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## 1. Introduction

Canberra Grammar School is pleased to make a submission to the national enquiry into the education of boys. We are hopeful that the findings of the Committee will help us in the future to better meet the needs of the boys entrusted to our care by establishing some facts drawn from well considered research that will shed light on the received wisdom of our day.

We would like to set out how we interpret the “received wisdom”:

Firstly, the current dilemma can be summarised as follows:

- Boys are failing, or conversely, schools are failing boys; there seems a tendency to presume this includes all boys, which of course is far from true;
- The gap between boys’ and girls’ academic performance is growing;
- Increasingly, boys are not reaching functional levels of literacy;
- And they lack the “emotional intelligence” to establish meaningful and productive social relationships.

Secondly, the reasons for this dilemma are invariably advanced in terms such as:

- The feeling amongst boys that there is no longer a valid place for them in society in the old traditional manner;
- The feminisation of the curriculum;
- The feminisation of the teaching force;
- The loss of male role models;
- Dysfunctional families;
- The loss of traditional male employment.

Thirdly, the way forward out of this dilemma and opportunities for schools to increase boys’ life chances is framed within the context of these things among others:

- Encouraging new forms of masculinity;
- Or at least encouraging the acceptance of forms which in the past were considered less than to be a “real man”;
- Encouraging boys’ “connectedness” with the communities and the society they move in;
- Encouraging boys to develop the nurturing side of their humanity, accepting responsibility for others, especially younger boys;
- Encouraging wider subject choices that will better prepare boys for the emerging “new” economy.

In our submission we have attempted to set out the influence upon our policies and practices of the above dilemma, of some of its apparent causes, and of the widely promoted way ahead.

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## **2. Canberra Grammar School**

Canberra Grammar School is an Anglican School for boys, within the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn, in the National Capital of Australia. The School provides a continuity of education for boys from Preschool to Year 12 and for girls from Preschool to Year 2 and has a total enrolment of 1450 students. Canberra Grammar strives to offer all students an education of the highest quality. It offers an education based on excellence in learning. All students are supported and encouraged by committed staff to set themselves challenging goals and then work enthusiastically to achieve them.

The School offers an education that includes a co-curricular program that will interest, enthuse and extend each individual. Students are encouraged to explore and develop their many talents resulting in enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence. Students from the youngest girls and boys through to young men are challenged, nurtured and cared for by experienced men and women who have a genuine empathy for the young.

## **3. The influence of society**

Motivation and volition play a crucial role in the development of boys and their reaction to challenges and obstacles. However, it is often claimed that a boy's predisposition to behave in a certain way, as well as his preferred learning style, also contribute to this process in potentially negative ways. If this is true, then the challenge to schools and educators is to create systems that cater for boys' preferred learning styles and capitalise on their behavioural predispositions. What does the literature have to tell us about this phenomenon? Those involved in the education of boys need to know the link between a boy's predisposition to behave in a certain way and his preferred learning style.

It is claimed that many boys are underachieving and that more often than not gifted boys go undetected, although we would not accept that this is a major problem at Canberra Grammar School. Some young boys seem to have a distinct lack of social skills and many of them exist on the edge of the social scene but do not take an active part. They can often be quiet and non-disruptive but are highly motivated to do the things they want and unmotivated to do what others think they should. They become creatively inattentive and their talents are wasted.

It would be dangerous to presume that this is true of all boys. Indeed, there are undoubtedly many boys with good social skills, constructive behaviour, and worthwhile learning styles who feel under attack from such generalisations from well-meaning sociologists who make a specialised study of "failures". Boys are so used to receiving from the media the message that they "cannot" that many will become dispirited as a result of this expectation.

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While the focus of this inquiry is most probably on the middle years (Year 6 to Year 9), it is reasonable to presume that the preschool years are very important, as this is when many of children's attitudes to learning are established.

