. It's not them as a person, it's just their current behaviour. Again, your job is to help them to want to change their behaviour by giving them whatever it is they need to change. This might mean more resources as discussed earlier. So go find that challenging student now and when you see them, say to yourself in your head; Accept the person – change the behaviour!

Top Tip 5: Communication is the Response you get

The final Top Tip is very important. So what does communication is the response you get mean? Well it means that you must own your communication. If the response you are currently getting when you communicate with that challenging student isn't what you want

it to be, you have to change your communication. For example, if when you talk to the challenging student they ignore you, or are rude to you or don't understand what you are trying to communicate – you have to take full responsibility and change your communication to get a different response. For example, have you ever said something to someone and they've been offended and afterwards you've thought, I'm so sorry – I didn't mean it like that?! Well you might not have meant it like that, but you have to take full responsibility that the way you communicated wasn't effective and that you need to communicate differently next time so that you don't offend them. By taking full responsibility you empower yourself to communicate differently next time and as a result you will get different results. So think about that challenging student now – do you always speak to them in the same tone of voice? How is your body language when you talk to them? What words do you use that may cause a reaction? Look at the way you communicate with them and change it and watch the wonderful results you'll get just by owning your communication and changing it accordingly.

Have fun!

I hope you have fun trying out the top tips in your boarding community. Remember in order to see real change with any challenging student, you must be the one to take action. They say the only sign of madness is doing the same thing again and again and expecting different results! So be brave and be prepared to try new ways of communicating. Change things that you currently do, test new ways of communicating and I'll guarantee you'll be pleased with the results.

Thanks for reading! Please feel free to let me know how you go.

How to Recover When
you Feel you've been Wronged

AUTHOR
Dr Timothy Sharp
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We've all, at times, felt wronged by others. We've all, at times, been hurt by those whom we felt betrayed our trust, were inconsiderate, or by those who in some way hurt our feelings. Clearly, lingering feelings of resentment or anger are not good for happiness so learn how to better manage these feelings and as a result, recover more quickly and experience more positive emotions.

Forgiveness
In his wonderful book, "Beyond Revenge: the evolution of the forgiveness instinct" Michael McCullough makes two very important points.

1. First, revenge is not some sort of abnormal response experienced only by psychopaths or the mentally unstable. Rather, it is a normal human emotion experienced by those who feel they've been wronged and, according to McCullough, an emotion that actually serves a useful purpose from an evolutionary perspective.

2. Second, and this is important to note, forgiveness is also a normal human emotion and more so, one we can cultivate in ourselves and foster in others to create, ultimately, a more compassionate and better world.

So how do we do this?
Try the following suggestions (partly taken from Sonja Lyubomirsky's "The How of Happiness"):

• Imagine forgiveness - sometimes it's easier to begin by imagining what we ultimately want to achieve so ask yourself what it would be like if you forgave a particular person and imagine how you'd feel as a result.

• Write a letter of forgiveness - if appropriate, deliver this letter to the relevant person; if not, just write a letter and read it to yourself but either way, express in words as best you can how you've let go of your anger and bitterness.

• Practice empathy - although this is very difficult at times, try to imagine the other person's position and perpective including why they might have done what they did (and note, this doesn't mean you have to agree with it).

• Ruminate less - if you're struggling to forgive then at the very least, don't make things worse for yourself by excessively worrying about what happened.

• As hinted at above, remember that forgiving someone doesn't mean you endorse their actions or agree with or like what they did. It simply means letting go of the self-defeating, painful emotions that are probably only hurting you and not affecting them.

PS: remember, throughout this, a very important point. Forgiveness is mostly for the forgiver (i.e. that's you!) as opposed to the person who's done wrong!

"We've all, at times, felt wronged by others."
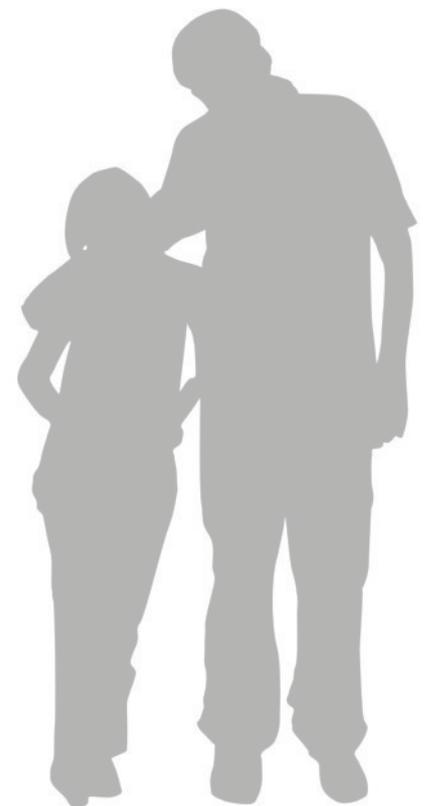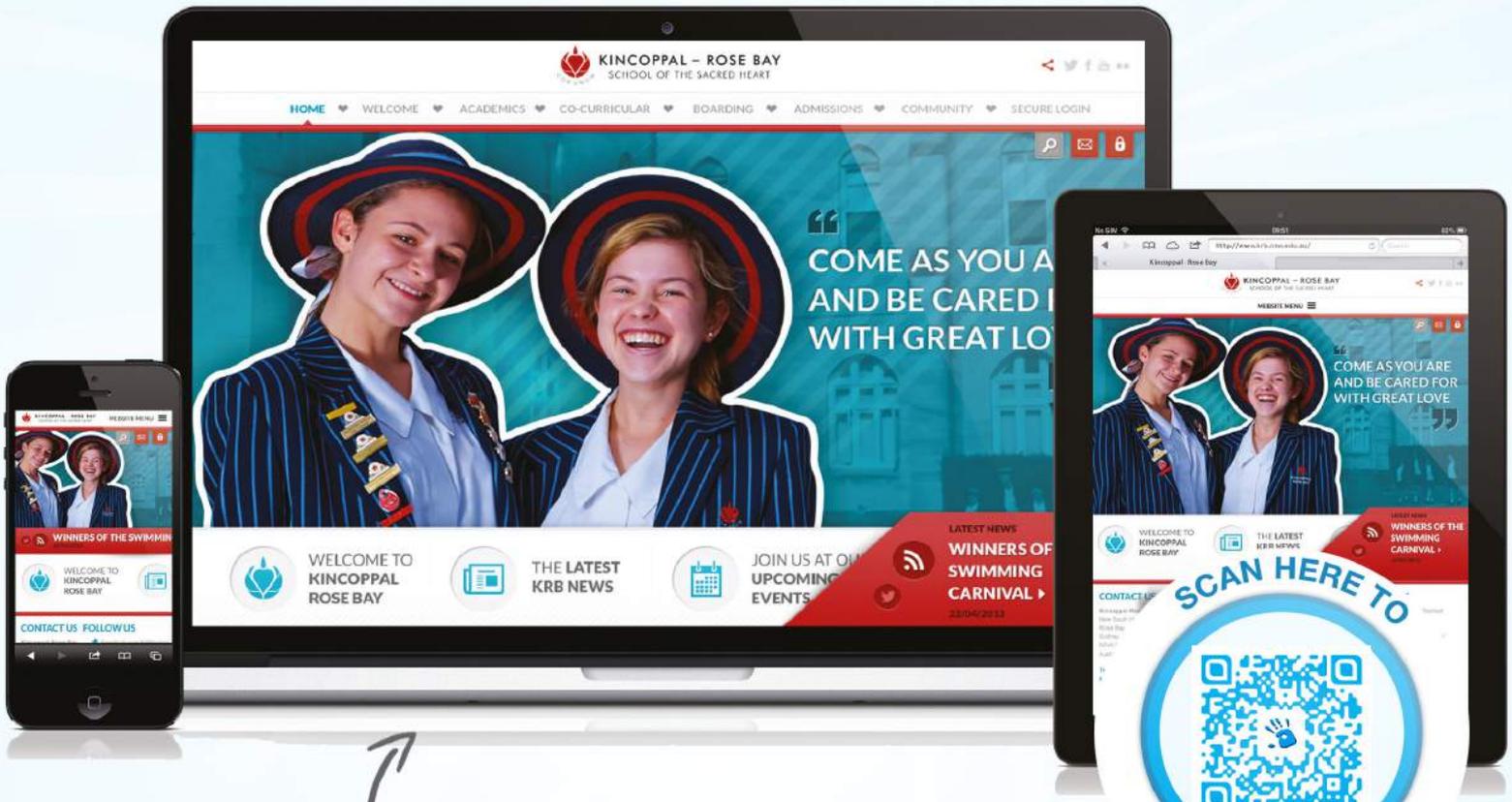
Home Away From Home?
What's the Point of Assessment in Boarding?

