Parenting is not for cowards - (with apologies to Dr James Dobson)

Parenting is never easy and the continually changing social landscape seems to find parents behind the game. Just when you begin to grasp technology, it slips through your fingers and you find yourself fifty paces back.

Recent media articles inform us that social media sites and platforms are an area where there are great risks for our children, and parents need to be well informed to protect them. They also provide people of all ages with opportunity to vent their frustration and comments about another from the security of their homes; not realising the impact this will have. As the saying goes “once it’s out there, it is very hard to stop and get it all back”.

My recent discussions with Focus on the Family Australia lead me to a resource for parents on the matter of social media and managing the use from a biblical perspective.

I recommend a resource (“Logged On And Tuned Out”, A Non-techie's Guide to Parenting a Tech-Savvy Generation), that can be found on Focus on the Family’s Website, along with many other parent-friendly articles and resources. This book will be available from our Parent Shelf in the Library, within the next two weeks.

Please feel free to come and browse the shelf for the many useful resources that are available to parents.

I wish to acknowledge the author of the following article, Linda Keffe. This article is reprinted with permission from Focus on the Family, Australia and is available along with many other very useful resources and articles from the website. www.families.org.au

Hugo de Ridder - Principal

But Mum, You Were Spying!

You're trying to be casual, but your teen isn't buying it. You've just asked her about a picture she posted on 'MySpace'. (Where in the world did she get that bikini top? You know you never bought anything that skimpy for her!) and now she's firing up the tornado siren: “Buuuuut Mu-um! You're not supposed to be on MySpace. You're old! You just want to spy on me and ruin my life. You don't trust me!"

You want to actively guide your teen's Internet use, but how can you do so in a way that doesn't seem distrustful or interfering? In a word, it's all about communication.

Talk First, Browse Later

Rather than going to your teen's favourite social networking site, finding something disagreeable and then telling him you were looking at his profile, talk about it first. Let him know that a condition of his being allowed to use MySpace, Facebook or the next big thing to come along, is that you have access to his page. The purpose of this conversation is not to negotiate, but to underscore the value you place on being upfront and honest.

Keep a Low Profile

Though social networking sites allow you to send messages to other users, that doesn't mean you have to use that feature. Keeping an eye on what your teen is posting is great. But unless the two of you have a very unique relationship, making comments his friends can see is probably a no-no. Public embarrassment doesn't do much for family communication.

Teach Teens to Think Like Stalkers

Teens create Web profiles to express themselves. They want to understand their own
identities, and they want to tell others who they are. That’s a normal part of growing up. But in cyberspace, it can be dangerous. So tour your teen’s personal page with her and point out where she’s posted details (often unthinkingly) that might pinpoint her specific identity and location to someone with less-than-noble intentions.

One wise Aunt I know did this with her 15-year-old niece. The girl didn’t think she had posted anything dangerous on MySpace. Then her aunt showed her how a picture of herself in her dance team t-shirt could enable someone to narrow her identity not only to a particular city and school, but to a group of a dozen students within the school. The girl was appropriately freaked out and removed the photo from her profile.

Thinking through safety issues with your teen may help her to appreciate — or at least tolerate — your online presence. Even better, it’ll make her more likely to be careful with what she posts on her page.

The Bottom Line

Even if you do a fabulous job of communicating with your teen, he may still be mortified that you read his online profile. Do it anyway. The protection you offer is so important to his well-being that it’s worth getting a rap as an intrusive parent. Maybe years down the road — long after MySpace and Facebook are obsolete — your teen will thank you.

Now when you were their age, it was telephones and hanging out at the mall. Now the teen social world has expanded to things like SMS messaging, online chat rooms and any number of internet and digital gadgets. Here is a resource to help you understand and help protect your tweens and teens from the dangers of this new, global world.

