



lightsout

AUSTRALIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION LTD.

Issue 02 | May 2008

Vol. 01 | Quarterly Newsletter



DEVELOPING EXCELLENCE FOR BUSY PROFESSIONALS

As busy professionals it's often hard to carve out the time we need to continually strive for and develop excellence. Here are some tips for creating excellence within a busy schedule.

Pg 6

TIP SHEET: How To Get More Time To Spend With Your Family

With the state of busyness being the catchcry of today's modern family, the theme for National Families Week 2007 from 13 - 19 May focuses on Families Investing In Time Together.

Pg 12

MANAGING WORD OF MOUTH

Every school has a reputation - good or bad. And every day, a hidden, unsystematic network of talk is either eroding or building your reputation.

Pg 21



Developing Excellence

Excellence is the state or quality of excelling. It is the superiority, or state of being good to a high degree. Excellence is considered to be a value by many organisations, in particular by schools and other institutions of education, and a goal to be pursued.

Excellence is a quality we all strive for in our work, and this year's conference is themed to give all staff working in boarding the chance to develop their skills and understanding of their profession.

The theme for this year's conference is a reminder to us all that for staff and students alike the experiences of the Boarding Community don't start and end with a school calendar, but continue on throughout our lives. We trust that you will be encouraged and challenged by the various speakers and workshops on offer.

The conference is to be held at Hotel Realm, Canberra's newest five star hotel. At Hotel Realm you find yourself surrounded by the nation's cultural icons including the National Gallery of Australia, National Library of

Australia and Old Parliament House. Lake Burley Griffin is just a short stroll away and you will also want to discover the many restaurants, bars and cafes of Canberra's most popular villages Manuka and Kingston. Canberra was chosen as the perfect place to launch the new organisation, showing the truly national focus for the work we will be doing. It provides excellent opportunities for partners and families to enjoy the sights of Canberra, and falls during Australia's premier spring festival, Floriade.

We look forward to seeing you at our first Australian Boarding Conference organised by the Australian Boarding Schools Associations Ltd.

Check out www.boarding.org.au for details.



2008 ABSA Conference

CONTENTS

ABSA Comes of Age	02
Applying the Science of Positive Psychology in Schools	03
Become a World Expert on Your Students	04
Developing Excellence for Busy Professionals	06
Groundbreaking Findings on The State of Student Social and Emotional Health	08
Society's Got the Speed Wobbles, and How to Fix It	10
Tip Sheet: How to Get More Time to Spend With Your Family	12
This Reflective Light	14
New Zealand Boarding Schools Association Conference 2008	15
A Brief History of Boarding Emotional Intelligence	17
Looking After Rowers in the Boarding House	18
Listen Like My iPod	20
Managing Word of Mouth	21
Reflection	22
Everything Educational at the 2008 Education Expo™	23
Coming Events	24

good representation of all the main sectors of boarding within Australia. The current board is made up of outstanding colleagues and I pay particular tribute to Pauline Turner for her professionalism and support as Acting Chairman whilst I have been away on study leave. The Board has representatives from AHISA, a good geographical spread from various states and territories, and an appropriate mix of heads and staff from junior and senior boarding schools.

ABSA Comes of Age

By Dr Tim Hawkes
Chairman



It is a particular pleasure to report that the Australian Boarding Schools Association (ABSA) has made a strong start as the peak body looking after the interests of Australian boarding schools. A constitution has been established, Executive put in place, Governing Board assembled, and an exciting vision for the future developed.

Richard Stokes as our Executive Director has been indefatigable in the exercise of the necessary tasks associated with merging the Australian Boarding Staff Association with the Australian Residential Schools Association to form ABSA. Herein lies one of the great strengths of ABSA, for it offers Australia a boarding organisation which covers both boarding staff and heads of boarding schools. Thus, governments and management are represented. Employers and employees, and policy and practice all find accommodation within ABSA. This is the first time we have managed this union and it brings Australia into line with the other great boarding school associations around the world.

The Governing Board of ABSA is organic and will evolve further in order to ensure

their regional gathering in the years not offering a national gathering. In relation to this matter, plans for the first National ABSA Conference to be held from Sunday 28 September to Wednesday 1 October 2008 at Hotel Realm, 18 National Circuit, Barton, ACT 2600 are well underway. Details of this conference are shared elsewhere, but it is appropriate to report that the conference, to be held in our nation's capital, offers some outstanding keynote speakers and workshop presenters. Do make sure you have representatives from your school at the conference.

With the formation of ABSA, I believe Australian boarding has come of age. To have the political influence necessary to shape national boarding policy, we need heads of schools and representatives from the relevant educational organisations. To have the practical insight necessary to keep professional development relevant and helpful, we need gifted boarding staff. ABSA is blessed with both input and as such is able to represent the interests of boarding schools and boarding hostels in Australia particularly well.

Running a national secretariat is never cheap and represents yet another cost for schools. However, our membership fees have been kept to a minimum, particularly when compared to like organisations in other countries. No great or worthy endeavour is arrived at cheaply. ABSA aims to provide a quality service for its members and this service will not be compromised by cost.

Most leading boarding schools are now members of ABSA and several others are "in the pipeline". With discounts on conference fees, professional services, access to training initiatives and a voice given in the formation of national boarding policy, heads have recognised the economic as well as professional benefits of ABSA membership.

I close by expressing my warm appreciation to the many colleagues who have encouraged ABSA in its formation. In a world all too often characterised by negativity and criticism, to have had the encouragement of so many colleagues in the formation of ABSA has been heart-warming.

Dr Tim Hawkes
Chairman
May 2008



Applying the Science of Positive Psychology in Schools

By Prof. Timothy Sharp



Prof. Timothy Sharp is the Wednesday keynote speaker at our conference – he writes here on one of his favourite subjects.

There are few professions that could be considered more important than that of teaching. At the risk of sounding clichéd, teachers are largely responsible for developing our children, our future generations. Accordingly, I'd argue that there is little if anything that's more important than ensuring that our children are encouraged and invited to experience positive emotions. Learning facts is indubitably important but learning skills for life is invaluable.

Why? Because happy children learn better; they are more resilient; happy children relate to and collaborate better with others; happy children are healthier and ultimately, more successful. Happy children will surely lead to a happier and more positive future.

The good news is that the rapidly developing science of positive psychology has generated much in the way of effective tools and strategies for boosting the health and wellbeing of our children (and, for that matter, ourselves). By applying these proven strategies in an appropriate way we can effectively improve the lives of many, many people which will also improve the lives of those with whom they live.

At The Happiness Institute our philosophy is that happiness is something you choose and that choosing happiness for yourself is a crucial first step in helping your students choose happiness. Children (largely) learn by observation so if teachers model happiness relevant behaviours, students will learn and begin to utilise these same behaviours.

To what behaviours am I referring? Well, these will be described in more detail during my conference presentation in October but in short, they include the following:

- the ability to be clear about, and to stay focused on what's important.
- living a healthy life.
- remaining optimistic (even in the face of adversity).
- respecting and relating positively to others.
- focusing on and fully utilising inner strengths.
- having fun and enjoying the present moment.

So how do you apply all this as a teacher? To begin with, as noted above, the most important thing you can do is to be happy yourself. By modelling these behaviours and strategies for your students you'll be helping them indirectly learn the benefits for themselves.

In addition, it's vitally important to ensure the majority of the interactions with your pupils are positive (research suggests the ratio of positive to negative interactions should be at least 5:1). Positive reinforcement is far more effective than punishment so "shine the light on what's right" and help your students gain confidence in areas in which they're good.

Dr. Sharp has three degrees in psychology (including a Ph.D.) and an impressive record as an academic, clinician and coach. He runs one of Sydney's largest clinical psychology practices, a highly

regarded Executive Coaching practice, and is the founder & CHO (Chief Happiness Officer) of The Happiness Institute, Australia's first organisation devoted solely to enhancing happiness in individuals, families and organisations. Visit: www.thehappinessinstitute.com

So how do you apply all this as a teacher? To begin with, as noted above, the most important thing you can do is to be happy yourself.

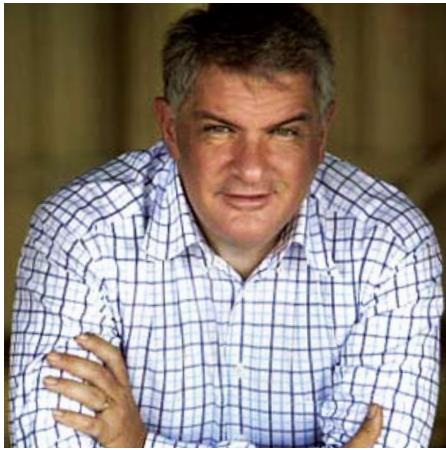
He's taught at all the major universities in NSW and is currently a Clinical Lecturer at the University of Sydney (Clinical Psychology Unit) and an Adjunct Professor (in Positive Psychology) within the School of Management, Faculty of Business at UTS. Dr. Sharp is also a best selling author (of, among other things, "The Happiness Handbook"), a sought after public speaker, and he makes frequent appearances in the local and international media including being read and heard by millions of people every week in a syndicated newspaper column and radio spot. Visit: www.drhappy.com.au



Dr Timothy J. Sharp, founder of The Happiness Institute in September, 2003. Dr. Sharp (also known as Dr Happy) is a well-known, highly regarded clinical and coaching psychologist who has helped thousands of people overcome problems such as depression, anxiety, stress, insomnia and relationship difficulties.