AUTHOR
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School of Psychology
University of Queensland

There is a growing emphasis on the importance of using data to guide practice at all levels of education, however, very few attempts have been made to measure important aspects of the boarding environment (Bramston & Patrick, 2007; Cree, 2000). While staff experience and intuition are important in guiding decisions in boarding communities, additional data is essential to inform best practice.

It is no longer sufficient for boarding schools to merely meet the basic needs of a comfortable bed, nutritious food and to attend to a boarder's personal safety. There is also an expectation that boarding staff will be responsible for promoting the social, emotional and personal development of each boarder (Hawkes, 2001).

What do we need to know?

Within the boarding environment, contextual as well as intra-personal factors combine to determine how each person both perceives and adjusts to this unique setting. The influential factors commonly identified in family research literature are important to assess the capacity of a boarding environment to provide a home away from home.

Family research has found that parent-child relationships characterised by conflict and lack of support are associated with poor adolescent adjustment such as poor self-esteem, low self-efficacy, anxiety and depression. Conversely, positive relationships, healthy open communication and perceived parental support have been found to be related to the development of a young person's sense of self-worth, belonging, security and stability, and to buffer against adverse outcomes. It therefore seems important to assess these aspects of the boarding environment.

With no purpose-built assessment tools currently available to guide this process in boarding environments, we adapted questionnaires used in family, parenting and school contexts to assess important aspects of the boarding environment and staff and boarders' intra-personal experiences. The newly developed self-report measures aimed to tap key aspects of the boarding environment identified in the family literature as being influential in the social, emotional and personal outcomes of adolescents. Details of each measure are shown in the table below:

Assessing the boarding environment

Aspect assessed	Boarders	Staff, Parents, teachers	What's being assessed?
Boarding Environment	Life in Your School - boarder	Life in Your School - boarder	• Measures boarding school climate including physical safety, boarder behaviour, emotional responsiveness of staff, staff demeanour and a general level of satisfaction
	Board SS – boarder	Board SS – staff	• Perceptions of social support given and received including aspects of communication and positive attention
	CBQ – boarder	CBQ – staff	• Perceptions about levels of conflict in the boarding environment
Wellbeing	SDQ – self-report DASS – boarders > 14 years	SDQ – all staff regarding specific boarder DASS – staff	• Measures both prosocial and difficult behaviour including social, emotional, peer and behaviour problems as well as an impact score. A screening tool for symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress

> **"It is no longer sufficient for boarding schools to merely meet the basic needs…"**

Who and what to assess?

The whole boarding community

Just as schools gather data to track and inform students' academic progress, boarding communities who are responsible for the in loco parentis care of boarders would benefit from regularly gathering information related to boarders developmental outcomes, to identify a focus for staff training and professional development or to establish a focus for programs or interventions for all boarders. Data can also be gathered to compare staff and boarders' perceptions, and to compare differences between specific age groups, year levels and, in the case of co-educational boarding schools, genders. In short, data is necessary to inform best practice in boarding communities and to provide regular feedback about how we're performing in our parenting role.

Targeted assessment

Sometimes it's necessary to gather additional, specific information about particular boarders, who for a variety of reasons, might be 'at-risk'. The assessment of identified risk and protective factors (see table) can inform the planning, implementation and follow-up of an intervention to address an area of concern. All boarding staff, teachers in the broader school community, parents and the boarder him/herself may be involved in this level of assessment.

System-level assessment

Objective data that is routinely captured by schools and boarding houses on an on-going basis can be used to get a sense of how the boarding system as a whole is performing both as a separate entity and also as part of the broad school community. This information can include: days absent from school/work (staff and boarders); visits to the school nurse; stays in sickbay/infirmary; recorded misdemeanours in both the boarding environment and the wider school community; a boarder's academic record; and complaints (or messages of thanks) from parents. This form of assessment does not require additional effort on the part of boarding staff, but provides an objective method (versus self-report) for measuring the outcome of programs for boarders and of staff training and professional development.

