



Edition: 77

26 January 2018

ST PETER'S GIRLS PREP SCHOOL

Weekly Newsletter of the Girls JP

FROM THE HEADMASTER

A huge thank you to the many parents who were able to attend our various Parent Information Evenings over the past two weeks. I sincerely hope you found them beneficial. To those of you couldn't make them, please ask your daughter to bring home the Grade specific Information Booklet. A great deal of what was discussed appears in this booklet. Please also feel free to pop in to see your daughter's teacher or me for any additional information.

A sincere apology must go to the parents who are currently not receiving our bulk SMSs. We are experiencing some teething problems with our new Administrative programme, called Engage. (At this stage these parents must be feeling somewhat dis-engaged ☺).

Thank you to all the moms and dads who filled out the on-line document to ascertain where, when and how you would like to be involved at St Peter's Girls School. We will collate the information in the next couple of days and will confirm your involvement early next week.

As you are aware by now, I like to share articles in my weekly newsletters that I believe would be of interest to you – relating primarily to educational trends or initiatives, but also in relation to parenting. I found this article by Julie Lythcott-Haims of particular interest:

Julie Lythcott-Haims served as Dean of Freshmen and Undergraduate Advising for over a decade at Stanford University, where she received the Dinkelspiel Award for her contributions to the undergraduate experience. A mother of two teenagers, she has spoken and written widely on the phenomenon of helicopter parenting, and her work has appeared on TEDx talks and in Forbes and the Chicago Tribune. She is pursuing an MFA in Creative Writing at California College of the Arts in San Francisco. This article is excerpted from HOW TO RAISE AN ADULT: Break Free of the Overparenting Trap and Prepare Your Kid for Success.

A heightened level of parental involvement in the lives of kids obviously stems from love—unquestionably a good thing. But by the time I stepped down as dean at Stanford in 2012 I had interacted not only with a tremendous number of parents but with students who seemed increasingly reliant upon their parents in ways that felt, simply, off. I began to worry that college “kids” (as college students had become known) were somehow not quite formed fully as humans. They seemed to be scanning the sidelines for Mom or Dad. Under-constructed. Existentially impotent.

Tremendous good can be said about the baby boomers—they were drafted into and questioned the Vietnam War, lay their bodies on the line in the monumental civil rights and civil liberties struggles of their day, and fueled the greatest economic growth our nation has ever seen. But did Boomers' egos become interlaced with the accomplishments of their children to such an extent that they felt their own success was

compromised if their children fell short of expectations? And did some of these parents go so far in the direction of their own wants and needs that they eclipsed their own kids' chances to develop a critical psychological trait called "self-efficacy"—that is, what eminent psychologist Albert Bandura identifies as "the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations"? There's a deeply embedded irony here: Maybe those champions of self-actualization, the Boomers, did so much for their kids that their kids have been robbed of a chance to develop a belief in their own selves.

Did the safety-conscious, academic achievement-focused, self-esteem-promoting, checklisted childhood that has been commonplace since the mid-1980s and in many communities has become the norm, rob kids of the chance to develop into healthy adults? What will become of young adults who look accomplished on paper but seem to have a hard time making their way in the world without the constant involvement of their parents? How will the real world feel to a young person who has grown used to problems being solved for them and accustomed to praise at every turn? Is it too late for them to develop a hunger to be in charge of their own lives? Will they at some point stop referring to themselves as kids and dare to claim the "adult" label for themselves? If not, then what will become of a society populated by such "adults"? These were the questions that began to gnaw at me and that prompted me to write this book.

These questions were on my mind not just at work but as I made my way in my community of Palo Alto, where the evidence of overparenting was all around me—even in my own home. Too many of us do some combination of overdirecting, overprotecting, or over-involving ourselves in our kids' lives. We treat our kids like rare and precious botanical specimens and provide a deliberate, measured amount of care and feeding while running interference on all that might toughen and weather them. But humans need some degree of weathering in order to survive the larger challenges life will throw our way. Without experiencing the rougher spots of life, our kids become exquisite, like orchids, yet are incapable, sometimes terribly incapable, of thriving in the real world on their own. Why did parenting change from preparing our kids for life to protecting them from life, which means they're not prepared to live life on their own? And why do these problems I'm writing about seem rooted in the middle and upper middle classes? After all, parents care deeply about doing a good job and if we're fortunate enough to be middle- or upper-middle-class, we have the means—the time and disposable income—on our side to help us parent well. So, have we lost our sense of what parenting well actually entails?

And what of our own lives as parents? ("What life?" is a reasonable response.) We're frazzled. Worried. Empty. Our neighborhoods are photo-worthy, our food and wine are carefully paired, but with childhood feeling more and more like an achievement arms race, can we call what we and our children are living a "good life"? I think not. Our job is to monitor our kids' academic tasks and progress, schedule and supervise their activities, shuttle them everywhere, and offer an outpouring of praise along the way. Our kids' accomplishments are the measure of our own success and worth; that college bumper sticker on the rear of our car can be as much about our own sense of accomplishment as our kids'.

In the spring of 2013 I attended a board meeting for an organization that provides financial support to Palo Alto's public schools. In casual conversation afterward as the parents were taking one last piece of coffee cake and heading out into their day, a woman who knows of my work pulled me aside. "When did childhood get so stressful?" she pleaded with a faraway look. I put my hand on her shoulder as tears slowly filled her eyes. Another mother overheard and came toward us, nodding her head. Then she leaned in, asking me, "Do you know how many moms in our community are medicated for anxiety?" I didn't know the answer to either question. But a growing number of conversations like this with moms like these became another reason to write this book.

