



lightsout

AUSTRALIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION LTD.

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An Excellent Boarding School

Being neither too formal so that individuality is crushed, nor too informal so that propriety is threatened, an excellent boarding school embraces those intangibles that transform a place of residence into a home.

It is a place where procedures are practised with an understanding of their necessity, and routines are celebrated for their capacity to achieve those ends not always obtained through natural inclination.

community rights. It is a place of balance between personal freedom, wherein is found the expression of creativity and character, and corporate duty, wherein is found the expression of proper citizenship.

The level of excellence in a boarding house can be measured in the mood of the least happy. It is found in the presence of a secure sanctuary, in the joy of belonging and in a community that brings order to a life and repair to those elements of character which nature and nurture might have conspired to neglect. It is found less in carefully crafted rules and more in unwritten habits that have been cemented into a community.

Excellence is when staff are chosen as much for their personal character as their professional skill. These skills must include an enjoyment of the young and an appreciation of their proclivities and passions.

An excellent boarding school is one which is happy, and happiness is seldom arrived at through the exercise of routines that deprive of dignity.

The excellent boarding house encompasses within its walls a right and proper mix of private and public space, the former to honour the individual the latter to honour the group.

Happiness requires warmth and empathy, but does not accommodate its students within a saccharine existence of self-indulgence, for an excellent community will occasionally express its love in a compulsion to adhere to prescribed expectations.

Boarding is not a holding pen between bouts of academia, but a place of learning in its own right, an academy which teaches the skills needed for life.

Excellence is a place where individual rights are celebrated, but not at the expense of

It evokes in its students not the awful tale of deprivation or the delicious account of cruelty, but rather, the memory of friendships and experiences which have enriched and equipped for a lifetime, and perhaps even beyond.

THE ANNOYANCE OF INTERNET GRAFFITI

There is a statistical theory that if you gave a million monkeys typewriters and set them to work, they'd eventually come up with the complete works of Shakespeare.

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TIP SHEET: Eight Top Time Tips

'No' is your most powerful time management tool. When we know what our values are, and when we have a clear set of goals in all areas of our lives, we're in a much stronger position ...

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NEW SENIOR BOARDING FACILITY AT ABBOTSLEIGH

Abbotsleigh has 160 boarders, housed in a mixture of lovely old family homes and newer purpose built buildings. Year 12 girls have been housed in 3 old street-frontage cottages ...

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2008 **ABSA** Conference
28th Sept to 1st Oct - Canberra

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From the Chairman

By Dr Tim Hawkes



The ABSA initiative to establish divisions is in no way designed to hinder the excellent work these staff organisations are doing. However, it is hoped that these state boarding staff associations would support the expansion of their operation to embrace heads of boarding institutions as well as boarding staff. This would probably require a change to the boarding staff organisation's constitution.

By allowing membership of heads of boarding institutions and by accepting the ABSA constitution and mission, the existing boarding staff associations would then be able to become the division of ABSA in their respective states.

Finances ABSA fees, be it school membership, affiliate or associate member fees, would include the membership fee not only at the national level but also at the divisional level. These fees will support a National Secretariat and help with the various projects undertaken by ABSA, in fulfilment of its mission.

Action Points

- State representatives on the ABSA Board will be commissioned to establish a division of ABSA within their respective state or territory.
- Discussions will be held between the Chairman of ABSA and the existing Boarding Staff Associations in Western Australia and in South Australia, in order to ascertain whether these staff associations might wish to make the constitutional adjustments necessary to become the division of ABSA in their respective states.
- In those states or territories which have no representative on the National Board of ABSA, the Executive Director, in association with the ABSA Board, will invite individuals who have a significant role in the boarding industry within those respective states and territories, to form an ABSA division.

Dr Tim Hawkes
Chairman, ABSA
July 2008

The Australian Boarding Schools Association is working toward establishing state and territory branches (henceforth called divisions) in order to further its mission to function as an umbrella boarding organisation which fosters collegiality and professionalism at a regional, state and federal level.

The Aims of Divisions The aim of state and territory divisions is to facilitate the national ABSA aims which are to:

- Promote high standards of residential care of children in Australian boarding schools and hostels.
- Provide a national organisation for the boarding industry that unifies the industry.
- Promote the benefits of boarding to the general community.
- Represent the interests of members to governments, other organisations and to the general community.

The role of divisions is vital in providing feedback to the national body on state and territory issues and in providing collegiality at the regional level. Quite apart from dealing with regional issues, the divisions will contribute to national issues such as the professional development of Australian boarding staff, and the establishing of national boarding standards.

Each division would nominate one director to the ABSA National Board as their representative. A few states already have well established organisations designed to meet the needs of boarding staff.

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 and send us some high resolution photos.

Make sure your content is in by the first week in October.

For further information, go to page 16 of this newsletter or contact ABSA.

This Issues Featured Schools

Abbotsleigh - 'New Senior Boarding Facility at Abbotsleigh'. By Rochelle Jenkins



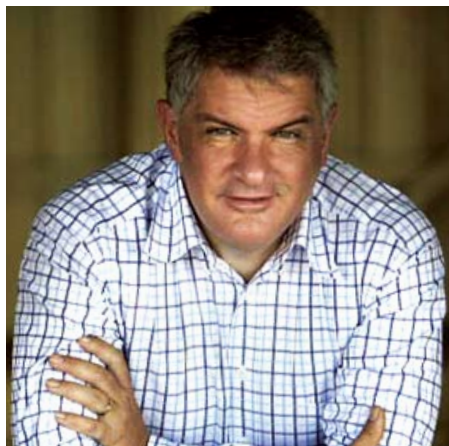
You have been sent multiple copies for distribution to your boarding staff.