What we found

These measures were used to gather information from 121 boarding staff and 415 boarders in Queensland schools. A brief summary of findings follows.

Boarding School Climate

On a very positive note, both staff and boarders agreed with the statements: 'This boarding school is a safe place'; 'There is good discipline at this school'; and 'The behaviour of boarders at this school is good'. However, there was a significant difference between staff and boarders' perceptions regarding the level of emotional support boarders received. Boarders' gave their lowest ratings for the statements: 'Staff pay attention to my feelings' and 'Staff make me feel good about myself'.

Conflict

Even though boarders perceived significantly more conflict than staff, overall boarders' ratings of levels of conflict were relatively low, ranging between 3.5 and 5. The largest discrepancies on this scale were reported on the following statements: 'The Talks I have with staff are frustrating for me' and 'Staff never understand my side of the argument'.

Social Support

The largest difference between staff and boarders perspectives was noted on the social support scale. The average social support rating for staff was 8.6, while for boarders it was 5.9. Boarders' ratings were highest for the statement, 'Boarding Staff help me when I need it' and lowest for, 'Boarding staff demonstrate that they care for me'.

While the differences found between staff and boarders' perceptions may be normative and reflect the development of an adolescent's identity and autonomy (Noller, Seth-Smith, Bouma & Schweitzer, 1992), it should also be noted that highly discrepant views of family functioning have also been linked to both internalizing and externalizing disorders in adolescents (Letcher et al, 2004).

For further information please contact Julie Hodges juliehod@psy.uq.edu.au.

Lights Out

Singapore Boarding Schools:
Setting an Example for the World

AUTHOR
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Singapore is a vibrant and diverse place, which over the years, has emerged and developed as the hub of industries and education. The evolution of the country from British colony to academic Mecca is dramatic and fascinating. Boarding schools, spread across the demography of Singapore, are a perfect example of academic, cultural and innovative excellence in the educational system.

Last year, I gained an insight into how Singapore boarding schools are blending cultures and applying technologies in fascinating ways. While on a student exchange programme in Singapore in 2013, I took the opportunity to tour three local boarding schools including ACS Oldham Hall, United World College of South East Asia (East campus) and Raffles Institution.

ACS Oldham Hall boarding school is one of the major multicultural and ethnic boarding schools one could ever see. The eight storey, co-educational boarding school has the capacity to accommodate up to 450 students, who attend one of five different schools. Students from various nations of South East Asia reside together with all cultural festivals and religious holidays celebrated with equal enthusiasm. The biggest challenge the boarding school has overcome is integrating students of different cultures through its events. The events create a platform for all to understand the Oldham culture better while improving the credibility of the students. Chess com-

petitions, talent shows and quizzes are the most popular events at the school. According to past ACS Oldham Hall Director David K T Chua, they even organise fundraising events to help financially challenged students.

The ultra modern and even bigger United World College's East campus has inducted technology apart from fusing the culture of more than 45 countries. According to Director of Boarding Gabriel Abad, the co-educational campus is for students from Years 8 to 12 with shared rooms for two to three students, as well as some single rooms. The students are also allocated small kitchens and a recreational room, which gives them a balance between studies and entertainment. Apart from the outstanding purpose-built boarding facilities, the most fascinating part of the school was its use of technology in daily life. The school is technology-focused from CCTV cameras for security services, to attendance recording with a system called 'Bento', which uses two iPads that are linked to each other. The school also uses iCalendar for leave management and iCloud for record maintenance.

Another boarding school even further ahead when it comes to the use of technology was the Raffles Institution. The Raffles Institution, established in 1996 and accommodating 450 boarders, uses a Boarders' Management System. It is a unique and common system, accessible by all smart devices, much

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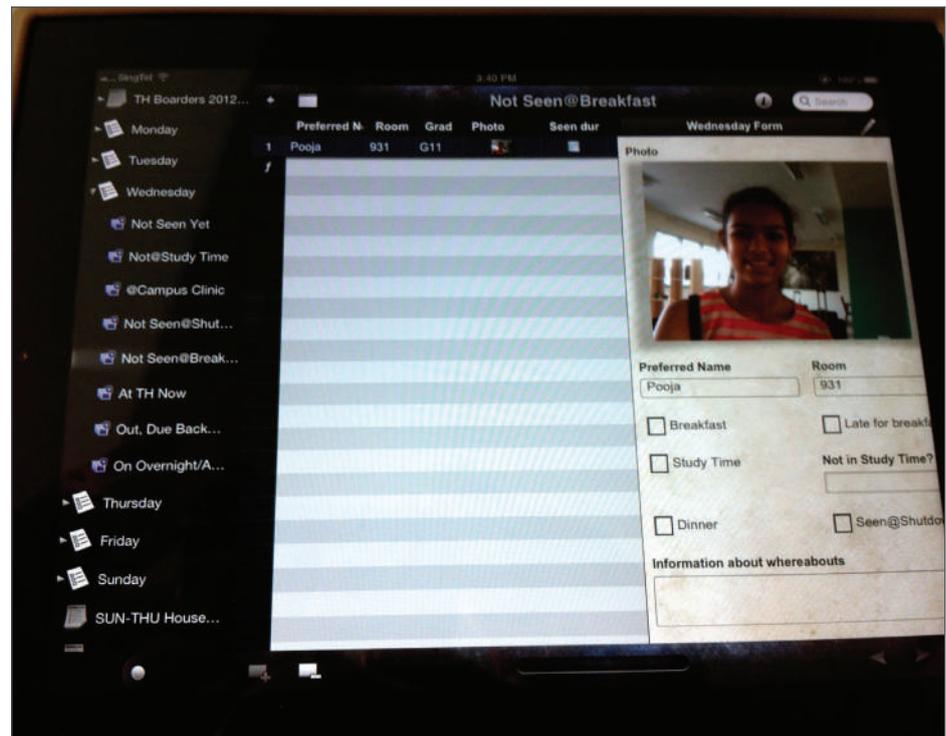
like an organisation portal. It can be used for absence management, illness reporting and various other tasks. It even has biometric scanners for attendance instead of the traditional paper-based systems.

I found these boarding tours to be most informative and a rewarding professional experience. Seeing such large boarding houses and how they manage their prodigious numbers was a real eye-opener. The significant ethnic diversity of these boarding houses and how they manage to integrate such culturally and religiously different boarders is a remarkable achievement. While the use of technology within these schools to eliminate the paper use in terms of attendance, leave and other related paper-based administration was significantly different to how things are done in Australia.

