



in this issue

Early Learning

2012 Biennial Conference

Special Feature: Healthy bodies, healthy minds

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**In Alliance 2013
Editorial Deadlines**

VOLUME 50
FRIDAY 1 MARCH 2013
Theme: *Engaging girls in STEM*

Articles and photographs should
be emailed to the Editor at
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From the President...

Robyn Kronenberg



In June I was fortunate to attend the National Coalition of Girls' Schools (NCGS) annual conference on *Media Savvy Girls*, at the Hockaday School in Dallas Texas. Everything is big in Texas and the Hockaday School, a school for over 1000 girls, was located on 88 acres in suburban North Dallas. It was pleasing to have three other Alliance members attend the conference as well as our two student delegates: Amany Cummins from St Margaret's Anglican Girls' School in Queensland and Isobel Pepper from Palmerston North Girls' High School, New Zealand.

The conference was stimulating and challenging and the presenters comprised a range of educators and high-profile media personalities who focused on four key aspects about girls and the media. Firstly the concern was raised about the under-representation of women in the decision-making areas of the media industry. In the US, only 3% of women hold high level director positions in mainstream media including telecommunications, entertainment, publishing and advertising. Consequently women are not making the decisions about what we see or read in the media, film and television. In the top 250 grossing films in the USA only 7% of directors are women and only 13% of film writers are women. So who is controlling what is portrayed in the movie industry?

When Jennifer Siebel Newsom wanted to make a movie about the misrepresentation of women in the media to make public her concerns, she could not find a film company to support her. She did eventually make her movie – *Miss Representation* – which was shown at the conference. *Miss Representation* is a powerful presentation of the issues of how women are portrayed in the media.

It was this issue of how women are portrayed in the media that was the second area of concern raised at the conference. An analysis of the 100 top-grossing movies last year showed that men had 67% of the speaking roles; women had about half of that, 33%. At the same time, female characters were more likely to wear sexy, provocative clothing than men (26% vs 5%) or to appear partially naked (24% vs 8%). It is clear that the image of women in the media is much more about appearance and beauty. Women are seen more for their sex appeal than their intelligence, thoughtfulness

or leadership. These are the messages girls all over the world are getting. The conference challenged us as educators by asking us what we were doing in our schools about the messages our girls are getting and how we were countering the stereotype of girls and women in the media.

Thirdly the conference talked about how girls are using technology and the safety issues that arise when they use Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter and other forms of on-line chatting. Presenters talked about the inappropriateness of girls posting naked images of themselves on-line and the dangers of chatting to total strangers or worse still, meeting up with strangers they have met online.

And then fourthly we looked at the way that girls are unkind to others via the media. When did it become cool to be cruel? The challenge for school principals and staff in schools is to develop a culture of kindness, respect and harmony, one that does not accept bullying and harassment in any form, including via the media.

"The challenge for school principals and staff in schools is to develop a culture of kindness, respect and harmony, one that does not accept bullying and harassment in any form, including via the media."

The presentations from the speakers ranged from personal experience to what the current research on girls and the media is telling us. Although the issues are global, the solutions need to be local. There were a number of key suggestions for ways to work forward

on these issues and some examples of good practice were presented. I have certainly come away from this conference with renewed insight and a determination to address these issues further at my own school.

In this issue of *In Alliance*, we bring you some summaries of the papers presented at the 14th Alliance Staff Conference, *Images of a Girl: Diversity, Dilemmas and Future Possibilities*. The introduction of a student film competition was well received and something that could become a regular part of future conferences. The conference organising committee are to be congratulated on a most successful conference. Feedback from the delegates' survey was very positive as well as offering suggestions that will assist in the planning of our next conference. Thanks must go to our sponsors (see page 29), Melbourne Girls Grammar School for hosting the conference and for their generous support and to all those who were able to attend our 2012 Staff Conference. I hope you will all consider a journey to Wellington for the next one in May 2014.

Robyn Kronenberg

From the Editor...



Jan Butler

I am fortunate to have the opportunity to attend some of the Alliance functions that are organised by the branch representatives on the Executive, and I am always struck by the wonderful and warm collegiality that is evident at these events. At a recent dinner, the Principals each gave a short talk about the history of their school to the 60 or so staff who were present. The stories were told with humour and interest and it was fascinating to see the similarities across the sectors and to hear often of the amazing women who had the courage and foresight to found a school for girls, sometimes halfway across the world from their home country.

I do encourage all members to make an effort to attend events that are organised by your local Executive members, or to send staff or students depending on the nature of the occasion. As well as the more formal talks that happen, the informal sharing and conversations can only enrich all of us.

At the Annual General Meeting in May, we farewelled four Executive members and welcomed three new principals to the Executive. I thank Mrs Antoinette Jones, Mrs Catherine Misson and Ms Deborah Lehner for their work on the Executive, and especially Mrs Karen Spiller who has served for seven years, two as President. We welcome Mrs Margaret Rouggos, Principal of Kildare College, SA; Dr Mary Cannon, Principal of Canterbury Girls' Secondary College, Victoria and Mrs Fran Reddan, Principal of Mentone Girls' Grammar School, Victoria. We congratulate Dr Amanda Bell who is taking up the position of Principal of the Women's College at the University of Sydney next year, so we will soon be looking for a new representative for Queensland to take her place.

The current Executive members are listed in the sidebar of page 2, and I am pleased to be working with them already on projects for the coming year.

We are delighted to welcome Bethlehem College, in Ashfield NSW, Principal Mrs Paula Bounds, to the Alliance. With 142 members, the Alliance now supports over 120,000 girls and their staff.

Registrations from Member Schools are now being received for the Student Leadership Conference for 2013 which will again be held at the Women's College at the University of Sydney. The Alliance is proud to announce a new initiative for the January 2013 conference. Thanks to our generous partners, World Challenge and CIRCLE, we are able to offer scholarships for indigenous students who may not otherwise be able to attend the SLC. Visit the Alliance website for details and how to apply.

In this issue of *In Alliance* we have some delightful stories and pictures of what is happening with our little girls (and sometimes boys!) in their first years of school. Technology is certainly adding a new dimension: together with books, puzzles and imaginative play, children are now using iPads and other relatively cheap computer devices with access to an astonishing number of low cost or free apps for early learning. They come to school already familiar with the use of iPhones and iPads at home, even though the devices have really only been in use for a year or two. It is encouraging to see that the effectiveness of these new technologies is being monitored to ensure that their influence on how young children play and learn is balanced and appropriate.

We have also featured summaries of some of the keynote presentations from the Biennial conference, held at Melbourne Girls Grammar School in May. For more speaker notes and links to relevant videos and reports, films from the student competition and other related resources, please visit the Members pages on the Alliance website. We encourage you to save the end of May 2014 in your diaries for a visit to Wellington, New Zealand, for the next staff conference, and to keep an eye on the website for dates, venue and more information which will be available soon.

Jan Butler

FOR YOUR DIARY
Visit the website for more details

28 September 2012	Due date for schools to register students for SLC2013
20-21 October 2012	National Association for Single Sex Public Education (US), International Conference on Single-Gender Education, Houston, Texas
23 November 2012	Due date for SLC2013 delegates to complete information and medical forms
19-21 November 2012	Girls' Schools Association (UK) Annual Conference, Liverpool Hilton Hotel
16-20 January 2013	Student Leadership Conference, Women's College, University of Sydney
25-28 May 2014	Alliance Biennial Staff Conference, Wellington, New Zealand



World Challenge excites and engages, stretches and challenges, develops new skills and opens doors for the future. It is not just an amazing trip to another country, but a developmental journey that starts long before students even step on the plane. There are four phases: acclimatisation, project, trekking, R&R.

Waikato Diocesan School Adventures Abroad

For 10 students from Waikato Diocesan School and their teacher, Anne Robertson, their project in December 2011 involved working and living in a women's refuge in Battambang, Cambodia, in a community deeply affected by Pol Pot.

