INSIDE THIS ISSUE
Advisory Reports
Shout Outs
Important dates for Term 2
LTI Feature
Get Comfy for NF Day

http://www.cookshill-s.schools.nsw.edu.au
‘If your dreams don’t scare you, they are not big enough.’

This week Tiana Binskin has achieved one of her BIG dreams. She is working at Taronga Zoo on a week’s internship. Leaving to learn and bringing that learning back into the school is a very important and pivotal part of the Big Picture Education design. She is a very talented young person who is striving towards her life goal of working with animals in a meaningful way. She is using all avenues to create her dreams and make them a reality.

She is not the only one.

We have many students who are out and about accessing mentors at the university, across industries and in unique small interest areas. AND we are only 14 weeks young as a program.

A very big shout out to Arron Stevens who has been instrumental in the initial stages of our design. He took a temporary position with us while we began our journey and has worked very hard in a new system, in a new way of thinking, and with a new team, to work out structures and administrative ways to best achieve for our students. Our team would like to sincerely thank him for his expertise and wish him well as he heads into his new consultancy position with the Department in Sydney.

Our new Internship Coordinator will be Mrs Amanda Hine. For the moment, the job will be shared with Alex Newman, until the official start date for Amanda in Term 3.

Exhibitions will be held in week 8 & 9. We look forward to showcasing the work of our students.

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**TRACEY BREESE**

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**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:**

**TERM 2 WEEK 6**

**Monday:** *Get Comfy* for Neurofibromatosis Day. See attached document outlining the Wolf Pack’s advisory project. Wear some comfy clothes and bring a Gold coin donation. Bring some money for bbq & bake sale.

**JUNE 16:** Come along to the Official Launch of CHC from 2—3.30pm. Parent Learning Groups will be held in advisory rooms from 3.30—4.15pm. Information being sent out to parents soon.
Question to ask students for this week:

“How have you used ‘Empirical Reasoning’ to gain a deeper understanding of key concepts in your interest project?”

This week I have had the pleasure of working within Advisories and discussing learning plans with individual students and Advisors. The variety of interest projects and the skillful way in which these have been mapped to the Learning Goals whilst focusing on student interest and passions is a great credit to our wonderful students and their amazing Advisors.

A great example is Mackenzie’s interest project. She is developing a children’s book aimed at raising awareness of Bipolar disorder. She is in the development phase of the project and, as such, is conducting research on a variety of related concepts: from facts about the illness through to the development stages and interests of her target market. She is outsourcing illustrations and, through this, is demonstrating an outstanding variety of communication skills. The quality control methods she is utilising are fantastic and include the creation of many drafts, surveying peers and target audience, and thoroughly verifying the validity of all sources of information.

This term we are trialing exhibition bookings online. Students should book a time slot through ‘teacher interviews’. The process for this can be found on the front page of our Moodle site (to access CHC Moodle, simply type ‘Cooks Hill Moodle’ into google and it should be one of the first two links). Please ensure that the selected time is negotiated between you, the student, mentor and any other invited parties. We would welcome any feedback on the appropriateness of this online booking process.

As always, please don’t hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding your family’s experience at Cooks Hill Campus.

Darren Ponman
Deputy Campus Leader
Cooks Hill Campus
Darren.ponman1@det.nsw.edu.au
We’ve had a busy past two weeks in the R.F.P.’s. People are working hard in progressing with their P.I.P.’s. Some of the projects include; Abby, who is creating a book about science, Shelby who’s doing fitness testing, Paige who’s doing mental health issues and Chelsea who’s researching the Suffragettes. We’re looking forward to seeing the end products!

We’ve had a few students volunteer for the Newcastle City Council at Newcastle Library to ask patrons to take a survey. It has been a great experience for those involved and a great way for the community to see our students in action.

We had the Newcastle Careers Expo on Thursday 22nd. We went to check out the different stalls to scope out different career paths and opportunities. It was interesting to hear about all of the different options.