As a result of these tours, I investigated the existence of similar electronically-based boarding administrative systems here in Australia. This search ultimately lead to us finding a system called 'REACH'. So in late 2013, Christ Church Grammar School trialled the 'REACH' system before successfully implementing the system in 2014.

Positive Education on a Shoestring!

AUTHOR
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A great deal of interest has been generated by schools embracing the tenets of Positive Psychology and Positive Education into their daily programs. The influence of the work of Prof. Martin Seligman as the founder of the movement has been profound in Australian schools and what some may have viewed as the latest in several educational trends or fads seems here to stay. A recent visit to the "Fourth Annual Symposium on Positive Psychology and Well-Being" at The University of Melbourne revealed to me both the interest in and impact of the emerging science of Positive Psychology on practitioners and the general public.

Whilst the impact of a focus on the positive rather than the negative when considering the emergence of our young people seems self-explanatory, my experience reveals hesitancy on behalf of some educators. Does a focus on the positive have the capacity to obscure the harsh realities that we often deal with our students? What are the barriers to introducing Positive Psychology into the programs of our own school? The reality is that many schools are embracing the concept of Positive Psychology without realising it and have done so for many years. Some simple tweaking of existing programs can be employed to embrace what is a remarkable movement, not only in education but in thinking about thinking in general! However, for many schools the thought of the extra cost involved in developing a Positive Education and Learning Framework may be a barrier. With a bit of reading and tweaking, there is no doubt that current practice can be refined to incorporate the very best principles of Positive Education with its ensuing benefits to your residential community.

Character Strengths
At The King's School (TKS) in Sydney we focus greatly on educating students for life, not just examinations. A residential boarding community of over 300 boys within the community, distinguished by strong links to rural NSW and international students highlights the diversity which exists in many schools with boarders. Within this diversity comes a range of strengths which can shape and influence a student community. At Year 10 level at TKS for the past 3 years we have employed the use of the VIA Character Strengths Inventory as a powerful tool for our boys to gain a sense of their own unique character, along with its strengths and importantly weaknesses.

There is a great deal of research and writing behind the use of this tool, freely available on the internet and my own experience reveals how powerful it can be in shaping an individual's understanding of self. The free online version of the inventory of 120 questions is worthwhile doing, whether a student or educator and a summary report highlight's a individuals strengths of the 24 identified. Further, reflecting on the experiences of others by understanding their character strengths can provide appreciation of their approach to learning and leadership. Consider the implications of the use of this diagnostic tool in your residential community to understand why conflict may arise between individuals. At TKS we have been using the survey with our Prefects to consider their leadership style and which portfolios they may be best suited to but its application to residential communities has been yet to be fully explored. It certainly makes for an interesting research project for any budding academics out there.

Try this link:
https://www.viacharacter.org/surveys.aspx

Just Be
A focus on mindfulness, or actively thinking about thinking in the moment and focusing on what is occurring at the time is another concept which is being actively and regularly applied in classrooms. Being in the moment or in the zone is something we talk about regularly yet a conscious effort on our behalf to train our students to think rather than let their minds wander to all sorts of destinations can have great impact. At the recent Conference on Positive Psychology, keynote Felicity Huppert from the Cambridge University Well-Being Institute distinguished between mindfulness and meditation in her discussion of successful initiatives with the House of Lords and Wellington College (UK). One of the great stories she told was of the Dot Be (.B) program which encouraged students to send a text message once a day to their peers with the simple .B message. Indecipherable perhaps, to those not literate in the language of text but profound to those who received it! Simply, stop and breathe……b! Imagine the impact of this on one your residents just before or after prep time. Such a focus on the moment has the capacity to reduce stress, conflict and make students more mindful of their environment and the needs of those around them. Starting the day with an exercise of this nature is also a good way to introduce reflection into the daily program of your residents. More information can be found at the following link:
http://mindfulnessinschools.org/what-is-b/

Mindset
Most academic communities these days incorporate goal setting for individuals and often groups as integral to their planning for the week, term and year ahead. Central to the approach of Positive Education is taking goal setting to the next level through considering mindset. Perhaps the best writing on the developing of Mindset comes from Carol Dweck, Ph. D of Stanford University in her two books yet there are some wonderful resources closer to home. At the recent conference, Dr. Steve Zolezzi, Director of Positive Education at Sydney's Knox Grammar School talked about the use of the film "The Matrix" and the character of Neo as an individual who demonstrated a growth rather than a fixed mindset. A belief that our talent ability is set in stone constitutes a fixed mindset, a growth mindset views these attributes as having the capacity to be built upon. Developing a sense in students that they can always learn from, reflect and improve upon their mindset is a central element of Positive Education and fundamental to our role of educators. Perhaps the key to engendering this approach with our residents is open and honest communication about how to improve next time in treat each opportunity as a chance to improve one's own personal best.

Conclusion
These approaches to helping our students and residents understand themselves, others and their learning better have the potential to have great impact on young lives. The worlds in which they inhabit shift and evolve rapidly yet the capacity to understand self and deal with stress with constants which will hold our young people in good stead regardless of where their lives take them beyond our care. Good luck and keep researching this new and exciting field. You may well be surprised about how much you are already doing!

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Exchange Program Expands Horizons
for St Hilda's Girls

AUTHOR
Margie McGregor
Head of Community
St Hilda's School, Gold Coast

Brogan and Keeley Press in London while on exchange at the Wellington School, Somerset UK

Visiting Africa's big game parks, riding the London Eye, shopping in the Big Apple – these are just some of the many experiences that some 54 girls from St Hilda's School will enjoy as part of this year's international exchange program.

"St Hilda's is committed to developing relationships with other schools, universities and businesses to help the school achieve its objectives for character and leadership development," said Head of School Mr Peter Crawley.

"Over the past six years we have expanded our international exchange program for Year 10 students to the point where we now have strong links with girls' schools and co-educational schools in 12 countries.

"These international links reach far and wide, bringing new insights and helping us to understand the world we live in a little better."

The exchange program also is seen as an important addition to the academic program, broadening the horizons of students and helping them to grow individuals. The opportunity to travel overseas and in return, provide a similar experience for students' host 'sisters' is keenly appreciated by St Hilda's boarders.

Mr Crawley said the school makes special provisions to enable host 'sisters' to be accommodated in the boarding school where spare beds are rarely available, however the 'juggling act' was well worth the effort.