If you would like extra copies in the future please contact us at, absa@boarding.org.au with the number of copies requested.



The Annoyance of Internet Graffiti

By Michael Carr-Gregg



There is a statistical theory that if you gave a million monkeys typewriters and set them to work, they'd eventually come up with the complete works of Shakespeare. The British actor Ian Hart recently remarked, that thanks to the Internet, we now know this isn't true.

One thing that clearly occupies the time of the plethora of cyber-monkeys however is inventing hoax email messages. Remember the one about the business traveler who goes to a lounge for a drink at the end of the workday. A person in the bar walks up as they sit alone and offers to buy them a drink. The last thing the traveler remembers is sipping that drink, until they wake up in a hotel room bathtub, their body submerged to their neck in ice. There is a note taped to the wall instructing them not to move and to call a number. A phone is on a small table next to the bathtub. The traveler is instructed to very slowly and carefully feel behind him and determine if there is a tube protruding from his lower back. The businessman finds the tube and answers, "Yes." The operator tells him to remain still, having already sent paramedics to help. The operator knows that both of the business traveler's kidneys have been harvested.

Even though I read this years ago, I still remember the initial horror and the subsequent feelings of 'how could I be so gullible', when I discovered weeks later, that this was just a giant hoax. Even today, at least once a month, a virtual variant of this bogus messages message finds its way in to the 'in' boxes of our nation. Some are

newly invented and can be quite ingenious, while others are recycled and have been circulating in varying guises since email was an egg.

The latest version to grace the information highway is known as the Progesterex Hoax and revolves around a fictitious date rape drug. The initial email, first spotted as far back as 1999, was recently read and believed by a young social worker in a regional NSW Hospital who forwarded it on under the title of "A terrifying and horrid thought" SUBJECT: PLEASE ADVISE YOUR DAUGHTERS AND PASS ON. Her name and the hospital phone number appears on the Australian version.

I still remember the initial horror and the subsequent feelings of 'how could I be so gullible'...

It claims that a woman at a nightclub in Cobar in NSW was taken by 5 men, who gang raped her before dumping her. Unable to remember the events of the evening, tests supposedly confirmed the repeated rape along with traces of Rohypnol in her blood, along with a new drug called Progesterex.

By combining Progesterex with Rohypnol, the date rape drug, the email maintains that the rapists not only erase the victim's memory but that she doesn't conceive from the rape and the rapists needn't worry about having a paternity test identifying him months later. Then the zinger in this hoax email emerges. The drug's effects, it shrieks "...are not temporary – but are permanent! Progesterex, it informs us, was designed to sterilize horses. Any female who takes it will never be able to conceive.'

First of all, there is no such drug and there are absolutely no sites on the Internet telling people how to use it. Second, no sterilization pill for horses exists, as anyone with a passing knowledge of horse racing, would

be aware that sterilization is done via the gelding of stallions. Third, police don't need a paternity test to tell them the identity of a rapist, as the DNA of any residual sperm will tell the police who it belonged to.

Despite the fact that many of these inconsistencies come from the university of the bleeding obvious, one can't help but feel sorry for the presumably well meaning social worker and the hospital who fell prey to this recycled hoax. The calls from the media alone, have driven the media manager of the hospital to drink! It's a puzzle as to what would motivate someone to write and distribute a bogus warning about a non-existent drug and drug spiking incident that never occurred. Unlike phishing, where one's efforts may be rewarded in the form of stolen funds or stolen identities, a hoax writer does not stand to reap such a material reward. Hoaxsters, on the other hand, have motives that are less transparent.

Whether this is one way for the internet monkeys to vent their anger against society or obtain their 15 minutes of cyber fame is unclear - perhaps it is simply a form of internet graffiti to alleviate some simian boredom. Whatever the reason the hoaxsters must get some kind of psychological payoff.

In this case, the email was sent out simply because the social worker genuinely felt compelled to let others know about the dangers posed by progesterex. But there are lessons Boarding staff can share with their charges and I'd encourage them to use this email hoax as an important teachable moment.

Lesson 1: Don't believe everything you read on the net.

Lesson 2: Always guard your drinks, as the most often used drug in drink spiking isn't rohypnol or progesterex - it is alcohol.

Lesson 3: If you are ever overseas and wake up in a bath full of ice, at least you'll know where they got the idea from.

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.

The Scent of Your **Boarding** School

By Dr Linda Vining



A pleasant fragrance has the power to establish a lasting emotional connection between you and your customers. Smell the air around you and see what you can do to enhance your boarding school with a scent-centred marketing strategy.

Years after visiting a boarding school in Queensland I still recall the sweet fragrance of the frangipani trees that lined the pathway to the boarding house. Once inside I commented to the director of boarding on the gorgeous smell of the entrance. To my surprise she opened her drawer and brought out a bottle of frangipani oil. "I spray the oil round the front door every morning to bring the fragrance of the outdoors, indoors," she confessed.

The director of boarding was building olfactory mental imagery. Of course she wouldn't call it that; but others in the scientific community do. In the USA and Europe the use of scent to establish a strong emotional connection between the brand and the customer is a growing marketing science. Researchers are measuring the impact of pleasant scents on their power to encourage shoppers to linger in a store, increase the number of products they examine and their willingness to pay higher prices.

Dr Pamela Dalton who studies cognitive and sensory psychology at the Monelli Chemical Senses Centre in the USA says that scents can trigger almost instantaneous emotional responses in mammals because of our evolutionary development. For example, a newborn baby smells its mother's milk.