Written by Lindy Keffer

Senior School News

Alysha Loffler - Ambassador for WA arthritis and Osteoporosis Foundation

Here is the continuing story of Alysha. She met Professor Stanley at the Royal Garden Party, who then invited her to tour the Telethon Institute during her Christmas school holidays. This was around the same time that she became involved as the Ambassador for the WA arthritis and Osteoporosis Foundation. After she spoke so well at the Great Gatsby Ball at Government House in March, Alysha was asked to represent the Foundation at the Telethon Beneficiaries Function being held next Wednesday at the Convention Centre, where Kerry Stokes and Richard Court are distributing last years Telethon funds to the 39 children’s charities. Alysha was called up during the Easter holidays by Sadie (mentioned below) from Channel 7, who asked Alysha to come to their studio and be filmed as the Arthritis representative, as well as the representative for PMH. She was also filmed giving the official introduction to Wednesday event; footage that will be used during this years Telethon. It was around this time that Alysha was asked to speak at Professor Stanley’s farewell.

The farewell for Professor Fiona Stanley was amazing. Alysha was the first speaker (of only 3, not including the guest of honour) and memorised her entire 8 minute speech which the ABC filmed and have put onto a DVD for us. It was Professor Stanley who had personally asked if Alysha could speak on the night. After she got off stage, Professor Stanley, raced to her table, literally pushing
Arthritis Foundation, where Jared and Alysha are promoting the Boots for Bones day. Check out the beautiful photos and story on the Arthritis home page (just scroll down a little) at https://www.arthritiswa.org.au/

What a journey!!!

Middle School News

Middle School Assembly

Farewell - Our best wishes and prayers go with Mrs Lamont and her husband as they prepare for the arrival of a new member in their family.

Mrs Lamont will be replaced by Mrs Fran Prebble (Monday - Thursday) and we welcome back Mrs Vanessa McQuade (Year 5 Friday) and Mrs Janine Cohen (Friday Year 6) to fill the gap left by Mrs Prebble.

Congratulations to all the award winners at last week’s Middle School Assembly.

- Mrs Carter’s class - Brian Chi, Gerhard Dunn, Oliver Gracey, Amy Hadlow, Riane Kruger, Meg Mathys, Mitchell Morrissey, Paris Schroeder, Jordan Walker
- Mrs Jolly’s class - Rowena Fleming, Abigail Gregorio, Janelle Licerio, Savannah Walker, Emily Shaw, Beth Barnes, Shannon Rampant
- Mrs Prebble’s class - Ben Bolwell, Anesu Chakaingeshu, Lisa Monaghan, Kristie Napoli, Chantelle Spillman
- Mrs Thompson’s class - Clare Mehrtens, Byron Hutchinson, Joel Ivers, Darcey Redman
- Mrs Lamont’s class - Mackenzie Holman, Ashleigh Rigg, Chelsea Ruane, Joel Delfino, Mian Grimbeek

Junior School News

Enrolments: Kindergarten, 2013

Places in our Kindergarten 2013 classes are filling quickly.

We invite existing parents to submit an ‘Application to Enrol’ ASAP for their children who will commence Kindergarten next year. Applications may be downloaded from the school’s website or collected from the office.

For further information, contact Mrs Marie Waite on 9726 4200 or email admin@grace.wa.edu.au

Parenting Forums

As parents, raising great children takes time, energy, skill and courage. As a school we want to ensure that we are supporting and encouraging parents in their vital roles by providing a forum which addresses the needs of parents in our community. This year we have launched a parenting forum which gives parents a place to come and receive tools for successful parenting but also a safe place to ask those difficult questions that many parents face. These events are very practical, where strategies are given to implement within the home.

We will be tackling behaviours such as obedience; power struggles, bed time and respect. We will also incorporate a question and answer time where parents can share their journey and some of the difficulties that occur when raising children.

Mrs Joss Barnes and Mrs Rhonda Lindberg will be conducting these sessions. Both of these ladies have years of experience and understand the joy of parenting and the effort needed to raise great children.