Year 10 boarder Grace Murray, who visited South Africa recently, explains that for boarders in particular, 'exchange' is a getaway from routine and an opportunity to develop global awareness and make new friends.

"As well as a getaway, exchange was also a huge eye-opener to the different aspects of the world and how others live," said Grace. "I recommend exchange for a broader view of the world we live in; it comes with so much experience and new knowledge. I truly enjoyed my visit to South Africa."

St Hilda's School currently exchanges with schools in Argentina, Canada, Chile, England, France, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Scotland, South Africa, Switzerland and the United States of America.

Students have the opportunity to apply for exchanges and generally, will travel to their host school for between four and six weeks, forging links and friendships that will last a lifetime. The timing of visits enables host 'sisters' of boarders to attend school and live in boarding for four to five weeks, and travel to regional and rural areas of Queensland and New South Wales to meet their buddy's family and see their home environments during term holidays.

"Girls return from exchange with renewed focus, vastly greater independence and a wider view of the world," said Mr Crawley.

Exchange Program Expands Horizons
for St Hilda's Girls
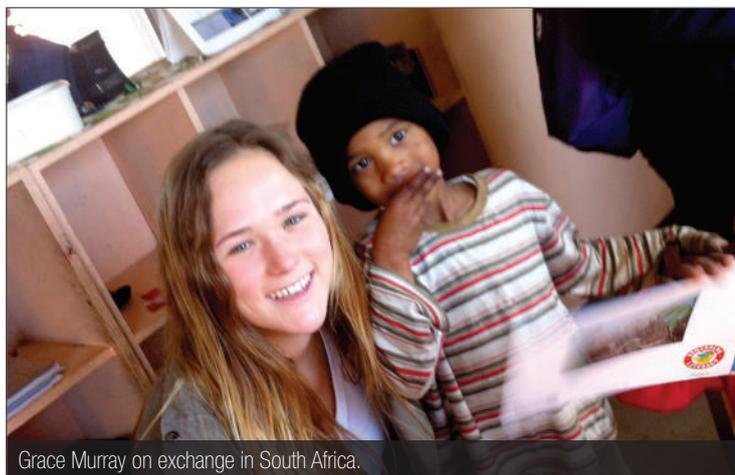
Grace Murray on exchange in South Africa.

"Visiting Africa's big game parks, riding the London Eye, shopping in the Big Apple..."
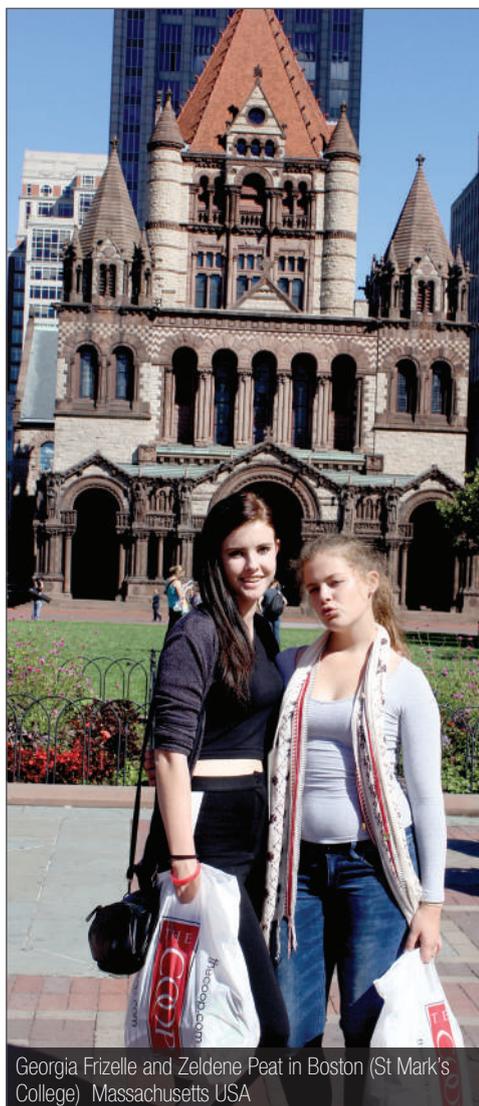
Georgia Frizelle and Zeldene Peat in Boston (St Mark's College) Massachusetts USA

Grace Murray on exchange in South Africa.

Amy Boardman and Mikela Alder with buddies while on exchange at St Paul's School for Girls, Brooklandville, Maryland USA

ICPA NSW - Stories

AUTHOR
Lucinda Stump
Speaker
ICPA NSW Conference

## "Sometimes it is almost as hard for the parents as it is for the children."

At The ICPA NSW State Conference we were entertained by Lucinda Stump as our after dinner speaker. Over coming editions we will read excerpts of her presentation.

For us parents, securing Knowledge in the North West isn't always straightforward. It was after I read this email from Jo Slacksmith about her daughter, Grace, going away to Toowoomba last year to boarding school that I had the idea of collecting a handful of stories from around our region about what it really means to be trying to educate our children when we all live in such rural and remote Australia. I'd like to read it to you now.

Dear Luc,

This morning we sat with Scott Hamilton, our agent, having a cup of coffee and discussing the details of travelling to Holbrook where our cattle are on agistment to mark the calves. He asked if we were taking our 4 cattle dogs (referring to the children knowing that they are very useful when it comes to cattle work). No, I replied, we are only taking 3, we have given one of them away.

And that is how I feel.
Jo

I might say that Grace is very happy and the Slacksmith family are adjusting to the change but I think we can all identify with that story.

Sometimes it is almost as hard for the parents as it is for the children.

This is a quote from a story I wrote in Australian Country Style back in 2005 when our own daughter was about to leave for boarding school:

I just want to press the pause button on life and keep everything exactly as it is for a couple of years until I have caught up. Our eldest daughter, Matilda, is about to go off to boarding school in Sydney and I haven't had time to collect my thoughts about it, let alone sew on name tapes. Who will I rely on to entertain the younger children and remind me that I have to bring them up properly? Who will feed the horses, drive everyone to the school bus and be responsible for the trail of belongings strewn through the house? Most importantly, who is going to part her hair and tuck her in? And who will make me laugh when she is gone?

I find that hard to read even now, nearly a decade later but sometimes it is possible to look back on that stage with a smile.