Become a **World Expert** on Your Students

By Michael-Carr Gregg



'Suicide like a great work of art, is prepared in the silence of the heart.'
Albert Camus

Despite the media speculation, the sad truth is that, as Camus observed, no one will ever know precisely what really lay behind the deaths of Stephanie Gestier and Jodie Gater as they strolled into the Dandenong Ranges in April this year. Despite, media speculation focusing on teenage subcultures, social networking sites on the internet and even a rare syndrome of psychosis (folie a deux) – the fact is that suicide is a behavioural outcome, it is a process in which social, psychological, neurobiological and cultural variables all contribute to produce the end result. The problem for those left behind in their agonizing questioning is that these contributing factors carry unequal weight and no single factor has been demonstrated to be necessary or sufficient to cause suicide.

As Dr Michael Dudley one of Australia's leading suicide prevention experts said, "...The prediction of suicides is impossible, even if high risk populations are considered, since the risk factors listed are overly sensitive and non specific. What we do know is that many young people who end their life do suffer from depression and that while not all depressed kids kill themselves, it is an important risk factor and if anything positive is to come from this seemingly senseless waste of young life it is to heed the message

of Beyondblue and its chairperson Jeff Kennett - that undiagnosed, untreated depression can kill and that all parents need to know what the risk factors are and what depression in young people actually looks like.

While most young people learn over time how to deal with the slings and arrows that life can throw at them some young people don't have good coping skills and will be more vulnerable to life stress. Research suggests that there are factors that may make a young person more vulnerable to suicide risk, such as the loss of an important person through death or separation, the recent suicide of a friend or relative, breaking up with a girlfriend or boyfriend, trouble with school or the police, feared or confirmed pregnancy, being a victim of sexual or other abuse (now or in the past) and family conflict or domestic violence. Many young people may, as part of their adolescent development, push the limits at home; isolate themselves from family members and experiment with risky behaviour. Some families need help to identify which behaviours are associated with an illness like depression and which behaviours are part of their teenager's personality. Although it is not possible to prevent every suicide, knowing about some of the warning signs may help people intervene sooner. One in

five young people experience depression and the good news is that it is treatable, but first it must be recognised.

These include expressing feelings of hopelessness, a drop in their standard of school work and attendance, painting, drawing or writing about death or suicide, giving away personal possessions, talking about death and suicide, such as "I wish I was dead", "no one cares if I live or die", "does it hurt to die?", feeling worthless or letting parents or others down, withdrawing from friends and a sudden bout of cheerfulness after a long period of sadness or anger. This last factor is critical. Having made a decision (i.e. to die) they may feel as though they can now stop worrying about their problems. If you see these problems present for more than two weeks continuously then see a GP and have your son or daughter assessed. Early intervention and prompt treatment is associated with a much better outcome.

The aim for boarding staff is to become the world expert on your students. Knowing where they are, who they are with, what they are doing and watching for any tell tale signs is crucial along with setting firm but fair limits and boundaries and ensuring that they feel safe, valued and listened to. The second message to come out of this tragedy is that caregivers take an interest in





what students do online and should monitor and supervise not just what is downloaded but also what is uploaded. Since the arrival and rapid dissemination of digital technology in the last decades of the 20th century everything has changed.

This is the first generation in human history born with 24/7 access to literally anyone and anything. Having 'bubble-wrapped' our kids and 'bunkered' them down safely in the family home many parents find comfort in knowing where they are, thinking they are cocooned in their rooms - but they're not really there at all – they are busy exploring an entirely new world, wandering its streets, learning its languages and customs. At a time when identity is the central issue in their whole psychological development, they're out in a world where identity means nothing. A world where things are not always what they seem.

To ensure their safety, all boarding schools should have a cybersafety policy which governs what young people do and say online. While filters play a role, the best possible filter is the one between the young peoples' ears, together with constant monitoring and supervision. The deaths of Stephanie Gestier and Jodie Gater remind

us that what kids write on their Myspace profile can be barometers of their mood and mental states and that we ignore it at our peril. But their story not only illustrates the close connection between depression, self-harm and suicidal ideas, but also the dangerous cocktail that can result when marginalised young people at risk of suicide come into contact and, as she says, "feed on each other's sadness and frustration".

The phenomenon of copycat suicide was first recognised with the 1774 publication of Goethe's novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, presented as a collection of letters written by Werther, a young artist who eventually kills himself over his unrequited love for Lotte. It led to the first known examples of copycat suicide, with an estimated 2000 readers killing themselves. A more modern example was seen in Japan in 1986, when 18-year-old pop star Yukiko Okada jumped to her death. Her death resulted in many copycat suicides and she went into psychological history by having a syndrome named after her: the Yukiko Syndrome. Boarding staff must be aware that social networking sites such as MySpace and chat sites such as Windows Messenger may significantly increase the risk of such suicides.

While it is important not to demonise the net, the clear message to emerge from April's sadness is that the internet is a powerful new medium that can act as a virtual petri dish for the suicide virus. Someone once said, "Pray to God - but row for the shore" and as far as kids online are concerned, active monitoring and supervision is crucial because, as the friends and relatives of Stephanie and Jodie now know, there is no second chance.

The aim for boarding staff... setting firm but fair limits and boundaries and ensuring that they feel safe, valued and listened to.

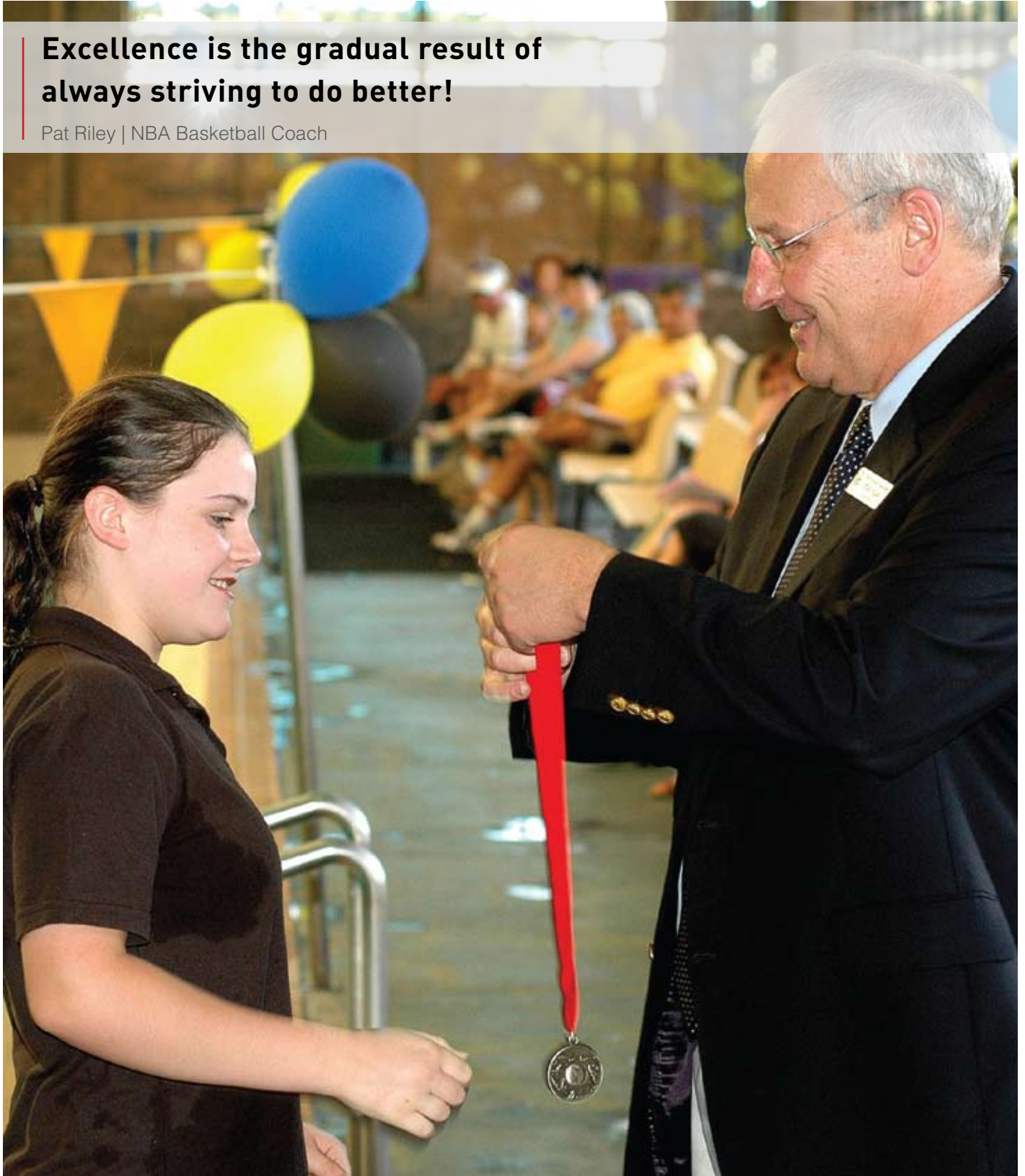
Dr Michael Carr-Gregg is an adolescent psychologist at Albert Road Centre for Health in Melbourne. He is also the Agony Uncle for Girlfriend Magazine and honorary psychologist for ABSA.

lightsout

Developing **Excellence** for Busy Professionals

**Excellence is the gradual result of
always striving to do better!**

Pat Riley | NBA Basketball Coach





Developing excellence is a gradual process - it does not happen overnight. Success happens as the result of continually striving to do better and be better. But as busy professionals it's often hard to carve out the time we need to continually strive for and develop excellence.

