

Lights Out

Vol. 16 | Issue 2 | June 2023

Why you should always
Expect the Unexpected

Better Together:
*Shaping a Co-ed
Boarding House*

Seven Tips to Prepare
your Students
*for Test-Taking
Success*

Hey there, mate!
*Six Simple Ways to
Remember Students' Names
and Strengthen Connections*



AUSTRALIAN
BOARDING
SCHOOLS
ASSOCIATION

Making Boarders' Lives Better



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Great Southern Grammar boarders on a Saturday afternoon

CONTACT US

Australian Boarding Schools Association.
Postal: PO Box 3241, HENDRA, QLD, 4011
Office: Unit 6, 26 Navigator Place,
HENDRA, QLD, 4011
P + 61 7 3205 4940
F + 61 7 3205 6567
E absa@boarding.org.au
www.boarding.org.au

EDITOR

Richard Stokes, Chief Executive Officer,
Australian Boarding Schools Association

GRAPHIC DESIGN

www.trishbiggsgraphicdesign.com.au
+61 403 471 903

PRINTING

Professional Print Services
sales@professionalprintservices.com.au

What makes *boarding staff training different?*

During the last six months I have been in discussion with a number of professional learning providers about what they are offering and, without fail, they are intrigued when I talk about the incredible role our boarding staff play looking after other people's children for that other 18 hours a day - when they are not in class.



Most recently we have been working with a provider to put together some online Child Protection training which is aimed at the specific needs of boarding staff - concentrating on areas such as grooming, careful supervision around bedroom and bathroom spaces and developing protocols which ensure both the boarders themselves and the staff working with them are comfortable and safe. This was highlighted even more to me recently when I met up with one of my ex-boarders from the early 1990s and he talked about how when training to become a counsellor it brought back to him his experience as a

Year Eight boarder when one of the staff clearly was grooming him - thankfully for him nothing more happened, whilst for others this was not the case.

Our Duty of Care Level Two - Essential Knowledge workshop highlights these issues specifically, but it is clear to me that one training in this area is nowhere near enough - it must be re-visited annually and mention the specific situation that boarding is, so that it is completely relevant and the perfect reminder of our need to take care and watch. So we are looking forward to being able to provide this for our members later this year.



However, child safety is not the only issue in which our staff need continual training - it is every aspect of their boarding journey. This term we have provided Certificate Courses in both Risk and Academic Performance Improvement, the Online Boarding Conference had some great speakers once again, and the ongoing webinars provide deep learning in specific topics relevant to the work of the boarding house staff member. However sometimes I wonder why these online activities are not oversubscribed - especially given we have over 3,900 boarding staff in Australia. I have heard all sorts of excuses - we don't have a budget for that, our teachers do heaps of professional development, we don't have enough time in the day, just to name a few but I challenge you to consider it with your legal glasses on - what will that day in court be like if the only training boarding staff have undertaken was a Duty of Care workbook completed six years ago?

For too long the boarding section of the school has been treated like the poor cousin, the one who gets the spoils of PD money once all the important people in the school have spent theirs. For too long those boarding staff who work part-time in boarding and also work elsewhere have used the excuse that they don't have time. For too long those who are also teachers in the school treat boarding as an add-on and therefore not one which requires any level of training. And for too long those running our boarding houses have

thought they have all the answers and there is nothing more they can learn.

As the lucky one who gets to see most of our training options as part of my work I can't believe how much better I would have been at my job running a boarding school if I had had the opportunity to up-skill like we do today. So here are ten quick ways you might consider expanding yours and your boarding team's learning:

1. if you have subscribed to the webinar bundle (and for those of you who haven't this is by far the cheapest online training available for your staff) structure your staff meetings around getting staff to report back on a webinar they found useful and/or interesting over the last term
2. closely follow your PD certificates (your Head of Boarding gets a listing each term and every staff member can request one from our office) to ensure you undertake at least 15 hours of training each year
3. if you are new to boarding, complete the Duty of Care Level 1 - Induction course online which is free for all members
4. complete the free online courses 'Active Duty' and 'Top Tips for Boarding Staff'
5. check the range of Certificate Courses offered each term and subscribe to at least one every year
6. send in a request to our office if you have a topic which is pressing in your

work and you would like us to teach our learning on

7. if your work includes handing out medication to boarders, complete the online 'Administer Medications' course
8. spend time watching the free online boarding house tours - they are a fantastic way to pick up new ideas and learn how others have solved the same problems you face
9. whilst you will have missed the 2023 Online Boarding Conference, make this a priority for future years. Where else can you get access to fabulous international keynote speakers for such a reasonable price and without leaving your staffroom or office?
10. Register for the International Boarding Conference in September to be held in Hobart - the program entitled 'Keeping Boarders' Lives Safer' is quite exciting.

Good luck on your professional journey in this wonderful profession and don't forget that ABSA is here to help you at every step along the way. ■



AUTHOR:
Richard Stokes
Chief Executive
Officer
Australian
Boarding
Schools
Association



Hello from Torres Strait Kaziw Meta, *Thursday Island!*

January 2023 saw my family (wife pregnant with our third baby, two sons and dog) pack up our house and relocate to the beautiful Torres Strait Islands; a place rich with culture, spectacular scenery and an incredibly unique boarding facility, catering to 67 boarders from 17 different islands.

In my short four months here, I have been on an incredible journey and am keen to share many of the learnings I have experienced here.

#1 - TIME IS PRECIOUS

I feel like I blinked and term one was over! As Director of Residential Community (which many of you will already know), ensuring you are generous with your time is one of the most valuable things you can offer to staff, parents, boarders, contractors, cleaners, cooks, community members and so on. My first two weeks

were very busy connecting with these people, with the aim of listening - to learn as much as I could about how things operated, what was working and what the struggles are, which allowed me to form a plan for my role. Connecting with people consumed an enormous amount of my time and energy (where I would be having conversations from the early hours of the morning into the late evenings) covering the following areas:

- **Cultural Understanding:** language, slang, cultural traditions, elders, family connects, cultural stories, history;
- **Boarders:** names, islands, stories and

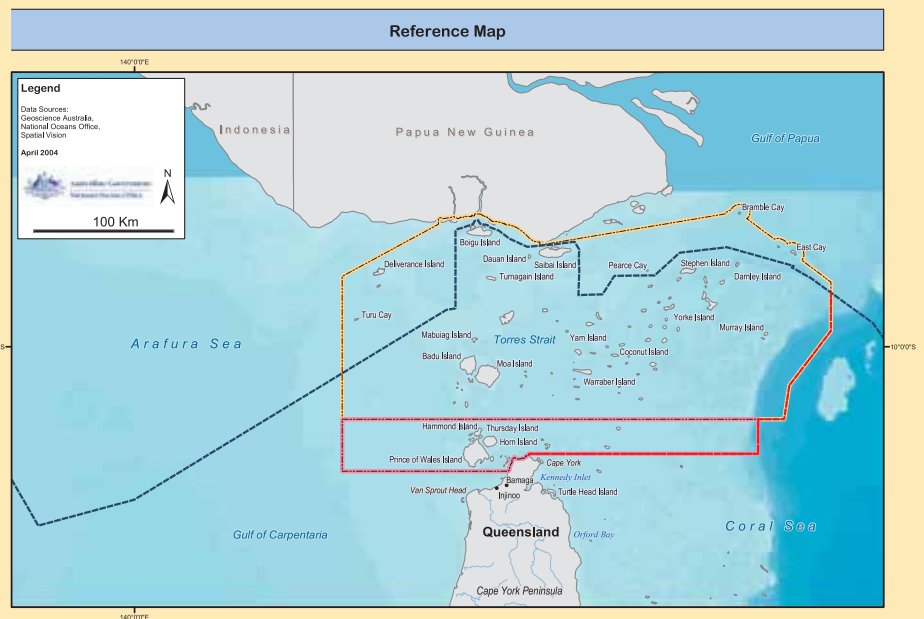
interests;

- **Staff:** names, islands, stories, experience and interests;
- **Workplace:** processes, structures, workloads, culture, uniqueness, improvements, history;
- **Management Committee:** structure, expectations, policies, procedures, human resources, finances, facilitates.

As I reflect on my first term, I strongly believe making myself available and being genuinely interested in the stories people have to share is the most essential first step before joining a new community and making any change.

#2 - CONNECTION TO CULTURE

Prior to leaving I suspected it would be useful to have a deeper understanding of the culture and history of the Torres Strait Islands, which led me to read as much



as I could. However, when we arrived, I quickly realised that researching from behind a book or computer screen can really only give you so much. As I suspect in most cultures, it's not until you start spending time with that particular community that you really get an insight into their culture and history.

What an amazing experience it has been to learn about the 17 islands (image above) that our boarders come from (which the locals call the outer islands) and the different dialects and languages they speak. All of our boarders speak English as a second language with quite a unique accent. As the boarders come from clusters of language groups they all have their own unique accent, which I initially struggled to understand. They would laugh as I would often ask them to repeat or explain themselves in a different way. A benefit of spending so much time talking and listening in my first few weeks was

that I was able to quickly adjust and am learning very slowly to speak (not very well) some of their language myself.

As you may be aware, the Torres Strait Islanders are rich with cultural dances and songs which we have been privileged to not only witness in performance settings, but also all the practice and passion that goes in behind the performances (Kaziw Meta has it's own cultural dance and singing group). Whilst I was aware that there were cultural dances and songs from the Torres Strait, I didn't realise how unique these songs were to the particular islands (some songs only certain boarders from certain islands know and practice). It is a great honour and joy for boarders to be part of the dance or singing team, and is also only privy to well-behaved boarders.

Here at Kaziw Meta, I get the privilege of working with 100% Torres Strait Islander boarders and staff who have a

deep understanding of the many different cultural nuances. The staff are very professional, understand the boarders and know the family members so when issues do arise, we can pinpoint the reason why or bring in family to assist with getting the boarder back on track (most of the time). I have been very blessed to attend many cultural gatherings where they serve Kai Kai (food) in traditional methods. It is definitely worth asking any of your Torres Strait Islander boarders about how they cook and what food they serve, as this can vary from island to island!

One of the easiest and most beneficial things we have done this term is altering our study sessions which now starts with daily reading and sharing of stories. We purchased books and magazines with either a Torres Strait theme or author, with many of the boarders particularly excited to read stories about the 'Myths and Legends' from their individual islands.



#3 - ONE FOCUS FOR DECISION MAKING

In establishing our professional culture, we decided that having a boarding house theme of 'Wellbeing' would not only maintain our focus as a staff group but also help with structuring our decision making. We collectively decided this focus and 'wellbeing' has become the foundation of all of our meetings, talks and staff debriefs. Having focus has pushed us to ask more questions when making difficult decisions. For example, are we looking after our boarders' and staffs' wellbeing by making this decision? Or why is this boarder acting this way?

This focus has also been the catalyst of changing routines, becoming more flexible and engaging with external community groups to assist in what we provide for the boarders. This led to us seeking out culturally appropriate mentors in

the community who could work with our boarders who are struggling, whether it be in school or with external influences. The mentors have the opportunity to come into the boarding house or school to support the boarder and offer rewards such as crayfish diving, fishing, visiting the local waterfalls or just a casual yarn.

#4 - CURIOSITY PROMOTES GROWTH

While in the role of Director of Residential Community at Torres Strait Kaziw Meta, my focus has been to continue to ask as many questions as possible so I have the best understanding and picture of how things occur and why we do what we do. Being curious and asking questions naturally allows challenges to rise to the surface. I have tried to provide positive solutions and have learnt how many parts of the 'machine' are affected when making a seemingly small change to an operation.

The specific areas we have needed to address in the first term have included:

- **boarding staff:** organising new contracts under the award, annualising salaries, roster changes, significant professional development, new roles - recreational officer and teacher, daily debrief meetings and staff input into new policies.
- **boarders:** routine changes, flexibility, recreation activities, behaviour management, study and prep, home studies, boarders' voice and focus on wellbeing.
- **school staff:** opening the boarding house to teaching staff from the high school, invitations and offering food, reviewing communication processes, requesting input into study and prep.
- **community:** stakeholder relationships (Abstudy/NIAA), opening the boarding house, accepting help from interested organisations, creating a mentor program, communication with family members and guardians, involvement in all community events and activities.
- **management committee:** providing strategic and operational plans and funding models.

