

NEWS LETTER

Safe Respectful Learners

TERM 1 | WEEK 9 | April 2020



CREATING OUR FUTURE

Wow, what an incredible week last week was for everyone. We went from a "normal" attendance rate of almost 90% on Monday to 4% attendance on Friday. We went from face to face lessons to a virtual school in a week. Our school changed dramatically, very, very rapidly. Our day to day staff have been reduced by 80%, allowing for increased social distancing. Please be aware that this brings new challenges, such as, reduced Office Staff, the need to book appointments to see staff, reduced access to the school. I would like to thank the amazing work of the staff in preparing and uploading the online learning content, Also the paper copies of work that were produced last week. Our Office Staff and School Learning and Support Staff worked incredibly hard to ensure that suitable work was available for all children. This last week has also resulted in a massive growth in the teacher's technical skills as they move to our online learning platform.

We are looking at strategies to keep our students linked in with school as we move forward. I have asked Year Advisers to contact students via mobile phone in Year 11 and 12 to check on wellbeing.

It is really important that all of our community is linked into our SkoolBag App as this is the best source of current school information.

We sent out over 150 packages of printed lesson materials last week and issued in excess of 80 laptops for student use. I am happy to issue more laptops to students if needed to ensure they have one to one access from home. Internet access to the online learning material is preferred as teachers can liaise with students in real time about their learning and can continue to deliver content as the COVID-19 restrictions become tighter.

Thank you to the parents who are keeping their children home. I realise that this will become increasingly challenging for you. I highly recommend that you keep your child in a "regular" school routine, by encouraging them to be online or working during their normal lessons.

We will continue to roll-out suggestions and helpful tips to assist you in your new role as you directly assist the teachers in continuing to provide strong educational outcomes for our students.

Keep well and safe.

Paul Humphrey



CONGRATULATIONS

Ryan Gilchrist, Toormina High School Captain, has progressed to the 2020 Regional Finals of the Lions Youth of the Year.

Lions Youth of the Year is designed to encourage, foster and develop leadership in conjunction with other citizenship qualities in our youth. The qualities sought, apart from academic attainments are those of leadership, personality, sportsmanship, public speaking and good citizenship.

Ryan has an active and constructive role in our school community through his involvement in the School Leadership Team.

Ryan has been a member of this team since year 7 and is passionate about this team's ability to provide a platform for student's opinions to be heard. Ryan is a keen and very successful public speaker and debater. Life balance is also achieved through Ryan's membership and participation in the Coffs Harbour Mountain Biking Club



Congratulations to these girls who successfully auditioned for the Mid North Coast Dance Ensemble! Chloe Szabo, year 10, Ella Chowdhury, year 7 and Darcie McInally year 7 (Reserve).

Congratulations also to THS Dance Teacher, Sally Atkins!



Southern Cross University Head-Start Program

Toormina High School has been involved with the Southern Cross University Head-Start program since 2015. This year we have 15 students enrolled in either Communication in Organisations or Biology. Southern Cross University Head-Start provides an opportunity for Year 11 and 12 students to gain direct entry and advanced standing into a variety of courses offered at Southern Cross University on completion of their HSC. Free from university fees, the program offers students the chance to gain a taste of university life, stimulate their interest in academic pursuits and enhance their educational performance and long-term aspirations.

The program has been designed for students who have the academic capability to succeed at university. Applicants are selected on merit, based on their academic performance, a personal statement and the recommendation of their Principal.

Toormina High School has 11 students enrolled in the Communication in Organisations unit, which aims to provide the communication skills necessary for employment and academic study. We have 4 students enrolled in the Biology unit, which has a focus on cell structure and helps students develop their knowledge of the living world.

This year students will be completing the courses online.

Robyn West, Careers Adviser

Bangarra Dance Theatre



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students recently participated in a one day contemporary Aboriginal dance workshop run by the Department of Education in collaboration with the internationally renowned Bangarra Dance Theatre. These workshops aim to foster the development of dance skills and cultural significance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.



Staff Wellbeing

Head Teacher Wellbeing, Scott Gale spreading joy as the Easter bunny with HSIE Teacher, Bridget Kramer.

Please download the FREE Skoolbag communication app to your phone. We use this app for reminders and alerts. Instructions are on the Toormina High School website. Follow Toormina High School on Facebook (look for the school logo).