Olfactory information is directly linked to the most primitive emotional centres of our brain.

There's nothing new about using ambient scent to tap into customers' psyches. It's used all the time in daily life. We use smell to make choices about food, cosmetics and lifestyle products. How many people will not select a café unless they can smell good coffee? What is new though, is the scenting of stores and organisations that are not normally associated with a pleasant aroma, such as clothing stores, airlines, electrical stores (and, dare I say boarding schools?)

Signature Scents Some companies are developing their own signature scent. For example, the air in Samsung's Manhattan electronics store smells like honeydew melon. It is barely perceptible, but together with the soft constantly morphing light scheme, this scent gives the store a blissfully relaxed feel. The fragrance is the company's signature scent and is being pumped out from hidden devices in the ceiling. Customers are being seduced, not just through their eyes and ears, but also through their noses.

Harold Vogt, founder of the Scent Marketing Institute in New York, says that marketing is all about how a customer feels about a company. "The advent of affordable new target delivery technologies to disseminate scents has spurred organisations to experiment with pumping out perfumes to make customers feel more relaxed or more pampered," he said.

Sniff Your School Not everybody is scent sensitive, but for those of us who are, an aromatic encounter can imprint a positive memory, influence how we feel about a particular brand and ultimately forge an emotional link. So here's a marketing exercise for you..

Stop and sniff the air. Undertake a scent audit of your boarding house. What do you notice? Ignore the rotting banana skins in the bin and the post-sport odours in the lockers, and search for the distinctly pleasant smells, such as the frangipani tree. Next, think about the smell you would like to

greet visitors on arrival. Maybe your scent marketing strategy will only extend to the entrance, but even a bowl of fresh flowers can enhance the air.

Or you might be creative enough to link the smell of your school to the colour of your uniform – the freshness of green, the cool notes of blue, the woody smell of brown, or the eucalyptus smell of grey.

My corporate colours are purple, so, by design, I have three jacaranda trees growing outside my place and a host of lavender plants at the entrance to my office. I spray about the entrance a special blend of lavender oil and rose oil that I mix myself, and visitors often pause, take a deep breath, smile, and say "what a nice smell." By arousing their olfactory senses and linking my corporate colour with smell, I know that the meeting is off to a good start; I have established a memorable connection. Fragrant trees and shrubs are a good way to enhance the air about the boarding schools or you can burn or spray some oil. And here's a thought for schools who have developed their own anniversary rose. If you can capture the perfume of the rose it could take you down a distinctive olfactory route that would really distinguish your school from your competitors.

Stop and sniff the air. Undertake a scent audit of your boarding house.

If your signature smell really takes off, you could do what a department store in Europe is doing. They send a small scent sachet of their signature scent in the envelope with their promotional catalogues. Think prospectus. Now wouldn't that be memorable marketing!

Dr Linda Vining is the director of Marketing Schools. This is a chapter from her entertaining new book "Purple Power: Making School Marketing Memorable". Her contact is 08 8260 7077 or office@marketingschools.net



Put it Away **Now!**

By Robyn Pearce

If you constantly struggle with 'stuff' left lying around, and your desk, office, garage or bedroom is a litter of 'I'll do that later' piles, let 2008 be your "Year of Putting Things Away" – you'll delight yourself.

It's easier to shift a moving object than a stationary one, it generates higher energy, and it's less time-consuming. It's when we have to go back to something that we end up in a muddle, it slows us down, procrastination becomes a familiar companion, and tidiness becomes a hard and challenging chore.

Folk who struggle with this issue typically do good work but just stop too soon. They tend to leave the putting away, or the final completion, or the decision as to where an item should live, for another time.



Next Time, When You:

- Complete a task at work – put away the tools and paperwork.
- Finish the day – tidy your desk and leave out only the first task for tomorrow.
- Return from a trip – unpack everything immediately.
- Get out of bed – make it.
- Dress or undress – hang things up and put the dirty washing in the basket (or ready to go out the door next time you leave your bedroom).
- Eat something – clean up after yourself.

- Arrive home with used gear – clean and store it ready for next time.
- Finish a task in the garage, workshop or garden – clean down and put away the tools.
- Come in from work or town with a bundle of items – groceries, post, accounts to pay, magazines to put away – whatever miscellany you typically bring home – put them straight away.

Consider This:

- What's clutter? Just something in the wrong place at the wrong time
- Space and clutter strugglers just stop too soon – the job's not done until it's all put away. Simply shift the finish line.
- Why make it hard when it could be easy – all for the sake of another two or three minutes?
- Capitalise on your existing momentum. Do it now! Remember, it's faster (and a lot easier) to shift a moving object than a stationary one.

Every piece of paper or equipment lying around is a symptom of a decision not made or an action not completed.

Robyn Pearce CSP is an expert in time management and productivity who mastered her own time challenges and now helps people around the world overcome theirs. She can show you how to transform your time challenges into high productivity and the life balance you desire.

Download her **FREE** report "How to Master Time In Only 90 Seconds", a simple yet powerful diagnostic tool to help you identify your key areas for action. You'll find it at <http://www.gettingagrip.com/products/ebooks.html>.



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Connect! Important Challenges to the Future on Independent Schools in Australia

By David Anderson

Education is a constant reorganising or reconstructing of experience. Mere growth and development is not enough. Educative experience involves activity and effort on the part of both pupil and teacher in many different theatres of the school. Education requires the blending of new and old in the creation of fresh patterns of meaning. Since much of this experience is the social interaction between student and teacher the process of education inevitably becomes a continuous reconstruction of the tissues of everyday existence. As individuals grow through education, so too does the bond of experience and learning grow between students and teachers.