By addressing these areas, we are seeing growth in the overall culture, wellbeing, academic interest and even work while at school and after school.

#5 - THE THREE R'S

Relationships

As so many Heads of Boarding have said in the past, relationships are key to success. I have learnt first hand the expectation of



the role and leading a residential community can quickly become overwhelming, especially, in the first few weeks while you are trying to learn and provide everything that is required to so many different parties. However, by prioritising and ensuring positive relationships with staff, boarders, parents and the community everything becomes so much more achievable.

Respect is two ways and requires boarders' voice

Something I have noticed in the first term of boarding is that without a relationship, it is difficult to establish respect with boarders, and when respect is demanded and not initiated by staff, boarders are less likely to show it. Our team have an understanding that before requesting respect, an effort has been on the staff's behalf to understand the boarder's personal story (for example what island are they from, whether they dive for crayfish, what is the horse power on their tinnie, what is their family situation, what activities they are interested in, who their friends are, are they Cowboys, Dolphins or Broncos supporters?). We have found that with a focus on building a relationship and being genuinely interested in, or actively helping a boarder, respect for the staff becomes quite natural.

Respect and behaviour management was a challenge for us at the start of Term One. We focused on providing 'boarders' voice' through leadership roles and during workshops conducted for boarders managed by our House Parents. We addressed the boarder and staff concerns as a group

and asked boarders in their houses to identify and contribute acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours and reasonable corresponding rewards and consequences. The boarders did an amazing job of this and have a strong understanding of why the consequences and rewards exist for certain behaviours. In addition to the behaviour management process, we made a significant change to the routines (to focus on wellbeing). Through consulting the boarders, we designed the routine to suit what our boarders want to be involved in around the community. This has resulted a higher level of respect and stronger relationships between staff and (particularly senior) boarders.

Relevance

Like many boarding houses, some of our boarders start with a very low level of numeracy and literacy and we realised that many of our boarders have never seen or experienced any real-life workplaces due to remoteness and the limitations of access on their island homes. Due to this, many of our boarders became disengaged and unmotivated with their academics. We are trialing a new discussion which focuses on 'becoming life ready' and not simply academic success, with the aim of building life skills, motivation and optimism for the future. Our program will consist of partnerships with local and national businesses in industries such as; mining, tourism, education, council, construction, health and more. Our boarders will be offered placements and engage in the workplace prior to leaving school, building their confidence and making

their school work relevant. Having boarders establish their future goals is a key component of this program (for example, a boarder recently shared a vision for establishing a plumbing business based out of a boat traveling between the islands). We have three boarders who have taken the first steps to either secure part-time work, a school-based apprenticeship or are interested in a career after school which we are very excited about.

ESSO (THANK YOU)

What has made this experience so worthwhile is the people in the community. The Torres Strait Islander people have an extremely rich culture and are amongst the most welcoming, caring and culturally in-touch community I have had the privilege to meet. They have a lot to offer, much of which I am only just experiencing the tip of. If you ever have the opportunity to visit the islands I cannot encourage you enough.

Yawo (Good-Bye) ■



AUTHOR:
Tom Dunsmore
Director of
Residential
Community &
Certification
Torres Strait
Kaziw Meta

Better Together: *Shaping a Co-ed Boarding House*

When the co-educational Pembroke School was established in 1974 through the amalgamation of two neighbouring schools, Girton Girls' School and King's College, both schools had proud boarding histories. Now, one year on from merging boys and girls boarding facilities, Pembroke Principal, Mr Mark Staker, shares the joys and challenges of creating a truly co-ed school community.

Why did Pembroke make the move to co-ed boarding?

Like every boarding school across the country, the temporary closure of our boarding facilities during the early days of COVID-19 provided us with an opportunity for reflection. The duplication of services caused by running two separate boarding houses became clear. The other key aspect is that we are a proud co-educational school born of a boys' school and a girls' school deciding that single-sex education was anachronistic and forging a path together.

The amalgamation of the two schools speaks to what is at the heart of Pembroke's belief in co-education – young men and young women sharing the mantle of leadership as equals, both having a seat at the table, their voices equally heard, with opportunities to lead not bound by gender stereotypes. We are also a proudly inclusive school, catering for students with diverse gender identities. They are all cared for, loved, and respected as members of our community.

So, in a way it was opportune because of the circumstances of COVID-19, but it was also adjusting our boarding house to meet the vision of our school.

What were the primary challenges you faced during this transition, and how did you address them?

As is the case with any amalgamation, we needed an efficient staffing model that still had at its core a duty of care for all boarders. We also had the physical sites to consider. It was decided early on that Campbell House, our boys' facility, would become the new Pembroke Boarding House. It needed substantial physical infrastructure changes which included one side becoming the girls' wing. Changes were made to incorporate new social spaces for girls and women to gather and just 'be' in their home. There were also changes to bathrooms, etc.

The other side became the boys' wing, and in the middle are the co-ed spaces. We invested in an outdoor lounge, barbeque, and garden area – it is a beautiful place for our boarders to gather, share conversations, share the mantle of leadership, and be at the table together. Visit on a Sunday morning and you'll see older students cooking breakfast for younger students, and young men and women residing together in community living. They know what respectful relationships are and how to treat one another even in challenging situations. I think our social spaces have been well engineered and crafted.

Having both male and female role models in the boarding house is also essential and aligns with the idea of learning to live together in a caring community that is based on respect.



Have you noticed any changes in the social dynamics of the students since becoming a co-ed boarding house?

It felt very natural for me as the incoming Principal to see our boarders eat together, talk together, and be friends together. It reflects the day school where young women and men sit together and share lunch – there's no difference in boarding.

Our firm belief in co-education is cemented by our 'Student Charter' authored by our student leaders. This agreed set of behaviours is nuanced across the Junior, Middle and Senior Schools, and sets out how we treat each other as people. Not as gendered people, but as people. These agreements are lived and breathed in the day school, and they also form the core of the way we treat each other in the boarding house.

Is there a risk that a co-ed boarding house can perpetuate gender norms and stereotypes?

I can't see any evidence of this. This is a community home of nearly 100 people, each with a different set of behaviours. What I see is an acceptance of difference, and that is a mark of Pembroke's culture. Everyone is treated with dignity and respect, and I believe that is a hallmark of a school that was ready to bring the two boarding houses together. It goes back to that initial, progressive idea of forming a contemporary, co-educational school.

Did you face any resistance or concerns from parents?

With any change there will always be people who are cautious. You must listen to those voices because they tell us a lot about the school and its culture. There were some initial reservations about gender norms, and we were also mindful that families had bought into an experience that extended to Year 12. When you make the significant investment to send your child away to boarding school, you project a journey for that child that goes to the graduation point. And when that changes, there can be some trepidation. The feedback from both parents and boarding staff now is that it has been successful, with positive changes felt from both a girls and boys boarding perspective.



How will you measure the success of this change over time?

We recently undertook a full review of our boarding house with ABSA. Their team has been onsite talking with students, staff, and parents to give us benchmark data on how we are travelling as a community. Anecdotally we are going strongly, but we are looking forward to receiving the report and creating a strategic development plan for improving boarding into the future.

Boarding always has been and always will be at the heart of our community. We are firmly committed to it at Pembroke, and we want to do it well - it was one of the things that attracted me to the School. We want to lead the way, and I think we have the infrastructure, goodwill, and genuine

appreciation of all that boarding gives to a school, to leverage into the future. I am thankful every day that our boarders are just across the road from my office and my home; it's a great privilege to be part of that community. ■



AUTHOR:
Mark Staker
Principal
Pembroke
School

Creating beautiful spaces *for a greener future.*

Green Options has established a reputation for delivering industry leading landscape maintenance and construction services on educational campuses. With over 33 years of experience, our team of experts in Horticulture, Greenkeeping, Irrigation, and Landscape Construction has consistently exceeded the expectations of schools across Australia.

Our portfolio is filled with award-winning sites, showcasing our dedication to delivering high-quality results. We are proud to be a leading provider of grounds and garden maintenance services for educational campuses and schools across Australia, with a commitment to environmental sustainability, we strive to provide top-notch services using innovative and cutting-edge technology.

One of the ways we put our commitment to sustainability into practice is by using battery-operated plant and machinery. These machines offer a cleaner alternative to traditional petrol-powered equipment, reducing our carbon footprint and helping to preserve the environment. In addition, we also use compost areas for green waste and take our green waste to disposal facilities where they are turned into compost and mulch. This not only



reduces landfill waste but also provides a sustainable source of fertilizer for the gardens we maintain.

Water conservation is also a key part of our sustainability efforts. We use water-saving irrigation systems to ensure that our clients' grounds and gardens are adequately watered without wasting precious resources. This helps to minimise water usage and promote a more sustainable future.

As part of our sustainability initiatives, we also create worm farms on site. These farms help to break down organic matter and create nutrient-rich soil that can be used to nourish plants and trees. Additionally, we use chemical-free steam weeding on some of our sites as a natural and effective way to control weeds without the use of harmful chemicals.

In order to promote sustainability and reduce our impact on the environment, we can also create on-site plant propagation facilities. These facilities allow us to grow new plants and trees from cuttings and seeds.

Sustainability gardens are another way we promote environmental conservation and education. These gardens are designed to showcase a range of sustainable practices and technologies, providing an opportunity for students and staff to learn more about sustainability and its importance, and a great opportunity to get the students involved in learning about the environment and sustainable ways in which we can grow our gardens.

Finally, we conduct paper-free site



auditing as part of our efforts to minimize waste and promote sustainability. By using digital technologies to conduct audits and track progress, we reduce the need for paper-based records and promote more sustainable business practices.

In conclusion, Green Options is committed to providing high-quality grounds and garden maintenance services to schools across Australia while also promoting environmental sustainability. Our use of innovative and cutting-edge technologies, such as battery-operated plant and machinery, compost areas for green waste, water-saving irrigation systems, and chemical-free steam weeding, helps us to reduce our carbon footprint and promote a more sustainable future. We are proud to be leaders in sustainable landscaping practices and look forward to continuing our work to promote sustainability at the educational campuses that we serve. Trust Green Options to bring your school grounds to life and create an environment that nurtures and inspires students and teachers alike.

If you would like to know more about how Green Options can help you and your campus achieve beautiful grounds and gardens through the use of innovative and sustainable practices, please visit our website at www.greenoptions.com.au for more information, and to get in touch with us. You can also reach us at 1300 647 367 for a FREE consultation today! ■





Hale Conversations *Program*



In 2022, the Year Ten Conversations program was launched to help young men at Hale School enhance their personal growth and development. The program is built around four key themes: exploring personal identity, building resilience, understanding culture, and fostering healthy relationships.

We recognise that socially and developmentally, Year Ten is challenging for many boys, and for some, it can be associated with higher levels of anxiety and self-consciousness. Boys are developing into young men, and therefore their identity formation needs to fit into a social

network, and the increasing influence of parties, drugs, alcohol, and social media present some challenges for them. This milieu often means boys gravitate more towards their peers, resulting in some turbulence at home and school. At this important phase of development for boys, we are seeking to proactively address

some of these challenges with our 'Conversations' programme and provide a strong foundation for students to navigate the challenges of adolescence in order to become the best versions of themselves.

Our pastoral staff are the key to facilitating this program. They, along with many experts such as Andrew Fuller (Clinical Psychologist, Author and Speaker) and Mike Dyson (Founder of Good Blokes Co) had great input into the key themes that have been presented. To enrich the program, guest speakers such as Paul Dillon (expert on drug and alcohol education), Jane Hannan (Senior Detective





in Western Australian Police Force), Julie Meeks (performance specialist and Sports Dietitian), Dr Jacqui Hendricks (Senior Lecturer at Curtin University on Relationships and Sexology), and Sean Pollard (former surfer and shark attack survivor) are invited to share their perspectives and insights. Past students from Hale and associated girls' schools are also invited to offer their experiences and support to current students. These contributions have been invaluable in helping students explore and understand the program's themes, providing valuable role models and sources of inspiration.