We want to invite you along to our introduction session on:

15th May from 7.00pm - 8.30pm

We will hold a follow up session on:

12th June from 7.00pm - 8.30pm

We will discuss new parenting topics based on the feedback we get from parents from the previous sessions.

Each session will be held in the main section of the library.

We believe that this will benefit you and your families and we look forward to seeing you there.

Mrs Donna Holman - Head of Junior School

School Community News

Parking

Thank you to all for your patience over the past month or two.

The gravel parking area will be marked at the Busy Bee, providing a number of additional bays on our site.

The area is now useable and will remain as such while the master plan and area use is under review.

Parents of children in Kindergarten to Year 2 are permitted to use this area, however parents of students in Years 3 - 12 are asked to continue to use the Middle/Senior School car park and “kiss and drop zone”.

Thank you to everyone who has assisted us by parking in the appropriate areas, preventing confusion and traffic hazards for other parents and our students.

One area of concern is the road corner next to the water tanks. Please do not park in this area now as it causes blind spots for our children and unnecessary traffic congestion.

School fees - now due

School fees are due by Friday, 4th May. Payment can be made by Credit Card (in person or over the phone); Direct debit; cheque or cash.

For any queries relating to your school fees, please speak to Mrs Fiona de Ridder (Bursar)

Family Portrait Fundraiser - Thank you

Thank you to all the families who participated in this fundraiser which raised $1200.

The photographer will be back on Thursday, 24th to deliver your photographs. Please ensure you bring CASH with you to pay for any additional purchases, along with the appointment card which you completed at your sitting.

“Give a can” - Salvation Army / Rotary Appeal - This year we are hoping to collect more than ever before, so we are appealing to each family to supply at least one non-perishable food item for donation. Items may be dropped off at the school office in the bins provided. Last day for collection is 25th May.
Grace Christian School Busy Bee.

The next School Busy Bee is scheduled for Saturday, 19th May (NEXT WEEKEND)

Our school Busy Bee is a great way to meet other families and to serve your school community. All families are eligible for a $75 credit to their school fees just for attending.

If you have not already returned a registration form, please do so with urgency.

The day starts at 8.30am (Registration from 8.15am). We enjoy a shared morning tea at 10am and the morning concludes at 12.30pm. There are numerous ways to assist from administration type jobs, painting, sewing, gardening, cleaning, water blasting, carpentry, art work, classroom assistance, library duties. “You name it, and we probably need it.”

Busy Bee’s are held only twice per school year, and bring all our school families together to work and fellowship alongside one another.

Please diarise our next two Busy Bee dates to avoid missing this very special time of building our school’s community.

- Term 2: Saturday, 19th May
- Term 4: Saturday, 3rd November

We look forward to seeing you there.

Camp Grace - Help needed

Camp Grace is a ministry of Grace Christian School.

Assistance is required to complete various tasks at the camp to upgrade the buildings to meet current Council requirements and as part of our plan to upgrade the facilities at Camp Grace.

If you have suitable skills (i.e. can use a drill and a few hand tools) Rocky would love to hear from you. There is free accommodation for all workers and families so you might want to make a weekend of it. Your help will be really appreciated and the improvement to our campsite will be very worthwhile.

Please call Rocky if you are available to assist, on 9755 4014 or 0412271280; email: campgrace@westnet.com.au

Host families will be visited prior to the arrival by the organiser to explain the programme.

The students are fully briefed about the school rules, are not to leave the school premises and will attend morning classes daily. They will be fully covered by appropriate insurance.

Please contact Martine Floyd on aupairoz@iinet.net.au (Mob: 0403 019 609) before the end of May if you are interested in hosting a French student.

Bunbury Baptist Church Youth Group - For all 12-17 year olds 5.30 -7.30pm Thursdays during the school term. Dinner is included.

For further information please contact Associate Pastor: Andrew Main andrew.main@bunburybaptist.org or 9721 3700 Mob 0427 244 287