Below are some tips for creating excellence within a busy schedule.

Tips for Developing Excellence For Busy Professionals

Take Five

Take five minutes every morning before you get out of bed to read something positive. Starting your day in an excellent frame of mind will help you to create excellence throughout the day.

Listen

Listen to CD's or tapes in the car that will inspire you to develop excellence and strive to do your best. Also listen to things that will increase your knowledge and professional expertise.

Take Time Off

We can not be our best if we are constantly racing from one event to the next. We need down time in order to be creative and develop as excellent professionals.

Hang With Success

Surround yourself with people who desire excellence and continually strive to be their best. By hanging with excellent people we learn and grow.

Read

Read books that will help you become a better manager, employee or person. There are so many tools available to those who truly desire excellence as a way of life.

Ask For Help

Excellent people desire to help others. Ask others for help in your journey towards excellence. And be willing to help others.

Laugh

Laughter is important and healthy. It helps release stress and worry. Include laughter in your daily life.

Make Excellence A Habit

Make a commitment to do something each day to strive towards excellence. By adopting any one of these tips for six weeks or more, you will have created a new habit. As you go about your day today – remember to take time to strive towards excellence!

Develop Excellence ~ Join A Professional Association

I was asked to write an article for one of the associations that I serve on the board for this month. As I thought about why I'm a member both at the national and local levels and what I get out of my membership – I once again saw the value of being a part of a professional association. The benefits have been huge. I have grown as a leader, developed a larger network and I have applied new knowledge to my business practices.

When I moved to Maine a year ago, I had no business contacts in this area. I simply had a dream to live in Maine and I made the move. It was exciting and scary all at the same time. Before I even made the move, I knew I would need to get connected into the business community as soon as possible. I made a very purposeful plan for networking and joined a few local associations right away. These early connections helped me to not only meet people here but grew my business as well.

There are many benefits to being a part of a professional association. The top three benefits for me are networking, skill building and volunteering within my field. I love being with a group of people who are committed to excellence and who share the same professional interests. Yet simply joining a group will not bring results – you need to get involved to get the most benefit.

Here are some excellent reasons for getting involved in a professional association:

Professional Development

By getting involved with a professional association you will grow as a business leader if you choose to do so. There is valuable information to be gained both personally and professionally.

Professional Education

If you applied everything you learned each month at association events – you'd be a very wealthy person and you'd have more

business than you could handle. When you are a part of an association in your field you have one more way to acquire knowledge and become an expert in your field.

Professional Resource

Associations offer many resources to their members. These resources can be anything from journals, websites, member lists or newsletters. The information an association distributes to its members often contains up-to-date information on issues and developments in your field, introduces you to the “movers and shakers” in your field and offers information about upcoming conferences and professional development opportunities.

Career Resource

Many professional associations offer a job posting or career search benefit. If you are looking for a new position in a particular field, try attending one of their professional association meetings. I have witnessed people finding jobs this way numerous times.

Resume Builder

Professional membership is an excellent addition to your resume. There are few better ways to show your serious commitment to the field. Local chapters of associations often sponsor programs, maintain alumni networks and provide valuable member advantages.

Volunteer Opportunity

Being involved in local associations is a great way to volunteer your time in your field. And the benefit to volunteering is that you get more out of your membership.

As you think about your vision for yourself as a professional, consider joining and getting involved in a local association in your field. The time and energy spent will definitely pay off. I'm amazed by how quickly I've connected to the business community in Maine and how my business has grown in this area. Being a part of associations keeps me developing excellence in my work.

Articles taken with permission from the Not For Profit Network E-Zine, February 2008.

Groundbreaking Findings On the State of Student **Social** and **Emotional** Health

The results of one of the most extensive research projects ever undertaken into the social and emotional health of Australian students have been released today.

Based on a survey of more than 10,000 students from 81 schools across Australia and spanning 13 years of schooling from Prep through to Year 12, The ASG Student Social and Emotional Health Report, commissioned and funded by the Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) reveals that a large percentage of students are experiencing social and emotional difficulties.

The ASG Student Social and Emotional Health Report reveals new insights into social and emotional health and shows:

- Four in 10 students worry too much.
- Three in 10 students are very nervous/stressed.
- Two in 10 students have felt very hopeless and depressed for a week and have stopped regular activities.
- A third of students lose their temper a lot and are sometimes quite mean to others (bully).
- Two-thirds of students are not doing as well in their schoolwork as they could.
- Four in 10 students have difficulty calming down (poor resilience).

The ASG Student Social and Emotional Health Report is the culmination of six years of development and research of its lead author, Professor Michael E Bernard, Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne, in collaboration with Andrew Stephanou and Daniel Urbach from the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER).

ASG's Managing Director, Mr Terry O'Connell said the ASG Student Social and Emotional Health Report makes a valuable contribution to the expansion of collective knowledge on the topic of student social

and emotional health and shows the critical importance of parents, teachers and members of the community in affecting and changing student social and emotional health.

"We know that the years of schooling, in particular the early childhood years are of critical importance to the development of our young people," he said.

"Statistics show that there are large numbers of young people not being fully engaged in education or in work, and the ramifications of unfulfilled education potential can be seen at the individual, family, community and national levels.

"Children and young people with higher levels of social and emotional health are more likely to successfully meet the physical, intellectual and social changes required through childhood and adolescence and ASG had funded the Report as part of its ongoing commitment to supporting children's education," Mr O'Connell said.

Between 2003 and 2007, both students and teachers at different year levels in 81 schools across Australia completed the ACER Social and Emotional Well-Being Surveys. Lead author of the Report, Professor Bernard said the research has successfully defined student social and emotional well-being/health as well as has identified the characteristics that make-up the student social and emotional well-being of young people. (Throughout the Report, the authors use the term "social and emotional well-being" as a synonym for the term "social and emotional health".)

"There are two distinct dimensions of student social and emotional well-being - positive and negative," Professor Bernard said. "And we have determined from this research that the level of a student's social and emotional well-being is influenced by the student's internal social-emotional characteristics such as resilience, learning

capabilities and social skills and values as well as their environment (school, home and community).

Professor Bernard notes in ASG's Student Social and Emotional Health Report that "for the first time, we are able to describe student social and emotional health in terms of six levels ranging from very low to very high levels.

"Students who are at the lowest or very low levels have the greatest need as they display large numbers of behavioural and emotional difficulties and the relative absence of positive emotions and behaviours.

"These students show delays in their resilience, positive social orientation and positive work orientation. They also perceive relatively few positive connections to positive adults, peers and youth-oriented programs in their homes, schools and communities. In the research sample studied, approximately 40% of students could be described as displaying lower levels of social and emotional well-being," he said.

The interaction of children within their community can positively impact on social and emotional health.

Professor Bernard

"One of the many benefits of the findings is that we know what a young person with strong social and emotional health looks like - and we can put in place the support mechanisms needed to help improve student social and emotional health," Professor Bernard said.



“However; different childhood problems such as bullying, getting into trouble, stress, feeling down, and under-achievement at school are displayed across all levels of student social and emotional well-being - not just at lower levels.

“When students perceive the relative absence of positive parenting actions, they are likely to display lower levels of social and emotional health,” he said, “talking about children’s feelings and how to cope with them is the parental action that contributes most to children’s well-being.”

“Teachers’ behaviour has a direct correlation to student social and emotional health. Students with lower levels of well-being feel their teachers don’t demonstrate the positive actions that the research shows contribute to student success and well-being.

“From the perspective of the teacher, the ability to manage a student’s emotions and help them to calm-down contributes most to high levels of social and emotional health,” Professor Bernard explained. Other key findings from the research show: Social and emotional health decreases from primary to secondary school.

- Girls display significantly higher levels of social and emotional health than boys. Boys rate higher in getting into trouble a lot and not being able to follow rules while girls rate higher in helping classmates who seem unhappy and finding someone to talk with to calm down.

- Consistent differences are found in the ways that students view their social and emotional health in comparison with teachers’ perceptions. Teachers may be unaware of the extent of the emotional difficulties of students such as stress and anger.

- Unexpectedly, the ability to ‘achieve to potential in schoolwork’ and ‘being confident and persistent in schoolwork’ contributes a great deal to student social and emotional health.

- The interaction of children within their community can positively impact on social and emotional health.

- Students from the highest 10% socio-economic level rated significantly higher in their level of social and emotional health than students from the lowest 25% socio-economic level.

Professor Bernard indicates that the results provide a “call for action.” The ASG Student Social and Emotional Health Report recommends a number of critical actions parents can take at home and teachers can take at school to support the social and emotional health of all students.

Mr O’Connell said the findings would provide valuable insights for parents, educators and the community. “A series of nine recommendations is outlined in this report that addresses policies, programs and practices for improving the social and emotional health of all students,” he said.

The complete ASG Student Social and Emotional Health Report, along with a number of additional resources, including summaries and images is available for download from ASG’s website at: www.asg.com.au/socialemotional or can be requested by telephoning ASG’s Corporate Communications on (03) 9276 7775.

Society's Got the Speed Wobbles, and **How to Fix It**

By Robyn Pearce



A year or so back I had the privilege of speaking to 100 Adventist School Principals from all around the Pacific.