Our boarding students have benefited greatly from the program, which has achieved its intended goals and brought unexpected advantages. The program has fostered a deeper sense of connection and belonging among the boarders, which has positively impacted their academic success and well-being. It has also provided a safe space for students to explore and express their emotions, helping them stand with their feelings. According to one student, "We didn't get the stock standard



boys' and teachers' point of view that we have already been taught. Instead, it's a different view that brings real-world things into the conversation." Another student appreciated the program's focus on preparing them for the future: "This program went through many things that will help you in the next few years. Things that you don't know or aren't comfortable talking to your parents about." Furthermore, our boarders have found the program enjoyable and engaging, with one boy highlighting how it has helped them develop important life skills: "Help you be a good bloke and keep you and your mates safe." Overall, the program has been a valuable addition to the lives of boarding students, providing them with a supportive environment to explore their emotions and experiences while also helping them develop essential life skills.

In closing, the program has encouraged our boarders to take responsibility for their actions and acknowledge when they are wrong. By developing these skills, students are better equipped to navigate the challenges of adolescence and become responsible and compassionate members of the Hale Boarding community. The Year 10 Conversations program has been a resounding success in helping our boarders become the best versions of themselves. ■

AUTHOR:
Chris Miles
Head of Boarding - Wilson House
Hale School



Why you should *always expect the unexpected*

I recently assisted a client with crisis communications in the wake of an accident in a school setting. It reminded me why preparing for 'what might be' is the foundation of effective communications planning and issues management in the education sector.

Anytime is the right time to make sure your School or College is well prepared for an unforeseen event. And in the education sector, the 'unexpected' encompasses a broad range of potential crises.

Anything from financial mismanagement and fraud, to changes in governance and school operation including asset disposal and board restructures, managing students stuck interstate or overseas because of COVID, parent complaints, alumni issues, matters in respect of child protection, injury and life threatening events, litigation and disputes, regulatory issues, media

issues in respect of funding, school fees and the like – the list is almost endless.

None of us can stop the 'unexpected' from happening – but what you can do is make sure you're ready if something eventuates by getting your communications house in order.

REVIEW AND REFRESH YOUR CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The first step is to dust off that Crisis Communication Plan – or if you don't have one - to start pulling one together because it's not something you want to

do in the midst of any crisis.

So what does the perfect Communications plan look like? In my 30 years in the media and communications' consulting I've arrived at the conclusion that there are no hard and fast rules.

Rather in my experience it is more about the essential elements that are always a part of a good crisis communication plan. For me planning starts by asking some basic questions of which a few are listed below – there are obviously many more.

- Are roles and responsibilities in a crisis clearly defined in your institution and do members of your team know what is expected of them?
- Who has final say on approval for any internal or external stakeholder communication – is there a backup if the main person is not available?
- Are your audiences clearly defined? Do you understand your internal and

Crisis
Communications
Plan

external stakeholders and the differences between them?

- Does your messaging recognise the different needs of different stakeholders? What is a good message for one group may be inappropriate for others.
- Have you identified who will be your spokesperson and is there a backup? Are they trained to respond to the media and do interviews?
- What are your communication channels and what tools will you use?
- What pre-prepared collateral do you have ready to go on key issues?
- Are your notification protocols clearly expressed in your plan and who is responsible for speaking to parents, authorities, insurers and others?
- What is your record keeping process for any crisis and who is responsible for that?
- Have you remembered the key role of Front of House play in a crisis and are they prepared and supported?

PUTTING IT ON PAPER

The next step is to get the ideas and principles down on paper – and then agreed to by key members of your team including participants, leadership, Board or other Governance body. Again the following is not exhaustive but these are some of the elements that are key inclusions in a good plan.

Aims

What are the aims of the communication plan and the fundamental principles that underlie it – e.g the values of your school, the importance of stakeholders being informed, what you want to achieve with the plan.

Key roles

Who does what – not something you want to be working out if the crisis has already broken. Look at the detailed roles and responsibilities that you will rely on and appoint team members to those.

The Process

Who does what and when? What are the clear and identified steps that each person takes - from the first notification of a crisis event through to the review of how things went after the dust has settled.

Stakeholder map

Who are the audiences and what are their needs? Again not something to be done on the run but a proactive stakeholder mapping and issues review exercise ahead of time will ensure you understand your stakeholders and what they need in a crisis.

Messaging & collateral

What are the messages that your stakeholders need and do you understand how these change depending on the group? What are you going to say that speaks to your stakeholders and upholds your values and principles? And what are the tools that you'll use?

There will always be the unexpected in a crisis, but all the work you do beforehand in preparing for how you are going to manage such a situation will pay off enormously when the unexpected happens. ■

AUTHOR:

Julian Brophy,
Perception Partners



FINALSITE

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- Award-Winning Website Design
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Hey there, mate!

Six Simple Ways to Remember Students' Names and Strengthen Connections



The success of your boarding curriculum, like all other activities at school, hinges on a trusting relationship between the adult staff and the students. Without a trusting relationship in place, most young people are not willing to try new things, make mistakes, persevere, and take healthy risks. Memorising and using students' names is an essential cornerstone of building the trusting relationship. If only that were easy.

As it turns out, people's names are one of the hardest things to remember. To understand why, here is a three-sentence neuroscience lesson: To recall a piece of information requires it be stored in our long-term memory. To move a piece of information from our working memory (also called "short-term memory") to our long-term memory requires intentional effort. When we meet a new person and hear their name, most of us do not put in any focused effort.

We might think we'll be able to recall a person's name later, but everyone has had the experience of instantly forgetting a person's name, so I hope you don't need much convincing that it's hard to remember names. Now you also know that it makes neurological sense. I also

hope you can remember how good it feels when someone remembers your name, even after meeting you once. It should feel good, right? Names are a centrepiece of our identity.

Clearly, learning names is a skill worth mastering, especially for youth development professionals, like you...um...what's your name again, ummm? Just kidding.

So instead of coy monikers, such as sport, dude, girl, mate, or the ever-popular student, here are four ways to put in the effort to make hundreds of new names stick. Of course, you can always fall back on, "What's up, mate?" or "Hey there, sport!" but why do that when the power of calling kids (or fellow staff or anyone else) by their name is within your reach?

CLEVER JULIET

Juliet, the co-star of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* was spot-on when she lamented, "What's in a name? That which we call a rose, by any other word would smell as sweet." Ten lines earlier, when she croons, "O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?" it is crystal clear she has successfully memorised her heartthrob's name. More on that later.

Juliet's main point is the same one linguists have made for nearly a century: Names are arbitrary. In Mandarin, rose is written 玫瑰 and pronounced may-gway; in Hindi, rose is written गुलाब and pronounced goo-LAHB; and so on. The point is: Changing the label for a thing does not change the thing's essence. At school, that child is Finley and the one over there is Cheyanne. They would be the same people if their names were Balthazar and Alara. The arbitrary nature of names means that recalling which particular child is connected to which particular forename is exquisitely difficult. Now you know the linguistic basis for the self-deprecatory claim, "I'm terrible with names."

What else can we learn from Juliet's successful memorisation? After all, she remembers it after hearing it just once,

and not even from Romeo's lips (which the thunderstruck duo spend a good chunk of Act 1, Scene 5 talking about), but from that of her personal servant. Not bad, especially for someone who came to the party knowing her fancy parents were arranging for her to marry the even fancier Count Paris.

The two keys to Juliet's remembering Romeo's name are the same two keys we must all use to unlock our memory's potential: connection and repetition.

STRATEGY 1: CONNECTION

To reliably remember someone's name, you have to grab some mental glue and stick it to something easy to remember. In other words, you must connect an arbitrary word (their name) to some story, picture, word, or feeling that pops quickly into our heads. That little exercise transforms their arbitrary, hard-to-remember name into an easy-to-recall piece of meaningful information. Memory researchers call this act of mental gymnastics a mnemonic. (No need to remember that word, though once I tell you that it is one of the precious few English words that begin with a silent "m," you probably will remember it. See how I did that?)

Juliet Capulet had it easy, from a mnemonic standpoint. She and Romeo fell in love instantly, even before they knew one another's names. So strong was their infatuation that after talking for just a few minutes, then parting ways, Juliet decides to drop her betrothed. Thus, she had an easy-to-remember story (their flirtatious conversation at the party) and an impossible-to-forget feeling (love at first sight), so it's no wonder she remembered Romeo's name after hearing it only once.

The same could be said for Romeo Montague, who is so smitten that he forgets all about his girlfriend, Rosaline, ditches his two besties after leaving the party, and sneaks into the Capulet family's orchard, searching for the apple of his eye (pun intended). As you no doubt remember, he finds Juliet swooning on the balcony of her Verona bedroom, calling his name into the night. Romeo then launches into one of the most famous soliloquies in history. As with Juliet, Romeo had a story and a feeling to which he could glue Juliet's name.

STRATEGY 2: REPETITION

Following their initial, lusty tryst, both Romeo and Juliet say the other person's name a lot. Repetition like that helps move whatever is in short-term memory into long-term memory. The related strategy of "spaced repetition," where a few seconds, minutes, or hours pass between restating someone's name, is even more powerful than rapidly repeating, Romeo, Romeo, Romeo, or whatever the person's name is. The longer the space between repetitions, the harder your brain works to retrieve the information from your memory. That mental workout strengthens memories in a similar way to how a physical workout's repetition strengthens muscles. You can use rehearsal or spaced rehearsal by saying a new name in your head, using it aloud in a conversation, writing it down (on paper or in your imagination), and quizzing yourself as you visually scan the faces of the people you're with.

To use the strategies of connection and repetition to remember students' names do this:

- A. **Focus during introductions.** When a student says, "I'm Joel," listen carefully to their name. Tune out distractions and repeat their name once in your head. (Repetition #1)
- B. **Say their name aloud immediately.** Reply by saying something like, "Oh, hey, Joel. It's nice to meet you, Joel." (Repetitions #2 and #3)
- C. **Create mental connections.** While looking at the student's face pick a standout feature. Maybe Joel has curly hair. (Connection #1) Now, find a word that also begins with "j," such as jam. Picture a glob of strawberry jam in Joel's hair. (Connection #2).
- D. **Rehearse the connections.** Say to yourself (not aloud), Joel has curly hair. I can imagine jam in his curls that's starting to drip down his face on a hot summer day. Jam will remind me of another "j" word: Joel. Jam = Joel. (Connection #3) The silliness of this image will make it easy to remember.
- E. **Test the connections.** Enjoy some small talk with the student, then ask yourself, What is this kid's name? Maybe you've forgotten; maybe not. Either way, ask yourself, What easy-to-remember facial feature did I pick for this kid? Visually scan his face. You'll instantly remember you

picked out his curly hair. Then, almost automatically in your your mind's eye, you'll see the glob of jam atop his head, with a few sticky drips oozing onto his forehead. Finally, you'll recall the association between two "j" words and think to yourself, Jam. Joel. (Connection practice) At this point, there's a good chance you've moved his name from the loading dock of your working memory into the warehouse of your long-term memory.

- F. **Use what you learned.** In a natural way, insert the student's name into the conversation, either right then or in the near future. For example, you might say, "Listen, Joel, we're about to start a game of kickball? Wanna join?" (Repetition #4) You might even have a chance to add, "Hey, everybody! This is Joel." (Repetition #5)

Practicing these six steps will feel deliberate and time-consuming at first, perhaps a little clunky. After a while, Steps A-F above will begin to feel automatic and efficient. The combination of connection and repetition works remarkably well, so your motivation to continue using them will soon be so high you'll never stop. Again, this process takes practice, so always begin subsequent social interactions in your head by asking yourself, What's that person's name?