With the minimum of tools and in extreme humidity and heat they built a fence, painted a gate, laid concrete slabs and also volunteered in the local school.

"Go for it" is Anne's message to anyone contemplating a similar challenge. "It is a learning journey for all of us and not knowing what to expect makes it the most fun."

Find out how you can get involved:

1300 728 568 (Australia) • 0800 456 134 (New Zealand) • www.worldchallenge.com.au

A Sense of Belonging: The Mandala Project

Mandy Whitworth, Deputy Head of Wardle House - Toorak College Junior School, Victoria

Learning and teaching should not stand on opposite banks and just watch the river flow by; instead, they should embark together on a journey down the water. Through an active, reciprocal exchange, teaching can strengthen learning how to learn. – Loris Malaguzzi

At Toorak College we see learning as the collaboration between children, teachers and parents in the co-construction of knowledge, promotion of independence of the individual, and that learning is a social activity. In our Early Learning Centre we embrace the Reggio Emilia Philosophy and it is at the core of everything we do. We want to share just a taste of the variety of projects undertaken by our students.

The Mandala Project provided an opportunity for the children to explore what it means to belong through the creation of a Mandala. The journey begins when Jodie, a parent, shares her skills with the students. The children learn that a Mandala is a wondrous and meaningful design represented in the form of circles and that loosely translated means 'circles'. This provocation was the catalyst to a decision by the learning community to create a Mandala as a symbolic reminder of the year to celebrate who the children are as individuals, and how together as a community they have achieved great things.



“...a symbolic reminder of the year to celebrate who the children are as individuals, and how together as a community they have achieved great things.”

Through the Mandala they would always remain connected.

Using the smart board the students discussed and created a mind map to identify the things they valued within the school community. It was decided the inner circle would represent the group. The middle circle would represent the Early Learning Centre and the things they connected with: sandpit, Bluey the Lizard, blocks, library and playground. The outer circle represented the whole school. Further connections were made and the children identified the fairy tree, running oval, beautiful flowers, the swimming pool and the ‘big girls’.

To enhance the children’s understanding of a Mandala, a circle hunt was planned within the school grounds with the children in charge of the camera. They discovered and recorded circles around the school. Each child placed a sticky note of something they connected within our school, onto a large canvas. Children were asked to vote on the colour selections. The background was created using the children’s favourite colours.

The fairy tree was identified by the children as a special place within the school. It was a favourite meeting place where they shared many fond memories. It was decided that the Fairy Tree would





Jodie and the students began the plan.

frame the circles of the Mandala. The branches would; connect shelter, embrace and interact with everything and everyone in our community. The children studied images of the Fairy Tree and then created their own interpretation through illustration. Combinations of designs were selected, creating the Fairy Tree which was represented on the Mandala canvas. The children wanted the Fairy Tree to look real so they pasted paper bark over the branches to give the tree more body and texture.

The children visited and documented other areas identified within our school which were important to them and placed these on the Mandala. The Mandala was beginning to take its own unique form and spontaneous connections were being made.

The Mandala became complete as the children made a wish about something that made them smile, as they sprinkled gold fairy dust over it. Parents who were not directly involved in this project made daily connections and were interested in the progress of the project. They asked many questions, offering ideas and giving feedback.

These learning journeys emerge from observations, from listening and approaching teaching and learning from a research stance. The direction and end point are often unknown, and the approach is both rigorous and shared.

We would like to acknowledge the investigation of Anna Melville, Teacher; Karen Exner, Early Learning Centre, 4 Year old Teacher; Lisa Dobson, Early Learning Centre Assistant; and the wonderful parents and students at Wardle House Toorak College, Mount Eliza.



The students made spontaneous connections:

- Charlie: "A Mandala is made up of circles and it's like a journey."
- Jasmine: "Charlie and I made a Mandala and it has three circles and three different colours."
- Isabella: "Circles are round and they connect things just like a Mandala."



Early childhood education at Walford

Charmaine Brooks, Director of Early Learning - Walford Anglican School for Girls, South Australia

Walford Anglican School for Girls, located in Hyde Park, Adelaide, in South Australia is an independent Anglican day and boarding school providing education to approximately 700 girls from Reception to Year 12. With the establishment of a new, expanded Early Learning Centre this year, children are now welcomed from three years of age.

Next year, 2013 marks the 120th year of Walford and its rich history will be shared and celebrated in many ways. In April, the newest addition to Walford, the Early Learning Centre or 'Adamson Centre', was shared and celebrated with the community at the Official Opening and proudly took its place in the history of our beautiful school.

Although we have been busy learning and playing in the new Adamson Centre since the start of the school year, the Official Opening finally took place after the completion of the outside play area. We are delighted with the wonderful new learning spaces, our play garden, all of the equipment and toys and of course our first classes of children. In preparing for our Official Opening something very special has come to light. It appears that the new early learning program in the Walford Adamson Centre shares many similarities and links with the first kindergarten program presented at Walford back at the turn of the 20th century.

With our present commitment to ensure high quality early learning experiences for young children and the introduction of the National Quality Framework, hours and hours of research, planning and organisation have gone into preparing and establishing early childhood education at Walford. Surprisingly perhaps, we only had to look back at what was happening in the Walford Kindergarten in 1909 for our inspiration. Many of our core aims are the same as those so highly regarded by the founder of our school when she established the first kindergarten at Walford in 1909.

Miss Lydia Adamson, the founder and first Headmistress of Walford Anglican School for Girls, was an advocate of the very progressive

Froebelian practice. Froebel emphasised the importance of a beautiful environment with child-sized furniture and resources, and the importance of learning through play. Froebel designed specific educational games and toys for young children, many of which are still used today, albeit in more updated forms (Spodek, 1982). He strongly believed that young children deserved trained teachers to guide them in learning. The first kindergarten teacher at Walford, Miss Maude Leicester, was one of the first eleven graduates of the South Australian Kindergarten Training College (Walford: a centenary history, 1994). Coincidentally, all Walford Early Learning Centre teaching staff have undertaken the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education through the Magill Campus of University of SA, where Lillian de Lissa started her Kindergarten Training College in 1907.

The 'modern practice' of the day, under the guidance of Miss Leicester, saw the children engaged in story time, singing and games. Miss Adamson valued the importance of directed games as a means of encouraging fair play, mutual helpfulness, and as a way of 'fostering the spirit of affection' among the children, teachers and families; bringing home and school life into 'closer union'. This is similar to our current aim of fostering a sense of belonging and community and working closely with families. Miss Leicester 'instructed' good behaviour, careful

manners and hygiene, and promoted 'an awakening of the children's perception of beauty in the natural world' (Walford: a centenary history, 1994).

Like Miss Lydia Adamson, our Principal, Mrs Helen Trebilcock, had a vision for establishing an environment that would deepen the learning experience for our youngest students and provide a quality early childhood education. Mrs Trebilcock is highly respectful of the uniqueness of individual learners and thinkers, and she has guided us in developing a broad philosophy that draws upon the principles of Reggio Emilia, the inquiry approach of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program, and the Early Years Learning Framework that places learning



though play at the centre of our practice. Miss Leicester would be proud to know that the importance of children's play is highly valued by current early childhood educators and that the beauty of the natural world and the importance of the natural environment are still very evident in early childhood pedagogy today.

The Adamson Centre consists of three learning and teaching spaces and is named in honour of Miss Adamson and her devotion to early childhood education. Our philosophy and practice is built around relationships, children's play and an inquiry approach to learning; these are principles highly valued by the kindergarten teachers who have followed Miss Adamson and Miss Leicester. The two rooms for four year old children are named in honour of two inspirational and much loved past kindergarten teachers, Mrs Peg Dowie and Miss Hyaline Chewings. Miss Chewings is remembered for her devotion to her children and for encouraging inquiring minds. Mrs Dowie's past students honour her for teaching them the value of 'love, learning, friendship and play'.