It is of no surprise that in boarding schools in England hundreds of year ago teachers were paid only a pittance however the school offered staff housing and meals as payment in kind. This environment caused staff to accept the school as their home, place of employment, centre of their sporting and co-curricular interest and sometimes their social outlet. Today many years later some independent boarding schools in the western world still rely on the close attachment of the boarding staff, who are also classroom teachers to share a similar lifestyle as in the past, bringing many rich experiences and rewards to teachers and students.

The general philosophy that independent schools organise co-curricular activities as an important part of their school program does ensure that the teachers become involved in many activities outside the classroom even if they do not reside on campus. Activities after school hours and on weekends involve teachers in a variety of co-curricular activities contributing greatly to the overall education of the student building up relationships and establishing confidence between themselves and staff.

The idea of staff working with boarders across many different spheres of the

school is an enormous bonus to the aims and objectives of the schools. It is also an opportunity for teachers to observe the different individual talents of the students in a more informal working partnership between student and teacher. Staff can also benefit from knowing the boarders in more than one setting allowing greater opportunity for student and teachers to work together in a mutually supportive environment.

The close connection between pupil and teacher in independent schools has been a strong and successful feature of the schools for hundreds of years. The 'schoolmaster', 'schoolmistress' has been in place to communicate the ethos, discipline and spirit of the school through activities shared with boarders. The boarding environment in independent schools is an obvious example of this philosophy where it has been observed that boarders and campus staff involve themselves more robustly in the activities of the school.

Staff living and working on campus can also provide similar support to each other as they work with their colleagues in many different areas of the school. They can provide each other with support and encouragement when disappointments are experienced.

Many school administrators in Australia and in other western nations have recently been strongly focussed on the academic attainments of their students, especially results in final examinations. This focus has been exaggerated by media coverage, reporting examination results of schools across regional areas and success of students acceptance to universities. Competition between independent schools focussed on academic results closely associated with marketing and enrolment has become in many schools, the single responsibility of the focus of the teacher.

School administrators who have become 'academic result driven' have allowed many teachers to specialise only in the academic program of the school. Teachers have been

released from many co-curricular activities and sporting responsibilities and replaced with outsourced part time instructors.

There has been a positive reaction by many staff to the changed responsibilities in schools. It is generally favourably received for an employee to be told that they are allowed to work fewer hours than in the past with less responsibility. Many administrators and teachers aim to replace the time involved in co-curricular activities with greater research into their subject discipline and devote extra time to classroom preparation. Evaluating how teachers allocate their spare time outside the classroom is a difficult exercise. However, I believe that the reduced connection by the teachers in the activities of the school is not in to the advantage of teacher, student or school.

Teaching is essentially a process of interaction between teacher and student. The teacher must remember the pupils are responding to them, perhaps more significantly than they are to the subject of study or the game they are playing. For this reason, the personality of the teacher is important and the teacher must use every opportunity to captivate a student's respect enabling the teacher to use that connection when working in many different spheres in the school. It does not take long for the pupils to relay their respect for a teacher to other students. A teacher therefore may enjoy respect from a student in the classroom in appreciation and respect for that teacher's energetic and purposeful work in the school. Teachers teach students not subjects!

The discovery and enjoyment of the continuing satisfaction of teaching may be listed as the first element in the good life for the teacher. To participate more actively in the school environment is sometimes easier than becoming remote or disconnected from the students. Children respond to positive reinforcement, encouragement and recognition and sometimes there



The close connection between pupil and teacher in independent schools has been a strong and successful feature of the schools for hundreds of years.

are more opportunities for a teacher to convey these expressions of support and encouragement. Students remember long after they leave school the teachers who cared and showed a genuine interest in their journey through the school. A positive remark by a teacher to a boarder outside of the classroom, especially to a student that may not receive a great deal of praise or might not achieve academically, can be a great personal boost.

A teacher who is closely connected with the co-curricular program of the school will also have an opportunity to recognise the achievements of students at other times throughout the school week. The follow up of participation and achievement by staff is an important motivational tool for many boarders. If co-curricular staff is outsourced by the school on a part time basis such opportunities do not present themselves during the school week.

A school employing many outsourced specialist to conduct co-curricular programs may not provide an all-round consistent and balanced approach to the educational experience. Boarders tend to expect their teachers, in the performance of their duties, to provide a model of the kind of behaviour which they are endeavouring to inculcate. Teachers mixing with students in all activities of the school are expected to be temperate in their habits, understanding of the ethos of the school and maintaining the policy of discipline expected at all

times. The same cannot be guaranteed from staff who have not been teacher trained professionally or orientated over some period of time to understand the aims and objectives of the school.

The playing of games is an example of my concern. Sport is one of many learning experiences in independent schools. It is an activity by which a student can learn a great deal about himself and the team of which he is a member. It is a place where the delight of promotion to a higher team draws a fine line with the disappointment if relegated to a lower team. Both become important learning experiences.

Sport, debating, plays and orchestra provide the opportunity to promote growth in pupils so that they can cope with developmental tasks that face them in the process of living. This means providing experiences outside the classroom that will foster such things as a healthy body, getting along with others, civic responsibilities, basic knowledge and skills. All these attributes lead to personal contentment. Students need good mentors to in these circumstances for seeing and assisting that they conduct themselves in an approved manner. The mentor who is professionally trained as a teacher and who knows the ethos of the school will be the best teacher for a student to deal with consistently.

In conclusion staff that care and know the students will have the most rewarding

careers in education and they will be the most effective and appreciated. If staff do not fully connect with the students the schools will not be places of excitement, sharing or effective learning. The 'master' teacher must remain the heart and soul of the school.

