

### **Academic Care: Enhancing well being and learning**

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Deputy Principal, St Catherine's School, Waverley, NSW

*Ann led the formation of the NSW Pastoral Care Network in 2000. Interested in the links between learning and psycho-social development, Ann was accepted into the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, as a Research Associate in the Lent term, 2002. Her work there formed the research basis for the development of the Academic Care Charter in NSW Independent Schools.*

*Ann has worked with staff in NSW Schools, in the implementation of the Academic Care Charter. Published in the Journal of Pastoral Care in Education (U.K) and the IUE Journal (Australia). Continuing association with the University of Cambridge. Ann has just completed a Post Graduate Advanced Certificate in Educational Research, focusing on Academic Care case work.*

Academic Care involves enhancing student learning, well being and resilience through academic processes and practices which are sympathetic to student needs.

The Community Change Projects which ran in four schools in the NSW Independent Sector have led to the development of the Academic Care Charter. The Charter assists schools in monitoring and implementing processes which enhance learning and well being.

Pastoral Care and academic progress are inextricably linked. Academic Care involves promoting long term well-being through academic structures and processes which are sympathetic to adolescent needs. It is linked to Pastoral Care in its attention to positive learning and developmental outcomes including knowledge of self, self-efficacy, healthy risk taking, goal setting, negotiation, reflection and empowerment. Academic Care has the capacity to strengthen the pastoral work of schools by enhancing protective processes, particularly resilience. Thus, Academic Care is care delivered through the academic domain, most significantly through learning experiences which become protective processes in students' lives.

The proposed workshop would: introduce participants to

- the research underpinning and development of the Academic Care Charter in NSW schools
- strategies for implementing the Charter in schools

### **Girls and ICT**

Jenine Beekhuyzen [[j.beekhuyzen@griffith.edu.au](mailto:j.beekhuyzen@griffith.edu.au)]

Chair of Girls and ICT Qld State Reference Group, Senior Research Assistant, Griffith University

The low numbers of girls participating in ICT subjects at schools has a follow on effect leading to around only 20% representation of females across the ICT industry in Australia. There are well-documented economic and social reasons why we need more females to participate as developers of technology, and there seems to be growing support for this from many sectors.

In 2004 the Queensland Girls and ICT State Reference Group came to understand the lack of coordination of activities taking place across Queensland. As a group, we decided to host the 2005 Girls – Doing IT Smart in Queensland, a 2-day workshop bringing together key stakeholders across Queensland (held in Brisbane) to present and explore past and current initiatives and activities, best practice and issues surrounding the low levels of girls involved in technology education and practice. During the workshop, delegates concentrated on developing useful strategies to engage girls in ICT in their sector; with this information contributing to this Queensland Girls and ICT Strategic Plan – a deliverable of the workshop. The workshop was action-oriented, with a project officer being employed to help finalise and then implement the beginnings of the strategic plan in 2006. The overall aim of the workshop and the State Reference Group's future activities will focus on uniting the fragmented and generally uncoordinated efforts towards girls and ICT initiatives and activities to date across Queensland, moving toward a more directed, strategic and coordinated effort.

### **Re/Signifying Girl Power: A Case Study of Shifting Feminist Paradigms and Pedagogies**

Dr Robyn Colwill [[rcolwill@bggs.qld.edu.au](mailto:rcolwill@bggs.qld.edu.au)]

Director of English, Brisbane Girls Grammar School, Gregory Terrace, Brisbane

This paper tracks shifts in the impact and influences of feminism(s) on pedagogical and pastoral practices across three decades in a secondary school for girls.

As well as profiling the pervasive effects of feminism(s) on curriculum and classroom practices, discursive shifts in the self/perceptions of young women will be explored.

The case study draws on theoretical, sociological, academic and experiential perspectives and interrogates the representations and positioning of postfeminist young women in contemporary culture.