The Adamson Room is currently full of energetic and happy three year old girls and boys, another link to our past, as boys were also welcomed in the first kindergarten classes at Walford. The naming of the rooms recognises the contribution and service these educators so generously gave to young children and to Walford. We were honoured to have Mr John Adamson, great nephew of Miss Lydia Adamson, officially open the Adamson Centre by cutting the ribbon with one of our youngest students.

Almost one hundred and twenty years on, Walford Anglican School for Girls is excited to be again providing a quality early childhood education for girls and boys. The current staff are committed to upholding the principles held by Miss Adamson and the kindergarten teachers who have come before us. We are equally delighted to share such strong links to the past and to continue the history of early childhood education at Walford.

We look forward to many more days of love, learning, friendship and play.

Spodek, B. (1982). The Kindergarten: a retrospective and contemporary view. in L. Katz (Ed.), *Current topics in Early Childhood Education*. New Jersey: Ablex Publishing.

Walford: a Centenary History (1994). Norwood, South Australia: Peacock Publications.



"...the beauty of the natural world and the importance of the natural environment are still very evident in early childhood pedagogy today."



iPads and Early Childhood: a good mix?

Karina Buttler, Director of Early Learning – Ruyton Girls' School, Kew, Victoria

For early childhood settings across Australia, this year has been one of many changes to our procedures and practices in light of the new Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). Lingering in the background in the midst of all of this, is that question I find myself continually asking in today's digital world: technology in early childhood, where are we heading?

While we have been incorporating the EYLF principles and practice into our programs, I have been aware that the world of technology is something that simply cannot be ignored in the learning environment for our youngest students, the true digital natives. The digital world of learning is progressing rapidly. The role technology plays in early childhood is also changing and becoming an important feature of a young child's home life. So when Ruyton Girls' School began their Digital Learning Vision and Plan this year, what better opportunity to face the big question: how can we incorporate IT into our early learning setting?

I was invited to join the ICT committee as the ELC representative, to ensure representation of all learning areas across the school community. The purpose of the committee in Semester 1 was to create our new Digital Learning Vision and five year strategic plan. We embarked on a thorough and involved process working with an external consultant who led research and involvement of all staff through survey tools. The resulting strategic

plan included the opportunity for staff to participate in innovation projects. The first of these was launched as the *iCollaborate Innovation Project*, an opportunity for staff to work collaboratively in groups over a period of one school term, investigating the capacity of iPads to enrich the learning and teaching in their setting. Staff were given the opportunity to submit an application outlining their goals and intentions for measuring their results.

The ELC staff were excited about the opportunity and submitted an application. Our team focus question was: 'How can the use of iPads support each child's growth in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) outcomes of Identity and Wellbeing?'

Our submission was successful; we are now investigating the use of iPads in the Early Learning Centre, with three, four and five year olds and documenting our results.

Although we are still in the early days of the project we have already found that the use of iPads can actually extend a child's sense of identity (Outcome 1, EYLF). Prior to this project I had been cautious in regard to the use of computers in our setting, as desktop computers can be an isolating tool for young children. As a tool for learning the iPads provide opportunities for socialisation and flexibility - provided they are used appropriately. Just like other tools for learning in a typical early learning





environment, such as play dough, puzzles and painting, our use of iPads has provided different learning opportunities. It hasn't taken over the curriculum, or isolated children; in fact at times they have been a form of negotiation and turn taking for the children, an important skill to learn in itself. They have also provided the opportunity at times to redefine the teacher-student relationship as some of our young students are very familiar with this technology.

During the project we've focused on working with apps that build a child's wellbeing and identity (Outcomes 1 and 3 EYLF). So far, we have found some apps to be successful in reaching these outcomes, and others not. Learning to choose the appropriate apps continues to be part of the learning journey for us as early learning educators. There is a huge market for apps, particularly children's apps. Some apps we downloaded claimed to be early childhood and educationally friendly, yet they contained blatant advertising material, obvious spelling mistakes or graphics and music that simply distracted a child from learning. The value of trialling apps amongst ourselves and reviewing them for appropriateness cannot be underestimated. To date, we have found the following apps to be very successful in answering our focus question:

- Play School Art Maker (this is also Australian which is quite rare for an Early Learning app). Children can create their own piece of artwork by moving familiar Play School characters around, creating a landscape, and recording their own voice to tell a story. They can do this on their own or with another child, and then play the video back to their peers.
- Toca Tea Party - we have found many of the Toca Boca apps to be worthwhile as they have clear, easy to focus graphics, with little instruction so children can intuitively understand what they need to do. Toca Tea Party is designed for a small group of children to play together, centred around the graphics of a dining room table. They can choose a tablecloth, plates and other crockery to match, and serve food and drinks to their friends. Just like the familiar dramatic play corner, the iPad can also be used as another tool for reaching the outcomes of identity and wellbeing.
- My PlayHome - the idea here is for the children to manipulate objects around the graphics of a house and move people around the house who can interact with the objects. It has linked children to the familiar: role playing in the family, home, and exploring the different roles each person can play in a family. The graphics are visually very attractive too.

“As a tool for learning the iPads provide opportunities for socialisation and flexibility”

Of course, introducing iPads into our learning environment has been challenging. How many iPads would be appropriate for each playroom? Through our project we have three available in one room, and the children have had to learn to wait their turn. It has also required careful supervision as some children will use iPads for as long as possible. Knowing each child, their strengths and what they need to further develop, has helped us in negotiating iPad usage with the children.

We are continuing our professional reading on this topic and have also arranged for Daniel Donahoo to present to our team of staff. Daniel Donahoo is a researcher and author in childhood development, media and technology. He has published *Idolising Children* (UNSW Press, 2007) and *Adproofing Your Kids* (Finch, 2010). Daniel has written about educational technology for wired.com for five years and now writes on trends in

ed-tech for the *Huffington Post*. His recent work has included: iPad trials with children with a disability, supporting the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Early Years teams to explore emerging technologies, and undertaking a digital stories project with Laverton Community Childcare Centre.

Previously, Daniel has worked as a toy librarian, childcare worker, early years policy advisor, researcher and consultant. We have many questions to ask him, to challenge our current thinking and our current learning environment.

At this stage of our project I can definitely say that this work has reinforced the need for us, in our role as early childhood educators, to keep abreast of new information and act as researchers, so we can guide our students' learning and our parents in the right direction when it comes to using appropriate technology with their children. As teachers, we are researchers and learners, just like our children. We have a responsibility to guide parents in teaching skills for their child to develop in a technology rich world. We need to provide an education that not only embraces the use of technology to best educate each child but also to work with parents to develop a strong moral compass in these young learners so that they use the technology ethically to support themselves and others.

There are risks involved with IT and young children, which is why it is so important for us to understand new technology, what forms of technology can be used appropriately with young children, and how best to facilitate this. Our *iCollaborate Innovation Project* has been a turning point in understanding the role of technology in our early childhood setting.

Making movies, singing songs, conversing in Japanese:

Children and teachers gather for collaborative planning time, many ideas are discussed, and drawn and written onto the planning board. One suggestion is to make something for parents. This leads to a discussion about Fathers' Day, including the types of gifts and presents Dads might like to receive. Together the group discusses how Fathers' Day is celebrated in different ways, with trips to the park, barbecues with family and for some, a special breakfast in bed for their Dad. The class eventually discusses that Fathers' Day could be something that could be celebrated at Kindy. The children are demonstrating in this instance that they are connected with and making contributions to their world (Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), 2009). Furthermore, these discussions develop the children's skills for connecting with and relating to others (Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline (QKLG), 2010).

Claire suggests that the children could use the iPads and be the 'filmmers' for the DVD. "Then we could have the Dads in and have a movie night and show them our DVD!"

