



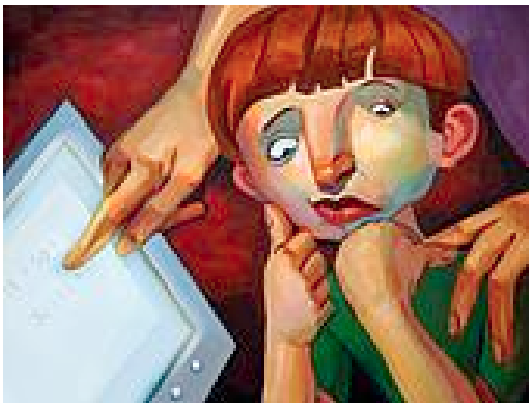
L2L NEWSLETTER

Learning to Learn

YEAR 8

Building a Learning Community

As all good educators know, the adolescent



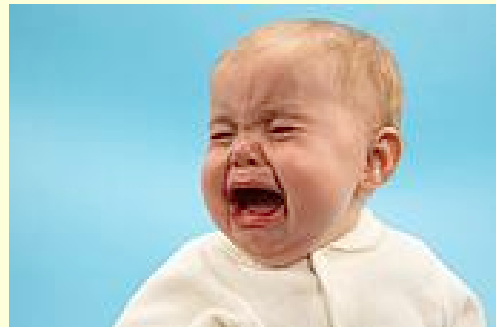
brain loves the unexpected. This is what Year 8 got this morning, when Sebastian Russo was hauled out the front of the group and publicly taken to task for defacing a chair with the words “Ms Burrett Sucks” and “This school sucks!” (Discerning students may have picked that something was amiss, since no self respecting 13 year old would spell “sucks” without an “x”! Obviously, a higher power (in this case Ms Upton) was involved!)

This set the scene for an examination of restorative justice – it was easy to restore the chair, but much harder for Seb to restore his relationship with Ms Burrett and with “This School”. Students identified behaviours that put them outside the circle of friends – of our community - and we began to talk about our responsibility to welcome people back into the circle once they have shown us respect again. This is hard learning, and we made a good start.

Restoring Justice

This week’s Learning to Learn takes a different tack. Following on from our staff development day at the end of last term, all students will be looking at their behaviour and learning more about the principles of Restorative Justice. It has been interesting in the interviews for next year’s Year 7 students, explaining to interested parents the concepts upon which our approach is based. It is clear that students react poorly to conflict models of behaviour

management and it is also apparent that students have appreciated the personal relationships being formed with learning advisors especially in the Learning Circle. Ultimately, healthy relationships will be the main “weapon” (to use conflict model language) to combat students’ poor behaviour. It is this idea of restoring relationship which will set up the clear consequences of poor behaviour which many staff are looking for.



YEAR 7

EDUCATING THE HEART

When we consider the behaviours of some of our students lately, this was a much-needed session for our school community. Building upon a previous session on Restorative Justice, Sue prepared the material for our students to gain a better understanding of the meaning of the words “restorative” and “justice”. In a discussion, Year 7 identified the



core values and beliefs and, the thoughts, feelings and actions that damage our community. They also named some of the actions that are necessary to restore our community when things go wrong; simply saying “sorry” is not enough to make it right.

Our emphasis was on “how we are always members of a community”. Our thespians, Liz and Simon acted out a classroom scene – the student who graffiti “Mrs Carnegie sux”. It got the right reaction from year 7. Through the carefully crafted questions from Liz, and the ‘right’ attitude from Simon, the students began to see how this act affected many people in our learning community. The students discussed what thoughts, feelings and actions would be used to restore our community. And they were spot on.

This was explored further in smaller groups. There, year 7 completed the poster section “What thought, feelings and actions damage our community?” Items like, anger, jealousy, bullying, littering and much more. Our group results were shared among the rest of year 7.

Afterwards, some of the LAs discussed how the next step would be to examine how restoring justice is part our personal transformation. There is room in the Food For Thought CLE, to continue our learning in restorative justice when we examine How do we spiritually nourish ourselves?

The powerful thing about RJ is directing students to reflect on their thoughts, feelings and actions in an objective way, without judgement.

Staff Learning

Here is the next installment from the Tasmanian Dept. of Education framework document concerning different literacies.

Being information literate

New communications media call for the mastery of many different symbolic codes – print, visual, aural, mathematical, technical and design elements. Learners need the skills to enable them to access, process, store, retrieve, transform and share ideas, images and information in a complex digital environment.

Learners not only need control over basic skills such as word processing, web-page operation, intranet and Internet uses, but also the capacity to combine, design and create using these elements. These complex new communication webs are structured quite differently from conventional narratives, and new literacy practices are required to fully engage with them. This new electronic communication system is both powerful and dangerous, in that it is global in its reach, integrates a range of complex media and has an advanced potential for interactivity. Information is not neutral and it is essential that learners select sources wisely, interact critically with multimedia communications and develop insight into their intentions, constructions and effects. Only then will they be able to make decisions about the authenticity and safe use of materials. With relatively open access to information on a global scale, especially outside school, young people need help to develop discernment, judgement and discrimination, so that they challenge assumptions, question validity and test ideas and beliefs against their personal and community codes of values. Information technologies offer new possibilities for innovation and enterprise, with skilled users translating ideas into practice to meet particular needs and opportunities. The rapid pace of recent technological change is likely to continue exponentially in the future. It is imperative, for reasons of equity, that all learners have the skills to access the possibilities that information technologies offer to expand personal and vocational lifestyle choices. It is also important that consumers develop the critical skills to select and use emerging technologies wisely.