As I listened to Barry, one of the first speakers, say 'Neglect yourself emotionally and you become toxic', I had to agree. It led neatly to one of the topics I was about to speak to them about - what I call Sanity Gaps - the piece that's missing from the lives of people who burn out (and that used to be me in years gone by, which is why I'm so passionate about the whole subject of time choices.)

In preparation for my session with the principals, just north of Brisbane, I'd re-read a great book, and I highly recommend it - Stephan Rechtschaffen's 'Time Shifting', Rider, 1996. Stephan talks a lot about the rhythm of society and how we have to break

the 'entrainment' of everyday happenings in order to reconnect with ourselves, to give our neurology time to process and integrate information, and to allow our spirit space to flourish.

Something said by a lady in a public course in Auckland the week before also framed this.

Wistfully she'd said, 'When the children were at home we were busy, but we seemed to have time to enjoy life. Now they're gone, there's only my husband and I at home, we've got all the mod cons that are supposed to save time, and yet we feel as if we never catch up - there's just too much to do and not enough hours in which to do it. Why is that?'

It seems to me that society's got the speed wobbles, and each of us has a responsibility to not allow it to happen, at least to ourselves.

And as we take control of our own situation, that in turn has a ripple effect on society. Each action means something on the wider platform of life.

Here are six strategies I shared with my Adventist friends. If you're feeling that life has become too fast for you, you might also like to try them.

1. Be Present In The Moment

Mindful attention lets life pour in. Develop true awareness of what's going on around you, instead of always thinking about the past and worrying about the future (even a future of the next 30 minutes). Empty yourself of busyness. Take a minute and just look deeply at a flower, a tree, a leaf, or maybe the sunset. Don't think about anything else. Even just sitting with your eyes shut for one whole minute - noticing your body, your environment, how the chair



under you feels, listening to the sounds around - is powerful. I had the Principals do it - the look of bliss on some of their faces was beautiful to behold.

2. Boundaried Time

Chunk out an hour a day, (if possible, but even 30 minutes is better than nothing) to do with as you wish.

This is a powerful sanity gap - puts the juice back in the tank! Most people will create this by getting up an hour earlier (it's the time of day I do my best creative work, and why I've been so productive with my writing over the last couple of years.)

It's not a chance to get a jumpstart on the emails, or the day's work. You may choose to read, exercise, meditate, pray, potter in the garden, do something creative, or nothing - it's your choice, your gift to yourself - by yourself.

3. Spontaneous Time

Another Australian teacher at another speech some years ago shared a great strategy. Every six weeks or so, the family had a 'free weekend'. Anything that needed doing before the beginning of the following week (such as food shopping) was handled on the Thursday night. Then, on Friday night after they'd all arrived home from work or school (it worked when their children were at home as well as after they'd left the nest), they went into 'spontaneous time'.

'What shall we do this weekend?' was the question.

Sometimes they'd stay home and just chill out - no work, no duties or obligations. Other times they'd get in the car and just drive, stopping when they felt like it, staying overnight if they wanted to. She said it was a most freeing experience.

Some people would think that was too organised. Others might say that every weekend should be like that. (They're not running boarding schools if they say such a thing, I'm sure the readers of this publication will agree!) The reality is, time slides by unmarked or crowded with 'busy stuff' if we don't put some structure around it.

This lady highlighted a profound principle - out of structure and planning comes freedom.

4. Honour The Mundane

Many of us begrudge doing mundane tasks like the dishes and housework. Instead of doing it with your attention everywhere else, and wishing you could get it done faster, focus on the task, do it to perfection, and enjoy the physical experience.

For instance, doing dishes is a chance to be grateful for the food, to send loving thoughts to the loved ones you've cooked for (if it was a shared meal), to be thankful for the hundreds (if not thousands) of people whose labour has contributed to the ingredients arriving safely in your kitchen, and even the hot water to get the job done quickly. (Millions of people around the world barely have plates to eat off, let alone nice crockery and hot water to clean them).

5. Create Rituals

This could be thanks or grace before a meal; 10 or 15 minutes with your loved one when you both get home, and before you get into the night's routines (expanded in my Top Time Tip at <http://www.gettingagrip.com/ttt/ttt-33.html>). It's anything that puts a framework around a parcel of time.

6. Monitor Your Language

How many times do you hear yourself say, 'I'm so busy', or 'I'm out of time', or 'There's never enough hours in the day'?

Change your language

This kind of statement only locks you into more of the same. I've now started saying, 'I'm as busy as I want to be', rather than 'I'm so busy' or 'too busy'. Why should being too busy be a badge of honour? Wrong honour, it seems to me! And who else cares anyway!

Final Thoughts

All or any of these techniques will help you break the frenetic rhythm that so much of life seems to consist of these days.

And to put a final spin on it, following is a snippet I read recently in a newly released book about the slave abolitionist movement of America - 'Beyond the River - the untold story of the heroes of the Underground Railroad' by Ann Hagedorn. The incident took place in 1817.

"It took the Rankins fifteen days to travel from Dandridge, Tennessee, to Lexington,

Kentucky - a distance of two hundred miles. The uneven terrain often forced them to walk, with Rankin leading the horse, and his wife carrying their young boy... Once, the carriage tumbled down an abrupt two-foot drop, and the axle broke. With a steep mountain road behind them, Rankin chose to ride ahead in search of a blacksmith, carrying the broken axle and riding bareback for fifteen miles. Jean and the baby waited on the side of road in the dark until the early hours of the morning, when Rankin finally returned."

You might like to reflect, as you drive along today's comfortable modern roads, that in 1817 it would often take a day to go 10 or 15 miles. And yet we never read of them bemoaning the lack of time!

There is enough time to do the things that really matter; there is plenty of it. It's all in the choices, in what we put first. Let's get off the speed trap and control our perceptions, language and behaviour around time, instead of other peoples' rhythms controlling us.



Robyn Pearce, one of our speakers at the upcoming conference in Canberra, is a mother of six, grandmother of ten, and international author and speaker who helps people around the world solve their time problems.

Check out her website at www.gettingagrip.com for heaps of practical and commonsense time management and productivity help, and while you're there, secure your subscription to her FREE Top Time Tips ezine.



It's about prompting individuals to remember that they are part of families and that the family unit itself, as well its members, need special tending if it is to be strong.

Tip Sheet: How to Get More Time to Spend With Your Family

With the state of busyness being the catchcry of today's modern family, the theme for National Families Week 2007 from 13 – 19 May (coinciding with the United Nations' International Day of the Family on 15 May) focuses on Families Investing In Time Together.

The aim of National Families Week 2007 is to encourage all Australians to take time to do things together that will improve the all-round physical and emotional wellbeing of their family unit. It's about prompting

individuals to remember that they are part of families and that the family unit itself, as well its members, need special tending if it is to be strong.

So how do you go about creating more time to spend with your family and use it effectively?

The Australian Scholarships Group (ASG), the nation's leading friendly society with the mission of supporting children and families, has prepared this tip sheet to help you gain some more family time.

Getting Your Priorities Straight

When asked, most people will say that their family and friends are their highest priority, but their actions don't always demonstrate these priorities. A simple not-negotiable commitment, such as spending a small chunk of time daily with your family, can realign your priorities.

Getting Organised

Many people confuse being neat with being organised. While a tidy and neat home is attractive and appealing, being organised means a whole lot more than neat. It means having a system that works for each member of your family and your family as a whole –

having an agreed upon place for items so that everyone can find them quickly and easily, and being on top of your paperwork, and knowing which day Fred needs his soccer sports clothes at school. Try these ideas to become more organised:

Create a workspace for processing all your paperwork – make this your organisation hub.

Put all incoming paper into one place in your hub.

Set-up tickler files (files for each day of the month and month of the year) as reminders for things that need to be done by certain months or dates – bring forward your reminders, and check the files daily.

Keep a schedule on the fridge for the whole family and write everything on it.

Try to create a place for things and return them to that place after use – think car keys, phones, school bags, homework, etc

Setting Goals

To-do lists can really help with getting you and your family organised, but if you haven't set the big goals first and worked out the daily actions required to reach your



goals, you may find you haven't made the progress you hoped you'd achieve by a specific timeframe. A well-developed goal focuses on what you want to achieve and specifies the details associated with it. Productivity expert and author of *Leave The Office Earlier*, Laura Stack recommends using her **SPAGHETTI** model to develop effective goals.

S-pecific: spell out what you want to achieve and quantify it so you can measure it.

P-otential problems: what obstacles do you expect to encounter – plan to resolve them before they happen.

A-cceptable: ensure you want to achieve the goal – if you're just doing it to please others, there's less incentive to achieve it.

G-ift: what is the reward attached to the goal – consider setting up milestone rewards to motivate progress.

H-ard enough: your goal should stretch you but be based on reality not fantasy.

E-valuate: review your goals and your progress periodically to keep yourself on track.

T-angible: write down your goals to make them more concrete.

T-ime bound: set target dates for each of the steps required to reach your goal.

I-nspirational: ensure your goal is motivational, visualise achieving it and empower it with emotion.

Planning Time

Creating a schedule and staying on track with it can be one of the most important strategies you can adopt to manage your time. If you find it hard to stay on track, try keeping a time log to determine your time bandits.