Together we start planning what should appear on the DVD. This collaborative planning is an active example of the children having a strong sense of identity within this Kindergarten setting (EYLF, 2009). The children make choices about their learning direction and through this, develop confidence in themselves as learners (QKLG, 2010). There are six iPads in Kindergarten that the children have been using to film short movies and shoot images throughout the year. The children know how to use the editing software iMovie. Together the children and teachers will develop skills in camera angle and shot composition as well as editing in iMovie to produce this DVD. These

teachable moments demonstrate opportunities for the children to develop as confident and involved learners with Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) (EYLF, 2009). The children are also provided opportunities through this engagement with media production to tell stories and explore narrative structure in personally meaningful ways as they utilise ICT in play and active learning to share their stories and learning, (QKLG, 2010).

As a group, we discuss the need to gain Dad's permission to film him.

This is an example of being an informed and active citizen, an important component of the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008). The children then design a permission slip for their Dads to sign. By colouring a happy or a sad face, each Father will identify his permission to be filmed. This simple act will help the children identify the importance of gaining permission to use images in media production. The children will go on to produce a DVD and share it with their families at a movie night later in the year.

No two days at St Aidan's Kindy are ever the same; the children's interests drive the curriculum with a strong focus on technology, communication, music and language learning. As a part of our morning routine, we start the day by choosing the correct day of the week on our calendar. This is nothing unusual; except that for us Wednesday is known as Wacky Wednesday. On Wednesday we have the full suite of specialist lessons. For the first lesson on Wednesday morning, Miss Jeans-Fraser, the Physical Education teacher, rotates through small groups in a tailor-made Physical Education program. This is followed by a trip to the Library for a library lesson, and then it is back to our Kindy

"The children make choices about their learning direction and through this, develop confidence in themselves as learners."

The children play and enjoy filming Mrs Prowse. They film straight into iMovie software prior to taking the iPads home.



It's all in a day's play at St Aidan's Kindergarten

Shaleen Prowse, James M. Cuskelly, Karen M. Gorrie and Louise McGuire –St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School, Queensland



Children with Sensei discovering names for the food they are eating.

room for a twenty minute *Music Every Day* lesson with Dr Cuskelly and finally before lunch, we squeeze in a 'Language Every Day' lesson with Sensei. The children love Wednesday and fly from one activity to the next.

Music Every Day sessions are offered daily for 20 minutes. Daily lessons include multiple activities, each lasting not more than three or four minutes. Kindergarten children explore active learning, a key focus of the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline and playfully explore ways to be imaginative and creative (Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline, 2010). While such a framework for teaching and learning is predicated upon the child's experience and enjoyment of the music, this pedagogical approach also promotes skill development, personal and social confidence, academic and conceptual scaffolding and group cohesion.

An example may serve to illustrate the point: The Kindergarten children recently learnt the rhyme *Feet, feet* and gained great satisfaction from chanting the chant while 'moving in time with the music' (walking on the beat). Over the coming weeks, as children learn that sometimes feet move fast and slow, they choose the tempo which appeals on the day. As a result, they are introduced to physical movement through their feet and to the language of music.

The playful practice of these comparative concepts is ongoing. Building on from this, Dr Cuskelly produces a set of 16 laminated and oversized footprints. The Kindergarten children are delighted, and playfully say the rhyme while they carefully place their feet on each footprint. The inherent sequence of learning, the gradual introduction of increased levels of challenge, and the satisfaction which accrues from mastery have been a source of pride for these young children.

However, after several weeks of intermittent practice with the feet icons, a new level of excitement emerges. On this particular day, the children were chanting the words while the teacher placed the laminated feet on the ground in preparation for the activity.

The use of the rhyme with movement and the visual icon served multiple purposes: while chanting the rhyme, the children were subconsciously

practising the music skills of beat and rhythm; they were engaged in an explicit language development activity; they were consolidating their understanding of the concepts of fast and slow; and they were taking the first steps in abstracting their own phenomenological experiences to a visual representation of that experience. However, the most satisfying result for the teacher was the unbridled delight on the children's faces as they made a new discovery.

An *Everyday Language Program* has been designed and implemented based on best practice in early years second language learning. It has long been cited that young children have a greater capacity for second language acquisition and learning, compared to adults (Perani et al, 1998). Recently there has also been a renewed commentary in modern media on bilingualism and the many benefits (socially, cognitively, economically, etc) that children can reap if encouraged to learn more than their mother tongue. With this in mind, we were very keen to offer these resources to the kindergarten children. The expertise we were able to access by being co-located on a school campus and being able to tap into specialist language teachers was readily available. Our language teachers teach in the kindergarten class for short 20 minute periods every day and work with the children in an environment where these young children feel safe and secure.

This carefully planned language learning philosophy also underpins the commitment to build relationships between the Kindergarten classroom and the wider St Aidan's community. The language learning philosophy supports best practice as described within the Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), 2011) where effective language learning takes place in a program that allows for time, regularity with a specialist teacher, and continuity of learning.

Within a typical week in the *Kindergarten Everyday Language Program*, the specialist Japanese teacher Sensei participates as a co-player and joins in the children's socio-dramatic play, substituting English for Japanese. On other days, Sensei joins the children for lunch and discusses in

Continued from previous page...

Japanese the contents of various lunch boxes. During these times the specialist teacher uses the language in a more 'immersion'-focused way. On other occasions, lessons take on a different format and the children gather on the mat and participate in songs, stories and games that follow a known structure. These lessons incorporate learning and developmental experiences that evolve from the wider Kindergarten curriculum, (for example, positional language, shapes, names of vegetables). Implicit language utterances are also used, (including instructions coupled with gestures for tasks such as sitting in a circle, sitting or standing) as is instructional language (putting hands on head, putting hand in the air, pointing to indicate a choice). Games and songs are often used to help with pronunciation, rhythm and patterns of vocabulary.



Dr Cuskelly with the children engaged in Feet, Feet

The following vignette describes a snapshot of *Everyday Language Learning* in St Aidan's Kindergarten. Sensei has arrived today during the children's lunch time and the children are just opening their lunch boxes. On seeing Sensei, a chorus of 'Sensei' erupts! Sensei positions herself on a tiny kindly chair between the children while they are eating. The children are speaking to each other and include Sensei in their conversations, as they are interested in discovering the Japanese names for the food they are eating. Sensei models the behaviour by pointing to an item in one lunch box and announcing the word for that food in Japanese. The children in the immediate group begin to repeat the word. Frank was eating a strawberry. Sensei pointed to it and said 'ichigo'. Frank repeated the word and then pointed at a strawberry that Rachel was eating and said excitedly 'ichigo' to which Olive also repeated. Sensei smiled and praised Harry, Rachel and Olive.

Sensei then replied with 'soudesune. Rachel mo ichigo o taberune'. Sensei began to rub stomach saying 'oishii!' (meaning delicious but this was not said) and the children agreed and mimicked the teacher. This pattern of saying the names of food and then 'oishii' was repeated by all the children with similar reactions and excitement from them. Other 'food' or 'feeling'-related vocabulary was also introduced.

The following lesson, the teacher introduced the names of four different fruits in Japanese using plastic fruit. The students repeated the names of the fruit numerous times. Then the teacher asked the students to sit in a circle ('minasan, maru o tsukute'). She brought out another set of the same four fruits so there was now two of each fruit. The children watched as she said each fruit with the first set and laid them down in a line (in a pattern) and then said 'tsugi wa?' (meaning 'next?'). The pattern was orange, apple, pear, banana. One of the children was able to say 'orenji' for orange as the pattern and place the piece of fruit next in line. This continued with all children becoming involved and with different patterns and more fruit being introduced. The children had been learning 'patterning' within their Kindergarten curriculum and were excited to recognise the activity in another language without any English being spoken.