Here are three other, schools-specific strategies, each of which is a derivative of connection and/or repetition.

STRATEGY 3: STORIES

An effective elaboration of Step C above is to engage each new student you meet in a conversation where you say their name frequently (repetition) and ask about their home, family, hobbies, favourite animals, activities they're looking forward to, etc. (connection). Those personal details may seem inconsequential, but they are like scaffolding on a building that is under construction. They support a memory that's under construction by gluing unique, easy-to-remember details to an arbitrary name.

STRATEGY 4: GAMES

As a matter of politeness and inclusion, I recommend playing the Name Game

within the first hour of each school year's opening day. Most boarding houses have floors or units that comprise 10-to-20 students, which is the perfect size to sit in a circle. If not, make your own groups. Then, to maximise the game's benefits, play it in a way that incorporates both repetition and connection. Simply quizzing the group by asking, "Can anyone say everyone else's name in the group?" may allow one or two students to shine, and it does use some repetition, but the benefits for you and the other students are minimal.

A more effective and less scholastic-sounding way to start the Name Game is by saying something like, "Hello again, everyone! Thanks for gathering 'round. Once again, welcome! I'd like us all to learn one another's names because it's a great way to connect us, as a group. When it's your turn, please say your name, nice and loud. Then, tell us how you spell it and how you pronounce it. Then, share one place in the world you'd like to visit someday...and tell us why. If you want, you can also say—now or at any other time—what pronouns you use. I'll start. My name is Chris, he/him/his. I spell my name C-H-R-I-S and I pronounce it 'kris.' Someday, I'd like to visit Antarctica because I love penguins, and I also love photography, so I think Antarctica would be an awesome place to take some cool penguin photographs."

Proceed around the circle until everyone has had a turn. After each person goes, thank them for sharing by using their name (repetition) and citing their fantasy travel destination (connection). For example, "Thanks, Nat. I hope you get to visit [name of place] someday because [their reason]." Then, it's on to the next person.

STRATEGY 5: SIGNS

As a supplement to the Name Game, ask students to make name signs with colourful markers and either 4x6 index cards or a quarter sheet of recycled paper from the school office. (Always ensure that your scrap paper has nothing confidential printed on the back side.) Each little sign should have the student's name, hand-written by them in big, block letters, along with a fun fact about them, plus any other snippets of information you pick. If you have some stickers or glitter glue or

other decorations, students can decorate their name signs.

Students can then tape or pin their completed name signs to the entryway to their room. At day schools, students might tape signs to their cubby, locker, or line-up location. The idea is for students to post their name signs in a place where they are routinely standing, sitting, or lying down. That personal placement gives everyone—including students in other groups who pass by—to learn new names or be reminded of names they once learned, without having to ask. As such, these name signs serve a similar function to name tags at conferences, minus the risk of kids losing them while they change clothes throughout the day. Once they are in place, these signs also give you smart quiz option when some or all of the students are not near their sign: Look at each name card and try to picture that student's face. That's a fun and effective way to reverse the usual sequence of first recognising a face and then trying to recall the person's name.

STRATEGY 6: LISTS

A final strategy, often used by teachers and other youth leaders, is a variant of the reversed quiz idea above. The Head of Boarding can give each staff member a list of the students in their group or boarding house, along with the longer roster of all the students in the school, sorted by boarding house and year. Your task is to memorise every name before the first day of the term, or at least familiarise yourself with the subset you'll be working with directly. When names are familiar, they become more accessible in your mind. In turn, the names are easier to connect with the new faces you'll see, compared to if you were hearing these names for the very first time.

Especially impressive is memorising first and last names, along with the hometowns of the 10-to-20 students for whom you are responsible (if that's how your school groups students). Shaking a student's hand when you smile and asking their name is welcoming in a traditional way. Adding, "Oh, Isam Hadad from Adelaide!" adds a surprisingly friendly touch. And if a parent happens to be present, you will have just won their hearts and earned their confidence. It's not as if parents wonder,

How did he know that? But they do think, This staff member is genuinely interested in my child. I feel reassured.

PRONUNCIATION

My wife emigrated from former Yugoslavia to the US when she was 18. Her name, Simonida (pronounced see-moe-NEE-dah), is rare in present-day Serbia. But in the US, it's practically unheard of. After 26 years together, we still appreciate how her unusual name helps us hang up quickly on telemarketers. "Hi, may I speak with... um...Sim...Simone...Sss—" Click.

At school, you should expect to encounter some names with which you're not familiar. Playing the Name Game as I recommended—with repetition, spelling, and proper pronunciation built in—will help you get new names right. Still, you might be confused about the exact pronunciation. The best strategy is to simply say so. I like saying, "I want to be sure I'm pronouncing your name correctly" instead of "That's an unusual name," because it may or may not be unusual in that person's social circle. And definitely avoid judgmental statements, such as, "That's a weird one!" or "Woah, woah, woah! What did you say your name was?"

FORGET IT

As diligently as you incorporate the six strategies in this article, you will forget some students' names. And some of them will forget your name. When that happens, it behooves everyone to be gracious. When people forget your name, which you can often detect when they leave it out of sentences in which it would normally be inserted, you can save them from asking by subtly stating it yourself, out loud. At school, you might say, "OK, friends! The pitcher for the Blue Team will be Chris—that's me. And the pitcher for the Gray Team will be Sarah" or "Listen, gang, the head lifeguard came up to me this afternoon and said, 'Chris, we need one more guard for the afternoon swim,' so I offered to help out."

When you forget other people's names, just ask, "Could you please tell me your name again?" and then force yourself to use a combination of repetition and connection so it sticks this time. Even if you

have to ask again, you are showing interest in that person's identity, which itself is a wonderful way to strengthen connection. Sure, a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but if roses could hear and speak, they would also tell us how good it feels to be called by name. ■

Footnotes

1. Burnett, D. (2017). *The Idiot Brain* (2nd Ed.). London: Faber & Faber.
2. Note that choosing a name, which many parents have the privilege of doing, is typically not arbitrary, but thoughtful. Additionally, many names have traditional meanings, historical significance, and personal relevance. When linguists say that names are arbitrary, they do not mean the name was chosen haphazardly, nor that the name itself has no etymology or personal importance. They mean only that the word or words that make up a person's name could theoretically be different without changing the appearance of that person's physical body. In other words, there is no preset link between how a person looks and what a person calls themselves.
3. Interestingly, Shakespeare's play never includes a character explicitly telling Romeo what Juliet's first name is. Her personal servant (the Nurse character) does tell Romeo that her last name is Capulet, but that's all. A minute later, at the end of Act 1, Scene 5, when only Juliet and her servant are on-stage, someone (not Romeo) calls from off-stage, "Juliet!" Perhaps Romeo heard this shout and made the connection. Who knows? Maybe he did more recon before Act 2. These days, many people conduct their own background checks via social media, company directories, and friends.
4. Type "remember names" in YouTube's search bar to quickly access some excellent presentations on similar sequences of name-remembering strategies.
5. Unlike arbitrary names, we never have to try to remember a face. The human brain has a specialized part of each temporal lobe (located behind your ears) called the fusiform gyrus, which can effortlessly encode between 1,000 and 10,000 human faces. That automatic process makes evolutionary sense. Remembering whether the person you see in front of you was violent or kind the last time you encountered them has obvious survival benefits. Remembering their name is comparatively trivial, from a survival standpoint.



AUTHOR:
Christopher Thurber, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and faculty member at Phillips Exeter Academy. He created Prep4School.

com, an engaging collection of brief videos that teach students healthy ways of coping with common social, emotional, and academic challenges. His newest book, *The Unlikely Art of Parental Pressure*, includes eight ways adults can transform harmful pressure to healthy pressure. Learn more about the work that Chris does with schools, camps, and companies on DrChrisThurber.com.

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1. CARROT BLISS BALLS - ENERGY BITES FOR KIDS AND ADULTS!

Mix in a bowl.

- 1 cup of oats
- 1 carrot finely shredded
- 5 Medjool Dates chopped finely
- 2 tablespoons of Sunflower seeds
- 3 tablespoons of coconut oil melted (pop jar in hot water)
- Pinch of ground cinnamon
- Pinch of ground ginger
- 6 crushed walnuts
- Honey to taste

Once combined and sticky roll into balls and cover with desiccated coconut.

A great one for the kids to make with you and to have in the fridge for an afternoon pick me up - tastes like a carrot cake!



2. CARROT FRITTERS FOR LUNCH, LEFTOVER SNACKS, DINNER OR BREAKFAST!

Servings 10-12 depending on the size you make.

- 150grams of chickpea flour
- 1 egg
- 1 cup of grated carrot
- 6 spring onions
- Pinch of coriander fresh
- 1 teaspoon of each of the following
- Salt, cumin, ground coriander, ground turmeric, cayenne pepper

you are vegan you can do a chia egg - (it's 1 tablespoon of chia and 3 tablespoons of water, wait a bit till it forms a gooey consistency and voila!).

Heat 1cm oil in fry pan and fry fritter mixture by the spoonful until golden brown.

You can serve this with fresh greens and coriander, basil even, it also goes well with any type of yoghurt.

Mix all together in a bowl until combined, if you find its too dry add another egg - if

Enjoy for breakfast, lunch, dinner or snacks!



3. CARROT & GINGER SOUP - (SERVES 4 SMALL BOWLS)

- 8 carrots chopped roughly
- Parsley to taste
- 1 onion
- 1 piece of garlic
- 3cm knob of real ginger - finely chopped (you can cheat and use 1 tsp of ground if you want)
- 1 can coconut milk
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 500ml water

Saute onion, garlic and parsley in the pan you are using with olive oil for a minute or two till onion softens.

Throw in the carrots, ginger and coconut milk - add 500ml of water here.

Bring to the boil - once all the carrots are soft you can blend the soup up and serve with fresh parsley on top - its SO EASY! If I feel a cold coming on I usually add some chilli and extra ginger to get that zing on! Depends on how you feel - go with it!

If you want it to be thicker and you have the veg - sweet potato also goes well in it.

Corriander also goes really well with carrot if you are a fan!

If you want to get fancy roasted walnuts or pine nuts are excellent on the top too!

HINT ** Lime and Chilli in this dish makes it like a Thai curry taste.



4. CHUCK IT IN THE OVEN CARROT, GOATS FETTA AND WALNUT BAKE

Literally - chuck it all together!

Carrots - fancy ones are nice, but the stock standard work a treat too.

Drizzle with olive oil, salt and pepper.

Throw on some goats cheese chunks and walnuts to suit! You can also add beet-root chips next to the carrots as beets and

carrots go so well together! Sometimes I drizzle honey over it too.

Bake in oven on 180 degrees until carrots are edible and soft, goats cheese will go brown but trust me baked with carrots walnuts and honey is DIVINE!

Enjoy!



3. CHIA PUDDING CARROT CAKE

This recipe makes one chia pudding - so if you'd like to make more for the family, just double, triple the mix..you get the gist.

Combine in a container that has a lid for placing this in the fridge overnight.

If you are doing for the whole family you can do in individual jars.

- 1 cup of milk - I alternate between coconut and soy and recently trying hazelnut - the options are limitless!
- 1 small carrot shredded
- Sprinkle of cinnamon
- 1/2 a teaspoon of ground ginger
- handful of crushed walnuts
- honey to taste
- 3 table spoons of chia seeds

Mix really well and make sure it all looks very covered in liquid - the chia tend to soak it all up if you are leaving overnight. It's usually better if you do leave it overnight - you can also add this mix to overnight oats to jazz them up a bit! If it's "stiff" in the morning, pop some warm-ish water in and mix around to loosen.

And there you have it - Five ways to use carrot! ■

AUTHOR:

Sarah Jane Fehlberg
sarahjanefehlberg@gmail.com
www.sarahfehlberg.com.au
@sarahfehlbergnaturopath

Is it better to be an optimist or a pessimist?

Or neither?

Optimists run the risk of being disappointed, but they have the two big advantages of being happier generally, and, because you tend to get what you expect, they are more likely to have ambitious goals and to achieve them. Tests have shown that they are more likely to be successful in interviews, and elections.