Children's time is different to adult time

Remember that children have a different level of concentration and focus to adults. Angela Rossmann author of the book, *When Will the Children Play?* Finding Time for Childhood, says young children particularly tend to dip in and out of activities moving from this to that, so they

want different levels of engagement with you. Your children's concept of time is more free flowing and doesn't really sit too well with scheduling. Make sure you have reasonable expectations of spending time with them and focus on giving them attention in shorter bursts of time, and giving them your presence for longer periods when they can engage with you intermittently.

Ask For Help

Trying to keep on top of all the activities required to run a family is tough especially if you try to do everything yourself. Delegating age-appropriate activities to your children can be fun and helps build independence and self-reliance. For older children, linking tasks with pocket money is a great way to gain participation. Alternatively, try getting the children to help you as you do each activity. This way you can interact with each other and make the task more enjoyable.

Making Choices

Juggling a whole host of activities can really put the pressure on you and your family, particularly when you throw employment into the equation. It's hard to remember that you really do have choices and the power to make them when the pressure is on, but making choices that support your goals and priorities in life is one of the most empowering things you can do. Whether it's choosing to work for a more family-friendly employer or turning off the TV for the night, you can choose an alternative approach to many things.

What's Your Next Action?

David Allen, author of the popular book, *Getting Things Done* suggests focusing on determining what's the next action for every item on your to-do list that will take you more than two minutes. With this focus he suggests you can keep all your projects moving towards your desired outcomes. For to-do items that will take two minutes or less, he suggests just doing them.

Share The Load

Creating a community of parents to share activities such as babysitting or picking up children from school not only helps save time but also creates a support network for your family in times of need.

More suggestions about how to get more time to spend with your family can be found at:

- KidsLife – www.kidslife.com.au
- David Allen, author of *Getting Things Done* – www.davidco.com
- Laura Stack, *The Productivity Pro* and author of *Leave The Office Earlier* – www.productivitypro.com

ASG provides a program that helps parents plan for their children's future education using the benefits of collective mutual pooling, beginning from as little as \$11 per week – less than the cost of a family takeaway meal. For more information about ASG and its programs, phone 1800 648 945 or visit: www.asg.com.au

© Copyright Australian Scholarships Group 2007. Used with permission.

For further information

Contact: Janet Thomas, Public Relations, Australian Scholarships Group.
Phone: (03) 9276 7758
Mobile: 0402 837 758
Email: publicrelations@asg.com.au

Further resources and information for parents can be found at ASG's website: www.asg.com.au/resources

Additional media releases and information for media representatives, including a profile on ASG, can be found at ASG's website: www.asg.com.au/media

Trying to keep on top of all the activities required to run a family is tough especially if you try to do everything yourself.

This Reflective Light

The interest of our young people from all walks of the major religions in the spiritual and reflective life is patently obvious to even the casual observer, but still elicits some surprise. Visitors to our weekly Eucharist Celebration for the Boarding Community at Saint Augustine's in Cairns are often taken aback at the whole hearted sincerity of the participation of our young women and men at Saints.

The presence of so many young people turning out during the Pope's recent visit to South America, the astonishing interest in World Youth Day 2008, the lively success of Protestant communities such as the Hill Song movement, and the very representative young face of Islamic communities, all point to a need, and a need being met. Doubtless, other faith communities are experiencing the same phenomenon.

Here at Saints, we have evolved a pattern of a very inclusive, celebratory, and musical Mass. We practise the singing and the music, and our aim to do it well is met. We do it well. The College recently hosted the Catholic Principals of Queensland at a Mass during their conference, and our senior boarders did what we do every Sunday – they demonstrated without fuss that the liturgy of the church is part of their lives.

Alongside of this somewhat public face of the College's Christian life is a very popular segment each week which has been developed over many years, largely by Lionel Williamson – an iconic figure in League football, Christian life, and good old fashioned commitment and generosity. It's our weekly reflection.

Our Chapel – which is a great space – is cleared of chairs and quietly, and calmly, our young people make their way there each week at an appropriate time for a reflection. They bring their pillows, sometimes their doonas, and occasionally a teddy – find a space for themselves and absorb the quiet background music.

They come to say hello to their friend, Jesus. The level of friendship and its particular



shape varies, but by and large, that's what happens. One or other of the senior staff then provides a reflection. Lionel tends to focus on reminding the young men and women in our boarding community that they are special in God's eyes – He has known them forever. Lionel reminds them about the creation and their role in creation – their part in God's plan. He leavens this with practical advice about relaxation techniques and the relationship between good bodily posture and good spiritual posture. Occasionally, he'll pick a theme. Recently Lionel talked eloquently about gratitude – what it means and why we need it in order to become whole people – to each other and to our God.

Conrad tends to write guided meditations – often trying to draw on some aspect of the known daily lives of our students. Sport, the outback, or perhaps families.

The picture before us at say, 9.30pm on a Thursday evening – 70 very still, very calm, very dignified, and fine tune focusing young men. There's almost inaudible background music, and amongst the silence of our young Year 11s and 12s, one has a sense of their engaging, a sense of reaching, and a sense of individuals abandoning the busyness of the day and searching, perhaps not so successfully this time or that time, for their reflective side. It's a gentle place – the odd over tired athlete may fall asleep – we

don't mind that. Our instruction at the end is always the same. "When you're ready, make your way back to your residence." This is done silently. Of their own accord, the year 11s then put themselves to bed, largely in silence. The Year 12s hang in a bit longer, but the mood and the tone in the residence on Thursday nights is different. Things are quiet, there's no adolescent ricochet, and more than the odd lad says a prayer before he drops off that night.

We are not mind readers, and it is difficult to know what the lasting effect of our efforts will be on individuals. We do know that despite the world wide interest in things spiritual by young people, some of our young people will abandon established religion when they leave an environment where it is part of daily life. But we do notice one thing – if by chance the crowded and busy boarding program means we can't have a reflection on a given day – there's palpable disappointment. Our students look forward to this weekly experience, and that in itself encourages us to continue with this reflective life.

Conrad Mathias works in the Boarding Program at Saint Augustine's College, Cairns.



New Zealand Boarding School Association Conference 2008

By Richard Stokes

I had the privilege of attending the NZBSA conference from 13 to 15 May, and was able to re-kindle a number of friendships and have started a very positive relationship working with their National Co-ordinator, Cara Ferris.

The conference was held in Auckland and began with a wonderful dinner, enhanced by Guest Speaker Dr Lauren Roche who talked about her life and how important it is that we look for the positives in our boarders.

Day 2 started with a wonderful welcome Powhiri, a rousing welcome by the Maori boys. Roseann Gedeye presented for the majority of the day on Effective Personal Relationships, and the workshop/presentation was a most productive and entertaining day. The afternoon also included the AGM for their association.

The last day of the conference started with a most moving Chapel Service at Dilworth School, and was followed by workshops and presentations on Restorative Practices, Legal Issues, Contract Negotiation and two very effective final sessions. Paul Ferris presented a challenging view of future schooling and its impact on residential education and a panel of boarding staff and ex-boarders talked about the key elements in successful boarding.

All in all it was a most productive three days, and sees us working together to hopefully hold a joint conference in 2010, as well as common training programs for boarding staff and shared resources.

Special thanks to Cara Ferris, the New Zealand National Coordinator for the NZBSA for making me so welcome.

Richard Stokes
Executive Director
May 2008



The Conference in action.



Powhiri welcome for conference delegates.

A Brief History of Boarding

By Ben Gelton

The first boarding school in Australia was The King's School in North Paramatta Sydney, it opened its doors in 1832.

In Great Britain, the oldest boarding schools date back many centuries, arguably including Oxford University, which in its earliest years was a loose aggregation of students. With the spread of the British Empire in the early 19th century, however, the boarding school concept blossomed. As more and more members of the English upper class served in the military and government overseas, they wanted their children educated in England. More and more boarding schools emerged as a result.

(As you may know, the British term "public school" refers to what Americans, Australians and New Zealanders call a private school. The English schools were "public" in that they attracted students from the entire country, rather than just serving local youths. For that reason, a British public school is a boarding school virtually by definition.)

In America, as in England, the earliest schools were almost exclusively finishing schools for white, wealthy, Christian boys. But they also existed for other reasons. In fact, the boarding school as an institution was rooted in practicality. The country was large, and transportation inadequate for even the wealthiest of families. Even traveling daily to a local school house could be difficult or impossible for many good

students. Living at school was a welcome solution. So the earliest boarding schools answered an additional need for the children of affluent families. These schools were also attended by children of clergy and the school's faculty.

Operationally, American private boarding schools were modeled after the British public schools. Salem Academy, founded in 1772, was originally a day school, then added boarding facilities.

With the industrial revolution came enormous redistribution of wealth and improved transportation. As a result, boarding schools were founded at an unprecedented rate, serving the upper middle class, and serving as conduits into the finest colleges. Many of these secondary schools remain today.

In the 1990's a new more modern boarding school emerged helping educate societies struggling teens, specialty boarding schools were established to deal with teens that were struggling in their home, school, or community. Some of these specialty boarding schools have helped thousands of teenagers regain their confidence and self-esteem and reunite with their families. These specialty boarding schools are cost effective, provide excellent academic opportunities as well as character building, components. Some of these specialty boarding schools have educational workshops and seminars for both parents at home and students at school, support groups, leadership opportunities, emotional growth aspects. These specialty boarding

schools are designed to help the struggling teens of today to become the leaders of tomorrow.