What then is the good life for the teacher? The diversity of gifts and backgrounds which different teachers bring to their vocation means that each one will work out his own pattern of life in terms of his own nature and the school community within which he finds himself. Within the riches of such diversity, however, certain common strands will be apparent. The teacher who enjoys a good life will find enduring personal satisfaction in the process of teaching and be fully involved in the life of the school. The teacher will continue to learn and constantly renew and update his pedagogical resources. The teacher will also aspire to a position of leadership to ensure these characteristics of the profession will be maintained. It is the teacher to whom the inculcations of values are entrusted in a diversity of experiences for young people.

David Anderson is the Senior Boarding Housemaster at Shore - Sydney Church of England Grammar School.

Tip Sheet: Eight Top Time Tips

1. 'No' is your most powerful time management tool. When we know what our values are, and when we have a clear set of goals in all areas of our lives, we're in a much stronger position to politely and appropriately say 'no' to potential time-stealers and less relevant activities.

2. Every week, block in a few important non-urgent actions. It's too easy to get caught up in everlasting deadlines. To change that emphasis make appointments with yourself, written into your diary or organiser, to work on one or two activities per week of long-term and long-lasting value. If you're not sure what sort of things you could be working on, think of the big tasks you're putting off until you 'have time'. Almost certainly they can be broken down into small chunks and there will be something you can realistically start on.

3. Constantly ask, 'What is my highest priority right now?' This is a great focusing question. When we use it as a constant background mantra or self-question we find it easier to stay on task with the activities that really will make a difference. We're also less likely at the end of the day to find we've not dealt with our highest priorities of the day.

4. 'How can I do this task more efficiently?' Become what I call a 'walking question mark'. There are always better ways to do things. Every time you do a task, look for a shortcut, some way to trim a few seconds or a minute or two off the task. They mount up to a surprising total over a week.

A very simple example: You're emptying the dishwasher. To quickly put away the cutlery lay a tea towel on the bench right beside your cutlery drawer. Tip the contents of the cutlery basket on to the tea towel. Then you can swiftly pick up and put away each category - it takes only a few moves.

Now apply that thinking to how you manage your paperwork, how you put things away, how many unnecessary steps you take in a

day. Notice how often you say in frustration, '*Bother it. I forgot to get (or do) ... '.

Time-saving efficiencies are all around us, but most people don't go looking for them. Instead, they just complain about lack of time.

5. Block in regular sanity gaps. What point is there in being wonderfully efficient if we don't take time to enjoy our wonderful life and the amazing world we live in? I've been down the trail of burn-out - it's not a pretty look. (The upside is that my tough experiences fuel my passion today to share this message.)

When did you last take a complete weekend off - no email, no business calls, no responsibilities other than the people you're with?

Many of us know it's important to clean out old files and regularly defrag our computers - it's a house-keeping process that helps them run better. Think of taking regular time off as a defrag of your brain. You'll come back fresher and you'll also produce better results (just like the computer!)

Give your conscious and sub-conscious time to talk to each other - you'll be amazed at the results.

6. Manage your energy well and time looks after itself. As I work around the world I'm hearing the phrase 'energy management' more and more. Think of your energy levels as your filter or indicator as to whether you're doing the right things.

They're also a clue - if something isn't flowing smoothly there is almost always an opportunity to either change activity or invest more energy into improving things.

A good filter question: 'What's blocking my energy here? What can I do about it?'

7. Eliminate clutter in all areas of your life. This links in part with the previous point. When you walk into a clean tidy environment, how do you feel? The more you're connected to that environment, the more impact it will have on you. Someone else's messy and untidy space may or may not have an obvious effect on you, but I'll guarantee that you'll virtually never want to linger.

Some people only sort out possessions and 'stuff' when they move houses; some do it every spring. I encourage you to run a constant 'clutter filter' on yourself. Make it part of your daily routine and it's never a '*big* job.

Instead of saying 'I'll just put it here while I think about it', get into the habit of letting go. The reality is, even if you do think about it again, why would you want to? Old 'stuff' is seldom used again by you. Why not recycle it and let someone else have the chance to get value. (Yes, I know there's a huge industry in recycling antiques and bric-a-brac. I'm not talking about Steptoe and Son, or the Antique Roadshow. I'm talking about your daily environment and the psychic advantage of keeping it clean and lean.)

Imagine every item you hang on to has an invisible silver thread connecting you to it. Does it energise you or exhaust you?

8. Don't make email the first thing of the day. If you get hooked into email first thing in the day it takes over. In fact, it's an addictive medium. Instead, you take control of your day.

Spend time on the most important tasks for the day, and (unless it's truly vital that you include an email check first thing) don't come to email until at least mid-morning, and then only for a defined chunk of time. Have two or three email slots through the day and you'll keep on top of most of it. Every now and then you may need a catch up, but in truth, if people are relying on email as the medium for urgent information they're using it wrongly.

(If you want to know how to keep your Inbox empty, get 5 Easy Steps to Email Excellence. It's a brilliant CD. Peter, Thea and Jurgen explain how to use Rules in Outlook and Outlook Express to automatically file. It's changed not only my email life but also those of my clients who've tried the techniques.)

A phone is still almost always the best way to alert someone that there's something urgent waiting. The thing is, communication is only what's received, not what is sent. How do you know someone has read your urgent epistle unless you've spoken to them?



Physical Intelligence

Opinion by Ben Vining

Somehow students have formed the wrong idea about sport. They are shunning it, afraid of it and worried that it will consume their time and rob them of study hours.