'SLIKK' Student Leadership is for Koori Kids Boys Dance Camp

In Week 6 our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students Archer Flowers year 8, Chris Bridges year 9, Gabriel Boota and Cooper McInally, year 10, attended the SLIKK Boys Dance Camp at Yuraygir National Park, Minnie Waters. On the way we stopped at Yarrawarra fish traps to see how the local Gumbaynggirr people used them over the years. The traps obviously work well as a turtle was in one of the pools which Cooper rescued and returned to the sea. Over the next 3 days, the boys, along with students from Bellingen, Macksville and Nambucca Heads enjoyed bush walks with Uncle Troy, spear throwing, art classes and stories around the campfire. The camp ended with a smoking ceremony and traditional dancing.

Iskaan Gantinas



NEWS LETTER

Safe Respectful Learners

TERM 1 | WEEK 7 | March 2020



A glimpse into just some of the activities around Toormina High School on a Monday during **Week B, Period 1** - above are photos of the Year 7 Mentoring class with their Year 9 Peer Leaders, below left, you will find senior students studying in the library, right is Head Teacher Wellbeing, Scott Gale, hard at work on the Positive Behaviour for Learning framework.



The office staff are always busy supporting the staff, students and parents and below Mrs Lawrence teaching a fun maths activity in our Support Unit.





The year 11 Modern History class above and on right Head Teacher - Coach Mentor, Positive Behaviour for Learning, Jo Stewart busy on a video conference call. The students below left are doing their job being dramatic in their Year 9 Drama class!



Above right is Mr Strydon's Street Art class, below left is Careers Adviser, Robyn West checking elective choices with each individual student, next is our enthusiastic 'Canteen Lady' Kirsten, filling her fridge ready for recess and students in Room 24 have been looking at the history of Coffs Harbour since first settlement and how Coffs has developed. As part of this unit the students made sailing ships, light houses and shearwaters.



COPING CALENDAR: KEEP CALM. STAY WISE. BE KIND

30 actions to look after ourselves and each other as we face this global crisis together. Please use & share.

1. Make a plan to feel less lonely, calm and stay in contact.	2. Enjoy walking your mind. Remember all things do for you!	3. Write down ten things you feel grateful for. Write and why.	4. Give feedback, not feedback. Say and boost your strengths rather.	5. Sit calm. Even if you're stuck indoors, wear & stretch.	6. Treat all a neighbour or friend and offer to help them.	7. Share what you are feeling and be willing to ask for help.	
8. Take five minutes each day to feel less lonely. Repeat regularly.	9. Call a friend one to catch up and really listen to them.	10. Get good sleep. No screens before bed or when waking up.	11. Focus on things that are beautiful in the world around you.	12. Exercise yourself in a park, boat, TV show or podcast.	13. Popped positively to everyone you interact with.	14. Stay a grade that you enjoyed when you were a younger.	
15. Make some progress on a project that motivates you.	16. Analyse your favourite music that really lifts your spirits.	17. Limit something new or documenting creative.	18. Find a fun way to do an extra 15 minutes of physical activity.	19. Do some acts of kindness to help others, however small.	20. Make time for self-care. Do something good for yourself.	21. Send a letter or message to someone you can't be with.	
22. Find positive stories in the news and share these with others.	23. Have a fresh start day. Good anything and start of the week.	24. Put your worries into perspective and try to let them go.	25. Look for the good in others and notice their strengths.	26. Take a small step towards an important goal.	27. Thank three people who've given help to you and tell them why.	28. Make a list of things you will achieve again later in the year.	
29. Connect with nature. Breathe and notice the outdoors.	30. Remember that all feelings and situations pass in time.	<p>“Everything can be taken from us but one thing: the freedom to choose our attitude in any given set of circumstances.” - Viktor Frankl</p>					

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

www.cdf.edu.au/happiness



Recently at THS we have had vaccinations for year 7 students and staff members, Gillian Kelly and Jodie McCormick embraced Saint Patrick's Day.