In the past decade, American boarding schools have undergone another transition. As with other schools, the cost of a private education is rising. (By some measures, the pre-aid tuition cost of a private school has nearly tripled vs. 15 years ago.) Simultaneously, declining birth rates and worldwide demand have led to a shift in demographics. The proportion of "legacy" students - from families whose children have attended a certain school for generations - is decreasing, while the numbers of foreign and non-white students are growing. Only 5% of the foreign students are attending with the benefit of financial aid (as opposed to 30% of students overall.)

For boarding schools this often translates into a vastly different type of student. These students are specifically seeking out superior educational opportunities and facilities and their parents are expecting superior mechanisms for providing this education and running these facilities. Added to this, boarding schools may soon have to satisfy regulatory authorities with ongoing licensing a real possibility (New Zealand boarding schools already have this). With these pressures it is not surprising that operational enhancement mechanisms such as LeaveRegister ASSIST have a useful role to play.

Clearly, today's boarding schools continue to have tremendous academic and social appeal, and with this influx of foreign students and their differing expectations, it continues to impress that boarding schools are able to remain faithful to their goals of preparing students for personal growth and exceptional achievement in a changing world.

For more information go to:
www.kings.edu.au

Ben Gelton
Software Marketing



1891 School Photo, The King's School, North Paramatta Sydney.



Emotional Intelligence

By Dr Tim Hawkes



Just when the power of the bean-counters and number-crunchers is at its most obvious in our schools, with their assessment surveys, performance indicators, school league tables, value-added measures and school effectiveness charts, along comes a prophet from out of the wilderness and taps us on the shoulder.

Spurring co-efficient variables and IQ measures, Daniel Goleman in his book "Emotional Intelligence" talks of soul, of character, of inner peace, and a new imperative to encourage emotional wellbeing and the repair of a fractured and alienated society.

Whilst schools churn out segmented knowledge on the causes of the First World War, the properties of H_2SO_4 , the value of X and the curse of the split infinitive, our society bleeds a little more. Goleman writes of a disintegration of civility in our society, of an onslaught of mean-spiritedness. He talks of surging rage and despair, of the loneliness of abandoned children, the ugly intimacy of marital violence and emotional abuse. Our common lexicon is being invaded by terms such as "drive-by shooting" and "post traumatic stress". The slogan of the hour shifting from "Have a nice day" to "Make my day".

It is suggested by Goleman that IQ contributes only about 20% to the factors that determine a successful life, and that despite the popular mystique of IQ, and UAI scores, they are singularly ineffective in predicting success in life. Goleman argues that emotional intelligence (EQ) rather than IQ is a more important quality in determining success in life. The key areas of education which need to be given greater prominence to nurture EQ include the ability to empathise, to hope, to regulate one's moods, to control impulse and to delay gratification. Illustrating the latter, a researcher, Walter Mischel, went and bought himself a lot of marshmallows and collected a number of four year old students. Each child was told it could have a marshmallow immediately, but if they were prepared to wait for a few minutes they could have two marshmallows when the experimenter returned from his errand. You can imagine the anguish, for the children were embroiled in what Goleman called the eternal battle between impulse and restraints, between desire and self control, between gratification and delay.

Follow-up studies some twelve to fourteen years later showed that those students who did not grab and eat the marshmallow, but could delay their gratification, were the adolescents who were more socially competent, self assertive, better able to cope with life's frustrations and dealt better

with stress, pressure and life's challenges, including not giving up in the face of difficulty. These adolescents were also more self-reliant, confident, trustworthy and dependable, able to take initiative and delay gratification in pursuit of their goals.

Those that could not delay gratification, but ate the marshmallow at once, were often found to shy away from social contacts, be stubborn and indecisive and be easily upset by frustration. Their self image was sometimes poor, with them thinking of themselves as "bad" or unworthy, and they often became immobilised by stress. Those who could not control their impulses were also prone to jealousy and envy, to provoking arguments and fights and overreacting to irritations. Can our children delay gratification? Can our children control their impulses... or are they only able to live for the moment?

Of course we all have our genetically predisposed temperaments, be they bold, timid, melancholy or upbeat, and our choice in this matter is not invited. However, Goleman notes that nurture as well as nature are powerful determinants of emotional maturity, with schools being able to play a key role. It is suggested that school, home and community need to be woven to form a caring community which will protect the child as it grows. Goleman states that teacher quality is particularly important and argues that teachers as well as parents model emotional maturity.

Goleman's message is not particularly new, except that with the passage of time old truths need to be refreshed by a new prophet. The hegemony of the educational numbers game is like many things, not without value or validity, except that numbers have been overstated and over-emphasised. It is time to heed the words of a prophet who dares to remind us of the real priorities in our lives.

Dr Tim Hawkes
Headmaster
March 2008

Reprinted with permission from the Kings Herald, newsletter of The Kings School.

Looking After Rowers in the Boarding House

By Ben Vining



Rowing is widely popular as a school sport for both boys and girls. Coordinator of Rowing at St Hilda's School in Queensland advises boarding staff on ways to help rowers reach high levels of performance.

Rowing is a highly disciplined and demanding sport that tends to fitness-conscious young people. If you have any rowers in your boarding house there are certain things you can do to build a good relationship with them and help them achieve their sporting goals.

Being a member of a rowing team is a transforming experience for a student. At the end of the season, a well-trained rower will emerge from the sport better able to set and achieve goals, work in a team, manage their time and be responsible for themselves and others: personal qualities that can be harnessed in the boarding house if staff understand the rower's psyche and routines.

Rowing is a seasonal sport that lasts 5 to 7 months. Crews train for regattas which are held each Saturday throughout the racing season. Schools take it in turns to host a regatta. The big end-of-season regatta is called the Head of the River and everybody comes out to race or play on this spectacular

day of chanting, cheering and parading. Girls and boys compete in different regattas, across different distances, although schools may share a boatshed. For example, St Hilda's School for girls uses the boatshed of The Southport School for boys.

Rowers at school level are placed in teams called quads, fours or eights (see glossary of terms). The cox is a lightweight person who sits at the back of the boat and calls directions and instructions.

The rowers' home is the boatshed - a revered place full of precious boats and photographs of past triumphs. Boatsheds are sociable places of fun and fraternity and the best buzz is on a Saturday morning when boarding parents often travel long distances to support their children in regattas. All staff are welcome to join in this casual atmosphere where there's ample time to have a chat with boarding parents and strengthen community relations.

Time Management

Rowing is an early morning sport and training starts as the sun comes up when the water is smooth and still. Rowers must be well organised to fit it all into a day. The alarm goes off about 5am and boarders need an early breakfast. Boarding staff can help by making sure they are up on

time, have a nutritious meal and have full waterbottles and sunscreen.

Discipline

Rowing is a highly disciplined sport and boarding staff can transfer a rower's self-discipline to the house if they understand the body rhythms of a rower. Rowers are often tired in the afternoon and evening, so do not ride them too hard at these times, rather tell them what they need to do and ask when they will be able to do it. Explain your expectations then give them flexibility. For example, at homework time they may need a 15-minute catnap to revitalise and they may need to take short breaks to eat and stretch or they may need to retire early.

Rowing teaches students about goal setting and how to focus and develop their powers of concentration, so encourage them to bring these qualities to their studies.

Communication

Rowing is not an easy spectator sport so it can be difficult to know how a rower is performing. Like most sports, rowers have a language of their own so check the glossary of terms.

Hugo McMicking from Goondiwindi in Queensland is a Year 12 boarder at The Southport School. He is a cox and has been involved with rowing for 6 years and he advises that the best way for boarding staff to form a relationship with a rower is to be interested in their sport and their achievements.

"If you show a basic understanding of the sport and the pressures it brings, students will feel you are a friend," he said. "The best way to build rapport is to show respect for the hard physical and mental rigours that rowers endure. If you have rowers in your house, show pride in them."

Hugo advises staff to ask questions about how the rowers are feeling and how well they are achieving their goals. Below are



Rowing teaches students about goal setting and how to focus and develop their powers of concentration

a few conversation starters, sprinkled with rowing words, designed to get students talking to you about their beloved sport.

"What time did you start this morning? How do you manage to get up so early and keep going all day?"

"What type of boat do you row?" (single, quad, four, eight)

"Tell me about the other boys/girls in your crew?" (Note: rowers are in crews, not teams)

"You're looking a bit tired. Was it a hard workload today?"

"Do rowers do things together outside the boat? (meals together, outings on the weekend)"

"What land training do you do?" (weights, running, swimming, ergs)

"Rowing is such a hard sport, why do you like it so much?"

Fuel

Rowing is an energy draining sport and rowers have huge appetites. An early breakfast of cereal or oats, toast, eggs, fruit and yoghurt gets them off to a good start. They should avoid fatty foods (sausages, bacon, hash browns) as these are heavy in the stomach and take up valuable energy to digest. Saturdays require peak performance so a packed lunch with carbohydrates such as multigrain bread, pasta and potatoes does the trick. Fresh fruit plus a waterbottle will keep up the high fluid requirements, and a few bananas will provide sustained energy.

Health

Rowing is a non-contact sport so injuries are few, but rowers have their own set of problems. Rowers are taught to be stoic; to suffer pain without complaint, so keep a lookout for particular rowing ailments. One of these is blisters. Some can be nasty and need treatment. Different remedies are used but I like metho or friars balsam which kills germs, dries up the blisters and toughens the hands. Sunburn can cause misery so a rower should never leave the house

without a hat and sunscreen. Dehydration is a potential threat and each student needs a named waterbottle, as we do not allow sharing of waterbottles. If a student is dehydrated it may explain lethargy in the house. Other things to look out for are boils on legs from rubbing in the boat and tinea between the toes. Hygiene of rowing suits is often neglected. Zoot suits get very sweaty and need frequent washing. Rowers tend to suffer lower back pain and the best remedy is constant stretching, which should be integrated into daily activities, for example, while watching TV or doing homework. It is helpful if boarding staff allow and encourage this sort of movement for the rowers in their care. The coach can provide a list of exercises. A back and shoulder massage is always nice!