The Kindergarten program was designed for effective student learning of the Japanese language as well as enjoyment. As the program has progressed, students do not realise that instructions are in a completely

new language, and after only five months, they are beginning to automatically say things in Japanese to the teacher outside of the lesson time.

These teaching episodes demonstrate how these Kindergarten children have engaged in media production, music, language learning and collaborative planning within a play based teaching environment. The teachers participated as co-player, mentors and meddlers, swapping between many roles. There were times when intentional teaching took place and times when the children peer tutored each other. At St Aidan's, we believe it is a part of our

teaching responsibility to begin conversations with our young children so that they might be able to act and listen with moral and ethical integrity. As demonstrated in the stories shared, we aim to do this through providing our young children agency, choice and independent life-long learning skills.

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Hatching an understanding of service learning

Mrs Julie Collier, K-2 Coordinator - Wenona School

At Wenona we continue to help our youngest learners, from Kindergarten to Year 2, in Woodstock, become aware of their wider world.

Wenona's motto, *Ut Prosim, that I may serve*, was chosen in 1886 to ensure that Wenonians would recognise that service and personal investment is necessary for a community to grow, to become stronger, to flourish and achieve great deeds.

Our challenge is always to engage our girls in meaningful service experiences which also help them develop important knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and benefit the community.

Being on Sydney's affluent North Shore is a privilege and we strive to help our girls understand that the world is filled with individuality and difference which is valuable and unique. North Sydney is approximately 10 kilometres from Redfern but could be 100 kilometres.

Redfern is an inner-city suburb of Sydney, three kilometres south of the Sydney central business district and is part of the local government area of the City of Sydney. Redfern is currently subject to extensive redevelopment plans by the state government, to increase the population and reduce the concentration of poverty in the suburb. Redfern is also the home of Jarjum College.

Jarjum College is an independent Catholic, Jesuit school for children of families in the Aboriginal community of Redfern and its surrounds. The school's mission is to draw from and share with its students the very best spiritual ideals and moral values, knowledge and learning skills, discipline, and character formation. The college responds to local needs in the context of the students' own culture, through its mission, policies and curriculum.

Through the use of Sydney company *Hatch and Grow*, which provides a duck hatching and education program for schools, Wenona girls have participated in a cooperative project to make a difference in our local community.



“The girls have experienced the rewards of giving through a service-learning project and discovered a wealth of information about the strength and power of community and the difference we can all make.”

We wanted our girls to see the world from another's point of view and to recognise the importance of respect for others. The girls have learned about the necessity of saving money in order to reach a common goal. They have explored the difference between wants and needs, and used this learning experience to discuss differences, mathematical concepts and life cycles.

Their amazing learning experience came at a cost! The girls raised money for Jarjum College by providing a gold coin donation every time a duckling hatched. The proceeds will be donated to the college to purchase resources.

The final experience will be when our students present their fundraising efforts to Jarjum College and publicly share what they have learned and celebrate the results of the service project.

We need to continue to look ahead to develop this connection, and bridge the ten km gap in many more ways than one! Throughout this process, Wenona girls have had the opportunity to be engaged, actively exploring, using inquiry and hands-on approaches to discover new information. They worked with their peers to share perspectives and recognise that service means genuinely meeting community needs.

What is the meaning of respect? How do we show respect for others?

In the process of learning about ducks and the Aboriginal community in Redfern, we have helped our girls to understand that not every child is born into privileged circumstances.

The girls were able to identify easily with the lives of students at Jarjum, and realised how they could make a difference in this community. This is the idea that 'from little things, big things grow', developing how we think of community service and service learning in K-2.

Service learning in K-2 may look different from the service experiences of a middle or upper school student. The life experiences of our youngest learners are few, but they are developing a context for understanding why the service is important, how it benefits others, who needs this help, and the impact of our efforts.

At Wenona, we are committed to teaching our girls about community, support for others, giving, and assistance within a framework of familiar experience. The girls have experienced the rewards of giving through a service-learning project and discovered a wealth of information about the strength and power of community and the difference we can all make.

Kids Interacting with The Elderly (KITE): An Intergeneration

The purpose of this report is to present the background, objectives and story of the KITE project – Kids Interacting with The Elderly - an evaluative research project that examined a co-located program initiative between an aged care facility and an early childhood learning centre located in Kingston, Tasmania.

Longer lives and ageing populations are challenges that all Western countries are facing, and the quality of care services and systems are subjects of debate and concern internationally. At the other end of the age spectrum, the range of provisions for child care environments is also increasingly changing and indeed improving as service providers consider and debate new programs and ways of operating. The KITE project was designed to study how the young and the elderly interact, to improve the quality of life in both the elderly and in the very young participants, and to produce recommendations for sustainable policies for the future. This paper looks at ageing, intergenerational relations and quality of life, and views these dimensions through the lens of a project that brought together children in one child care centre with the residents of an aged care facility. For the purposes of this paper, the study is referenced in the past tense because it took place from 2010-2012, however the KITE project is ongoing.

One of the assumptions held by initiators of the project was that for a range of sociological, cultural and geographic distance reasons, families often have reduced intergenerational contact than was perhaps more evident in extended family situations historically. Despite modern communication and improved transportation, many of the elderly in Australia often have limited opportunities to interact with their wider intergenerational family members. Understanding the nature of the bonds that create cohesion between individuals has long occupied social researchers. Durkheim (1933) held that traditional family cohesion that characterised ties between individuals in the pre-industrial revolution era, what we might consider an endorsement of traditional norms and customs bond, was weakened by industrial society. The general background issues and concerns outlined here provided the context for the development of the intergenerational project described in this paper.

What the KITE program aimed to do was to provide structured opportunities for the elderly and the young to work, play and interact together. The KITE research project was initiated so that we, as observers, participants and researchers could come to a detailed understanding of the relations between intergenerational group participants in order to provide some organisational and policy responses. The goal of the KITE project was to learn how families and service systems may support autonomy and delay dependency in old age through promoting quality of life interactions among the elderly and at the same time promoting learning, communication and understanding with the young participants.

Background and intentions

St Michael's Collegiate School's Early Learning Centre (for children aged three months to five years) is located at Kingston in the grounds of Bishop Davies Court, an aged care residential centre (combining both low and high care units) managed by OneCare Limited. This co-located arrangement enables an intergenerational program to be conducted with

the 40 low care residents of Bishop Davies Court and the 58 children in the Early Learning Centre. While the practice of co-located intergenerational care occurs in other countries, especially the USA, UK and Canada, the Collegiate-OneCare program at Bishop Davies Court is unique in Australia.

Since the establishment of the Collegiate Early Learning Centre in the grounds of Bishop Davies Court six years ago, many positive outcomes of the intergenerational program have been observed. It was clear to the child care workers and the aged care staff that there were obvious benefits to be gained from this intergenerational program. However these benefits remained anecdotal and undocumented.

The researchers set out to evaluate the co-located intergenerational project at Kingston in order to identify, illuminate and understand the beneficial outcomes for all participants, their communities and the bodies that authorised the project. Secondly, they wanted to highlight factors for success and develop guides to assist

other communities to adopt, adapt, initiate and develop similar projects in rural and regional areas of Australia. Thirdly, the evaluation was to enable the production of resources useful for other intergenerational care initiatives.

Research approach

Through capturing the story of the program, the researchers aimed to identify what the participants, including families, recognise and learn and benefit from during the program, in terms of what they perceive as good program outcomes. As researchers we sought to listen to the voices of all participants in the program and convey their stories so that we might:

- honour their participation, their personal growth and their contribution to the program
- find evidence of beneficial outcomes for participants and communities
- explore ways in which the program could better contribute to the lives of participants and others involved in the program as well to the partner institutions
- influence the understanding of community groups and supporting agencies about the practicality and replicability of such a program in other community, care and educational settings
- develop and provide a resource book for inspiring and establishing similar projects in such settings
- develop a website as a resource for information, online inquiry and dialogue that can be linked nationally and internationally

Our approach to collecting evidence was to adopt a narrative evaluative method. Narrative evaluation and reporting has been used before to great effect, because the participants' stories are checked by the people who share them to ensure the participants' satisfaction. Every request for anonymity is respected.