**4. Some social factors which have an impact at Canberra Grammar School on the way we structure our curriculum, co-curricular expectations and pastoral care of the individual boy:**

- We know that many boys experience difficulty in adapting to the demands of the classroom/school environment and the following behaviours can become evident: inattentiveness, a tendency to withdraw from class activities, disruptive behaviour, impulsiveness, bullying, anxiety and social withdrawal. Since these behaviours militate against academic success, we have to put in place structures to reduce their influence. These will often have a social emphasis.
- Perhaps a disproportionate emphasis can be placed on educational conformity and not on individual excellence - this may help to explain the significant peer pressure to underachieve. We strive to give academic success credence in the peer group, and seek to ensure that every boy's improvement is acknowledged and praised.
- Boys who are emotionally sensitive can feel out of place in the hegemonic male culture common to many schools or if their sphere of talent lies outside this culture. Adults often encourage or even pressure boys to pursue their talents independently, while neglecting their social skills, with the result that boys can become increasingly isolated and consequently lack social supports and friendships. Boys are more likely to act the fool in the classroom because it assists them in building and maintaining strong peer popularity. However, it is likely to have a detrimental effect on their achievement levels. On the other hand, in an all-boys school, they can be taught to admire their peers' achievements in all areas. Boys seem less inhibited for example, in singing, drama, music, debating and the visual arts, when they fear no embarrassment in front of girls. School Assemblies pay tribute to all areas and not just those belonging to the dominant culture such as rugby and rowing.
- A drive for excellence may mean forfeiting the attainment of strong bonds with age peers with the noted exception being in the area of sporting ability. This is an essentially personal matter with boys' acceptance amongst their peers dependent as much upon their social skills as upon their sporting ability. Boys at Canberra Grammar School who forfeit those bonds cannot usually blame their academic prowess. But it is true to say that some boys hesitate to achieve well in class because to do so is seen as wrong in the "cool" culture.
- Australian society makes heroes of its sportsmen (and to a lesser extent sportswomen) in the publicity and public exposure they get and in the salaries they receive. The example they set both on and off the field can sometimes be deplorable, and not seen to be punished properly by the various sporting

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bodies. There is an emphasis on competition and winning. There are too many events that are described in the idiom of battle. This is a problem for our whole society and not just for schoolboys. We need to uphold the many wonderful examples of sportsmanship that can be found. Boys respond to positive role models and do not warm innately to the larrikin yobbos seen in continuous television replays. While some cheering is in the nature of applause, some is clearly derisory.

- There is a generational problem where many male parents have a view that what was appropriate for them should be appropriate for their sons' education. However, in a changing world, even "old-fashioned" fathers can see that the old ways are no longer sufficient; indeed, many of them face truncated working lives as a result of these very innovations.
- A constant message is that there are no jobs 'out there' and at the same time advertising suggests that happiness depends on material possessions. The tendency is to say that knowing information is of itself of little value. While it seems normal for people to define themselves in terms of what they do and whom they are related to, this will remain a problem. The concept that paid employment is the only worthwhile pathway through life is powerful, but a decent education in values could help to suggest other worthwhile paths. The converse message is that there are many jobs "out there" for those with the skills, knowledge, flexibility, communication skills, and personal qualities to fit the role. There is much to offer boys with a positive outlook.
- Research indicates that there are many more male underachievers than female. We should be assisting boys by providing opportunities for satisfaction and improved self-esteem beyond the academic curriculum. This is related to the concept of "connectedness" mentioned in our introduction. We need to find worthwhile and sensible roles in schools for boys to fill and find a meaningful activity for them independent of classroom activity. When they are treasured by their community they are very generous in giving to it in return.
- Beginning at the earliest levels of education, some teachers tolerate and accept poor interpersonal skills better than they tolerate poor work-related skills. Young boys are often less skilled socially than female classmates when they enter school, partly because of parental reinforcement patterns. Boys need to be taught skills that promote resilience, such as a positive and pro-active approach to daily life, flexibility, task persistence, divergent thinking and problem solving skills. This would lead to personal autonomy, high self-esteem, and positive peer relationships. Parents as well as teachers have a strong influence in the development of these important and sometimes life saving skills. However, teaching pre-service courses rarely cover such areas from the affective domain. These are highly subtle skills which good teachers develop – they are rarely recognised by society for the essential importance they have in ensuring quality outcomes for the socialisation of children.