My next story is a very amusing anecdote from Jane and Wally Friend about putting their eldest daughter Harriet into boarding school at Frensham. They turned up on the appointed day, the whole family (three younger siblings) prepared, so they thought, to send Harriet off. Jane's sister, Margot was also there with her family because, coincidentally, their eldest daughter, Georgia, was also starting school. The two families were very nervous and very over dressed, in suits and dresses, naively expecting the process to require very formal attire. After depositing Harriet and her cousin Georgia, both families left in tears and, realising that they were all too emotionally exhausted to begin the long haul back to Walgett, they elected to meet at a motel along the way.

When they got there, the parents set their remaining 5 children up in the motel room with pizza and as much fizzy drink as they wanted and retired to the bar/restaurant and ordered scotch. It was an Indian restaurant and it was late and the very polite Indian maitre d was very keen to take their orders but everytime he approached their table, all four parents would dissolve into tears and order more scotch. Jane can't remember if they ate at all. What she can remember is that the next morning, when they checked out, their bar bill turned out to be greater than the accommodation charge for all 9 of them and the manager expressed his deep condolences, saying he knew how upsetting funerals could be.

Sometimes we aren't really prepared for the break. But, I hope you will agree, that by and large, we do prepare our kids well for school and more often than not, they leave home full of enthusiasm and confidence.

Take this little bloke from Collarenebri, whose mother Tracy has just kindly introduced me. His name is Will.

Will fronted up in year 5 at an open day TAS was holding near Walgett. He was introduced to the Headmaster, the Head of the Middle School and the Registrar but he was undaunted. After a short interview the Headmaster asked him if he had any questions.

"Yes" Will confidently replied, "I was just won-

dering, will there be any opportunities for overseas travel?"

Impressive. Perhaps you are more familiar with the type of little boy who the headmaster interviewed next. When invited to ask a question this particular said he didn't know if he wanted to come to TAS if it meant he couldn't go piggin!

Bush kids can seem very innocent when they hit the big smoke and, as parents, we all fear for them and how they will fit in when they go away to school. Older kids, we know, can be ruthless. When our own kids were little we had an ancient Daihatsu ute with a set of bull horns attached to the front which Matilda, as I have said, used to drive to the school bus. When we were given it the children assumed that it was a sports car, as you do when a vehicle has no roof, and they began calling it the Ferrari.

I remember being on holiday one year when our son Olly was about 6 and overhearing him explaining to a group of older, and highly sceptical, city children that his older sister, then aged 9, could drive a car and regularly transported him and his younger sister, as well as the other two children who lived on our property, to the school bus. They would not have a bar of it and tried to disprove his account by challenging him to name the make of car. Before I could intervene, he replied innocently, "It's a Ferrari."

And I have another "bush meets the larger world" story about a young boy from Boggabilla who went to Kings. His name is James Holcombe and he found himself, early in year 7, spending the weekend at one of his new mate's places near Bowral. He was being treated to a fantastic Saturday morning breakfast by this very warm and welcoming family, the mother an interior designer and Dad quite a famous artist, and there was opera playing in the background. I hope you get the picture.

"What is that music?" James asked politely.

"It's opera," replied his hosts. "It's called La Traviata. Do you like it?"

"Oh not sure about opera," replied James, "At home the only music we have in the mornings is the sound of mum emptying the mouse traps."

Maybe it's best we don't always know what goes on when our children leave home. While they are still at home, at Primary School, at least we can see them every day and keep up with what they are doing and thinking. Everything is always easier for the second or third child in the family and often it is the older children who pave the way for their young siblings.

Alys Marshall, aged 6, attempted to make the transition to Primary school as smooth as possible for her younger brother Sam. She was heard giving him this excellent piece of advice.

"If they say you can go to recess, Sam, what they are really talking about is smoko."

Her father, years earlier, had had a similar issue with terminology. One day he was being reprimanded by particularly fierce teacher at Burren who declared,

"Richard you are incorrigible."

"No", he replied, "I'm in Second class".

At the primary school stage, wet weather has traditionally meant that many of us have trouble getting our kids to school. It might be hard for us to even remember what that is like, given that Burren, for example, hasn't had any decent rain in nearly two years. But the rain will come and the poor state of our roads means that the not getting to school bit can last a lot longer than the rain.

And those of us who are not used to teaching our own kids will sometimes go to almost any lengths to get the kids back to school.

to be continued....

Shifting from Paper to Pad
with the REACH Boarding System

AUTHOR
Michael Holland
Director of Boarding
Brisbane Boys College

Our Stats for April 2014

6,415
Users

9,835
leave requests

42,818
meal notifications

78,761
student movements

103,268
communications

220,757
audit log entries

It is fair to say that we do not pursue a career in boarding for our love of administration and paperwork, however it is a crucial and time consuming part of what we do, through practical necessity and legal obligation.

As staff and managers of a school boarding house we are expected to know the whereabouts of boarders in our care and to maintain accurate records of their leave from the boarding house.

At times there may in fact be very few boarders in the building. Rather, they are spread across the campus at training, tutoring or simply at play in the gym or on the courts. They may be off campus at a local sporting club or visiting relatives overnight.

The task of tracking the movements of even a modest number of boarders is a monumental one so finding a tool that has so simplified the need for knowledge and administration has for me been a hallelujah moment. It is dramatically changing the way I work, vastly improving my efficiency and strengthening our risk management at school.

I first met Steven Montgomery from REACH when I was the Director of Boarding at Guildford Grammar School, in Perth. He came to show me a rugby stats mobile app that he had which could assist me as First XV coach. The meeting was constantly interrupted by phone calls from parents and boarding staff. In hindsight I should have known better than to schedule a meeting for a Friday afternoon when boarders are frantically making, and often changing, plans for the weekend.

When Steven revealed he and his team had developed some applications for schools, we discussed the possibility of creating a product which could simplify the entire leave process. Essentially, I wanted an easy way to approve a leave request and notify all parties, parents, the boarder and staff with the push of a button.

I provided Steven with a list of requirements and REACH rapidly evolved into much more than just a leave management system with the addition of attendance tracking, pastoral care, notifications, student tracking and an audit trail which tracks absolutely everything.

The school administration, boarding staff and parents at Guildford Grammar were very enthusiastic about piloting the use of the REACH and the boarders were very excited about the new electronic system.