I notice this when students say to me with regret, "I'd love to do sport but I don't have time because I want to do really well with my studies." In response I point to the research that shows that marks actually improve when students do sport, and I explain how this happens. In our market-oriented education environment where academic achievement is so highly prized and promoted, I fear that educators are short-changing students if they let them believe they only need to cultivate the mind. A well-functioning person looks after both mind and body.

Steve Kalend, executive officer at School Sport Australia, says that sport in schools is declining because teachers no longer volunteer for coaching, and the threat of litigation over injuries makes everybody nervous. He sees sport being squeezed out to accommodate a crowded curriculum, suffering from a lack of programmed time and resource allocation."

So, here we have a situation where the community is talking about healthy canteens, diabetes, body image and obesity, while sporting programs in schools are being cut. This is a serious mismatch that needs attention. I'm pleased to see that the Queensland government has taken action and introduced a Smart Moves initiative to all government schools this year. The program requires primary students to participate in moderate physical activity for at least 30 minutes a day. In secondary schools, the requirement is a minimum of two hours a week.

Queensland Education and Training Minister, Rod Welford, says that the 2006 Healthy Kids Survey showed that one in five Queensland children are overweight or obese. "Research tells us that engaging in physical activity at school improves students' educational outcomes and supports their personal development so we want to allocate time for sport in schools,

improve access to sporting facilities and increase teachers' capacity to deliver physical activity," he said.

In my opinion we have to re-evaluate the place of sport in education and look at the sort of intelligence that sport brings to students. The British physical educator, Dr Margaret Whitehead, describes physical intelligence as "literacy in movement; as vital to every person as literacy in verbal expression." She points out that physical intelligence develops perception, experience, memory, anticipation and decision-making.

When I train a rowing crew I see the emergence of physical intelligence all the time. Students start the season as a bunch of mixed individuals each pulling in their own direction, fooling around, lacking commitment, and full of fatuous ego about their skills. However, after a 5-month season I observe a marked shift in their behaviour and attitude as a result of hard effort.

Those who start out loud, wayward and disrespectful usually change as the coaches show them how to channel their energy in positive ways. They frequently become leaders and develop a motivating attitude that influences others. They like it when fellow crew members look up to them for positive attitudes, and they respond well to this sort of respect.

The tougher the training we do the greater the students' resolve to succeed and the stronger they become as a team. They develop commitment to the goals of the group, and instead of being self-centred, they grow a sense of belonging and loyalty. It's a miraculous transformation that never ceases to reward me. I marvel at how they mature in such a short period, and I feel sorry for all those who miss the opportunity to participate in a sport and develop this intelligence.

Just recently a mother of a Year 12 student said to me, "Of all the things my son has done at school, the best thing was to join the boatshed." This boy was no star performer, but he changed from a difficult teenager to a confident and disciplined sportsman and



Year 8 students at St Hilda's School develop physical intelligence through their engagement with sport.

it carried through every aspect of his life. So, when a student tells me s/he has no time for sport I point out the benefits of participating in sport and explain that the secret of success is time management, not denial.

I believe we need to sell school sport differently and take it beyond exercise. When you think of sport I want you to think of the physical intelligence that sport brings to the students' lives and how you can capitalise on these benefits for better performance in the boarding house.

Benefits Of Organised School Sport

In addition to fitness and fun, sport teaches students to:

1. Pace themselves – sometimes to move explosively, at other times to sustain movement over a long period.
2. Set goals and endure pain and discomfort.
3. Practice discipline, precision, balance and coordination.
4. Develop strategies and solve problems quickly.
5. Value the team and respect other players.
6. Lose with grace, then get up and try again.
7. Manage pressure and allot time thoughtfully.

So, if you find your boarders are flagging under the weight of all their academic commitments, help them join a sports team.

Ben Vining (B Applied Science) is Director of Bravo Rowing. He is a consultant to schools and coaches rowing at St Hilda's School on the Gold Coast Queensland and The Southport School. His contact is 0403 195 339

New Senior Boarding Facility at Abbotsleigh

By Rochelle Jenkins



Abbotsleigh has 160 boarders, housed in a mixture of lovely old family homes and newer purpose built buildings. Year 12 girls have been housed in 3 old street-frontage cottages, each holding 10 to 12 girls plus a staff member. The girls have always enjoyed this 'pre-uni' flatting scenario, even though the houses have been in need of significant repair and refurbishment.

It was with this in mind that we set about planning our new Senior Boarding facility for Years 11 and 12 boarders. We wanted to maintain the homely feeling of the Hirst Houses, with family-sized living areas rather than huge common rooms; with breakout areas for collaborative learning or a cup of coffee; bedrooms that provide privacy and comfort; and a project or 'wet' room so that girls could work on their final year Art or Design projects; a parent retreat with facilities for parents to freshen up or relax after a long trip from the country. Girls also requested that we find somewhere to put a bath for them to relax in!

Wheeldon House was opened on the 25th May this year. It provides accommodation for 64 girls (32 in each of Years 11 and 12), 2 Boarding Coordinators and 6 Boarding Resident Assistants, in four two-storey

wings. As the building site contained one of the last stands of 'Blue Gum High' trees in the area, we had to build around trees and adhere to strict environmental guidelines. The result is a beautiful facility nestled among gum trees and other native flora.

Each Year group has its own Reception office and staff, planned so that staff can see who is coming to (or going out!) the front door. All doors are electronically alarmed. Staff accommodation is situated at the ends of each of the wings: Boarding Coordinators have 3 bedroom apartments and Resident Assistants have 2 flats, with 3 Residents in each. Residents enjoy a room with ensuite and share a common room/kitchenette.