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To summarise the points above, boys want to be successful, valued and included in their school community. As educationalists we need to find them opportunities to fulfil such desires. Genuine leadership opportunities need to be offered to boys along with adequate training. Co-curricular opportunities are also important. At the same time greater recognition needs to be given to boys who choose not to follow traditional sporting paths and who do not necessarily achieve high academic levels. Teachers should seek ways of catering for various learning styles. The really important issue is the appropriateness of coercing boys into caring behaviour if one is to influence their socialisation. That needs to be firstly caring for a younger child, secondly, caring and serving beyond the school community and thirdly, caring within their own peer group; caring for girls as well as for their fellow males.

Boys are vital and energetic. This should not be suppressed; rather this enthusiasm should be directed appropriately. Learning environments need to be engaging, creative and challenging. Specific strategies and structures need to be in place to enable teachers to maintain a high level of commitment and motivation in their role.

## **5. Socialisation Strategies within Canberra Grammar School**

At Canberra Grammar we acknowledge that there is a need for issues relating to socialisation skills to be addressed. We do this in a variety of ways:

- Staff development focussing on issues such as protective behaviour including the issue of bullying;
- Workshops for staff promote awareness of differences in learning styles with a view to promoting best teaching practices;
- A clear Behaviour Management Policy;
- Employment of School Counsellors and Chaplains;
- A 'Buddying' system with the Infant Schools where the younger pupils work and play with older boys from other parts of Infants, Primary and Senior Schools; this aims to develop a nurturing responsibility, and the concept of belonging and being valued;
- Small pastoral groups enable discussion and development of interpersonal relationships and self knowledge;
- Our House structure provides the mechanism for promoting School culture, expectations, behaviour to be passed on;
- Within the House, broad achievements are acknowledged and strategies provided for goal setting
- Through Houses boys are encouraged to perform in music recitals, dramas and poetry readings;
- Year 11 boys are allocated to Year 7 Houses where they are able to model appropriate behaviour, develop a sense of responsibility towards those in their care and come to understand the concept of servant leadership;
- Compulsory sport develops team building and acquisition of social skills in addition to sporting skills;

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- Regular academic assessment provides frequent feedback, the possibility of setting and evaluating short-term goals and the opportunity to applaud academic success.
  - Effort certificates reward hard work and diligence -a tool for focussing on developing a routine for successful learning;
  - Assessments are calculated on various areas; therefore a student's multiple intelligences are evaluated. Students' particular strengths are identified and acknowledged;
  - Acceptance by the School of a wide range of behavioural characteristics of boys within an ethos of discipline;
  - Encouragement to work and play in groups;
  - Develop skills of co-operation and caring within the classroom environment;
  - Staff model positive behaviour management - positive interactions - teacher to parents, teacher to teacher, teacher to boys;
  - Encourage the very young boys to play with toys of their own choosing
  - Encourage boys to follow their own line of enquiry and to be as independent and as responsible as they can for their own learning;
  - Work with parents to build boys' self control and self esteem;
  - Promote opportunities for parents and teachers to work together in the education of boys in the broadest sense;
  - Honour boys and their achievements in social, sporting and intellectual pursuits by Awards and Prizes and public announcements;
  - Host special events where the parents' role in nurturing the creative and intellectual process is honoured, such as Father's Day functions and Family Gatherings.
  - Maintaining and enhancing the idea of one School from Pre-school to Year 12.

## **6. Literacy Needs of Boys**

It is well documented that boys generally fall behind girls in the area of literacy development. Most schools have support programs and Reading Recovery programs – mostly attended by boys. There are two important areas to acknowledge when talking about the literacy needs of boys. Firstly, boys are often not ready to read and write when teachers think they should, and secondly, there are differences in the learning styles between girls and boys. It is sometimes alleged that current teaching practices in the literacy area appear to favour girls. If the Committee of Inquiry finds this to be true, there will need to be a powerful program of teacher professional development to right the balance and ensure that boys have equal access to these lifelong and important skills.