Having relocated to Brisbane Boys' College in January 2014 to take up the role of Director of Boarding, I immediately wanted to know how the leave system operated. Like many boarding schools, BBC was running a simple system where parents made requests which were collated at the end of the week. A spreadsheet was printed on Friday afternoon and boys would sign out with staff on duty.

Whilst adequate, this system is challenged when late requests come in or when the leave approver is not bound to the desk over the weekend. In addition, it is not always easy to communicate a boarder's leave arrangements to relevant boarding staff and to maintain adequate records.

Shifting from Paper to Pad
with the REACH Boarding System

"The IT department was a potential obstacle."

It was easy to convince the Headmaster of the benefits of REACH in terms of obtaining parental permission for leave, approving the leave, tracking student movement out of and back into the boarding house and then maintaining accurate, searchable records. He immediately recognised the efficiency of the system and the important role that it will play in minimising risk.

Boarding staff were equally excited about a 'dashboard' from which all leave functions can be managed. They no longer have to call the Director of Boarding at the insistence of a boarder to check if an email granting permission for leave has been sent. If a request has been lodged, it is visible on the dashboard. If it has been approved, the boarder's status is automatically updated, as is their attendance list.

Rather than thumb through pages of a diary, pastoral notes can be easily accessed and searchable. Boarding staff also have easy access to contact details of the boarder, parents and hosts and the dashboard even alerts staff when a boarder is late returning from leave.

The IT department was a potential obstacle. Understandably, they required the system to be secure and compatible with existing software at the College. Data sovereignty was a primary concern because ensuring the security of parent, host and boarder data is so critical. The fact that REACH stores all data securely in Australia and not overseas en-

sured compliance with our data security requirements.

BBC utilises TASS for its electronic administration and our IT department were also pleased to know that REACH will connect directly to it via API (an acronym for the tech savvy) ensuring that each time a boarder's contact details are updated in TASS, they will be automatically updated in REACH.

Ultimately, it has not been difficult to convince the Headmaster, boarding staff, IT and the Business Manager of the value that REACH will provide to the school.

What began as an a wildly interrupted meeting about taking rugby statistics on my iPad has resulted in a comprehensive system which has completely changed the way I manage my boarding house. REACH provides simplicity, efficiency, rapid access to critical information and vastly improved risk management. I believe REACH is setting a new benchmark for best practice for managing school boarding activities and I would encourage all Heads of Boarding to consider this product.

See a short video on how Guildford Grammar use REACH www.reachboarding.com/ggs

All ABSA members are entitled to a free private demo portal on REACH where you can assess and trial the system at no cost with your own live data.
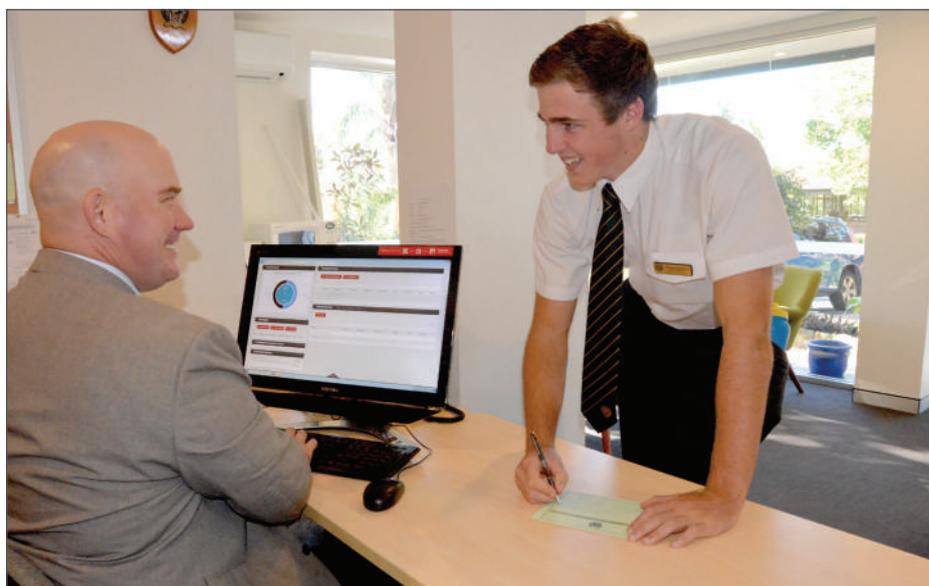
ABSA AWARDS
FOR BOARDING SCHOOLS AND STAFF

The Premier Leadership Award

Principals of Boarding Schools are asked to nominate someone from their school who has made an extraordinary contribution to the excellence, advancement and success of boarding schools, both current and in the past. We are looking for a person showing passion for their work, has achieved something special for their Boarding House or has made a remarkable contribution to the Boarding School Industry.

This is a prestigious award given to one person every second year at the ABSA National Conference dinner.

Nominate a person for this award at: http://www.boarding.org.au/1930/ourcommunity/absa-premier-leadership-award-nomination/

The ABSA Premier Leadership Award

Congratulations to Dave Scott from Scotch College, Adelaide, the 2012 recipient of the ABSA Premier Leadership Award

Dave's remarkable physical feat to support Indigenous Boarders in the Yalari organisation is unsurpassed. He has devoted one year of his life to prepare for his 7 marathons in 7 days in 7 cities around Australia - all for a boarding cause. This selfless act should be recognised by all working in Boarding. Furthermore he has transformed single sex boarding at Scotch College, Adelaide into a real co-educational experience with boys and girls living harmoniously under the same roof. He had to lead from the front to do this and his systems and processes are a model to all. He has revolutionized communication within the boarding community and it is a good model for others.

NOMINATE TODAY!

The ABSA Most Innovative Idea in a Boarding School

Congratulations to Scotch College, Perth, the 2012 recipient of the ABSA Most Innovative Idea in a Boarding School

The Bibbulmun Track is an arduous trek that the boys commence in Year 8; many are overwhelmed with the experience as they come to terms with a foreign environment and are forced to rely on themselves and their peers in order to get through each leg of the journey.

However, it is not long until they discover the virtues of such an experience as the group of boys forge friendships and bonds that will last the next five years and beyond. As they grow and mature with each successive section of the track, the boys develop a better sense of mateship and team spirit as they discover the importance of considering others and that life is very much about helping and relying on each other.

The expeditions, from Year 8 to Year 12, form an integral part of each boy's emotional, physical and intellectual development, which makes the journey all the more remarkable for its ability to capture the essence of the adolescent journey. Boys walk approximately 200 kilometres a year in two one-week blocks each year. Each stage gives the opportunity for boys to develop new personal and interpersonal skills.