Stress

There is nothing to equal the Head of the River at the end of the rowing season for stress generation. The eyes and hopes of the whole school are upon their rowers, so treat them tenderly at this time. Other times of high stress are during crew selection and trials at the beginning of the season. Rowing training goes through cycles alternating between heavy and light routines. During heavy cycles rowers tend to be extra tired. The coach can give you a timetable.

Good athletes are desirable members of any group and they can easily over-extend themselves with sport, drama, cadets etc, until they reach a point where they cannot fit it all in, and instead of enjoying their extra curricula activities, they feel they are always letting people down by missing a training session or a rehearsal. Added to this is the demand of study, and if they are not careful they can feel overwhelmed and exhausted.

We all want the best for the students in our care so try to counsel individuals to focus on one or two activities rather than constantly trying to catch-up on a multitude of obligations.

Ben Vining (B. Applied Science) is coordinator of rowing at St Hilda's School and coach at The Southport School on the Gold Coast Queensland. Before taking up coaching and consulting, Ben was a rower at The King's School, then at Sydney University. His contact is 0403 195 339.

© This article is protected by copyright. No part can be reproduced without the consent of the author.

Glossary Of Rowing Terms

ROWING: a person with a single oar held with both hands (1 oar)

SCULLING: a person with an oar in each hand (2 oars)

SINGLE SCULL: sleek boat for an experienced individual rower (2 oars)

TUB SCULL: wide boat for beginning individuals

ZOOT SUIT: one-piece rowing suit

COX: a non-rower who steers the boat and gives the commands

STROKE: strong rower at the stern who sets the pace

BOW: front of boat that crosses the line first
STERN: back of boat, where the cox sits, last over the line

COXED QUAD: 4 sculling rowers plus a cox, frequently used by beginners

COXED FOUR: 4 rowers with 1 oar each plus a cox

COXED EIGHT: 8 rowers with 1 oar each plus a cox, for experienced rowers

FIRST EIGHT: a school's top rowing team
BOATSHED: Home/club house of the rowers

TINNY: Motorised boat used by a coach
ERG or ergometer: machine that replicates the rowing action for fitness training

ON-WATER TRAINING: boat skills, aerobic training, technical lessons in a boat

LAND TRAINING: body weights, jogging, swimming and general fitness exercises to build strength and stamina

Listen Like My iPod

By Richard Cohen

Re-printed with permission from the April 2008 edition of Sign In, newsletter of the New Zealand Boarding Schools Association.

I am not what is known as an “early adopter” of new technologies. I would still be waiting in line to pay the turnpike toll if my wife hadn’t registered us for Massachusetts’ undeniably convenient electronic payment system, Fast Lane. And even though music is one of my passions, I own an iPod only because Apple gave me one as a free gift when I purchased a computer.

Some of my friends view iPods with disdain, cringing at the sight of white cords descending from so many ears. They see iPods as yet another barrier between people in an already disconnected world. Though I appreciate their perspective, I experience the iPod not as a method of retreating from reality, but as a way of embracing it. It has done wonders, at least, for my listening experience. Like many music enthusiasts, my music collection - accumulated over many decades of listening - is wide ranging and unique to me.

I would more likely win the lottery than hear a radio station play my favorite artists in the same segment.

I find myself startled by how well my iPod knows me, even though I put the music on the iPod in the first place!

So when I put in my ear buds and hear Paul Robeson’s “Balm in Gilead,” followed by The Incredible String Band’s “Maya,” Charlie Sepulveda’s “New Arrival,” Steve Reich’s “Tehillim,” The Waterboys’ “Whole of the Moon,” Jane Siberry’s “Hockey,” Talib Kweli’s “Joy,” and so on...I enter my own musical nirvana. I hear familiar songs as



if I am hearing them for the first time. And most surprising: I find myself startled by how well my iPod knows me, even though I put the music on the iPod in the first place! I converted my favorite pieces of music into digital files; I loaded 1000 of them onto the device; and I then instructed it to play them back in random order.

I controlled the input, and yet I am surprised when I hear it played back to me. Sounds like what happens in peer mediation. Much of what we do as mediators is serve as figurative iPods for parties: they “input” their life experiences, feelings and concerns by talking with us, and we let them know we understand by “playing it back” to them.

And like my iPod experience, after hearing us repeat back what they have told us, parties often gain new and surprising insights. Equally significant, playing back the parties “soundtrack” also builds their trust in us and tends to make them feel safe and connected.

Of course, mediators do more than merely play back what parties tell us: we synthesize,



we draw out deeper and sometimes hidden meanings, we help parties connect seemingly unrelated information, we empathize with their experiences.

We listen better than a mechanical device ever could. But it is good to be reminded that just by “playing back” what parties tell us, we can do them an important service.

Reprinted with permission from Richard Cohen, publisher of The School Mediator, Vol. VII, 1/08



Managing Word of Mouth

By Dr Linda Vining



What are people saying about the boarding experience at your school? Every school has a reputation - good or bad. And every day, a hidden, unsystematic network of talk is either eroding or building your reputation.

Because of a quirk of human nature, negative talk reaches a much wider audience than positive talk. You cannot stop negative talk; you should not even waste your time trying. Instead you can practice proactive strategies to manage what people are saying about you and your school.

The potential to exploit positive talk is enormous. There are many types of talk to carry your message. Schools concerned about good community relations make sure that every aspect of school talk is working in their favour and circulating widely to the right audience.

Types Of Talk

- Formal Talk is the official party line delivered by the principal, head of boarding and other executive members of the school. It projects the values and tone of the school. Students learn what is expected of them, parents receive messages on school values and the community interprets the information to determine school standards. Everybody who hears this authorised talk uses it to position the school in the education marketplace. It can be a powerful voice in influencing people's perceptions.

- Newsletter Talk is community talk that informs and invites. A bossy authoritarian tone using brusque directives such as "you must do this and you must be here" can mask the image of a friendly, caring school.

Many parents complain that the dictatorial tone of newsletters and notices offends them.

- Selling Talk is your outreach material. It includes your prospectus, annual report, promotional brochures and website. Such documents will convey an impressive image if they are professionally prepared and up-to-date.

- Media Talk is written in a journalistic style about a specific event. It can greatly influence public opinion, particularly if there is regular supply of it.

- Letter Talk is personal talk. Your letterhead, crest, business stationery and page layout says a lot about you, in addition to your written words.

- Email Talk is often informal but an email is still a legal document so do not let your guard drop. Check your spelling. Make sure you include a signature block that adheres to the school's style guide.

- Telephone Talk is often the first point of contact a person has with the school. People are extremely sensitive to how they are treated on the phone, particularly when they cannot see you and have nothing else to go by.

- Grapevine Talk is the informal talk that spreads and defines information passing through the system. The instant somebody becomes a customer, they share the right to talk about the school, to judge it and to broadcast their perceptions. Keep feeding the grapevine with positive news.

Negative Talk

Not only can negative talk damage the reputation of the school, it can undermine the perceptions people have of boarding. How can a school stop people badmouthing the organisation they should be cheer leading for?

Negative talk about a school often starts within the school and quickly spreads along the grapevine. Careless insider talk is like unguided missiles flying around the school. Staff talk is extremely powerful. It influences

parents and the community and it affects the morale, performance and motivation of staff and students. Management of word-of-mouth starts at the top. A major role of the principal and the director of boarding is to inspire positive talk. Here are some tips.

- Know what people think of you. Conduct regular customer satisfaction surveys of your parents and students.

- Repeatedly emphasise to boarding staff that they are influential members of the school. People want to respect them, particularly parents. They are ambassadors for their profession as well as their particular school. Often people judge the entire boarding experience by the comments of just one staff member they know.

- Highlight the positive things that staff can emphasise. So often support staff have little knowledge about the fine work going on in other parts of the school. Keep them in the information loop.

- Organise staff seminars on public relations. Hire a facilitator to conduct an in-service program or ask your marketing manager to run a session. Don't isolate word-of-mouth marketing in the public relations department. Good PR is everybody's business.

- Make it a deadly sin to badmouth. Equally, reward those who talk positively. School executives set the tone in a myriad of ways by giving compliments, passing on the appreciation of others, commending ideas and acknowledging extra time freely given. It's worth noting that the major reason for job dissatisfaction in most organisations is that staff feel they are not appreciated and recognised for the work they do.

Dr Linda Vining is the Director of the Centre for Marketing Schools. Her new book "PURPLE POWER for Memorable School Marketing" has a chapter on ways to measure customer satisfaction.

See www.marketingschools.net for more info. Contact Linda on (08) 8206 7077 or email: office@marketingschools.net



Reflection

One day, when I was a freshman in high school, I saw a kid from my class was walking home from school. His name was Kyle. It looked like he was carrying all of his books. I thought to myself, "Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday? He must really be a nerd."