There is a general belief within school communities that girls are more likely to acquire good learning skills than boys, particularly in the area of literacy. Girls are seen as being more focussed, more motivated and more capable than boys except where sport is concerned. In general, girls mature earlier and are ready to read and write before boys. Does our education system take sufficient notice of such differences in the context of a public concern about the education of boys?

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Our own early childhood teachers find that from day one in any Kindergarten class, girls go to the writing table to read, draw and chat, and boys head for the construction toys and make something. This is much easier for them than reading and writing. Although boys can put together the most intricate of constructions, they have difficulty with the physical aspects of writing. In any case, given that learning differences between girls and boys manifest themselves from the very beginning it is essential that early childhood teachers are sufficiently aware of these differences to be able to offer a differentiated curriculum for boys and girls; this is especially so since it is women who most often educate boys in the early and middle years of schooling. This influence is reinforced at home, where mothers are more likely to be involved with the supervision of homework activities than fathers. The male role in the family, although changing, is still seen as the one with the career path while the female role is the nurturer and carer.

Therefore, boys see the promoters of reading, writing and speaking as female. Some would claim that boys often resist reading because of this. Some studies show that 90% of students in special classes for emotional and behavioural disturbances are boys; 75% in learning or intensive reading classes are boys. Does the research establish why this is so? More importantly, does it confirm and identify whether recovery programs are effective?

Some reasons offered for these figures are:

- Boys are more likely to be encouraged to participate in physical activity than in reading;
- Boys are often encouraged, both by parents and by teachers, to do maths, physics, and chemistry rather than humanities or expressive subjects in the creative arts domain;
- Boys are more involved with computers, particularly games that are 'interactive', than with more passive pursuits of reading and writing;
- Boys often find the creative approach to reading and writing difficult because they find it difficult to express their feelings.
- It's not 'cool' to read;
- Male role models in Australia are sportsmen, not poets and philosophers;  
Many parents do not encourage reading and do not themselves read as a pastime.  
Many homes are devoid of books.

It is to be hoped that the Committee will be able to advise which of these factors are the most important because the implications from these observations are far reaching, particularly in the area of literacy. We must accept and acknowledge that girls and boys differ in their thinking and their learning styles. These issues should be kept in mind when Literacy programs are being developed.

In dealing with these things highly trained teachers are essential. They must have a good understanding of how children learn and must be taught how to recognise gifted children and cater for them before they get entrapped in the cycle of under achievement. With parents they need to encourage boys' literacy development by:

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- helping each boy set reasonable goals and reflect on these goals;
  - immersing boys in a literature-rich environment;
  - modelling and demonstrating a passion for literature;
  - offering a range of books including factual and visual literacy text to interest boys;
  - knowing the interests and learning styles of boys so well that appropriate books are read to them and offered to them for enjoyment and study;
  - monitoring the progress of boys' literacy standards closely;
  - giving each boy individual feedback on the intellectualisation that takes place as he constructs meaning while reading and writing;
  - expecting success for each boy based on his learning style and preferred learning mode;

## **7. Literacy Strategies within Canberra Grammar School**

At Canberra Grammar all of the following strategies have the aim of encouraging reading and improving literacy in the students (boys only from Year 3 to Year 12).