Despite assertions that feminism “no longer matters” to girls, it will be argued that feminism functions as an active and empowering presence rather than absence in the education and in the lives of young women today.

### **Australia USA Financial Literacy Education - A Comparative Study**

Judy Pilch [[jpilch@meriden.nsw.edu.au](mailto:jpilch@meriden.nsw.edu.au)]

HSIE Coordinator, Meriden School, Strathfield NSW

*Judy is Financial Literacy Coordinator and the author of Business Studies texts 2003, 2005*

Australia is fast catching up to the USA with its many savvy financial literacy programs. We have over 700 financial literacy programs and are witnessing the increasing role of corporate social responsibility played out by businesses including Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) and Citibank in assisting young Australians improve their financial literacy. Organisations such as the Financial Literacy Foundation, Financial Planning Association of Australia, NSW Office of Fair Trading, and members of community, public and private sectors are working to develop commercial awareness, through leadership on consumer youth debt and financial literacy, and national resource clearing houses.

A recent nationwide survey sponsored by the Jump\$Start Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy showed today's USA 12<sup>th</sup> graders know less than their colleagues did three years ago when it comes to personal finance topics such as paying taxes, using a credit card or saving toward retirement.

Meriden School Strathfield NSW has addressed the issue of teenage mobile phone debt, credit card debt and basic financial literacy in both the junior school and senior school through a range of pastoral care, Business Studies, Commerce and Maths financial literacy programs with the help of two CBA financial literacy grants. The programs included development of resources including an interactive CD Rom, pocket shopping cards, mobile phone retailer visits and guest speakers. Survey results at Meriden school show a significant improvement in the financial literacy of year 9 and year 11 students.

### **Of Mice and Souris: Developing skills for the future from Prep - Year 6**

Kathy Waterson [[kw@ruyton.vic.edu.au](mailto:kw@ruyton.vic.edu.au)], Ruyton Girls' School, Kew, Victoria

Teacher, Junior School French

*Kathy has a rich professional background which has included translating, conference interpreting and business management in the recruitment industry, as well as teaching in both France and Australia. Kathy's experiences have led her to the firm belief that to prepare girls for successful futures, it is essential to equip them with the ability to function in a technological world, to communicate effectively with others and to adapt confidently to change.*

An innovative program which was introduced at Ruyton Girls' Junior School in 2005 is founded on the efficacy of content-based learning in LOTE. Essentially, girls learn Information Technology skills in a French environment, supported by a language arts French programme. Commencing from Prep, the programme aims to develop skills in three key areas; Information Technology, Communication and flexibility of cognitive processes. In the upper primary levels, girls complete tasks which will assist them to develop time-management skills and equip them for on-line learning as an option for future study. The benefits of this approach for the development of divergent thinking will be outlined, and examples of IT activities for all primary levels using a range of applications will be provided. In addition, possibilities for on-line class management and assessment with instant feedback will be discussed.

### **Intercultural language learning: a passport for life**

Staff of the International Studies Faculty, Brisbane Girls Grammar School, Gregory Terrace, Spring Hill, Queensland

Ms L Thornquist [[lthornquist@bggs.qld.edu.au](mailto:lthornquist@bggs.qld.edu.au)]

Director of International Studies

1985-1999: Head of Languages, Brisbane Girls Grammar School

2004 – Present: Director of International Studies, Brisbane Girls Grammar School

Mrs M Bryant [[mbryant@bggs.qld.edu.au](mailto:mbryant@bggs.qld.edu.au)]

Head of Latin

Ms W Parkinson [[wparkinson@bggs.qld.edu.au](mailto:wparkinson@bggs.qld.edu.au)]

Head of French

This presentation explores the fundamental role of the language and cultural programs within and beyond the curriculum in this School and their impact on the future perspectives of Students.