“Intergenerational programs can benefit the emotional, social, cognitive, physical and sensory aspects of participants’ lives.”

al Research Study

Dr Julie Rimes, Director, The Collegiate Institute – St Michael's Collegiate School, Hobart, Tasmania



“...positive gains for children in terms of better understanding of the elderly and what elders can bring to a young person’s life.”

Continued from previous page...

Intergenerational Programming

“An intergenerational program is a planned intentional interaction of different age groups, infant to elderly, in a variety of situations at a level that provides close communication, sharing of feelings and ideas and co-operative activity in meaningful tasks.” (Peacock & Talley, 1984)

Intergenerational programs can occur in a wide variety of settings. These include child care settings, schools, aged care facilities, community based settings such as a senior citizen’s group, and even in the aged person’s own home with a visiting service. In our KITE program most of the activities occur in the aged care facility where children and elderly play games, colour-in and paint together, work and explore together on iPads or enjoy reading together from picture books. From time to time some of the elderly visit the early learning centre to join in the activities at that centre.

The scope of intergenerational programs is very broad, incorporating age ranges from pre-school to teenagers. The elderly involved are usually over the age of 60. The types of activities that the participants are involved in will depend on the ages of both the young and the elderly involved. Obviously, different age groups will have differing levels of skills and abilities, for both the young and the elderly.

When babies are involved in the program it is generally observational, with the carers or parents assisting the elderly with close personal contact, if appropriate. Programs involving pre-school age children tend to be observational, with some interaction based on the interests of the children; for example, reading of books, stacking of blocks, throwing balls, blowing bubbles, playing with play dough and drawing. The level of interaction is also dependent on the age and ability of the elder. Many activities need to be lap based, as the elderly cannot reach the floor where children tend to play. Our KITE program encompasses babes in arms, toddlers and children up to the age of four. Babies and the elderly enjoy the experience of being together, or nursing and being nursed, and indeed for the elderly just watching and enjoying the activity that surrounds young babies as they begin to crawl and explore. For older children the experience broadens so that they talk, read, do puzzles, listen and spend time doing shared activities.

With KITE, once the children are school aged the programs can be quite varied. The younger children are often assisted at school by a volunteer elder. Elders assist with a wide variety of activities depending on the requirements of the teacher. Many programs have been set up to help children with the basics, such as reading and maths. There are also many other activities that elderly volunteers can be involved with such as art, music and imaginary play.

Older children are often involved in intergenerational programs where they visit the elderly and learn about the past. There have been programs that involved young people helping an elderly person to put together a ‘Life Book’. Other programs have the young people recording local histories based on the reminiscences of the elderly and sometimes assisting the elderly to become familiar with new technology. We have found that the iPad experience has brought huge pleasure and entertainment to both age groups with the younger children obviously taking the lead in venturing into this media.

The activities that the elderly participate in will depend on their physical, social, emotional and cognitive abilities, coupled with the things that they are interested in. As people grow older their abilities change and are sometimes limited. Physically mobile and cognitively aware elderly are more able to be involved in activities that require an elder to assist a child, for example craft activities and reading. For those elderly who are less mobile and having difficulty with cognition, the activities may be adjusted for them to observe so that they can participate as well.

Benefits of Intergenerational Programs

The benefits of participating in an intergenerational program are numerous for both the young and the elderly. Intergenerational programs can benefit the emotional, social, cognitive, physical and sensory aspects of participants’ lives.

For young people some benefits are that they: improve their understanding of the elderly; learn about limitations of the elderly; bring a sense of fun and enjoyment; improve self-esteem; encourage active participation; develop friendships in a safe environment; enhance their social skills;





enable a role with someone outside of the family; have physical contact; and learn about accepting that illness and death are a natural consequence of living.

For the elderly some benefits are that they: are less lonely, feel needed, improve their self-esteem, look forward to something, are less bored, experience fun and laughter, have an opportunity to play and be young again, are motivated, develop friendships, share their skills, knowledge and abilities, learn about children in today's society, have more physical activity and have physical contact.

There are also opportunities for other people not directly involved in an intergenerational program to benefit as well. The staff of both the Aged Care Facility and the Child Care service benefit indirectly through the program. We have had very positive feedback from the aged care staff members about how much they too value the opportunities to see young, carefree and happy people in the aged care setting. The program brings enjoyment, energy and enthusiasm to their setting. The child care staff also have commented favourably on the many benefits they have noted for their children from developing relationships with the elders. During the course of the program, they noted positive gains for children in terms of better understanding of the elderly and what elders can bring to a young person's life. In fact, the carers of both centres reported that the program was 'transformational'.

Discussion

Bengtson & Dowd (1981) used exchange theory - see for example Thilbaut & Kelley (1959), Homans (1961) and Blau (1964) - to explain the decrease in social interaction and activity with age. They maintained that withdrawal and social isolation are not the result of system needs or individual choice, but rather of an unequal exchange process between older persons and other members of society. The shift in opportunities, roles and skills that accompanies advancing age typically leaves older people with fewer resources with which to exert power in their social relationships, and their status declines accordingly (Hendricks 1995). Left only with the capability for compliance, older people may disengage. The opportunities that are afforded to the elderly through intergenerational programs reverse this status decline and create an environment where equality of exchange is evident. This in turn reignites the elderly's enthusiasm for life, provides them with fulfilment and recognition of their innate worth. In intergenerational exchanges there is a mutual dependence, where a sense of solidarity is evident.

It is our observation that intergenerational settings are inclusive, regardless of disabilities that may accompany growing older. We also observed

that intergenerational programs come to reflect the culture, capacities and understandings that each centre carries forward with its mission. As the intergenerational program evolves it reflects and portrays the social, cultural, environmental and financial contexts in which it is set. These opportunities and constraints over time illuminate the possibilities and benefits that can be derived and are particular to each setting.

There are important things we have learnt in organising an intergenerational program: such as having management and staff support from both centres; having clear communication between both centres as well as a known 'point of contact' within each centre for organising activities. It is advisable to be flexible and adaptable in the way the interactions occur and above all else to enjoy the process of the interaction.

The two sets of staff members in each centre have become passionate advocates for the program and are now planning ways to ensure its continuity beyond the research project. They are launching a pilot program in another centre to spread the word about the benefits and joys of working in intergenerational programs.

Dr Julie Rimes is Director of the Collegiate Institute, a Centre for Professional Learning, Research and Innovation. Contact the author at julie.rimes@collegiate.tas.edu.au

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Connecting Home with School

Sally Hollins, Communication – Methodist Ladies' College, Western Australia

In their implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework, Methodist Ladies' College in Perth is trialling an innovative program to more strongly connect home with school. The program is a part of a suite of initiatives introduced by the College and specifically addresses Outcome 1 of the Framework to ensure that children have a strong sense of identity; feel safe, secure and supported; and learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

Launched in 2012, the program targets all Kindergarten students for a home visit. Head of Early Years, Melissa McNamara, visits each child in their own home taking with her all the fixings for a 'Mad Hatters Tea Party'. The ice is broken with afternoon tea served in traditional high tea style. Following afternoon tea, it's time for play and Melissa and the student spend some time getting to know each other better through the girl's chosen activity.

The program has realised a number of benefits for both students and teachers. It settles the girls in their early days at school and it's comforting for them to see a connection between school and home. It gives the teachers a good insight into their students; they see a side of the child that might not normally be apparent in a group situation.