- Parent Literacy Workshops that inform and empower parents to provide support;
- Support of all ability groupings - gifted and those requiring learning support;
- use of boys' interests to create writing and reading programs which appeal to them;
- An open ended, differentiated curriculum in the Primary School which allows students to pursue a topic or interest as far as they are able;
- Use of Bloom's taxonomy to create a learning environment which encourages higher order thinking skills within reading and writing programs;
- Cross age groups based on Howard Gardener's multiple intelligences to cater for all talents and thinking styles;
- In-servicing of staff with a focus on literacy across the curriculum;
- Employment of a Support teacher to assist students with literacy/learning needs;
- English writing courses written and modified to suit individual needs;
- Student participation in internal and external competitions in many subject areas where literacy and reading skills are paramount, eg English, Geography, Languages Other than English, Economics, etc.;
- The concept that every teacher is a teacher of English
- Writing workshops for staff;
- At the beginning of every English lesson for Years 7 & 8, there is ten minutes reading time. The boys are encouraged to read fiction.
- A Shared Literacy program in Year 7 to encourage a wide range of reading and discussion with the intention that reading becomes a habit;
- Year 7 to 12 students purchase their set texts. The end result is that the students build up a small library including some of the classics, Shakespeare and poetry;

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- Top sets in English ensure that the more responsive and the more literate of the students have the chance to develop amongst their intellectual peers, to feel ‘safe’ to respond emotively or sensitively, to study more difficult texts beyond the curriculum and to be introduced to the great books of the English canon;
  - There is a gender balance in the English staff. The male staff members model a love and appreciation of books and reading in the English classroom. English is not perceived as a ‘female interest’.

## **8. Successful Strategies drawn from Canberra Grammar School experience which happens to be with boys and which have a broader scope for implementation**

- In-servicing of staff in all areas relevant to their teaching area, but especially emphasising the importance of good communication through writing and speaking;
- A program of visiting experts who can explore with teachers and parents ways to promote better learning for boys;
- Behavioural Management Programs;
- Counsellors and Chaplains on staff;
- Working with parents to establish reasonable goals for each boy to achieve;
- A structured buddy system - peer support;
- Policies and procedures to deal with issues such as bullying;
- Small Pastoral Care units, Houses and Tutor Groups
- Public acknowledgement of achievements (social, academic and sporting);
- Co-curricular program and compulsory involvement in Years 7 to 10;
- Promotion and ethos of school as a community;
- Programs to help students with study and research and literacy skills;
- Personal Development programs.

## **9. Conclusion**

At Canberra Grammar we do not spend our time giving negative messages to boys or suggesting that some things are ‘typical boy’ behaviour. We emphasis the acceptance of differences and variety of contribution; we acknowledge and applaud achievement wherever it occurs: - we accentuate the positive!

If the deliberations of the Committee lead to recommendations for programs that involve financial funding, our School would hope that the money can be provided by Federal and State governments as an additional injection to education funding. It would be a backward step for resources to be diverted from other areas of education. In particular we would be totally opposed to any cutbacks in the special programs that have been so successfully implemented to improve the educational outcomes for girls over recent decades.

A S Murray  
Headmaster

We live in a world where the term ‘diminishing returns’ is becoming increasingly relevant, even for children. Equipping children with the skills to cope effectively with the uncertainties that lay ahead are now more than ever the educator’s main purpose.

As educators we must continue to develop and implement processes designed to help children discover more appropriate ways to manage themselves and future challenges. We must create in schools a climate in which students are empowered, and we must find ways in the nation’s classrooms to celebrate the potential of each child. (Boyer, 1996) Goleman believes we should focus on developing qualities which help children to excel such as self awareness, impulse control, compassion, persistence, zeal and self motivation, empathy and social deftness. These are the basic ‘arts’ of democracy. Goleman in quoting Etzioni says: ‘Schools have a central role in cultivating character by inculcating self-discipline and empathy, which in turn enable true commitment to civic and moral values. It is not enough to lecture children about values: they need to practice them, which happens as children build the essential emotional and social skills.’ (Goleman, 1995)

Maslow identified that love and connectedness need to be fulfilled as a prerequisite for developing self esteem and ultimately self actualisation. Steve Biddulph believes that ‘men’s difficulties are with isolation’ and that ‘the prisons from which men must escape are: loneliness, compulsive competition, and lifelong emotional timidity.’ These ‘three enemies’ of manhood indicate that basic love and connectedness needs are not always adequately fulfilled.