Scott played for Newcastle High School in a Football Gala Day. They played against Hunter Valley Grammar School, Hunter River Community School, Merewether High School and Maitland Grossmann High School. They won against all of these teams, victorious at the gala day.

Jacob is organising a whole-school handball competition that will happen very soon. Entry into the competition is a gold coin donation, and the funds will go to the Westpac Helicopter Foundation. The winner of the competition will win a trophy. Good luck everyone!

On Wednesday 28th we had our Parent Learning Plan Meeting. Our parents got to see where we are up to with our Personal Interest Projects and how our Learning Plans are coming along.
I have been really enjoying my internship at the University of Newcastle's Legal Centre. I have been attending lectures and tutorials with a group of fourth year uni students as well as helping out in the office and working on my LTI project.

I have learned lots of great life skills there and feel like I now have a really good insight into the world of law.

My mentor has also been really helpful and supportive of me throughout the internship. Professor John Anderson has shown great interest in the school and has helped a lot with my LTI project. He has also ensured that I get the most out of each day that I'm there.
It’s been a fast moving week: internships are underway and work is being completed.

Today is the Learning Plan meeting and most students have been given their narratives. Feedback from the advisors is ranging with each student but all round, results have been good. Fingers crossed parents are as impressed as the advisors have been!

Personally, the best part of the week is Tuesdays now. I started my internship yesterday and I think I’m in love. I attended lessons with personal trainers, group workouts and office work at Anytime Fitness, Wallsend. The gym there is amazing. It’s always pumping with good vibes and music to get you going. People there always seem happy and even if they are sweating like crazy, they are having a laugh with their mates. It’s such a positive environment; I can see why it’s said to be addictive. The manager at Anytime Fitness is the friendly, gorgeous Jake. He has been helping me get used to the environment and is allowing me to be included in all things possible. I’m not the only one loving the internships, so on behalf of Cooks Hill Campus, I’d like to give a shout-out to all the wonderful companies, people and places that are helping the students here be presented with wonderful opportunities, learning experiences and the ability to test the waters in work industries.

Internships have been great for us all. It has been an amazing way to get a feel for the future ahead and has made us really think about what we do or do not wish to go forth with. So far, being on internship has pointed out just how much I love the fitness industry and how my future will be very much taken up with this. I hope to continue enjoying, learning and loving the time I spend at Anytime Fitness. So, Good luck guys, have fun on internships and soak up all the knowledge you can!

Yours, Isobel-Grace.
Artworks By Maddi Duffey
This fortnight in our advisory class Jacob and Josh have completed their MathsOnline for the term. Last week on Monday most of the people from the school came into the Zen Pen class and we all sat around and watched a PowerPoint presented by Byron from Headspace which contained information about what Headspace is. On Wednesday we went to the science lab at Newcastle High with Aurelia & the Wolf Pack. On Thursday the whole campus went to the careers expo in Broadmeadow and we had a lovely day. Also, this week we have worked really hard on our personal interest projects. Whoo go The Zen Pen!

On Monday this week in town hall the whole school did check-in and we listened to Tracy talk about respect: respect towards advisors, other students and ourselves. After town hall we went to our advisory classes and wrote a journal entry about respect. Also at town hall we found out that Arron, our LTI Coordinator was leaving us. He did an amazing job working with students to organise their internships. Good luck with your new job, Arron.

On Tuesday most of the people from our class were off on their internships. On Tuesday morning the first lot of the Nintendo Wii consoles arrived. On Wednesday we set up the Wii and Matt was winning. We believe that the Wii is very productive and whenever the class need a Pick-me-up we can all come together and be very Zen. Thursday was the day that we had our learning meeting and our parents came and watched us talk about our learning plans. On Friday is our sport day and the teachers have been swapped around for the sports because Arron has left. This week we have been working hard for our exhibitions in week 9 we are all scared and nervous, but in the end it will all turn out great because we are the ZEN PEN.
Unfortunately the Wolf Pack has been without their matriarch she-wolf this week. Lizzy has been away sick and we miss her terribly! We’ve been looked after by her replacement, Sheri, who has helped us prepare for our advisory project—*Get Comfy for NF Day* which will be on Monday.