Pessimists run the risk of not even trying to improve things ("What's the point?"), of having fewer friends, and being generally less lucky, but they do have advantages too: they are more likely to have back-up plans, less likely to be disappointed, and, according to philosophy guru Alain De Botton, they are less likely to be angry (if you expect that person to pull out of the side turning and cut you off, and then they do, you just think "Ha! I knew he'd do that!").

What about being in the middle? Would you get the best of both (setting goals but having back up plans) or would you get the worst of both (not aiming high enough and being taken by surprise when things go wrong)?

Well, I've got three answers for you to consider:

One is to be a **REALISTIC** optimist or pessimist rather than an unrealistic one.

For example, the unrealistic optimist would tend to think "Oh, everything will be fine, I don't need to check anything" and the cure for them is some realistic pessimism: "Something might happen, best to have a plan".

The unrealistic pessimist would tend to think "I'm doomed, it'll never work" and their cure is to try a bit of realistic optimism: "OK it's difficult but what if it worked? I can take actions in order to succeed".

The second approach, which can be combined with the first one, is to be an optimist about yourself and what you can achieve (I can do it, I'll aim high, I won't be put off by the occasional set back) and be a pessimist about other people (what will I do of they let me down? What if someone does something unexpected?)

"Hope for the best, and expect the worst"

Finally, you could be an optimist at the **START** of projects: "Let's give this a go, it could work!" and then a pessimist **DURING** projects: "What might go wrong? Let's be ahead of every possible problem".

So there we are: onwards and possibly downwards but probably upwards. ■

AUTHOR

Chris Croft

Chris Croft Training

chris@chriscrofttraining.co.uk

BUILDING MEMORABLE DINING EXPERIENCES.

Chartwells has recently commenced a new partnership with Clayfield College, Brisbane. Having previously operated the catering services in house, Clayfield College saw the benefit of a partnership with Chartwells to utilise our experience delivering nutritious, high street quality food, combined with the benefit of a new look and feel for the boarding house servery.

Our partnership commenced in January 2023, and the recent Easter holiday period saw an extensive refurbishment take place at Clayfield. Replacing the existing equipment, we introduced flat top hot counters, stone benchtops and contemporary cabinetry to modernise the students dining experience. The introduction of a new cold well for the students has been a hit, and we have loved seeing the students enjoying their new, fresh, rotating menu each day.

The introduction of new partition walls between the servery and kitchen, complete with digital signage, finishes the new look and has created a dining environment that has truly brought the boarding community together.

Working closely with the school, this remarkable renovation was completed in just 8 days and we are delighted to see it come to life. We are excited for the future of our partnership and look forward to the Clayfield students using this space, and making life-long memories.

For further details on how we can help you, or a review into your current services, please contact:

Chartwells

George Michaelides
Director, Business Development
0404 000 931
GeorgeMichaelides@compass-group.com.au

Tom Dey
Manager, Business Development
0437 600 133
TomDey@compass-group.com.au

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Plating Up a Healthier Relationship with Food

10 Tips for Supporting Boarders

Boarders face unique challenges when it comes to eating habits. The stress of being away from home, the pressure to succeed academically and socially, and the limited options for food can all contribute to disordered eating. In the context of rising rates of eating disorders, it's important that we take preventative action.

As a student or caregiver, it is important to be aware of the signs and symptoms of disordered eating and to take practical steps to support boarders who may be struggling. Here are ten things to consider:

#1. Understand what disordered eating is.

Disordered eating refers to a range of irregular eating behaviours that may not meet the criteria for a full-blown eating disorder but can still have negative impacts on one's physical and mental health. This may include skipping meals, restricting food intake, binge-eating, or engaging in behaviours intended to 'make up for' eating, such as over-exercising, or purging. These behaviours often begin with a desire to change body shape or size.

#2. Never assume.

If you suspect that a friend, peer, student, or family member may be struggling with disordered eating, it's important to approach the situation with sensitivity, curiosity, and empathy. Avoid making assumptions or judgments about their attitude or behaviour, and instead seek to understand their struggles or concerns and offer your support in a non-judgmental way. You could try asking "how do you feel about your relationship with food?"

#3. Keep mindful of triggers.

Be aware of the triggers and challenges that boarding school life can present for those with disordered eating, such as limited food choices or peer pressure to diet, or 'gym'. Other triggers include: media and social media portraying an 'ideal' body type, body talk in general, even if giving compliments about appearance a friend, family/staff member or celebrity following a restrictive diet or trying to lose weight (no matter how 'healthy' their



intentions!) following measured out meal plans and/or calorie counting and talking about food as “good” or “bad”.

You might try saying “all bodies/foods are different and great in their own ways. Let’s talk about something else.”

#4. Respect boundaries.

Talking to a trusted friend, family member, or health professional is at the top of the list for improving a relationship with food. At the same time, talking about struggles with food and body image can feel scary and incredibly vulnerable. Respect that while you might not be the most appropriate person to directly discuss disordered eating with the person you care about, you can still take action to help; role model balanced eating, provide a range of foods to choose from, and/or offer a variety of options where you can. Try asking “is there anything I can do (or not do) to be helpful?”

#5. One step at a time.

Provide a supportive and non-judgmental environment for boarders to discuss their concerns, and encourage them to talk to the school counsellor, Butterfly Foundation or Eating Disorder Dietitian. Try asking “can you think of someone you could talk to about this some more?”

#6. Role model the ‘keep calm and carry on’ style of eating at the table.

Repeatedly drawing attention to diet culture, or to someone having a healthy/unhealthy relationship with food can make it a thing for the person struggling, which can sometimes make an already challenging dinner-table situation worse. Instead, know that when you demonstrate normal, balanced eating from a variety of foods, you are contributing to creating a supportive environment. If you find yourself in a conversation about dieting, you could contribute by saying “I love food, it’s as simple as that.”

#7. Watch your language. Lose the labels.

While it can sometimes be helpful to promote “healthy” eating habits and positive body image, a slip can quickly turn into a slide for someone with a difficult relationship with food. Calling a food “healthy” or “unhealthy” can insinuate that the food is “good” or “bad”, and then a person can feel “good” or “bad” for eating it. This can lead to debilitating perfectionism and/or shame. So, instead; call a food for what it

is! “An apple is an apple, a cake is a cake, it’s not good nor bad, it is what it is.”



#8. Provide permission to eat.

As humans, it is our right to eat all foods (yes, there are extra considerations for cultural diets, allergies and intolerances). Whether someone you care for is struggling with not eating enough or overeating or binge eating, it is important to reassure them that they have permission to, and must, eat enough to function well – regardless of their size or shape. It is more satisfying and more supportive to focus on adding nutritious and delicious foods, rather than restricting or eliminating foods. “You can have that food/meal/snack. “You can try it”. “You can nourish your body and mind.”

#9. Get in a rhythm.

It’s a no-brainer that having a daily routine is helpful. It’s the same for sleep, study, exercise, and showering! Eating meals and snacks at regular times helps to regulate appetite, digestion and the body clock. It also reduces the likelihood of skipping meals and/or binge eating. Supporting boarders to eat something at meal times in the boarding house can encourage this routine. “Eating regularly helps with energy, concentration, sleep, metabolism, mood and digestion – it feels great!”

#10. When ready*, tune into body cues.

Once a regular eating routine is in place, it can then be helpful to get familiar with hunger and fullness cues. Having an eating routine means you eat within a certain timeframe, but it doesn’t determine how much you eat at that time. Less hungry = smaller meal, more hungry = larger meal,



or meal + snacks. It sounds simple but trust me when I say it takes practice!

*It is important to note here that this is not for everyone and many people with disordered eating patterns temporarily lose the ability to accurately identify hunger and fullness cues. Eating adequate meals and snacks is priority before letting hunger and/or fullness guide the portion size.

In summary, disordered eating is a complex issue that can have serious impacts on one’s physical and mental health. For boarding school students and families, it’s important to be aware of the signs and symptoms of disordered eating, and to approach the situation with sensitivity, curiosity, and empathy. By providing a supportive and non-judgmental environment, encouraging an eating routine, and developing positive coping mechanisms, we can help to prevent and manage disordered eating behaviours in the boarding school community. ■

AUTHOR:

Molly Warner

Accredited Practising Dietitian
Credentialed Eating Disorder
Clinician

molly@satisfynutrition.com.au
www.satisfynutrition.com.au

PHOTOS: UNSPLASH



Seven Tips to Prepare your Students *for Test-Taking Success*

As test prep season starts to creep up for the end of the semester, there can be an undercurrent of anxiety, overwhelm, and stress - both from teachers and students. But with preparation and tools in their toolbox, our learners can become more confident, calm, and ready for upcoming assessment tasks. In order to get your students prepared, I'm sharing seven test-taking tips to use in your classroom and in the boarding house, during test prep season.

With each tip that I provide, it can easily be implemented in your already established literacy routine and instruction. Keep in mind that these test-taking tips might be ideas and activities you've already used throughout the year, but are specifically targeted for success on the test. Additionally, each tip has positive benefits for every student in your classroom. These tips are boarding-friendly too!

1. Dissecting the Title

The purpose here is to analyse the title in detail. Start at the top. Read the title twice and ask: *What words stand out? What connections can you make? Why do you think the word might be there?* The goal is to think about keywords, background knowledge and what you think the passage might be about, prior to reading the passage. We want to stretch their brain muscles ahead of reading the text.

Here's an example of a comprehension text title: **The Early Life of a Famous Radiographer**

a) The word 'life' gives you a clue that it could be a biography, the word 'early' - could be focussing on their life before they became famous. The word 'famous' has synonyms such as well-known, celebrated, notable, respected. 'Radiograph' derived from roots: 'radio' used as a prefix is from the Latin word radius, meaning a ray) and '-graphy' meaning writing or recording something. We want our students to dissect the title by analysing these words.

2. PIE: Persuade Inform Entertain (Author's Purpose)

We want our students to identify the purpose for writing the passage. *Did the author want to persuade them to think a certain way, after reading the passage? Did the author want to inform them about a topic or idea? Did the author write for enjoyment and want to entertain them?* When the students are firm on 'why' the author wrote the text, they can decide on and circle either P, I or E. This is helpful because often comprehension passages will include an *author's purpose* question. All of the comprehension tasks in

our literacy programs feature this exact question category.

3. Numbering Paragraphs & Finding the Main Idea

You might like to try this technique: before the students read the passage in depth, ask them to number the paragraphs. After reading a paragraph, ask them to write a few short words about the main idea. Numbering each paragraph supports their claim. If they need to check what they've written, they simply jump to that numbered paragraph rather than reading the whole passage. This also helps with summary questions - so many students find this to be tricky - but if they've jotted down main ideas, this will help to form a summary (and also assists with sequencing).

4. Show Proof for your Answers within the Text

This will break kids out of the habit of rushing to form an answer and saying, "Finished!" and that's it. We need to encourage our students to show proof and **how** they got to that conclusion. Doing this practice verifies that the best answer choice is being selected based on the text that they've read.

Methods for showing proof include highlighting, underlining, circling and, taking it a step further, mentioning the paragraph number where the information is found. This is super helpful for teachers and parents because you can flip to the passage paragraph - especially if their

answer is incorrect. You can work on addressing the student's misconception, correct it and clarify their understanding.

5. The Importance of Visuals

Images are powerful! Anytime there is a photo/image/graph/visual it is there for a reason. This is a warning sign for students: *this is important*. We want our students to pause and ask "Why is this image here?" "What is it here to teach me?" "Why did the author include this image/photograph/diagram/timeline?"

This practice helps with answering the author's purpose. Don't skip over it without doing some thinking around the image.

6. Elimination Strategies

This is my favourite strategy! I like this technique because it empowers our students and helps them feel in control when reading.