I had quite a weekend planned (parties and a football game with my friends tomorrow afternoon), so I shrugged my shoulders and went on. As I was walking, I saw a bunch of kids running toward him. They ran at him, knocking all his books out of his arms and tripping him so he landed in the dirt. His glasses went flying, and I saw them land in the grass about ten feet from him. He looked up and I saw this terrible sadness in his eyes. My heart went out to him. So, I jogged over to him as he crawled around looking for his glasses, and I saw a tear in his eye. As I handed him his glasses, I said, "Those guys are jerks." They really should get lives. "He looked at me and said, "Hey thanks!" There was a big smile on his face. It was one of those smiles that showed real gratitude. I helped him pick up his books, and asked him where he lived. As it turned out, he lived near me, so I asked him why I had never seen him before. He said he had gone to private school before now. I would have never hung out with a private school kid before. We talked all the way home, and I carried some of his books. He turned out to be a pretty cool kid. I asked him if he wanted

to play a little football with my friends. He said yes. We hung out all weekend and the more I got to know Kyle, the more I liked him, and my friends thought the same of him. Monday morning came, and there was Kyle with the huge stack of books again. I stopped him and said, "Boy, you are gonna really build some serious muscles with this pile of books everyday!" He just laughed and handed me half the books.

Over the next four years, Kyle and I became best friends. When we were seniors we began to think about college. Kyle decided on Georgetown and I was going to Duke. I knew that we would always be friends, that the miles would never be a problem. He was going to be a doctor and I was going for business on a football scholarship. Kyle was valedictorian of our class. I teased him all the time about being a nerd. He had to prepare a speech for graduation. I was so glad it wasn't me having to get up there and speak. Graduation day, I saw Kyle. He looked great. He was one of those guys that really found himself during high school. He filled out and actually looked good in glasses. He had more dates than I had and all the girls loved him. Boy, sometimes I was jealous! Today was one of those days. I could see that he was nervous about his speech. So, I smacked him on the back and said, "Hey, big guy, you'll be great!" He looked at me with one of those looks (the really grateful one) and smiled. "Thanks," he said. As he started his speech, he cleared his throat,

We talked all the way home, and I carried some of his books. He turned out to be a pretty cool kid.

and began "Graduation is a time to thank those who helped you make it through those tough years.

Your parents, your teachers, your siblings, maybe a coach...but mostly your friends... I am here to tell all of you that being a friend to someone is the best gift you can give them. I am going to tell you a story." I just looked at my friend with disbelief as he told the story of the first day we met. He had planned to kill himself over the weekend. He talked of how he had cleaned out his locker so his Mom wouldn't have to do it later and was carrying his stuff home. He looked hard at me and gave me a little smile. "Thankfully, I was saved. My friend saved me from doing the unspeakable."

I heard the gasp go through the crowd as this handsome, popular boy told us all about his weakest moment. I saw his Mom and dad looking at me and smiling that same grateful smile.

Not until that moment did I realize its depth.

Never underestimate the power of your actions. With one small gesture you can change a person's life. For better or for worse.

*This reflection was put together by Board Member, **Rachel Bartolo**.*



Everything Educational at the 2008 Education Expo™



Immerse yourself in a weekend of learning resources, new products and educational services at Australia's largest education expo.

Principal Jenny Hayward from the Central Coast travelled to Sydney for the expo last year in a minibus. In the bus were teachers from her school, two parents and the canteen manager. On arrival each person hopped out the bus and went her own way. When they gathered again in the afternoon each was loaded up with bags, free samples and brochures, and, as they compared notes on what they had seen and who they had talked to, each had different stories to tell.

Jenny said she found it particularly valuable to talk to parents with children with learning difficulties who had developed resources for their children that were so successful they had turned the home-made resources into commercial products.

"These parents talked first hand about their child's disability and what worked for them and what didn't, and I found this very insightful," said Jenny. "There's a wealth of good information here and specialists to talk to that we don't see elsewhere. It was a really worthwhile trip."

Expo Convenor, Dr Linda Vining, describes the expo as an intellectual hub with learning environments to demonstrate ways to engage students in problem solving and to develop their creativity. Activities include mind games, interactive software, outdoor education, an art studio and a non-stop

performance space. She described the expo as a powerhouse of information for experienced educators, beginning teachers and anyone else interested in education. Showgoers can collect ideas on things such as brain function, self-esteem, leadership programs, literacy and languages, financial literacy programs, open source software, creative arts, theatre for young people, intelligent toys, health and well being for learning, aboriginal resources, music, and much more.

"The expo is a peak event on the education calendar," said Dr Vining. "There are online networks, expo discounts for teachers, and unusual excursions and incursions to stir interest."

For teachers with an eye on career progression there are awards to enter, job opportunities in Australia and overseas and courses for 50+.

"It's a perfect place to talk to face -to-face to people from professional associations and government agencies and discover the funding they have to work with your school and your students," said Dr Vining who spends a year with her team bringing everything educational together in one place.

Community services such as the Asthma Foundation, Centre for Autism, Dyslexia, Red Cross and Guide Dogs have educational programs they want to show teachers. Others offer assistance to families in need. Demonstrations of management and classroom products such as school industry partnerships, educational publishers, recruitment services, playground equipment, school uniforms and a host of fundraising ideas will keep educators and parents occupied for hours.

For teachers with an eye on career progression there are awards to enter, job opportunities in Australia and overseas and courses for 50+.

The expo is organised by teachers from every sector and has won many awards for outstanding community contribution.

2008

Education Expo™

BIGGEST
Education Show in Australia

June 14 & 15 : 9am - 4pm

- Resources for school & home
- New products & technology
- Excursions and incursions
- Uniform Parade 2pm Saturday
- Professional Associations
- Special Needs and G & T
- Software & intelligent toys
- Support for autism, ADHD, aspergers & dyslexia

- Leadership programs
- Promotional Products
- Community service providers
- New books & equipment
- Educational magazines
- Info on awards for schools
- And much more . . .

Grand Pavilion, Rosehill Racecourse, Sydney - FREE entry FREE parking

www.edexpo.info
+61 2 6643 4643

Coming Events

Australia

NSW Boarding School Expo

Date: 13 & 14 June 2008

Location: Canberra

The Alliance of Girls Schools Australasia
Annual Conference 2008

Topic: Broadening the Horizons for Girls

Date: 20 - 22 June 2008

Location: Canberra Girls' Grammar School
Deakin ACT 2600

ICPA: 37th Annual Federal Conference

Rural Education: Dream - Believe - Achieve

Date: 31 July & 1 August 2008

Location: Somerset on the Pier, Hobart,
Tasmania

NSW Boarding School Expo

Date: 1 & 2 August 2008

Location: Singleton

Developing Excellence in Boarding - the ABSA National Conference

Location: **Canberra**

Date: **28 Sept - 1 Oct 2008**

ICPA QLD Inc. 37th State Conference

Theme: Gateway to Learning

Date: 15 & 16 October 2008

Location: Mitchell Shire Hall, Queensland

- Do you enjoy reading 'Lights Out'?
- Do you find some things worth trying in your boarding house?
- Do you enjoy sharing your good ideas with others?

If you answered **YES** to any of the above questions - then you need to consider writing a piece for this newsletter.

We struggle from time to time to get enough information to publish the next edition, so this plea is aimed at **YOU** - spend ten minutes and write about something that is happening at your school so that we can keep publishing a top quality newsletter!

USA

International Boys' School Coalition - 15th
Annual Conference

Theme: New Worlds for Boys

Date: 22 - 25 June 2008

Location: Hosted by Upper Canada College,
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

2008 TABS Admissions Academy
and Residential Life Workshop

Date: 21 - 24 July 2008

Location: Boston University

The Association of Boarding Schools
2008 TABS Conference

Date: 3 - 7 December 2008

Location: Leading Schools Baltimore, MD

UK

BSA - Annual Conference for
Matrons and Medical Staff

Date: 14 - 16 July 2008

Location: University of Leicester

LetzLive ~ Gap Placement: Letz Live would like to welcome you to explore our new website at www.letzlive.org. We are pleased to confirm that we are now recruiting GAP tutors and residential assistants from Canada and the United Kingdom for boarding schools throughout Australia.

For a copy of our prospectus please email Mr Nicholas Hare on 0404 128 558 or via email director@letzlive.org We look forward to hearing from you.

E: director@letzlive.org

M: +61 (0) 404 128 558

W: www.letzlive.org

Nicholas Hare B.Bus, Dip.Com

Founder & Director

LETZ LIVE PTY LTD

Software Marketing: Software Marketing Ltd, Run and owned by Ben Gelton. Ben worked for three years in a boarding school in New Zealand in the mid 1990's. With this background and his experience in the computer industry he saw an opportunity to apply his understanding to improving its operation. This resulted in LeaveRegister™ASSIST a software system for managing the real-time leave requirements of up to 1000 students simultaneously while also enabling vastly superior flows of information between boarding school decision makers, the catering staff and the students themselves. Visit: www.softwaremarketing.co.nz

2 x FREE Large Format A1 Posters

(Worth \$400.00 see website) Also receive FREE DVD, "Why Parents Think Some School Brochures Stink!" Offer ends 30 June 2008. Visit: www.artspec.com.au

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 500 words) and send us some high definition photos.

Send all files to: lightsout@boarding.org.au by the first week in July.



AUSTRALIAN
BOARDING
SCHOOLS
ASSOCIATION

AUSTRALIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION LTD.

PO Box 279 Virginia QLD 4014 P + 61 7 3863 4885 F + 61 7 3863 2881 E absa@boarding.org.au

www.boarding.org.au