Melissa has seen the benefits first



“It settles the girls in their early days at school and it’s comforting for them to see a connection between school and home.”

hand, “the program has opened the floodgates for communication and in some cases broken down a cultural divide. I’ve been able to get to know each girl on an individual basis much more quickly than I might ordinarily do so. The girls’ choice of play

activities in their own homes has been enlightening and allowed me to know about their particular interests which I can then adapt to enhance their individual learning style.”

The program supports one of Methodist Ladies' College's Early Years guiding philosophies of 'Fundamental Skills through Play' which in turn supports the College Mission of providing challenging and holistic educational experiences that inspire individual excellence and global citizenship. It is part of a range of activities designed to facilitate the Early Years Learning Framework including a comprehensive Orientation Program, summer holiday welcome DVD, and staged entrance to the College.

Feedback and post visit discussions with parents have shown the program to be a resounding success and it will now be introduced to the College on a permanent basis prior to the start of the school year.



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Alliance Staff Biennial Conference 2012

Nearly 200 delegates gathered at Melbourne Girls Grammar School at the end of May 2012 for the Biennial Staff Conference.

The theme *Images of a Girl: Diversity, Dilemma and Future Possibilities* challenged speakers to 'reflect on their understandings of female narratives' and offered the delegates an 'opportunity to consider their own and others' responses to the leadership required to deliver futures worthy of our girls'.

The conference began after a day of school tours on a cold and wet Friday evening when delegates were welcomed by Catherine Misson, Principal of MGGS, with the opening speech by Dame Jenny Shipley, a Patron of the Alliance and the first female Prime Minister of New Zealand. Other Speakers included Amy Smith, Business Professional; Samah Hadid, Human Rights Activist; Anita Zeimer, Chairman of Melbourne Girls Grammar School; Professor Margaret Hellard, Women and Youth Health Expert; Professor Erica McWilliam; Educational Researcher and Anne van Zyl, Headmistress of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for

Girls. Nelly Thomas entertained the guests at the conference dinner at the Powerhouse, Albert Park.

The Short Film Competition was very successful, with members suggesting this should be a regular event.

First Prize was won by Harriet Clapham from Abbotsleigh for her film *Nostalgia*. Damon Gameau, an Australian Actor and Director who judged the competition, said that Harriet could certainly be a film maker of the future.

Second Prize was awarded to Shelford Girls' Grammar. The Year 10 Drama students created a film called *Who am I?* with an original song composition by Year 10 student Cara Widdicombe called *Broken*.

Third Prize was won by the Strathcona girls for their film *Alana's Battle*.

The winning films can be viewed on the Alliance website. A selection of competition film entries can also be viewed on YouTube by searching for agsafilmcomp2012.

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Alliance Staff Biennial Conference 2012

Kate Broadley has produced the following notes on the two most popular speakers, and these and other reports can be found on the Alliance website at http://www.agsa.org.au/page/Members/2012_Biennial_Staff_Conference_Review/Speaker_summaries.

Girls can do anything!

Rt Hon Dame Jenny Shipley DCNZ NZFIM

Great companies and countries can come from our girls in the future.

Working with women all over the world, their stories are often the same because of the barriers they face. Australian and New Zealand women have equal rights and equality in the law but they do not have equal outcomes. So what is going on?

Women have succeeded in scholarship in almost every field. Young women are crossing boundaries in conventional and non-conventional places, such as flying planes. However, we have to teach girls more about the choices they will exercise and how to tackle and interpret those choices, so that they are well informed. This is the critical element.

Do we properly equip girls to make the right choices? They are qualified but not necessarily assertive. We need to enable girls to say 'I can participate'. Women in interviews often lack confidence in defining where they want to move to. We want girls to be entrepreneurs, to be at the head of NGOs, companies and involved in policy.

Scholarship matters. In substance the girls are doing well, broadening their experiences and getting qualified but in form it is a different story. Form is how you present yourself, your skills, attitudes and attributes. It is having the confidence to define who you are, rather than having others define it for you. Girls need to have confidence, so when they face challenges, they can see themselves at the table.

We need to get to a point where women see themselves at the table and then men expect the women there too. Girls' experience at single sex schools has helped to develop their confidence but other mentors are needed in addition to school.

Who is defining the rules? Who is allocating the resources?

We want girls to not just rule the household but rule companies and politics. Encourage girls to form and articulate views on the hard issues; to engage and to be effective. Encourage girls to articulate a view in their own mind and in others' minds too.



Girls must be resilient and we must equip them properly so that once they leave school they have the necessary skills and strategies to stand their ground. By forming strategic alliances and partnership with like-minded people, girls can be encouraged to stand their ground.

Do girls expect to lead, not just to follow? There are norms everywhere that constrain girls. We need to inform girls to make the right decisions in the future, we need women in the strategy space. Girls can and must shape the future. Therefore we need to start talking about making and framing choices much earlier. The challenge to educators is whether we are equipping girls to make decisions about: career versus motherhood, career and motherhood, motherhood alone, career alone and so on.

Using the points from Sheryl Sandberg's (2010, TED.com) speech on Why we have too few women leaders, there are three ways we can help girls see themselves in the future state:

1. Encourage women and men to sit at the table, in a balanced space.
2. Make real partnerships work.
3. Don't leave before you leave. Often young women pre-empt their future, we need to remove this conditioning and allow them to stay in control, define their space and look to the future.

We can't educate girls to be like ourselves, we must educate girls to understand difference and equip them for the new world. We can encourage women to have three things: risk, opportunity and identity. Fostering resilience in girls will help to achieve gender balance and numbers at the top.

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Choosing discomfort: future trajectories, present realities and the lessons of history

Professor Erica McWilliam

Erica began her presentation by highlighting several notable women from the past, who travelled and experienced discomfort in order to achieve their goals. These women: Alexandra David-Neal, Beatrix Bulstrode, Hester Stanhope, Mary Wortley-Montagu, and Mary Kingsley are all described in the book *The blessings of a good thick skirt* (1994) by Mary Russell.

Why would you choose discomfort?

Alice Nicklin went to Brisbane Girls Grammar and was a strong swimmer. In 1890 she was aboard the *Quetta* when it sank. She stripped off and swam to safety, while most of her fellow passengers drowned. Without the discomfort of being naked she would not have survived.

These were all examples of women who were driven to the possible. What about today's girls? There are many lawn-mower teachers and curling parents who ensure that no young person has a negative experience.

What are schools for? Most trainee teachers give the same answer but what informs their opinion? Where did their ideas come from? What are your sources? We need to move away from uninformed blurring.

Teachers often work in a therapeutic way: we must not give our girls discomfort. Currently there are low-threat and low-challenge classrooms, as we pour into the self-esteem basket. There is much indiscriminate promotion of students' self-esteem; congratulations, even for wrong answers. Many student teachers just can't say no.

How do we stop the retreat from difficulty? It is time for a post-therapeutic approach. Self-efficacy does not come from compliments or being spared failure, it comes from evidence of achievement. Self-control predicts all those things researchers had hoped self-esteem would, but in fact has not. Self-managers with powerful learning portfolios will trump those who rely solely on test results and credentials. We want productively nervous students who are keen and sceptical; never cynical but deeply sceptical, informed and eager. Who do girls trust?

The Four 'V's of Data Transformation: Volume, Variety, Velocity and Veracity. How are we preparing girls to work with data emotion? Data emotion changes the way that people deal with data.

The Four 'C's of Cultural Transformation: Connectedness, Change in the workplace, Cheeky power plays (see the Dave Carroll reference below), Can I trust you?

Global Labour Markets: Moving between low-end personal services and high-end personal services. Moving between low-end impersonal services and high-end impersonal services.

Knowledge creators are the only people whose jobs cannot be outsourced.