I like to forewarn my students about a comprehension assessment by saying, "The test writer is out to trick us but we

don't have to be fooled. One way that we can be one step ahead is to properly remove any fake answer choices immediately. But wait! Don't cross out anything just because." We want our learners to think about why they are crossing out that answer choice. Once kids find out what is wrong with that answer, it is a great feeling of empowerment to cross it out. Emphasising this strategy makes it easier for students to arrive at the best answer. *Choosing between two answers is a lot easier than choosing from four answers.*

6. Tricky Words

When kids come across a tricky word in a text, there are several strategies they can use to figure it out. Here are some common techniques:

- Context clues: Learners can look for clues in the surrounding words to help them understand the meaning of the tricky word. Aim to make connections with other familiar words or phrases nearby.
- Phonics: If the word is unfamiliar, they can try to sound it out by breaking

it down into individual sounds or syllables.

- Word parts: Children can look for pre-fixes, suffixes or root words within a tricky word. This can provide clues to the meaning or pronunciation of the word.
- Picture or context support: In some cases, the text may be accompanied by pictures or illustrations that provide visual clues.

I hope that these seven strategies are leaving you excited about assessment preparations with your learners. We want our kids to feel comfortable with reading passages and answering questions when they know they have a toolbox of strategies that will help them. ■

AUTHOR:

Tanya Grambow
Founder
Literacy for Kids

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From the other side *of the fence*

As Term Two draws ever closer, I have taken some time during the holidays to reflect on my first term working as a boarding supervisor. Let me tell you, after being a boarder for six years in both co-ed and all-girls boarding schools, I thought I knew everything there was to know about boarding. Naively, I thought I knew exactly what I was walking into when I made my way down to the dining hall at Clayfield College for my first time being on duty.

Already, I'm sure you are all thinking, "Wow, poor thing was in for a surprise" and yes, yes I was. I was surprised by how different being a supervisor in the boarding house was compared to being a student in the boarding house. I enjoyed my time being a boarder and my best friends in life are all from boarding school, but I also understand just how difficult it can be at times. I thought this knowledge and personal understanding would allow me to have a unique relationship with the boarders and that they would be able to pick up this "vibe" of my "all knowingness" very easily - that, unsurprisingly, was not the case.

Boarders are intrinsically judgemental. Before you get defensive, I do not mean this in a bad way whatsoever. If you think about it, boarders grow up in an environment away from their family and are told to trust a group of adults who are supposed to care for them, and live and sleep in a building full of strangers. Therefore, they are going to judge everything about that environment, including their boarding supervisors. I was told by a few people who had worked in boarding previously that when you are introduced to the boarders you will be looking after, they will judge you based on your very first impression. So obviously when I was walking around during my first shift being introduced to the boarders and meeting them for the first time, I was incredibly

nervous. BUT you should have seen me at the end of my first duty, I was a big ball of energy and smiles. I could not understand how I enjoyed it so much. Do I love it so far? 1000% yes. Is it only my second term and does everyone keep telling me to "just wait until it gets hard"? Also, yes. I am not living under some false illusion that it is all fun and games, trust me, I don't think vomiting children is anyone's strong suit but it is especially not mine. However, I do believe that I have never worked in a job as rewarding as this one.

Being a boarding supervisor means I am many things... I am a leader, supporter, trusted adult, hair-plaiter, tutor, and listening ear, but most importantly, I am a person in the life of many young girls and this means that I have the opportunity to leave a positive or negative impact on their lives. I am choosing to have the most positive impact that I can. I am doing this by continuously learning about myself and how I can best support them. I have learned how to not let my emotions sit on the surface where everyone can see them, I have learned how to emanate a calming presence with my voice and actions, and I have learned how to be a quiet listener.

Anyone who has ever met me would describe me as someone who could literally talk to a tree - basically, I never know when to be quiet. So, being in a boarding house full of girls means that I

do a LOT of talking but I also spend a lot of time quietly listening to what's on their mind and letting them get their feelings off of their chest so they can continue on with their day. This is definitely the most useful skill I have ever learned. So to all of the girls that I supervise, thank you for allowing me to learn that skill. For those who are almost at the end of this article and are wondering if my "good vibes" were picked up - the answer is yes and no. Boarders are intuitive and a lot of the time are more mature than most other children their age because they have had to grow up in order to make the transition into boarding successfully. Therefore, they were able to identify that I was working there because I wanted to be and this was enough of a first impression for me to build a positive relationship on. However, in the same vein, they test you in all sorts of ways but all you need to do is remain consistent so they learn to know who and what they are getting when you're on duty.

No duty is ever the same. Some involve trying to help a student pass their driving test (you'd think I'd be a good teacher because I have my licence..not so much), some involve consoling a homesick boarder and some involve interesting discussions on why not having your phone at night time is actually good for you. I could not ask for a more interesting or rewarding job and I continue to work to earn the trust and respect of the girls that I supervise. So while I sit here writing in a quiet and empty boarding house, it is the perfect time to reflect on why I started my journey of working in boarding... I will ask you as well, why did you start working in boarding? Call me an optimist, but I can't wait to hear the familiar kerfuffle of the girls back in the house. ■



AUTHOR:
Zahli Bahnisch
ABSA
Training and
Communications
Coordinator.

Time Management

Time Management may seem like a common sense subject really, but actually a lot of it isn't obvious. Here's a collection of things that you may never have thought about, and then even when you do, they're not necessarily obvious!

Underlying good time management are two key skills (and they ARE learnable) – Self Discipline and Assertiveness.

These both come from having clear goals for personal and work. Without clear goals you can't be self disciplined or assertive.

Procrastination is a battle between the conscious and subconscious parts of your brain, so in order to beat it you have to use the conscious to play tricks on the subconscious, for example "I'll just do the first part of the job", or "Once I've done that job I'll have some chocolate".

You need TWO jobs lists – a big master list of everything and a small daily list of what you'll do today. Combining them, or having just one, won't work.

You should have a daily list every day – even when you think it's not needed, i.e. when you don't have anything urgent that needs doing. That's when you can put some important things on it.

Your jobs-to-do list should be not be written first thing when you come in to work, or when you get up – you should write it the night before. This gives you closure on your working day, and clears your brain ready for the evening and sleep.

If you write down your personal goals they are MUCH more likely to come true – for two reasons I don't have time to go into here. And yet most people never do this!

Goals need to be written down – keeping them in your head is nowhere near as effective.

Efficiency is not enough – you also need goals and interpersonal skills - like for example saying no.

Your 'drivers' are controlling you all the time – things like Hurry Up and Be Perfect and Please Others are controlling 80% of your behaviour!

Don't fill up your diary completely – say no before it's full. Otherwise you won't be able to cope with unexpected tasks (which usually form at least 50% of our days).

Working longer hours doesn't work – in fact working long hours means you've failed! If you do it regularly you just end up pacing yourself for a longer day, and producing less per hour, so the total achieved remains the same.

Urgent and important are not the same. If something is important it doesn't mean it's urgent – in fact it probably isn't. If something is urgent it doesn't mean it's important – in fact it probably isn't.

Your jobs to do list will gradually become less and less fun if you pick the most fun jobs to do first. So you have to deliberately pick jobs that aren't fun from your list, every now and then.

Small things can be important. So importance is not only to do with the size of the job.

A "Must do" task, like buying food, can still be unimportant. Just because you have to do it doesn't mean it's important. Importance is about about how long you spend on it - do you want to spend longer in order to do it better?

If you find yourself in Box 1 (urgent AND important) it means you've failed. Box 1 jobs always start out in Box 3 (important but not yet urgent) and should ideally be dealt with there.

It is important to have a feeling of achievement from outside of your work. Many people's plan is to enjoy themselves outside work and to achieve stuff at work, but ideally achievement wouldn't be restricted to work.

Faster is not always good.

Better is not always good – it's possible to do unimportant things too well. This is because doing something really well means you don't have time to do something else, something that could add more value in total.

A life plan which is to retire early is not a good life plan. (More about this another time!)

Onwards and upwards! ■

AUTHOR

Chris Croft

Chris Croft Training

chris@chriscrofttraining.co.uk

Financial Life Skills Education

Should Be Purposeful, Intentional, Strategic: It's a World View

As with any subject matter, no boarder will learn and become knowledgeable and capable unless there is an investment in the learning related to that subject matter.

Purposeful teaching, engagement and practice, aligned to the knowledge and skills of that subject matter is required.

Whether it be learning to play a musical instrument, learning a new sport, writing better assignments, learning a new language or making informed financial decisions, an instructional program must be purposeful, intentionally designed and strategic in its delivery.

While simple exposure to a topic e.g. watching football on television helps build knowledge about football, exposure is not enough to build proficiency and capability.

Too many adults believe their teenage children or students develop proficiency through simple exposure. This is not the case. There must be intentional and strategic engagement with purposeful topics that provoke thinking, discussion and reflection.

Purposeful

Unfortunately, it is easy to go through the motions when it comes to financial education. It is also easy to say "the boarders will just work out how to manage money. I did".

Such attitudes are not fair to the boarders, nor to their parents who are investing in all aspects of their education.

Financial education has to be purposeful and boarders need to be told that purpose. They should know that informed financial decision-making will be an essential aspect of their future life and that learning

financial life skills is needed now, because it doesn't happen later.

The vast majority of boarding parents will always support financial education for their children, because most of those parents will say they would like to have had such an education when they were in school.

Previous surveys of boarding parents overwhelmingly support this notion.

The reality is that today's financial world is completely different to the one their parents and teachers grew up in. Additionally, in a boarding house there will often be boarders from various demographic backgrounds and cultures.

These circumstances should compel boarding house managers to ensure financial life skills education is a regular occurrence and purposefully included in the wellbeing or pastoral care program of the boarding house.

Intentional

Once a decision is made to embed financial education into the boarding house program, there must be intentional parameters put in place.

These parameters will ensure commitment to planning and delivery.

- Who will organise the program?
- Which boarders will participate and when?
- What aspects of the program will be mandatory and which parts opt-in?
- Who will be the facilitator/s and how will they be prepared and resourced?

- How do you make the program sustainable and ever-growing?

These are just a few of the questions that will demonstrate a boarding house manager's deliberate intention to plan and deliver an appropriate, efficient and effective financial life skills program.

Strategic

Financial education has two strategic elements - external and internal.

- **External:** Will the boarding house managers show to prospective parents a commitment to boarder financial education? They should, because this topic matters to most parents.
- **Internal:** How will boarding staff make best use of The Wealth Academy's resources, as well as those from other sources, to strategically engage boarders in financial learning and grow the program over coming years. As with all programs they should not be too ambitious at the start, but rather start with small steps and then incrementally develop. Sustainability of the program, then has more likelihood.

Support

The Wealth Academy can help with all aspects of the establishment and delivery of your financial life skills program for boarders.

Find out more: admin@thewealthacademy.com.au

It doesn't matter if boarders' homes are in regional or metropolitan Australia or overseas, they all deserve a financial education because they will all make financial decisions later in life.

Australia: Call for a financial literacy reboot

Australians' financial wellbeing has fallen as households struggle with the higher cost of living, according to a new report, prompting a call for a review of the country's financial literacy strategy. Your Financial Wellness surveyed 1200 people and found that the average "wellness index score" fell 11 per cent from 6.4 in 2021 to 5.7 now. Index scores are based on responses to nine questions about current financial conditions, future prospects, savings and money management behaviour.

At the same time, ANZ's latest financial wellbeing report highlights a persistent gap between the financial wellbeing of men and women in Australia. According to Your Financial Wellness, 43 per cent of respondents reported "high or overwhelming" financial stress, compared with 27 per cent in 2021....

Read more: [bankingday.com](https://www.bankingday.com)

Japan: Japanese brokerage, schools work to improve kids' financial literacy

Morgan Stanley Securities Co. has recently signed agreements with Japanese junior and senior high schools to help them offer a curriculum that will improve the financial literacy of students.

The move comes after financial education was made compulsory in public senior high schools last year...

Read more: english.kyodonews.net

USA: The Value of Financial Literacy: Practical Life Skills & Decisions

... teaching financial literacy to children in school as a life skill, which becomes only more relevant by the student loan debt crisis. ... [the] two major financial barriers for people with their personal finance are the complex language and acronyms and comfort and familiarity...