Current research into the area of men’s health suggests that boys in particular require a great deal of support and structure in relation to learning about and living the ideals of self management and empowerment. Steve Biddulph in *Raising Boys* implores that we ‘talk with them often in a friendly way about options, choices, ways to solve problems and what they can do in situations in their lives.’ Furthermore, to be an educated person, the lessons of the classroom must be linked to the realities of life. (Boyer, 1996) If this is true, we need to consider Biddulph’s alarming findings in *Raising Boys* about the risks of being an adolescent male: ‘By fifteen years of age boys are three times more likely than girls to die from all causes combined – but especially from accidents, violence and suicide.’ In *Manhood*, he shares some additional facts about being a 20th century male: ‘Men routinely fail at close relationships; over 90% of convicted acts of violence will be carried out by men, and 70% of the victims will be men; in school, over 90% of children with behavioural problems are boys and over 80% of children with learning problems are also boys; one in seven boys will experience sexual assault by an adult or older child before the age of 18; men comprise over 90% of inmates in gaols; men are also 74% of the unemployed; and the leading cause of death amongst men 12-60 (years) is self inflicted death.’ We need to address the real costs of emotional illiteracy in our male school populations and the wider community.

The aim of the program we hope to develop and implement is to reduce the incidence of the problems outlined by Biddulph. It is essentially a prevention program which provides boys with a psychological inoculation against emotional health problems and complications. Many programs focusing on prevention have been successful in the United States. Goleman discovered in a case study of a high school in Oregon that an 8 session intervention program based on forming friendships and greater participation in social activities, helped the recovery of more than half the students who had mild depression. The program also helped to reduce the number of students with major depression. The key components of successful programs are based on self-awareness, such as impulse control and handling stress and anxiety, and

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interpersonal skill development, such as reading social and emotional cues, being able to resist negative influences and taking others' perspectives. (Goleman, 1995)

Boys need to learn to develop confidence, friendships, and a rich sustaining inner life. (Biddulph, 1995) It is therefore imperative for a boy's school to focus specifically on programs which will set boys up for success in their lives within their school, families and community. 'Specific programs for boys, run by male-affirming men and women, are needed to equip boys with the skills to stay alive and be competent socially, at school, at work, as husbands and as fathers. Boys need to learn fathering and the care of younger children throughout their schooling. Peer support and cross-age tutoring are good examples. Boys themselves appreciate the programs and there are measurable benefits to behaviour'. (Biddulph, 1995) An integral part of our proposed program for boys is a mentor and buddy system, designed to give students opportunities to share knowledge and practise skills learnt in classroom setting.

Cooperation is a key factor in ensuring that individuals can maximise their opportunity for life long learning. Cooperative management in our staff rooms and classrooms will enhance relationships and assist the school to strengthen and expand its position with parents and the wider community. By establishing a safe, communicative environment and a sensitive curriculum, children will develop the strong self-esteem that empowers them to learn. In *Raising Boys*, Biddulph sees the importance of providing boys with 'the right human ingredients at the right times.' If we are to honour this, we need to work collaboratively to identify, develop and implement relevant programs. Embracing necessary changes and sharing understandings will foster the individual and collective growth of boys in schools.

Over the past decade the issue of providing for boys personal development has been pursued within Canberra Grammar School. Recently staff have shown their strong support for the development and implementation of the proposed program. With the support of a Healthpact grant, we can work collaboratively to make a difference to our male population and our community, eventually sharing our program with other teachers at conferences and other co-ed and boys schools. In closing we would like to quote Goleman who is deeply troubled by the rising tide of murders, robberies and assaults committed by teenagers in the US and says: 'Despite high interest in emotional literacy among some educators, these courses are as yet rare; most teachers, principals and parents simply do not know they exist... The best models are largely outside the education mainstream, in a handful of private schools and a few hundred public schools. But given the crisis we find ourselves and our children facing, and given the quantum of hope held out by courses in emotional literacy, we must ask ourselves: Shouldn't we be teaching these most essential skills for life to every child – now more than ever? And if not now, when?'