“Neurofibromatosis (NF) is a genetic disorder that disturbs cell growth in your nervous system, causing tumours to form on nerve tissue. These tumours can develop anywhere in the nervous system, including brain, spinal cord and nerves. NF is usually diagnosed in childhood or early adulthood. The effects of NF can range from hearing loss, learning impairment, and hear & blood vessel complications to severe disability due to nerve compression by tumours, loss of vision and severe pain.” (http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/neurofibromatosis/basics/definition/con-20027728)

Our advisory project consists of students donating a gold coin for wearing their comfy clothes (pjs, onesies, etc.) on Monday. We will also be holding a bake sale and guessing competitions, while at lunch we’ll be cooking a BBQ with meat & vegetarian/vegan options. All proceeds from the day will go to research for NF. Please bring your money and support this wonderful cause!
Hello again all! This fortnight in our advisory we were lucky enough to go to the *Newcastle & Lake Macquarie Careers & Training Expo*, which we all enjoyed very much. It was very busy and there were plenty of stalls for us to investigate future careers.

Almost everyone in our class has an internship: with **Nikita** at Response Disability Services, **Brittney** at Blackbutt Reserve, **Jade** at Muso’s Corner, **Tiffany** at the John Hunter Children’s Starlight Room, **Bianca** at Frank’s, **Tom** at the Maritime Museum, **Zoe** at Mark Priem’s Photography, **Lara** at Anna Bay Childcare, **Cheyenne** at the Shark and Ray Centre, **Kaitlin** at Go Kindy Little Legends Childcare, **Maddy** at Anytime Fitness Thornton and **Rhiannon** at Noah’s Ark Veterinary Clinic Medowie.

Brittney’s Personal Interest Project for this term is organising an excursion for our Advisory to Blackbutt Reserve on **6th of June**. There will be a tour, a BBQ lunch and lots of fun activities so be sure to return your permission note and $12 to Brittney ASAP.

We also celebrated several birthdays in the last two weeks. Tiffany turned 17 early last week and Cheyenne turned 15.
Health & Wellbeing

I recently read with dismay a newspaper article reporting the high incidence of self-harm that plagues young people in the Hunter region and it made me consider what causes teenagers to harm themselves?

While there is no one cause of self-harm, one consideration I came up with was the dominance of phones and social media in their lives. Teens today are bombarded with messages, photos, texts and status updates all day long. They constantly know what others are up to and report what they are doing/thinking/feeling to others, many of whom they have little real-life connection with. The problem is that they choose to partake in this process and that they use it (probably unknowingly) as a form of validation of their self-worth. Rather than just sharing their thoughts with someone in person, they seek some sort of peer-approval or support by sharing with myriad other people online. Now there is nothing wrong with seeking support from others: the need to feel a sense of belonging is intrinsic to being human, but it’s far better to do connect with a person who can be there to give you a hug!

When a teen’s identity is so reliant on the approval of so many other people, there is little hope that they will receive the amount of attention they are seeking, especially the much-needed loving attention from people who really care about them. Think about how many people your child “connects with” every time they use their phone compared with how many friends you had as a teenager. Chances are you had a few close friends you could really turn to when you needed to. Nowadays teens are seeking that same sense of closeness from many more people. (An interesting article on the neurological effects of Facebook can be found here. It’s interesting reading).

Concurrent with this is the problem of cyber-bullying, where the support teens seek is turned against them in a vicious way. Again, the ‘always-online’ mentality means that there is no escape for them, even in the privacy of their bedrooms.

So what’s the answer?

I don’t know.

Just as there is no one cause for self-harm, there is no one answer to how to stem their use of technology to share their problems and to involve themselves in the problems of others (Life is tough enough when dealing with your own problems, let alone being bombarded by the problems of others!). Asking a teenager to give up their phone gets a similar reaction to asking them to give up breathing! Limits about their use at home may help. But I guess that whatever action is taken needs to be taken as a result of a serious, caring conversation around the negative effects of social media. Teens and parents working together in a non-judgemental and supportive way is the key to success.