Read more: www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6nEi_ehAjg

Africa: Stakeholders canvass improved financial literacy

The importance of financial literacy cannot be over-emphasised especially as there are challenges that people face living successful, happy and purposeful lives. Money is a very important tool. It is a means to an end.

Because the topic of money is not being taught in schools, it is important that people get to understand money when they get out of school and that is why financial literacy is very important.

Read more: punchng.com

China: China working to enhance financial literacy among kids

The Chinese Ministry of Education and the Chinese Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) were quoted as saying by Xinhua news agency that they would be working together to "increase financial literacy" among China's youth.

The campaign to improve understanding of the nation's securities and futures markets would begin with textbooks for elementary and middle schools, officials said.

For years, authorities have been trying to improve financial literacy as retirees or less savvy investors have lost their savings to risky schemes or fraud.

Against the backdrop of a slowing Chinese economy, maintaining citizens' savings is even more critical...

Read more: taipeitimes.com

Saudi: Why financial literacy is a vital tool for Gen Z's success in the job market

Financial inclusion refers to the ability of individuals to access and use financial services and products that meet their needs and are affordable.

Financial literacy plays a crucial role in helping these youngsters understand and navigate the financial system, which can seem quite daunting to the uninitiated.

With the proliferation of digital payment systems, online banking and cryptocurrency, young people face more difficulty navigating the world of finance. ...

Read more: thenationalnews.com

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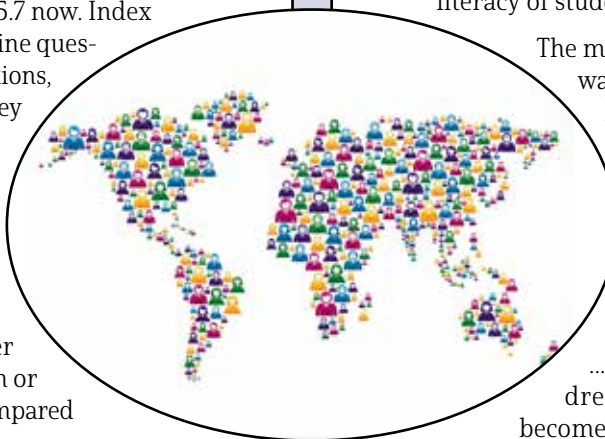
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AUTHOR

Ken Swan
Founder - The Wealth Academy



Boarding schools across the “Dutch”



There I was at the top of the South Island of New Zealand visiting the Omaka Aviation Heritage Centre, near Blenheim, (a fascinating place btw), and I learnt a surprising fact. Some 35 Australians flew combat missions during the Battle of Britain, and a staggering 135 Fighter Command aircrew from New Zealand served in that self-same battle in 1940.

Aren't they meant to be very much smaller in population than Australia?

I then realised I had a presumption of knowledge about New Zealand that needed to be far better informed – and this correction needed to be extended to the area I work in, which is the school boarding industry.

Furthermore, there is a brisk trade in personnel across the Tasman Sea that sees Heads of boarding schools and boarding staff serving in both Australia and New Zealand. Even a past Chair of ABSA, Garth Wynne, now serves as Headmaster of one of New Zealand's leading boarding schools, Christ's College, Christchurch.

Therefore, it is not inappropriate for the school boarding industry in Australia to know something of boarding schools in Aotearoa – the land of the long white cloud.

12 FACTS ABOUT AOTEROA BOARDING SCHOOLS:

1. In 2010 there were about 10,000 school-aged boarders in New Zealand.
2. About 100 private and public schools offer boarding.
3. Around four percent of NZ students are boarders to which must be added nearly 1000 boarders from overseas.

4. Elementary boarding still features in NZ but is declining.
5. Huntley School, Morton, is New Zealand's oldest and largest preparatory (elementary) boarding community.
6. Weekly boarding is growing in popularity with about 18 percent of boarders now weekly boarders.
7. St Peter's Cambridge is one of New Zealand's largest co-ed boarding schools. Some 40% of its 1,220 students are boarders.
8. Dilworth School is the largest boarding only school in NZ.
9. King's College has the largest school boarding community in NZ, offering boarding from Year Nine for boys, and from Year Eleven for girls.
10. There are a number of Māori boarding schools, for example, Hato Paora College, Feilding.
11. The oldest state secondary school with boarders is the all boys' school, Nelson College.
12. The two boarding schools generally considered among the most expensive are, Christ's College, Christchurch (boys); and Queen Margaret College -Thorndon (girls).

Dusting the character of the school boarding industry in New Zealand is the Treaty of Waitangi. A controversial document ceding sovereignty to Great Britain in 1840, the treaty established the bicultural foundation of New Zealand now evident

in school policies, whānau and in communities such as boarding schools.

Within New Zealand's boarding schools, you will find the celebration of Māori concepts like *whanaungatanga* (the importance of family) and *manaakitanga* (caring), which are *taonga* (treasure) to Māori.

Waitangi principles have also impacted many of the laws impacting boarding staff. These include the Vulnerable Children's Act of 2014, and the requirement for safety checks on those working with children.

Another feature of New Zealand's boarding schools is the fact there remain quite a number that cater for preparatory or primary-aged students. Examples would include Waihi, Medway, Hereworth, Huntley, Selwyn House and Southwell schools.

Other institutions cater for more senior students, such as Auckland International College, Christ's College and King's College. Some boarding schools, such as St Margaret's College and Woodford House, provide apartment style living for Year 13 boarders, thus preparing them for greater independence when they leave school.

Many boarding schools in New Zealand use gap students and university students to help with supervision. This would be true of Diocesan School for Girls. Known as “Dio”, which has over 50 boarders, their Year 7 – 10 boarders are partly supervised by university students.

A small number of boarding schools have been set up in Aotearoa to help repair the elements of character that nature and nurture might have neglected. This includes Salisbury School, a girls' boarding school in Richmond, established to help girls aged 8 – 15 years that have complex learning and social needs.

The quality of the boarding experience in New Zealand schools and hostels has come under the microscope in recent years with the establishment of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care (the Commission). The Commission is focussing on both state and faith-based institutions. It was set up to look at allegations of sexual, physical, emotional and psychological abuse during the period, 1950 – 1999.

Like Australia, New Zealand's Children's Act of 2014, requires its boarding schools and hostels in to have a Child Protection Policy. The policy must:

- state how the institution will identify and report child abuse and neglect,
- be available for download from the institution's website,
- be reviewed every three years.

Another feature of the residential care industry for school aged children in New Zealand is the significant number of hostels. Hostels in New Zealand are required to reach minimum standards. Under the [Education \(Hostels\) Regulations 2005](#), a hostel must be licensed by the Ministry of Education (the Hostel Licensing Authority) and comply with the minimum standards specified in the Regulations. Hostel licenses need to be renewed every three years, and hostels are reviewed by the Ministry of Education's, Education Review Office, as part of their regular review cycle.

A place becomes defined as a hostel if the provider has five beds or more that are available on a fee-for-service basis.

Given the rural nature of much of New Zealand, many quite small boarding schools have been established, as have many boarding hostels. These are slowly amalgamating or closing down, but many still run vibrant educational programs.

A unique feature of many of new Zealand's boarding schools is that they can be state run, state-integrated or private. State and private boarding schools are well known to boarding staff in Australia, but not state-integrated.

The state integrated schools came into being in 1975 when the Catholic church approached the government because it could no longer afford to fund many of its schools. Therefore, most state-integrated schools are former private schools that have chosen to integrate into the state education system. They are allowed to retain their "special character" and be run by a religious community or a specialist group. State-integrated school can charge fees on top of the funding they get from the government. Typically, these fees are between \$400 - \$4000 NZ a year.

An example of a state-integrated school would be Lindisfarne College, a boys only, day and boarding school in Hastings. The College was founded in 1953 and has up to 250 boarders that live in five boarding residences.

Many boarding hostels and schools in Aotearoa are faith based. For example, Saint Kentigern College, a private co-educational, secondary school of over 2,300 students in Auckland, has a Presbyterian foundation. Its motto, *Fides Servanda Est*, can be translated as, "The faith must be kept". The College is named after St Kentigern, a Scottish abbot, evangelist and the first bishop of Glasgow. Sometimes known as Saint Mungo, Kentigern died in 612, but has now lent his name to a school on the other side of the world.

A number of boarding schools have been established for the specific purpose of educating Māori students. For example, Hukarere Girls' College, a boarding school in Eskdale, was once called, "Hukarere Native School for Girls".

Even today, the College nurtures over 70 boarders, and teaches the Māori culture.

Not far away is St Joseph's Māori Girls' College, which is in Taradale, Napier.

St Joseph's is the largest Māori girls' secondary boarding school in New Zealand.

Boarding schools of this nature serve an invaluable educational purpose by not only advancing life skills, academic qualifications and values, but also in preserving Māori culture and traditions.

There are some unique challenges for those working in boarding schools and hostels in New Zealand, not least because it sits uncomfortably on the Pacific Ring of Fire – where seismic activity can be significant. This was amply demonstrated when a 7.1 magnitude New Zealand earthquake struck the Canterbury Region on September 4th 2010. The damage done to dozens of schools was significant. Fortunately, a 30-year program to seismically strengthen School buildings reduced the potential damage. This strengthening is important. There are about 14,000 earthquakes in New Zealand each year.

The most damaging earthquake in modern times was a 7.8 magnitude earthquake that struck Hawke's Bay on February 1931. This earthquake caused widespread damage to buildings and infrastructure and 256 deaths in the cities of Napier and Hastings and the surrounding region.

As a result of these natural disasters, the Ministry of Education requires every New Zealand school to have preparedness plans and evacuation schemes in place. However, the most common natural hazard is flooding, together with associated landslides and infrastructure damage.

There is a certain grit and courage associated with New Zealand. Despite a population of only a little over five million, (Australia's is nearer 26 million), it produced four times as many aircrew for the Battle of Britain. It also produces many outstanding state, state-integrated and private boarding schools that exhibit world's best practice in the residential care of school-aged children. ■



AUTHOR:
Dr Tim Hawkes
OAM
Co-founder of
ABSA, Educator,
executive coach
and author.

Profile:

Ipswich Girls' Grammar School

Ipswich Girls' Grammar School is a leading independent school in Queensland, Australia, providing quality education for girls from Years 7 to 12. The school has a rich history of providing an excellent education and has been doing so since 1892. The school's boarding house is an integral part of the school community and provides a supportive family environment for students who live away from home.

Ipswich Girls' Grammar School was officially opened in 1892. Thirty-one girls started their secondary education at the school, six of whom were boarders, establishing the school's 131-year history of boarding. In 1987, the impressive, five-wing boarding area, Cribb House, was officially opened. The House is named after Thomas Bridson Cribb, the first Chair of the Board of Trustees. Throughout the decades, Cribb House has undergone many changes, most

recently including the refurbishment of the Brock and Gill wings, and student common areas.

At the beginning of the year, the school welcomed Ms Rebecca Jones as the new Head of Boarding. Ms Jones has over 15 years of experience in boarding and has worked in both co-educational and all-girls facilities. Throughout her career, she has spent her days alongside like-minded educators who share a common



purpose in educating and supporting young women.

Ms Jones has developed a passion for engaging and leading young women in a holistic manner through our constantly changing, dynamic and unique world. She believes that boarding is a partnership between students, families, and the school, and works proactively to ensure clear and constant lines of communication are evident between all parties. She understands that living away from home can be a difficult journey with various hurdles, and believes in creating a stable environment for students which includes having a steady and visible presence within the boarding and day school. She has an open-door policy and invites students to seek guidance, refuge or just a daily chat whenever they need.

Boarding schools provide a unique opportunity for students to develop their



independence, resilience, and flexibility, which will serve them well throughout their lives. When asked what contemporary boarding means to her, Ms Jones said that a boarding family consists of diverse individuals. She wants to ensure that each girl feels valued for their individuality and feels confident and comfortable within their boarding home to express her true self.