**(This paper prepared by Jeanette Terry and Mark Snowden)**

**March 2000**

## **ATTACHMENT B**

### **BEING MALE IS OKAY – AN ACTION PLAN FOR BOYS IN SCHOOLS**

**Our program** is aimed at improving, and positively changing, the emotional well being and

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communication styles of boys. It is anticipated that by fostering emotional well being and/or changing the approach to communicating boys can better focus on positive/assertive intrapersonal and interpersonal approaches to communication. The program is essentially one of prevention, specifically to discourage boys from behaving in ways that may be harmful to themselves and to others in the community. In addition, it emphasises connectedness with themselves, other boys (and eventually men) and the wider community.

**We are seeking** to become a more healthy school community by providing a supportive environment and is tailored to enable boys to build a solid foundation to assist them in reaching their individual human potential. In the current school environment boys' emotional well-being is diminished by emphasis on academic and sporting achievement, competition and a predominantly male school population. We do not have a sequential, curriculum-based personal development program for boys in place across the primary school. There has been a growing realisation among staff and parents that this health issue has been neglected in a formal sense.

**We envisage** the total timeframe for planning, implementing and evaluating our project in the first instance to be over four school terms (one financial year). The first of those terms would require intense research and collation of relevant materials to produce teaching programs for boys from Years 2-8. The following three terms would be used to professionally support staff and facilitate the programs. Over the three terms we would specifically target half of the primary school population (approximately 160 boys plus staff) evenly spread from Years 2-8.

**Recent research** in male health supports the need to improve intrapersonal and interpersonal communication for boys. If this is addressed at an early age boys are more likely to experience a healthier intellectual and emotional development over the longer term, enabling them to experience themselves as holistic human beings who have improved social, cultural and community interaction. Please find attached a paper: *The Vulnerability of Being Male*, which underpins and supports our submission. It is envisaged that upon the completion of the trial and evaluation of this project over this first year, further support at a state, national and even international level would be sought.

**The broad aims of our project are:**

- to gain ongoing support for the program and its integral philosophy so that it is seen as a permanent requirement of educational curriculum;
- to train the trainer so that gradually all staff can understand and have input into the personal development program, as well as competently facilitate such a program;
- to support the personal development of as many young boys as possible; and
- to promote resilience to male suicide, violence and excessive risk-taking behaviours.

**The major objectives of our project are:**

- to influence and experience cultural change by enhancing the school environment;
- to create and celebrate an infrastructure which is designed to actively promote behaviours which foster the development of a more healthy organisation (eg Train the trainer and sequential PD program for boys);
- to enhance at least 180 boys' emotional well being by developing appropriate skills and networks for individuals;
- that boys internalise and live the message: 'being male is okay'; and
- to foster connectedness between individuals and their community.

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**We will achieve this by:**

- developing a cohesive, sequential PD program from Years 2-8 (see Table 1);
- recognising and celebrating individual strengths and differences in boys (including cultural);
- implementing a peer tutoring and buddy system to support the classroom program;
- team teaching for in-house personal and professional development, so that staff are supported in the development of skills and knowledge to promote this health policy confidently and accurately; and
- creating supportive environments through consistent approach to emotional development and well-being, and connection to the parent community.

**During this first year period we would anticipate evaluation to take the form of:**

- keeping anecdotal records of individual and group behaviours, recording sometimes subtle cultural shifts;
- providing surveys for staff and students at the beginning and conclusion of the program; and
- involving parents in this process by facilitating a parent program, providing a brief overview of the boys' program and asking them to fill in a post-program questionnaire to gauge the boys progress in 'living' the lessons of the classroom.

**Over the long term we will be able to:**

- track positive cultural changes as the boys progress from Year 2 to Year 6 and then on to Year 8. These cultural changes should manifest themselves in boys being caring, sharing, willing to listen to the ideas of others, displaying more supportive peer behaviour, more ability to express emotions in a positive way, greater general sense of happiness in school environment (significantly reducing bullying behaviours) as well as the wider community. This would indicate that our school environment has been enhanced by the program and has become a healthier organisation as a result.