Mobile Phones at THS

We believe that mobile phones have great utility. We have also found that learning and social behaviour improve drastically when students are fully present so they can engage with their teachers and classmates. We are writing to share the exciting news that we will be making our school a phone-free space to improve teaching and learning. We are using a system called Yondr to achieve this goal. Yondr is currently used across the world in over 1,000 schools, as well as at concerts, comedy shows, weddings and special events of all kinds. The goal of these spaces is to encourage people to engage with each other and their surroundings. The Yondr Program employs a simple, lockable pouch that stores a mobile phone. Every student will secure their phone in a personally assigned Yondr pouch when they arrive at school each morning. They will maintain possession of their phones, and will not use them until they are unlocked at the end of the school day. Students are required to bring their Yondr pouch to and from school each day and are responsible for their pouch at all times.

We are encouraged by the effects of this system in learning institutions. In 2019, Yondr surveyed over 400 school partners to measure the effects of creating phone-free educational environments. These schools achieved notable progress in multiple areas:

- 69% of schools saw an improvement in academic performance
- 84% of schools saw an increase in student engagement in the classroom
- 80% of schools saw a decrease in behaviour referrals

In an effort to best serve your child, we appreciate your full support in adoption of the Yondr Program at our school. More information will be sent home soon.

Paul Humphrey, Principal



POUCH

As you enter the phone free space, your phone is placed in a Yondr pouch by our staff.



SECURE

The pouch is closed and secured. It is handed back to you. You'll keep it throughout the event.



EXIT

When leaving the space, you'll tap the pouch on an unlocking base to release your phone.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I want to reach my child during the school day?

We want our students to be engaged in their learning. Please refrain from contacting your student during the school day unless it is an emergency. Contact the main office at 66533077 to reach your child.

What if there is an emergency?

In case of an emergency, we direct our students to safety first. School staff will be able to unlock a Yondr pouch in a matter of seconds for students once they are in a safe and secure location.

Will my student's phone be safe?

Students are in possession of their phone - in their Yondr pouch - for the entire school day. We will advise students to store the pouch in their backpacks where it is completely safe.

What if the pouch gets damaged?

The Yondr pouch belongs to Toormina High School just like any other school supply. If a student damages a Yondr pouch, he/she will be held responsible. The student's phone will be confiscated, and a parent must come to school to retrieve it.



Crazy Hair Day Fundraiser

Every year the Leukemia Foundation raises funds to go towards their life-saving services, research and support for teens with cancer. To support the annual 'Shave for a Cure' fundraiser on Friday 13th March, Year 8 students at Toormina High School held a Crazy Hair Day. Staff and students were encouraged to wear a crazy hair-do or an entirely new do (with the help of a crazy wig) and make a gold coin donation to the cause.

It was great to see students and staff getting creative with fancy wigs, plaits, hair colour and some retro styling. The day raised over \$240 for this worthwhile cause with a number of our year 8 students taking on the challenge through gaining sponsors and donations from the community.

A huge thank you to all those who enjoyed taking part in this worthwhile cause!

Cherie O'Brien, Year 8 Adviser

Footwear Guidelines for NSW Government Schools Health & Safety Directorate

The School through its WHS Policy, is committed to providing a safe working and learning environment for all students, visitors others undertaking work.

Footwear is an important safety item. Good soles provide a sound grip on the floor preventing accidents such as slips, trips and falls from occurring. Footwear can also protect feet from damage caused by accidents such as falling objects or chemical spillages.

These guidelines have been developed to assist NSW government schools in providing a safe working and learning environment. Areas where safe footwear must be worn In accordance with the Safe Working Policy, the Department has identified areas of its workplaces where appropriate footwear must be worn by students and visitors to ensure their safety.

Areas where enclosed leather footwear (or other material confirmed by the manufacturer to be suitable, refer to Australian/NZ Standard 2210: Safety Protective and Occupational Footwear) is required are:

- Industrial Arts and trades workshop areas
- Science laboratories
- Canteen or Food Technology (kitchen areas)

Sandals, open footwear, high heel shoes, canvas type shoes/and or gym boots are not permitted in these areas. If students present for a class or activity with inappropriate footwear the student should be offered alternative educational activities until they are wearing appropriate footwear. The above list is not exhaustive.

Appropriate safe footwear may also be identified as a requirement in relation to other areas or activities, documented procedure or a documented risk assessment. For example, in work situations where floors can't always be kept dry or clean, the right footwear is especially important, so a slip resistant shoe may be required. Another example is wearing enclosed leather footwear (or suitable safe alternative) in agricultural areas/activities.