Boarders have a single bedroom with an ensuite shared between 2 girls. They have an extra cupboard outside their bedroom door to put large items such as sports gear or suit cases. Each girl has her name and town of origin on her door. At the end of Year 12 the boarder may take home her name badge, and a miniature version will be placed on the back of the door for tradition and posterity.

There is a nook or break-out area for every 8 rooms on each floor, for relaxing and collaborative learning. They are different

sizes and shapes. Having small nooks rather than large common rooms fulfilled our desire to keep the 'homely' atmosphere of the old cottages. Each nook has a table and chairs, and a kitchenette with a boiling / cold water tap and a microwave.

Each Year group has a full-equipped kitchen for girls to cook weekend meals or snacks and family room with comfortable lounges and large flat screen TVs. There is an outdoor area with barbeques leading out from each kitchen/common room.

There are two parent retreats, each with bathroom, sofa bed and tea-making facilities. This is where we found the opportunity to provide those strongly-requested baths! The retreats can also be used as interview rooms or private areas for personal discussion if necessary.

There is a Project Room downstairs, providing tables and deep sinks for art and design work or sculpture, plus computers and a sewing machine for other practical work. Sensor lights in all the hallways save electricity. There is a 50,000 litre tank underneath that collects all water from the roof and this is used for toilets and washing machines as well as irrigation.

The girls and staff are delighted with their new home and younger years are eagerly looking forward to their senior years in the "Resort in the Bush".



Rochelle Jenkins
Head of Boarding
Abbotsleigh



The result is a beautiful facility nestled among gum trees and other native flora.



Old Dog **New Tricks.** What Type of Dog Are You?

By Ben Gelton

Old Dog lay on the carpet and looked at Young Dog. Young Dog strutted towards him.

He walked right up to Old Dog and sniffed his nose as if to say "Hey come play with me!"

As Old Dog fell asleep, Young Dog trotted off dejectedly...

A short time later Young Dog bounded back into the room and Old Dog woke with a start. "What was THAT?!" he thought as he woke.

Don't be afraid to get involved in the technology that your students use everyday. Take an interest.

Young Dog ran around dragging and fighting what looked like a snake.

It had a long tail that split about halfway down its body, was white and flat with a grey circle in the middle. Its three triangular



eyes peered ominously at Old Dog. "Wait a minute" Old Dog thought. "That's not a snake... that's the music device that The Master uses."

What was that pup up to??? He had a good mind to scold it. The Master would not be impressed if he discovered his iPod had been tampered with! Instead of scolding he watched intrigued, but was more annoyed at the sheer joy Young Dog was having, first pouncing, then wrestling, then chewing the snake.

As usual Young Dog soon lost interest and dropped the snake and disappeared behind the sofa, off on his next big adventure. For almost a minute there was COMPLETE silence. Then, without warning, there was a loud "BANG!". The lights dimmed, then a shrill yelp was heard, followed by the smell of burnt dog hair.

A pang of concern shot through Old Dog as it was he, that was meant to be looking after Young Dog. "What NOW?" he thought. He made his way around the side of the sofa in order to get a better view of the back. As he peered behind, Young Dog leapt out. Old Dog had but a fraction of a second to step aside to avoid being bowled.

On a second look, Old Dog realised the awful truth. The Master's iPod charger lay smashed on the floor and a small flame was venting from the charred electrical socket.

Young Dog was yelping and barking. Old Dog knew that the situation was serious and that fire and smoke killed quickly. He needed to act!

As the room filled with smoke Old Dog grabbed the pup and dragged him out.

But the sad truth was he was powerless and he knew it, because they were both locked inside the house. His heart sank when he saw the telephone sitting on the table in front of him and he realised his lack of technological understanding meant



that he could not call for help. They were trapped!

The moral of the story is: Don't be afraid to get involved in the technology that your students use everyday. Take an interest. Most children under the age of 18 have grown up with computers, cell phones, iPods and the like. These are second nature to them. As older people, we need to make more effort to understand and work with the technology they use. If we are going to maintain our place in the world alongside them, then we really have no choice.

I am reminded of a famous quote "The greatest discovery of all time is that a person can change his future by merely changing his attitude" Oprah Winfrey.

By Ben Gelton
Software Marketing



Life is...

By Rachel Bartolo



Life is in the image of God
Life is a wonder be aware if it
Life is a privilege be grateful for it
Life is a hardship bear it
Life is a miracle marvel at it
Life is your life it is precious
Life is a challenge meet it
Life is worth living have hope
Life is your teacher be guided by it
Life is a trail follow it
Life is a sorrow overcome it
Life is unpredictable adjust to it
Life is hope cling to it – never give up!
Life is an adventure dare it
Life is a tragedy triumph over it
Life is friendship embrace it
Life is a game play it
Life is flexible adapt to it
Life is a duty perform it
Life is complicated keep it simple
Life is a mystery unfold it
Life is unique treasure it
Life is a journey complete it
Life is human nature show compassion
Life is a promise fulfill it
Life is conflict find peace
Life is beauty appreciate it
Life is making mistakes learn from them
Life is full of hurts seek and give forgiveness
Life is a struggle fight it
Life is a goal achieve it
Life is a story read it
Life is a puzzle solve it
Life is cunning be cautious
Life is a dream pursue it
Life is fearful have courage
Life is a gift accept it
Life is fragile handle it carefully & with prayer

Life is our Faith ~ It is such a force in our lives that it is awe inspiring in its wonder.

Life is what you make of it ~ Do the very best you can!

By Rachel Bartolo
Director of Boarding
Mt St Bernard College

The **Need** for Fences

By Dr Timothy Hawkes



Parenting is not always easy. I have three bits of evidence to support this claim. They are called Peter, Alicia, and Pippa.