Over the long term, we expect, either directly or indirectly, to reach the entire school population! (approximately 3000 people).

**(This paper prepared by Jeanette Terry and Mark Snowden)**

**March 2000**

**Table 1: Sequential personal development program Yr2-8**

<b>Yr</b>	<b>Focus Concepts</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Strategies</b>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>‘My Family, Your Family’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Families</li> <li>* Roles/Responsibilities</li> <li>* Environment</li> <li>* Culture</li> <li>* Similarities/Differences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Appreciation of similarities and differences between families</li> <li>* Develop empathy for families operating in other cultural settings</li> <li>* Understand how lifestyle is affected by environmental factors</li> <li>* Order and place ie. hierarchy and cooperation</li> </ul>	8 sessions @ 90 minutes per session	<p>Pre-test and post-test</p> <p>H’work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Prediction</li> <li>*Brainstorm</li> <li>*Artwork</li> <li>*Reading</li> <li>*Discussion (small group, whole class, pairs)</li> <li>* Viewing</li> <li>*LOTE</li> <li>*Writing</li> <li>*Health/hygiene</li> <li>*Cooking</li> <li>*Eating out</li> <li>*Entertaining</li> <li>*Drama</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>‘Feelings for Fiction’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Explore feelings</li> <li>* Emotions</li> <li>* Fear</li> <li>* Brothers and sisters</li> <li>* Good and bad</li> <li>* Friendship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Cooperative skills</li> <li>* Understanding individual differences</li> <li>* Skills and understandings about bullying behaviour</li> </ul>	8 sessions @ 90 minutes per session	<p>Producing a Big Book</p> <p>Artwork</p> <p>Drama</p> <p>H’work</p>	
<b>4</b>	<p><b>‘Conflict Resolution’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Communication</li> <li>* Talking and Listening</li> <li>* Feelings</li> <li>* Choices</li> <li>* Self Control</li> <li>* Problem solving</li> <li>* Good communication</li> <li>* Win/win</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Skills</li> <li>* Cooperative skills</li> <li>* Improved understandings of self and others</li> </ul>	8 sessions @ 90 minutes per session	<p>Role play</p> <p>H’work</p>	
<b>5</b>	<p><b>‘Boys and Relationships’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Stereotypes</li> <li>* Communicating feelings</li> <li>* Expressing feelings</li> <li>* Assertive, passive, aggressive</li> <li>* Heroes</li> <li>* Conflict and conflict resolution</li> <li>* Relaxation techniques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Managing personal change</li> <li>* Alternative models for behaviour</li> </ul>	8 sessions @ 90 minutes per session	<p>Pre-test</p> <p>H’work</p> <p>Post-test</p> <p>Student self evaluation checklist</p> <p>Parent/carer evaluation</p>	

6	<p><b>‘Negotiation and Mediation’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Win/win</li> <li>* Negotiating styles and skills</li> <li>* Active Listening</li> <li>* Assertiveness skills</li> <li>* Mediation skills</li> </ul> <p><b>‘Human Sexuality’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Sexuality defined</li> <li>* Sexuality development</li> <li>* Sexuality issues</li> <li>* Safe Sex</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Leadership</li> <li>* Supporting the Behaviour Management program by becoming a Student Mediator</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Greater understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Human form</li> <li>- Human reproduction</li> <li>- Human sexuality</li> <li>- Self</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>8 sessions @ 90 minutes per session</p> <p>5 x 45 minute sessions</p>	<p>Student self evaluation checklist</p> <p>Teacher feedback</p> <p>Role play</p> <p>Individual and group responses to issues treated</p>	<p>Gaining a certificate to become a Student Mediator</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Discussion</li> <li>*Group work</li> <li>*Viewing</li> </ul>
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**NB.** The umbrella for these classroom programs is a mentor and buddy system which links: Year 2 with Year 4, Year 3 with Year 5, and Year 6 with Year 8. This system is essential for practising the classroom programs, so that students are **actively empowered** by their skill development and their new and/or improved knowledge.