#### § **The International Affiliate Schools (exchange) programme** (Ms Thornquist)

Ongoing relationships have been forged between students across the countries and cultures that our programme, now in its 27<sup>th</sup> year, represents. While our Affiliate Schools represent the languages learned in the school curriculum, this programme is promoted as a whole School community experience.

#### § **Learning Latin in the 21<sup>st</sup> century** (Ms Bryant)

Brisbane Girls Grammar is only one of two schools in Queensland to offer Senior Latin and has recently seen a significant rise in interest in this language and culture, particularly with younger students. The Latin department has captured the aim of addressing the historical virtues of teaching a classical language while integrating more contemporary processes into the learning, providing a sense of how this language learning can be relevant to the students' life.

#### § **The integration of 21<sup>st</sup> century media into the Learning of modern languages (French as an example)** (Ms Parkinson)

In 2005 the French Department received funding to formalise some ongoing learning approaches practised in the French Department using web based French television sites for access to authentic contemporary language and topics as they occur. The Presenter will discuss this project and its enhancement on student learning by offering a challenge that students relished.

#### **Personal Financial Literacy – Empowering Girls for Life**

*Ms Elizabeth Criddle [[ecriddle@iona.wa.edu.au](mailto:ecriddle@iona.wa.edu.au)], Iona Presentation College, MOSMAN PARK WA  
Acting Deputy Principal - Curriculum*

Why is it essential for girls to feel empowered by personal financial literacy? In an era of spiralling credit card debt and ever increasing personal bankruptcy, control over personal finances is now vital to adolescents. As the percentage of Australian women being provided for by another person throughout their life is decreasing, it is increasingly important for young women to become financially independent and to remain informed about financial options. Education needs to lead to confidence in managing personal finances. Australian and overseas indicators show that financial literacy among students and adults is currently abysmally low. How then, can financial literacy be integrated into secondary education in a manner that is inclusive and relevant to all young women? This paper will discuss the need for girls to be financially literate, as well as innovative methods of motivating students and engaging them with this issue.

#### **Growing older is mandatory, growing up is optional. Moving beyond the classroom to promote growing up**

*Lyndy Stagg [[lstagg@ivanhoegirls.vic.edu.au](mailto:lstagg@ivanhoegirls.vic.edu.au)], Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School, Ivanhoe, Victoria  
Teacher of Physical Education and Health, Year 9 Coordinator*

*Lyndy trained at Dartford, Kent, England, and has taught at Bedale, a coeducational boarding school, in Hampshire, England and at Geelong Grammar School, Corio and Whittlesea Day Training Centre, Epping developing and delivering the physical education curriculum. At Whittlesea she was responsible for arranging individual programmes for each client.*

*Lyndy commenced at Ivanhoe Girls' as the Physical Education Coordinator in 1986 and while still heavily involved in physical and outdoor education she has now moved into a pastoral care role as she manages Year 9 and 10.*

*Community work has included ongoing positions on the Board of Hockey Victoria and the local East Ivanhoe Community Bendigo Bank. She has also been a cub scout leader for eighteen years.*

*Such rich experiences with young people have led her to reflect on a variety of pathways necessary for individual fulfilment and underpin the following presentation.*

Growing up happens when young people encounter real life experiences that are outside the usual daily interactions at the institutions they are part of. What are these challenges and how can we encourage girls to see these, not as hurdles, but as real life opportunities? In all young people maturity is as wide a developmental spread as is the academic range. What we aim to do is to ensure that we give every girl a chance to find the way to mature at their own pace and have the space and internal resources to grow.

We have created a whole school approach to finding ways for girls to encounter these challenges. For example students designing school policies, the self directed Year 12 charity concert, Grade 4 Grandparent Buddies, International Club, St. George's Sunday lunches, international travel and helping with community events. We offer a multitude of intra and inter school challenges, immediate community and international opportunities with constant changes and innovations. We want the girls to master the challenges of life in a safe, supportive environment but still include some that may take them outside their comfort zone.