One particular challenge for parents is to set the boundaries of permissible behaviour. When must lights go out? When must lights go on? When must you return? When must you leave? When must you say "please"? When must you say "thank you"?

What are the boundaries in your house about language, manners, bed times, driving, chores, etiquette, smoking, sex, drinking, dress, music, computer use, TV watching, schoolies-week, and the host of other battle grounds that can lead to the premature whitening of hair?

Some parents just get exhausted by the warfare. Worn down by pester-power and intimidated by their children's growing

physical strength, they capitulate. Others prefer to be their children's best friend rather than their best parent.

I suspect there are too many children with too few fences in their lives. Our children need boundaries within which they must operate. If the fences are weak and undefended, the young bulls will break through. Asking them not to lean on the fence is about as useless as playing the flute and expecting the rats to follow. It only happens in fairy tales.

If a fence is weak, as some parental and academic fences can be in some child-centred environments, many of our children will cross the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. A weak fence tells a child that "this particular restriction is not thought very important by adults... I wonder why it's not worth defending... I'll give it a gentle nudge..." The natural streak of inquisitiveness, when combined with a propensity for aggression

and independence, will ensure that a bull will soon run wild, and a wild bull can do a great deal of damage in places other than a china shop.

Our children need boundaries within which they must operate.

If we take the trouble to build a strong fence that will withstand the odd bump from a bull, the boundaries become both known and respected. Children generally admire strength. The teachers who are strong are the ones that are remembered with genuine fondness at alumni gatherings for decades to come. The compliant parent who is weak in discipline is in danger of being seen as an object of pity or even a target of scorn. Weak adult guidance can breed a presumption which can end in crumpled roadside metal, wrecked careers, and ruined relationships.

Care needs to be taken not to confuse the setting of boundaries with oppressive restrictions. The strong teacher and the firm parent need not be a stranger to compassion and sensitivity. One can see this in the strong people in history. Mandela, Ghandi, Jesus: each had a moral and ethical strength which was extraordinary. They were resolute people who remained constant to their calling. This did not stop any of them showing love, shedding tears, or dealing with those they met with kindness.

As adults we need to bear witness of having limits in our lives. Some freedoms are only found with fences.

Strong words gently spoken can be the making of a student, and one word that many of us might need to learn to use in our guidance of our students is "No".

Dr T F Hawkes
Headmaster
November 2006



Without a Home

By Brad Papworth

Census data shows that about 100,000 people are homeless in Australia on any given night (2001). A person is considered homeless if they do not have access to safe, secure, adequate housing, if they frequently move from one temporary shelter to another or they are staying in accommodation that falls below minimum community standards.

Homelessness is multi-faceted and affects different groups of people in diverse ways with the causes and consequences of homelessness varying between groups such as families, young people and women escaping domestic violence. It can be the result of poverty, unemployment, lack of affordable housing and domestic violence being the single biggest cause of homelessness in Australia. Homelessness can also be triggered by family breakdown, mental illness, sexual assault, alcohol and other drug use, financial difficulty, gambling and social isolation. In 2004-05, about 34,400 young people aged between 12 and 25 sought accommodation; however, this figure does not truly reflect the number of young people who live on the streets.

A recent report by Wesley Mission, More than a bed: Sydney's homeless speak out, found that 71% of respondents identified the housing crisis as the major reason for their homelessness. Of those, 88% said that accumulated debt and unexpected financial difficulties were factors behind housing crisis. Nearly a quarter said that before becoming homeless they had been earning incomes of between \$35,000 and \$50,000 per year and the findings indicate just how easy it is for an ordinary person to end up homeless.

There is an old saying that 'home is where the heart is'. While we can never replace a student's home, as a boarding residence we do endeavour to create a safe environment, where each child can develop their individual talents and feel valued. We also try to represent the collective of parents' values, attitudes and beliefs that they would instill in their child at home. What makes a boarding residence or school great is more



than the sum of the people who live in it. It is what we stand for, it is about striving to do one's best in areas of talent as well as realising that at times we need to contribute to the organisation in other areas in which we are not as talented. It is about caring for others, having a real sense of worth of ourselves and value of other people.

It is far too easy to be parochial to that which suits ourselves or for the sake of traditions at the expense of losing the opportunity for each child to develop themselves while still enjoying the benefits of a boarding house

or boarding school which strives together. For students and staff it can be easy to be popular but mediocre, far harder to be respected and achieve great things.

With 1 in every 200 Australians being homeless everyday and living without their most fundamental rights, it is our duty that to ensure that every child feels they have a 'home' in the House and in the School.

Brad Papworth
Housemaster - Hake Harris House
The King's School

Coming Events

Australia

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

USA

The Association of Boarding Schools
2008 TABS Conference

Date: 3 - 7 December 2008

Location: Leading Schools Baltimore, MD

UK

Annual Conference for Housemasters
and Housemistresses

Date: 2 - 4 January 2009

Location: Cheltenham Chase Hotel,
Gloucestershire

Annual Conference for Deputy Heads

Date: 29 & 31 January 2009

Location: Chesford Grange Warwick

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 resolution photos.

Send all files to; lightsout@boarding.org.au by the first week in October.

This Issues Featured Schools

Abbotsleigh - 'New Senior Boarding Facility at Abbotsleigh'. By Rochelle Jenkins



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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.

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Visit: www.artspec.com.au

- 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 for the next edition of 'Lights Out', 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!

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.

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M: +61 (0) 404 128 558

W: www.letzlive.org

Nicholas Hare B.Bus, Dip.Com

Founder & Director

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