Most Innovative Idea in a Boarding School

This award recognises a person or a school who has stepped out of the norm to achieve something exciting in their school. We are looking for people or projects which really support the ethos of the boarding school, and provides the boarders and/or the staff with an excellent standard of service. This is also a prestigious award given to one person or one school every second year at the ABSA National Conference dinner.

Nominate people or schools for these awards at: http://www.boarding.org.au/ 1931/our-community/most-innovative-idea-nomination/

The awards are judged by a sub-committee of the Board of Directors of ABSA, and will be presented at the ABSA Conference Dinner on Tuesday 30 September 2014.
Nominations close Friday 1 August 2014.

Boarding School Staff Entitled
to Safety at Work

AUTHOR
Andrew Knott
Special Counsel
Tresscox Lawyers

A decision of the District Court of New South Wales delivered on 17 April is a reminder that persons working in schools and in boarding houses are entitled to protection against a real risk of injury or accident. The obligations imposed on employers (and others) can arise from statutory regime such as workplace health and safety legislation or from the common law, that is, the general principle that in those areas recognized by the law the duty of persons is to take reasonable steps to minimise the risk of foreseeable injury to others. Although this case involved a school, the principles are equally applicable to the boarding house situation. Indeed, given that boarding house staff are present for long hours, many resident in the boarding house facilities, and given the wide range of activities occurring in boarding houses, the duties imposed on employers (and others) and the rights of staff are very considerable.

This case arose out of an incident in a Government school conducted by the NSW Department of Education & Communities in south western Sydney.

A teacher was injured as discussed below, by an 8 year old student who was a refugee from East Africa. He had been traumatised before his enrolment in the school. He had a history of severe behaviour problems in respect of which there was substantial school documentation and there had been attempts at remediation and disciplinary action by the school authorities. Of particular significance, he had a significant history of displaying aggression and violence towards others.

The teacher in question was called to intervene in a playground altercation in which the student was behaving aggressively including using a stick to assault other students. After dealing with the altercation, the plaintiff teacher led the student gently by the hand to the office of the school Principal in accordance with applicable school procedures. However, on the way to the Principal's office which is located off a corridor in the administration building of the school, unexpectedly so far as the plaintiff teacher was concerned, the student propped and braced himself in a doorway in the corridor with his free hand and with his feet and then violently pulled the plaintiff backwards with some force. This caused her to fall and she sustained serious injuries which, in effect, eventually brought an end to her career. Ultimately, she recovered damages of approximately $689,000 of which $161,900 was for past economic loss and $425,000 for future economic loss, the balance primarily being for past and future superannuation loss. (Many of her medical expenses had been covered by workers compensation). This school certainly faced a difficult situation with this student. It is, of course, well known that it can be very challenging in school environments to both 'support' the student and at the same time protect the staff and other students. Nonetheless, it was held that in this case negligence was established, the principal grounds being as discussed below.

The judge had little difficulty in determining that a reasonable person in the position of the defendant employer would have foreseen the risk of injury. Turning to the question of what might have been done which was not done, the following were of particular significance:

• 'Nothing of significance was done to address the risks that were actually identified' at the time of an earlier risk assessment.
• 'The filing of student records at the school appeared to be deficient so that the records were not well coordinated and amenable to ready review to determine whether a pattern of behaviour was emerging that required a protective response'.
• 'The response to the risk assessment was to put the problem off, and seek more support for (the student)' but 'that did not address his uncontrolled behaviour'.
• 'The response of the school lacked immediacy for such a serious problem where students and staff remained at risk of serious injury in circumstances where the slightest trigger could precipitate the behaviours in question'.
• There are interesting observations on the issue of whether this student should have been removed from 'a mainstream school'. That, of course, is always a very 'big call' to make but the judge certainly was of the view that the circumstances here made that appropriate.

Accordingly, negligence was established and the damages were assessed as set out above.

> "This case arose out of an incident in a Government school conducted by the NSW Department of Education & Communities in south western Sydney"

The case is a reminder of the importance of ensuring that assessments are not only made but acted upon, and also that documented information is distributed to all of the persons in the school (or boarding house) where that is necessary in relation to the discharge of the duty of care. Obviously, confidentiality and sensitivity are appropriate to the extent consistent with the protection of staff and students.

Given the broad range of risks in boarding houses, this case is a reminder of the need to review systems and attitudes and practices to ensure that risks are minimised. They cannot be eliminated but there is a duty to take the steps which can be taken.

The case does repay close reading, particularly by those charged with designing and administering systems of safety. The case is Sticker v NSW Department of Education & Communities (17 April 2014) and is accessible on the free web site Austlii.

A Word from the Chairman

AUTHOR
Garth Wynne
Chairman
Australian Boarding Schools Association

It seems incredible that I write to you at the change of season. That means that we are all in second term and approaching the end of the first half of the year! It is amazing how time seems to escape us and good intentions evaporate into the cut and thrust of normal school days.

This reality can be especially so in boarding houses where so much unplanned interruption is what we come to expect. It is, however, also the most over-used and unacceptable excuse for not achieving that which was intended at the beginning of the year. To shift the locus of control of what we do and don't achieve as individuals (or indeed as a part of a team) to things 'beyond our control', is simply not good enough. Purposeful planning of time and the rigour that is required to protect that which is important to us is one of the most fundamental skills that effective leaders must master. To prioritise and then execute with discipline is what we expect of others (often students) and yet we don't always lead by example.

One of the ways that I try to help myself in this, is to concentrate on my circle of influence, rather than my circle of concern. This framing comes from the leadership guru, Dr Stephen Covey of '7 Habits' fame, and is one of the most significant pieces of leadership learning that has ever crossed my desk. I have found that if I focus on that which is in my area of responsibility (and let others do the same), it's quite amazing just how much time seems to become available!

I do wish all within our membership well for the winter months ahead and encourage you to consider 'warming up' on the Gold Coast at our national conference in September.

"Purposeful planning of time…"

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BOARDING
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Tasmanian State Seminar

28 September - 1 October 2014
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Gold Coast, Queensland

Duty of Care Workshops
Check out www.boarding.org.au for details

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The Independent School Conference on Law & Policy
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Solihull

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Would You Like Your Boarding School Featured in Lights Out?

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

Send all files to:
absa@boarding.org.au
by 1 August 2014.