We want our students to learn to answer these questions positively:

- What can I do that would matter or make a difference beyond what is normally expected?
- How can I do it?
- Where would I go to find out?
- What's important in life?

Finding the opportunities is hard but we need to constantly look for new ways. No one challenge can meet the variety and needs of our students and community. All these ideas take time and effort but anything worth doing demands firstly a vision and secondly someone willing to do the work!

### **What's in a name? Relationship management V behaviour management V restoration V punishment V discipline V justice ...**

Linda Evans [[l\\_evans@fairholme.qld.edu.au](mailto:l_evans@fairholme.qld.edu.au)], Shirley Stepanoff [[s\\_stepanoff@fairholme.qld.edu.au](mailto:s_stepanoff@fairholme.qld.edu.au)]  
Fairholme College, Toowoomba, QLD.

*Linda is Head of Senior School. In former lives she has worked in co-educational schools both state and independent, teaching English and Physical Education and more recently at a leadership level in the areas of curriculum and pastoral care. She has a particular interest in restorative rather than punitive approaches to behaviour management.*

*Shirley is a Swedish-born South African, married to an Australian. She is currently School Counsellor and has previously worked in the fields of youth counselling, outdoor education and sports psychology. Not surprisingly, she has found restorative principles philosophically compatible with her beliefs.*

Our session focuses on the use of restorative practices in response to incidents of inappropriate behaviour or relationship breakdown. Specifically, we will discuss the outcomes of this model of restitution particularly in relation to the low incidence of re-offending that has occurred since restorative practices have been introduced within our college. We will use case examples based on actual restorative conferences that have been run successfully within our school – from small conferences of 6 to full class conferences involving 30.

Those involved in the session will be invited to participate in a mini conference situation. A short DVD will be shown that includes the thoughts of teachers and students who have been involved in a conference situation. The video will be introduced by our school principal who will express his early scepticism of the restorative approach but who is now an avid devotee.

When we transgress in our daily life, we can ask ourselves, "what sanctions will occur because of this?" However, when we ask also, "who has been affected by my actions and how can I restore the damage done?" then we learn how to live positively in relation with others and the essential lesson, how to remain connected within that community.

Our presentation has relevance for anyone who works with adolescents; it may be of particular interest to teachers, counsellors or administrators. Particularly it may be helpful for those who are using such principles already or are considering the versatility of application of this approach.

Our session is a demonstration, reflection and discussion, based on the way in which restorative practices can operate effectively within a school environment. We are in a sense, sharing some action research – a case study of how restorative practices, specifically the use of the restorative conference, can be used as a means of relationship management with outcomes that positively affect the school culture.

### **Change Matters!**

Susan Parker [[susan.parker@mgc.vic.edu.au](mailto:susan.parker@mgc.vic.edu.au)]

Susan Cole [[susan.cole@mgc.vic.edu.au](mailto:susan.cole@mgc.vic.edu.au)]

Melbourne Girls' College, Yarra Boulevard, Richmond, Victoria

*Susan Parker is Director of Curriculum and has been a core member of the Curriculum Reform group for four years; she was part of the team which developed the new MGC curriculum model. Susan is a visionary thinker and is currently responsible for the implementation of the new approaches.*

*Susan Cole is Director of Innovation - English, SOSE and LOTE - and she has taken a lead in the reform process. Susan is a big picture thinker who has guided the implementation of the integrated units at Years 7 and 9. Susan is currently guiding the college staff through Action Research in order to evaluate and redirect their educational directions.*

*Melbourne Girls' College is a government secondary college catering for 1200 girls - we have undertaken significant reforms of the curriculum and support programs from Years 7 -10. 2005 has been an implementation year and so has posed significant challenges for all staff. The model we developed reflects the needs of the college as determined through a data gathering and research process. There are some aspects of our model which have been very contentious; one of these includes the semesterisation of core subjects at Year 8. The goal is to improve the learning outcomes of the girls, improve their pathway choices and to respond to the current needs of young women in our society. The new curriculum highlights the importance of community links, in particular the core World of Ideas Integrated unit at Year 9.*