Agile alumni will be:

- Skilled in and beyond one discipline
- Highly literate and numerate
- Keen and sceptical learners
- Risk-taking; welcoming error and complexity
- Relentlessly curious
- Productively nervous
- Team-oriented, collaborative
- Technologically savvy; able to apply tools to higher-order thinking
- Self-starting, self-managing, self-critical, self-evaluating

Epistemological agility

- The capacity for moving seamlessly across disparate and newly-emergent knowledge domains in ways that make for better living, learning and earning.
- An eagerness to engage with the unknown

We don't want girls to leave school with the idea that success is easy. There is lot for us to do as we move to a post-therapeutic approach to education and work to girls' ultimate good.

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2012 National Coalition of Girls' Schools International Girls'

Touching down in Dallas, Texas, after a long, sixteen-hour flight from Sydney - and even longer for Isobel from the cold shores of New Zealand - we were excited and nervous, but the descent into a land not like our own was eased by the fact we were travelling together. At the airport we were warmly greeted by our hosts from the Hockaday School where the NCGS Annual Conference was to be held. That night we met some of the other international delegates of eleven girls, from the US, Canada, the Philippines and Rwanda.

Throughout the conference, we were fortunate to be staying with a very welcoming American family, who showed us the sights and the best Dallas had to offer. Their kindness and generosity added to the experience of being in America, and showed both the cultural differences and similarities between the USA and New Zealand and Australia.

The first day of the conference began with meeting our fellow delegates and an excursion to the Fort Worth Historical District and Stockyards, for a day that our chaperone described as 'stereotypically Texan'. We were greeted by cowboys and a BBQ lunch to round off our experience, which was our first exposure to the epic portion sizes, definite proof of the 'Everything's Bigger in Texas' philosophy. Upon returning to downtown Dallas we visited the infamous Texas Schoolbook Depository, which now houses the Sixth Floor Museum dedicated to the much-loved JFK. The feeling was fascinating yet somber.

That afternoon we returned to the Hockaday School for the opening of the conference focused on educating media-savvy girls, a topic increasingly relevant considering the constantly growing presence media is having on our lives. An impressive list of engaging speakers including Madeline Di Nonno, Katie Koestner, Dr Sybil Bennett, Katie Orenstein, Charles Fadel, Catherine Steiner-Adair and finally Jennifer Siebel Newsom. Speakers covered a diverse range of topics including: perceptions of female characters in family films and the importance of cyber citizenship

and the true transparency of the internet. These keynotes were dotted with our participation in two workshops. In one of our workshops we had the amazing privilege of working with Jess Weiner, who has appeared on Oprah and is a columnist for Seventeen Magazine and who also has established herself as an industry leader in promoting positive body image for girls. The workshop topic was 'everyBODY has a story'. For this workshop, we were working on the panel presentation which we would give on the last day of the conference. We had done some preparation prior to the workshop, bringing videos with women in our lives discussing what part of their bodies told the stories of their lives. With these, we held a discussion about women, how we view our bodies, why we view them a certain way and things that needed to be done to alter perspective. The discussion we had with Jess really was motivational, and sparked a social campaign started in the space of roughly 30 minutes. We also had the lucky opportunity to attend a screening of Jennifer Siebel Newsom's *Miss Representation* amidst exquisite art at the Nasher Sculpture Centre. We spent some time with Darragh Worland from the Media Literacy Project, who taught us some skills about analysing the content to which we are exposed every day.

To conclude the conference the delegates from the International Girls' Forum contributed to Jess Weiner's keynote address and officially launched our *One Tweet for Girls* twitter campaign. Our campaign aims to encourage girls to take back the power which the media claims over them, through the platform of social media. The campaign encourages girls to dedicate one tweet a day to positive messages about girls and women in the media. Instead of making a grand goal, we aimed to make something small and achieve it. Jess also announced that she would feature it in her monthly column for Seventeen Magazine which we hope will aid in the campaign exposure and momentum it needs to become a worldwide trend. It was fantastic to work with Jess and we received overwhelmingly positive feedback from many of the attendees at the forum.

"...dedicate one tweet per day to promoting positive representations of women and girls around the world."



Amanya and Isobel at the Stockyards in Dallas-Fort Worth



Isobel, Amanya and Laura-Brynn (host)

Forum Report from Alliance Student Ambassadors

Amany Cummins, St Margaret's Anglican Girls' School, Queensland, and Isobel Pepper, Palmerston North Girls' High School, New Zealand

The workshop and presentation with Jess Weiner was probably the highlight of the conference for us and many of the other girls. The formation of the *One Tweet for Girls* Campaign is a development we are ever excited about! The conference was a great experience and completely exceeded our expectations; the speakers were entertaining, inspiring and engaging. Words simply do not do justice to the entire experience and we thank everyone at the Alliance, NCGS and Hockaday for allowing us the fantastic opportunity to attend the conference. We can't wait to share the knowledge we were able to learn from our time there. We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity, and hopefully the impact of our awareness will be shown soon with the development of our social campaign and sharing worldwide of the information all the international girls took on board.

Please support our campaign and follow *@onetweet4girls* to be the positive change we want to see in the media's representation of girls and women around the world. And dedicate one tweet per day to promoting positive representations of women and girls around the world, and add the *#onetweet* to get it trending worldwide!

Some ideas we gathered from the conference

1. Our consumption of media is at an all-time high and it is the predominant influence in the lives of young people today. The messages communicated to us are shaping our futures.
2. Media literacy is vital for all media consumers, especially girls. A large amount of the media's messages are targeted at girls and set unrealistic expectations. It's important for people, girls especially, to be able to distinguish fact from fiction. Girls need to be aware of tools that marketers use - like Photoshop and that models and celebrities aren't real people to aspire to look like.
3. Role models are vital in challenging stereotypes, 'If she can see it, she can be it.'
4. The power of social media, but how it can be used for good. The power is in our hands - establishing *OneTweet4Girls*.
5. Cyber Citizenship, being aware of how you conduct yourself online. No privacy online - students have to be aware that the internet is transparent, and anyone can have access to personal details.
6. Is there true authenticity in the digital age?
7. Current generations don't have the right to say what is and isn't possible in the future.
8. Children are being put into an adult world yet turning to each other for advice rather than adults.
9. Normalisation of the media portrayal of girls; people are beginning to follow media-induced, unadvisable stereotypes.
10. The issues girls face in terms of body image, self-esteem are universal.
11. Technology will be essential for building our future. We must be aware of the importance of ethics while we advance.
12. If we want girls to be leaders, we need to change our ways now. We need to ask critical questions about our world in order to change it.
13. Being aware of the world around us is becoming increasingly important.



Amany and Isobel

Some of the ingredients we feel are important in educating young women to be global citizens

1. Exposure to different cultures and ethnicities through language curriculum and exchange programs in turn provide both a unique, challenging and enriching cultural experience.
2. Boarding schools encourage a diverse student body and friendships.
3. Encouraging girls to have a say in current affairs, and be involved and engaged instead of passive. Extra-curricular activities and organisations like World Vision, international committees, student ambassador programmes, and school exchanges with sister schools
4. Educating girls to be aware of the world around them through both curricular and extra-curricular activities. Curricular including humanity subjects such as social studies - where students learn about global issues, and about key areas of history that are necessary for development.
5. The environment a girls' school presents which allows girls to challenge stereotypes in a supportive environment.
6. Confidence and initiative by allowing girls to hold leadership positions and in turn become role models for other students.
7. Girls taught traits of being open-minded and to embrace cultural diversity.
8. The teaching of technology skills, such as setting up websites as the world is increasingly becoming connected through the internet.
9. Having access to high speed internet.



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Register now at www.agsa.org.au

Alliance Student Leadership Scholarships

The Alliance is offering up to ten scholarships for indigenous students to attend the Alliance Student Leadership Conference, which is to be held at the Women's College, University of Sydney, from 16-20 January 2013.

Each scholarship will provide free registration, which includes accommodation, food and transport to and from Sydney airport; in addition a refund of \$250 will be made towards travel costs. Each Alliance member school may nominate one student for the scholarship.

More details are available online at www.agsa.org.au