Brendt

Next issue I will be discussing the positive effects mindfulness practice can have on people, giving them the emotional space needed to deal with the ups and downs of life.
WORKSHOP
WITH CVETA & KASSIE

Stress Less with YOGA
A teenage girl's life is anything but stress free. From exam stress to social pressures there are so many issues that our teenagers are faced with!

Stress Less with Yoga will teach you how you can calm the mind, relax the body and stay present so you can deal with the daily pressures that life tends to throw at you.

Cveta will take you through a fun yoga class to relieve stress and anxiety, while Kassie will provide you with necessary tools to deal with those unavoidable emotions and feelings that arise. You will gain more energy and practice mindfulness that you can use for life.

This is a series of workshops that would benefit so many of the girls in Newcastle.

Perfect for ages 14-18
Bookings essential!

WHEN
Saturdays
June 14th & Sept 20th
12.30-2.45pm

WHERE
Level 5, 50 Hunter Street

COST
$35 for 1 Session
$55 for 2 Sessions

For info on workshops for boys contact info@yogaloft.com.au

Level 5, 50 Hunter Street Newcastle
Call 4927 1010 | Open 7 days a week | www.yogaloft.com.au
AMBIENT IMPRESSIONS | SUSAN SHERIDAN
OPENING EVENING THURSDAY 5TH JUNE 6-8PM

Featuring a selection of new art work from Susan as she approaches her 40th anniversary as one of Australia’s leading professional artists. On the evening meet the artist over a wine, browse, and buy from the collection. Continues until Monday 30th June.

With almost 30 exhibitions to her name and successful shows internationally, including in London with the Federation of British Artists, CHG is delighted to have secured this collection of evocative and ambient work that delves into the mood and experience of our coast, outback and wildlife.

A graduate from the National Art School in Sydney, Susan is a naturalist painter often lured by nature and highly regarded for her stunning yet muted depictions that balance dreaminess, with soft ethereal tones and sublime tranquility. Her paintings grace the walls of many homes, hotels, resorts, boardrooms, offices and institutions throughout the world.

Included in this exciting exhibition are multimedia, oil, acrylic, and works on paper. The range offers exciting buying opportunities for all with works priced between $1,000 and $5,500.

With a flexible purchase plan available there has never been a better time to own one of Susan’s beautiful works!
SHOUT OUT— to Arron for organising our excursion to the Newcastle-Lake Macquarie Career & Learning Expo.

Another SHOUT OUT to Arron who is sadly leaving us this week for a great opportunity to work in Aboriginal Education, a real passion of his. Thank you for all of your hard work, we will miss you! Good luck!

A SHOUT OUT to all of the students who went to Newcastle Library to volunteer for the Newcastle City Council. You all did a great job!

A SHOUT OUT to Lizzy who is away sick at the moment. We all miss you and hope you get back to campus soon.

A SHOUT OUT to Matt for getting some Wii consoles for those rainy sport afternoons and reward time.

A SHOUT OUT to Tiana Binskin who is completing a week internship at Taronga Zoo.

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES

“If you are always trying to be normal, you will never know how AMAZING you can be.” - Maya Angelou

“Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be Kind.”
- Anonymous.

“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.” - Benjamin Franklin.
Get comfy for NF

Monday 2/6/2014

What to wear?
Comfy clothing including PJS
Gold coin donation

What to expect?
Barbeque $1.50
Guessing competition $1 per guess
Bake sale (prices may vary)

Neurofibromatosis facts:
There are 3 types of this condition
NF 1 effects about 1 in 3000 people
NF 2 effects 1 in 25,000
Shwannoma折磨is effects 1 in 40,000
more people have NF than Cystic Fibrosis, Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, Tay Sachs Disease, and Huntington’s Disease combined.