*We will outline the history of the model, present the model, articulate the process of managing the change process with the staff, then conclude with the challenges that we face as we enter our second year.*

Reforming the 7 -10 Curriculum at a college of 1200 girls is a formidable task. This workshop takes delegates on the complex journey that describes how Melbourne Girls' College set about changing structures, processes and pedagogy across the college in order to create a relevant and real learning environment for young women in contemporary society. The challenges and rewards are there for all to see.

So what now? The challenges that we continue to face after one implementation year are complex. Recognising and understanding that educational and social change are ongoing, that new programs take some years to embed and that the job must continue to take into account the learning and personal needs of young people encourage us to be dynamic in our curriculum development. The question for us is "Where to next? We can't expect that what we have completed 'will do' and that we can take time to rest. We will outline the post implementation phase and the new challenges for us all next year.

### **Creating Contexts that Engage Girls in the ICT Classroom**

*Ann Farley [[afarley@bggs.qld.edu.au](mailto:afarley@bggs.qld.edu.au)]*

*Maggie Golawska-Loye [[mloye@bggs.qld.edu.au](mailto:mloye@bggs.qld.edu.au)]*

*Brisbane Girls Grammar School, Gregory Terrace Spring Hill*

*Ann is Director of Technology and Learning and has worked with staff and students in the Mathematics, Science and Technology areas to develop curriculum that encourages diversity within the classroom. She has recently completed a PhD that examined the roles of teacher collaboration, learning contexts and spaces in developing optimum learning environments.*

*Maggie has qualifications in both the teaching of IT and ESL. She has worked with colleagues to develop and implement a range of ICT curricula across Years 8 to 12.*

*Ann and Maggie have been part of a team at Brisbane Girls Grammar School that has investigated the specific needs of girls in relation to ICTs with a view to developing experiences that will encourage and challenge girls to face and interact with real world technology demands.*

Context and purpose is everything when developing ICT curriculum that will engage and enthuse girls while catering for the inevitable diversity that exists within each classroom. By utilising community involvement, cross subject connections, group and individual activities and a range of authentic assessments we have developed and explored curriculum that has enabled girls to acquire a repertoire of skills within contexts that allow them to pursue personal interests while catering for individual levels of expertise. Students have utilised skills of communication, cooperation, collaboration, self-discipline, reflection and evaluation. They have been encouraged to take risks, invent solutions, envision possibilities and make new connections within real world contexts.

### **Professional Learning – Tokenism, or Creating Powerful Ways to Change Teaching and Learning in Schools?**

*Amanda Swaney [[sw@ruyton.vic.edu.au](mailto:sw@ruyton.vic.edu.au)], Ruyton Girls School, Kew, Victoria*

*Amanda has been Director of Learning at Ruyton for the last five years during which time the school has undergone substantial change in both curriculum and facilities. Change has been progressive and strategic, and in her presentation, she draws on her long experience of working in classrooms and with teachers, to present solutions to the vexing issues of what will effectively drive a school forward in creating improved teaching and learning for students.*

Many of our current practices in Professional Learning for teachers are ineffective. There is little transfer of what teachers learn and experience from a Professional Learning event into their own classroom. Too often, the one-off exposure to an expert is more frustrating than satisfying and the experience of Professional Learning has remarkably little to do with student learning outcomes, and the development from girls to women.

The presentation will investigate an effective Professional Learning model. Illustrated case studies will show some of the ways in which schools can implement effective Professional Learning approaches that create a climate of learning for all teachers in the school. The role of coaching, Team development which focusses on collaboration and shared practice, the Ruyton Award for Educational Research, Japanese lesson study, experiential opportunities and the linking of staff reviews to ways in which teachers seek to improve their practice will be discussed.