As for the benefits of all-girls boarding schools, it is widely accepted that girls learn differently from boys and an all-girls environment can help them focus better and develop a stronger sense of identity awareness. All girls boarding provides an environment where girls can feel confident expressing their views and learning about diversity that the boarding house encompasses. The boarding community has a wide range of cultural backgrounds, which influence its social environment. This diversity gives students exposure to different cultures and ideas, which can help them understand different perspectives and develop empathy. It can also provide a sense of belonging and support for students from diverse backgrounds.

Girls develop strong life-long friendships that enhance their ability to navigate the growing interconnected global society. They receive the encouragement and support they need to achieve their best, in a supportive family environment.

As Head of Boarding, Ms Jones has big plans for her first year at Ipswich Girls' Grammar School. She plans to take an active role in the school's regional tours and will work closely with the international enrolments team to support their international student cohort. She hopes to connect with a broad range of past families, as well as current and future boarding families from around Australia. Boarding extends far beyond the four walls that accommodate the students. She looks forward to transcending regions, states and even countries to continue to build a greater connected family, as they empower our talented young women of the future. ■



Welcome: New Principals



Dale Bennett
Principal
Launceston Church Grammar
School
Launceston, TAS

LAUNCESTON CHURCH GRAMMAR SCHOOL – TAS

Dale joined Launceston Church Grammar as its 21st leader in January 2023 and is the School's first leader with the title of Principal. Launceston Grammar is Australia's oldest continuous day and boarding school.

Dale has worked in some of the great schools of the Southern Hemisphere including Caulfield Grammar School, Carey Baptist Grammar School, and Whangarei Collegiate School (NZ). He joins Grammar from Scotch College, Adelaide where for 12 years he was Deputy Principal and Head of the Senior Campus. He has held a wide range of roles in schools and for the last 17 years he has been part of the Senior leadership team. He champions students and ensures that school programs reflect

the values and culture of the school community, and at Grammar these are clearly identified as Compassion, Community, Inclusion, Safety, and Respect. Dale leads a quality team of staff in both the day and boarding school and is working with all staff to create a family friendly workspace. Like many of his colleagues he is focussed on workload and future job design with the team at Grammar. His approach to education is best summed up by his favourite Maori proverb.

He aha te mea nui o te ao

What is the most important thing in the world?

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata

It is the people, it is the people, it is the people. ■



Simon Harvey
Principal
Mazenod College
Perth, WA

MAZENOD COLLEGE – WA

Mazenod College WA is excited to welcome Simon Harvey to the role of Principal for the commencement of Term Two, 2023. Simon joined Mazenod College after six enjoyable years of service as the Principal at his alma mater St Norbert College, where he was the first ex-student appointed to the role.

Now in his 30th year in education, Simon brings a passion for engaging with students, a commitment to their welfare and playing his part in providing a safe and caring school environment. Simon also endeavors to bring a sense of pride, unity and common purpose across staff, students and families.

Simon has previously held several senior leadership positions in Catholic schools as the Deputy Principal at Emmanuel Catholic College,

Trinity College and was also the Vice Principal at Chisholm Catholic College, all in Western Australia. Whilst new to the boarding school environment, this added dimension at Mazenod College is something that Simon is excited about and is very keen to engage with other ABSA affiliated schools.

The Mazenod spirit embraces students, families, staff, Mazenod Old Boys and the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The College shares many family values with a hope that all feel welcome and a part of a supportive and diverse community.

In addition to being the Principal of an all-boys' school, Simon is the proud father of three daughters, Jenna, Eva and Lucy, and along with his wife Maria, enjoys nothing more than the fun and laughter of the family home. ■



Michael Horne
Principal
The Hamilton and Alexandra
College
Hamilton, VIC

THE HAMILTON AND ALEXANDRA COLLEGE – VIC

At the start of Term Two, The Hamilton and Alexandra College welcomed Mr Michael Horne as the 39th Principal in the school's 151st year.

Michael is an experienced educational leader and was most recently Associate Principal at Braemar College in Woodend, Victoria. Prior to this role he was Head of Senior School at Braemar College, and has held senior leadership positions including Deputy Principal at Salesian College and Ave Maria College. Michael considers himself first and foremost to be an English teacher, with interests in music, history and outdoor pursuits.

An established speaker and author of numerous English textbooks, Michael is passionate about developing the capacity of staff and students to

be continual learners, and is a strong advocate for pursuing excellence in teaching practice. Michael is currently undertaking a Doctor of Education degree through The University of Melbourne with his research focusing on the development of professional learning using teacher-led action research methodologies.

“Regional schools are not the same as metropolitan schools; they have a unique character, a particular set of strengths and challenges. I've enjoyed starting to understand the deep community connections to College, which stretch back in time and support the students of the school in myriad ways. ■



Adam Armanski
Principal
UWC Dilijan
Armenia

UWC DILIJAN - Armenia

Adam Armanski, Head of UWC Dilijan starting from August 2023, was previously the founding Head of School at Gjøvikregionen International School, Norway, where he was in charge for eight years. He previously taught at schools in China, Kazakhstan, Poland, Switzerland, and Turkey. He has over two decades' experience as IB DP coordinator and active senior work within the IBO. At university Adam studied English and TEFL for his first degree followed by American literature for his masters, concurrently with a course in Art History. He speaks four languages. ■

Welcome: New Heads of Boarding



Theuns (TJ) Pieters
Head of Boarding
Launceston Church Grammar
School
Launceston, TAS

LAUNCESTON CHURCH GRAMMAR SCHOOL - TAS

TJ has been part of the Launceston Church Grammar School Community since 2019. He started his journey in the Hawkes Boarding House as a Boarding House Assistant, while pursuing his PhD. In 2021, he was appointed as the Head of Boys' Boarding at Launceston Grammar and in 2022 was promoted to Deputy Head of Boarding. The Hawkes Boarding Community has truly been a home away from home having moved over from New Zealand, encouraging TJ to take on the responsibility of Head of Boarding. It is in this role that he can inspire the students to pursue their interests, express their individuality, and take ownership of their actions. Having pursued

his PhD in the training loads and wellbeing of adolescent athletes, TJ understands the importance of balancing the workloads associated with school, sporting demands, relationships, and the Boarding lifestyle to ensure that students are thriving in their environment. ■



James Hopper
Director of Boarding
St Patrick's College
Ballarat, VIC

ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE - VIC

St Patrick's College is delighted to welcome Mr James Hopper as its new Director of Boarding from the beginning of Term 2, 2023.

James has been the Head of Boarding at St Francis de Sales College in Leeton, NSW since 2009 and therefore, will bring extensive experience to the College. Prior to his current role, James worked in boarding at Yanco Agricultural High School, Red Bend Catholic College in Forbes and St Gregory's College in Campbelltown, on the southern edges of Sydney.

James' belief has always been that 'it takes a village to raise the child' and much can be gained

when that village is a strong boarding community built on respect, trust and other centred, community spirit. 'Boarding can bring the best out for those who would not otherwise have opportunity, especially for rural and isolated children. When a good culture is encouraged by "what we do when others are not watching", this lends itself to peer driven standards each can aspire to'.

James and his wife, Deanna know St Pat's well as parents, with their three sons attending as boarders several years ago. James is really looking forward to getting to know the boarding students at SPC and working closely with their families. ■



From the Chair

Jaye Buntel

As I write this article, we have come to the end of National Boarding Week. I must admit I've been blown away by the enthusiasm which schools, their boarders and wider communities have taken to celebrating this week across the country. A sincere congratulations to all of our members who took part in the various activities being run at their own schools, as well to those who entered into the social media competition showcasing their "Patchwork of Boarding". It has been nothing short of impressive to see how individual schools not only celebrate their boarding school life but promote the amazing talent they have within their communities, boarders, families, and staff alike.

What shone brightly for me as an observer in the National Boarding Week festivities is that there is a distinct difference between those schools who have boarders in residence and those who are boarding schools, by where every day boarding life is acknowledged and understood to be quite different to that of the day school peers and routines. The critical difference between the two is that of acknowledging and understanding the subtle and not so subtle differentiating needs of boarders than day scholars. This awareness is not just created by celebrating the uniqueness of boarding life during one week in May, but rather a deep seeded commitment and engagement with these aspects in all facets of school life.

My view on this is simple, but experience informs me that it is extremely effective.

The commitment to boarding in a school begins with knowledge and skills, which are gained by ongoing training and professional development of your school's team. Not just boarding staff, but all staff across the school who interact or support boarders and the boarding houses to function. Over the past decade or more, training of boarding staff and teachers has become more accessible and affordable for schools, particularly during the COVID period where an abundance of training moved online. At an ABSA Board level we have been delighted to see how quickly members took up these opportunities and continue to engage in the duty of care module. However, professional development should not commence and conclude with the base requirements of boarding staff training. The challenge is to engage and embrace a wide range of professional development opportunities

from internal staff lead in-services, to conferences (online or in person), ABSA supported or through other reputable training providers that can offer your team the opportunity to upskill in a particular aspect that compliments and supports your unique boarding lifestyle and programs.

These professional development opportunities not only help inform your team but enact the continual review and reflection of your boarding program. This is vital to remaining contemporary, connected and relevant to your clients and posts your school as a Boarding School, rather than a school with boarders in residence.

At the end of this term, I conclude my time as a boarding practitioner in action. Moving into a school support role. Boarding is in my veins, it is a career I have enjoyed for just over nineteen years. However, we all know that adage, "all good things must come to an end". Little did I know at the time, back in 2003, that what was a job to see me through my university days would turn into a wonderful career which would space almost two decades. Those early days sparked a love affair for me which is hard to explain, but it has been an amazing journey of twists, turns, tragedies, triumphs, but nothing short of a chapter of my life which would be summed up as one full of happiness. Denis Waitley, an American self-help guru and motivational speaker gave his understanding and take on happiness, it is one that resonates with me. He states, "Happiness cannot be travelled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is

the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace and gratitude”.

Boarding has been this for me, and I'd like to think it has been the same for the many boarders who I have worked hard to provide a special place they can call home for a while. As well the teams I have worked amongst or led, as I did my best to support them in the pursuit of providing boarders the love, care and attention that is needed along the demanding journey that is adolescence to young adulthood.

While life in boarding (staff or boarder) may not always be a feeling happiness, the experiences along the entire journey provide that broader acceptance that this is a place where you can be loved, whilst learning to love others (or at least tolerate in positive way), it is a house where grace is required and accepted as a daily mission, and a community built on gratitude.

Therefore, over the past few months I have taken a good amount of time to reflect upon not just my boarding career but

more so boarding itself and how it has changed from what I first knew.

Sunday nights were reserved for writing home to a loved one. An art form replaced by emails, texts, insta and snapchat. A relic that has sadly slipped from our space, one I wish we didn't have to lose. The joy of writing a letter is largely unknown by many, nor the pleasure and delight of the person who receives the letter, note or card.

Weekends were time for unstructured outdoor play, beach trips, sports and catching up on school work. Now, it's a challenge to find a moment to rest between all the competing priorities of the individual, the boarding activities calendar and the growing need to be connected to the digital world.

Boarding Houses have come from a world of large and busy houses, three squares daily, open showers (often cold), hard beds and routines built on discipline to a space where the individual is known, staff are

trained professionals, parents are part of the journey, comfort is placed as a priority, and care is absolute.

I guess in a sense, these are not words to say “hey look at how good we have it now, or try to say it was better back in the good old days”, it is more of a reflection of what I have seen change and mostly for the better. It has been for the betterment of the boarders and their families, or it has been for the betterment of the boarding community as it changed and grew to be a place where happiness is an experience where love, grace and gratitude are found.

One final thought I will leave you with. The greatest gifts that parents can give a child, are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence. Boarding School life is this gift – responsibility and independence are here in abundance. Therefore, it's worth doing well and celebrating this growth along the way. ■

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P + 61 7 3205 4940

E absa@boarding.org.au

Office: Unit 6, 26 Navigator Place, HENDRA, QLD, 4011

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www.boarding.org.au