The use of data which enables defensible interpretations about teaching and learning, feeds into knowledge for the teacher of what Professional Learning needs they have. It informs strategic planning of pathways for learning. The data includes the voice of the students and that of colleagues; the use of classroom video data, which enables rigorous observation and analysis; and the maintenance of comprehensive testing results over students' school years to create a detailed picture of student performance and consequent learning needs.

### **Linking Desire and Experience: Student leadership at Loreto Kirribilli**

*Robyn Wigham [[rwigham@loreto.nsw.edu.au](mailto:rwigham@loreto.nsw.edu.au)], Director of Student Welfare*

*Kate Edmondson [[kedmondson@loreto.nsw.edu.au](mailto:kedmondson@loreto.nsw.edu.au)], Deputy Principal, Loreto Kirribilli NSW*

Student leadership and opportunities for students to experience personal excellence in co and extra curricular activities are built into long established structures at Loreto Kirribilli. This presentation will share with the participants these structures and also name elements of the culture of the school which both nurture and are nurtured by these structures. Also discussed will be the attitudes towards success and competition held by the school and the importance of supporting students through their experimentation and mistake making by teacher mentors. Goals known by the whole community which have the commitment of teachers and students are located in the desire of the students to recognize and achieve excellence within the culture and tradition of the school. The presentation will give possible reasons for the success of student leadership at Loreto Kirribilli and will give participants an opportunity to examine their own school situation and gain enrichment ideas from others in the group.

### **Kaleidoscope or Periscope: how do we link with our students' lives to their lives as women?**

*Dr Ness Goodwin [[ngoodwin@somerville.qld.edu.au](mailto:ngoodwin@somerville.qld.edu.au)], Principal*

*Ms Dale Nicholas [[dnicholas@somerville.qld.edu.au](mailto:dnicholas@somerville.qld.edu.au)], Student Counsellor*

*Somerville House, South Brisbane, Queensland*

*Ness Goodwin has worked in leading girls' schools in Australia. She has also taught at tertiary level and has worked as a consultant in professional development.*

*Dale Nicholas is the Student Counsellor at Somerville House. She completed her tertiary education in South Africa and has worked in a variety of settings including schools, hospitals and adult education.*

One of the strengths of girls' schools is that they educate girls to take their place in the world with confidence and courage. The theme of the conference invites us to consider the progression from young girl to woman, reflecting on the relevance of what we teach to their future lives. It is possible to take a periscopic view of our students' lives of the future, taking a quick look around, and then submerging ourselves in the routine of where we were before. It is, however, more fruitful if we take a kaleidoscopic view, seeing the lives of modern women as a pattern that changes with every shake of the tube. Women's lives, like the patterns in a kaleidoscope, are complex, flexible, and unpredictable. It is not possible to discern a fixed pattern.

In this sort of shifting environment, where each student has a different kaleidoscope pattern, we pose the questions - What do we teach our girls about becoming women? What sorts of decisions will they confront in the future and how do we prepare them for these? We take a particular focus on careers and family life and examine what, if anything, we should be teaching our students about life choices.

The first section of the presentation examines some aspects of modern life, with a discussion of the retreat from the gains of feminism that can be seen through the media, government policy, and in the lives of some women.

The second section looks at the ways in which Somerville House is framing these issues and how we endeavour to develop our students' understanding of issues beyond tertiary study. We explore how we

currently educate girls about careers, study and university life, and what changes we have made to raise their awareness of issues which are likely to impact on their lives.

The conclusions we draw are tentative and partial, and are part of an ongoing process of curriculum and pastoral care review. In the process of examining the best way to raise awareness for students with many different kaleidoscopes, we raise more questions than we answer.

**Connect: Learn, Think, Do**

*Kim Edwards [[kedwards@plc.wa.edu.au](mailto:kedwards@plc.wa.edu.au)], Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning  
Erica Walker [[ewalker@plc.wa.edu.au](mailto:ewalker@plc.wa.edu.au)], Director of Learning Enrichment Centre  
Presbyterian Ladies' College, Perth, Western Australia*

*Kim is currently Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning (Staff), at Presbyterian Ladies' College, Western Australia. She has been teaching for 20 years, 9 of those years teaching Science in the Middle School. She was Head of Middle School for 8 years prior to her appointment as Deputy and had responsibility for the curriculum and pastoral care of students in the Middle School. In 2002, she was jointly awarded the International Association of School Librarianship award for 'Most Innovative Practice for School Libraries' for the development of the 'Bloom's Thinking Strategy' teacher and student resource package. She continues to explore ways to use technology in the classroom to assist in differentiating the curriculum and enhance student learning.*

*Erica is currently Director of Learning Enrichment at PLC where she works helping to promote positive learning outcomes for all students in a flexible environment where the respect for individuality of the student is at the centre of all decision making.*

Do teachers acknowledge how students learn? This paper will explore a simple, effective digital tool to use with students that connects Learning Styles - how students take in information (Learn), Thinking Styles - how they process information (Think), and Multiple Intelligences - how they show their understandings (Do). It incorporates work from Julia Atkins' research on Ned Hermann's Whole Brain Thinking model, and Gardner's updated Multiple Intelligence Theory. It has been trialled in an integrated Middle School context where students examined the questions: Who and what am I as a learner? Where do I belong? Student and teacher support materials will also be demonstrated.

**Connecting the 'co' and 'curriculum' in the middle school years– the rewards & challenges**

*Julie Shaw [[shawj@abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au](mailto:shawj@abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au)], Abbotsleigh, Wahroonga, NSW*

*Taught in Tasmania and the UK. Currently Head of AbbSchool, coordinating a wide variety of co-curricular activities, including Outdoor Education.*

*Integrating Outdoor Education from Kindergarten to Year 9 using an outcomes based approach is one of my current projects. The purpose is not to undervalue the integrity of Outdoor Education or co-curricular activities as valuable stand alone programs, but to highlight opportunities for curriculum connections, values education and the importance of these connections in helping schools such as Abbotsleigh to maintain a 'whole child' perspective .*

This presentation will address the system used at Abbotsleigh to systematically coordinate many of the experiential learning opportunities that exist from K – 12, including Outdoor Education, Dance, Year 10 Applied Learning Experience and Speech and Drama to name but a few. Future directions to further enhance the reciprocal benefits to be gained from connecting these activities and core curriculum outcomes will be explored.

**From group or gang to supportive network: promoting healthy relationship-building in teenage girls**

*Karen Belbin [[kbelbin@bggs.qld.edu.au](mailto:kbelbin@bggs.qld.edu.au)], Brisbane Girls Grammar School, Brisbane, Queensland*

*Karen has over 25 years experience working with children, adolescents and their families. With a background in Child and Adolescent Mental Health, she works within the psychodynamic frame and has particular interest and expertise in the areas of attachment, anxiety and depression. Karen has been working at Brisbane Girls Grammar School for the past 5 years. She has also worked as a Consultant to School Counsellors and Psychologists at private schools in Brisbane and has written and presented papers on trauma, grief and loss at national and international conferences.*

This paper will begin by looking at how and why teenage girls form groups; the important and necessary function of group membership during adolescence and why some groups are supportive and caring while others are toxic and destructive.

It will explore how basic human needs and desires are expressed and satisfied through group membership and dynamics; the conscious and unconscious processes involved and the primitive impulses that drive much of a group's behaviour.

The paper will provide insight into what happens when group members submerge their capacity for thought, planning, reasoning and decision-making into a leader or group member who may be functioning at a primitive or destructive level. It will conclude by offering suggestions on how to support and assist girls to develop positive peer relationships which will serve as a template for the development of supportive, nourishing friendships that last for life.