The dean in me may have been concerned about the development and prospects of young adults who had been overparented—and I think I've made better choices as a parent thanks to spending so much time with other people's young adults. But the parent in me has struggled with the same fears and pressures every other parent

faces, and, again, I understand that the systemic problem of overparenting is rooted in our worries about the world and about how our children will be successful in it without us. Still, we're doing harm. For our kids' sakes, and also for our own, we need to stop parenting from fear and bring a more healthy—a more wisely loving—approach back into our communities, schools, and homes. Through research woven together with real-life observations and commonsense advice, this book will show us how to raise our kids to become adults—and how to gather the courage to do so.

Have a good weekend!

Nibe nempelasonto emnandi!

Darrel Webb (*Headmaster*)

FROM THE JP HEAD

PARENT EVENINGS

Thank you for the wonderful turnout for all the Parent Information Evenings in the JP and the sense of community that St Peter's is known for. I wanted to share some of the salient points with you.

Primarily, we wish to provide rich, inquiry based learning opportunities for your child's success.

- A focus on Character Development
- Value-based teaching and learning
- Developing Critical Life Skills
- Continued high expectations of Core Skills
- Personalised

St Peter's is a FAMILY that helps grow young people, based on Christian values, for THEIR big futures. St Peter's provides more than a one-dimensional perspective on learning. We strive to enable children to get the most out of their childhood, whilst preparing them for tomorrow's complex world, by leveraging the power of AND not OR:

- Academic AND Sport AND Cultural
- Professional AND Informal
- Confidence AND Humility
- Responsibility AND Fun
- Individual Attention AND a sense of Community
- Heritage AND Forward Pioneering Thinking
- Truly South African AND World Class
- Resilient AND Nurturing

Our Core Values include:



- Respectful
- Responsible
- Honourable
- Resilient
- Compassionate
- Collaborative

PARKING

It is really important to follow the guidelines as far as parking at the JP school and walking your girls in. Please drive around the Girls School to the JP parking and at first, walk the girls in. If you are late and need to drop and go, the Chapel parking is an option.

N.B. You may not park on Newlands Field in the morning. This is only an option in exceptional cases e.g. the first school day of the year.

BACK TO SCHOOL PICNIC

I am looking forward to joining you on Newlands Field this evening, at the annual 'Back to School Picnic'. Braai facilities are also available. We will be setting up from 17:00. Both the Boys and Girls School are invited to join.

Heather Kissack (*JP Head*)

VALUE OF THE WEEK: RESPECT

Teaching children about character, and what it means to be a positive contributor in the world, is a valuable gift that we can give our children. Being intentional in the process will help our girls to better see the importance of developing qualities that will equip them for a world that is very different to the one in which we grew up. Society is not what it was, even a decade ago, and instilling good old-fashioned values in our girls, will ensure that they become adults who can reach their highest potential.

We will be introducing our *New Values* this year. Every two weeks, we will be focusing on a different value, starting with Respect.

WHAT IS RESPECT?

Honouring ourselves, our environment and other people and treating them with care and courtesy.

Treating someone or something as though it has value.

Teaching respect at home and at school

- ▶ Teach them powerful greetings
- ▶ Give them opportunities to interact appropriately
- ▶ Provide respect-based rules
- ▶ Regard online and social interactions as privileges
- ▶ Support the teacher and school at all times
- ▶ Follow protocol

The best way to teach respect is to show respect.

'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.'

Cara Eggett

(Director: Pastoral Care)



CIVVIES & HOT DOG DAY & CARTRIDGE COLLECTION FRIDAY, 2 FEBRUARY



For the privilege of wearing civvies on Friday, 2 February, please could each child bring in tinned food for Christ Church Children's Centre. This organisation is an orphanage, which looks after about 60 children in Hillbrow.

If you are available, and would like to help, please add your name to the list, which will be up on the front door of Reception (Senior Prep) and on the notice board (Junior Prep), from Monday, 29 January.

Belinda, Ellen & Victoria

(Hot Dog Day Co-ordinators)

**REMINDERS**

INDIVIDUAL MUSIC LESSONS - are still open for enrollment. The online application form can be accessed through the following link: <https://goo.gl/forms/jlP2qREK5dYOaUz32>. Lessons in Cello, Voice, Flute, Violin, Piano, Guitar, Ukulele, Drum Kit, Percussion, Clarinet, Trumpet and Saxophone are available. Pupils receive one lesson of thirty minutes duration per week, at R185 per thirty-minute lesson.

MEDICAL FORMS - Please remember to return the Medical Forms to the class teacher:

Medical Consent Form – Compulsory to return

Emergency Medical Form – **only if your child has an allergy**

These were sent to parents, via email, at the beginning of term, but can also be found on the Communicator:

Resources, BOYS/GIRLS: Medical

MOVE TO A NEW SCHOOL SOFTWARE ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM

We have started 2018 by transitioning a new school software administration system, called 'Engage.' As with most major changes, this has come with some challenges. One of the immediate challenges we have noticed is that some parents are not receiving communications via email due to the mail being flagged as spam on the receiving end. In order to address this, future communications will come from the following address:

StPetersPrep@stpeters.joburg

This term, we will also be checking and updating all email and contact numbers for parents. Forms will be sent home for you to check and adjust. These are to be returned to the class teacher. It is of utmost importance that we have the most up-to-date details should there be any emergency and we need to contact you.

Sean Porter (*Director: School Management System*)

ECO NEWS

As we hope, you will have noticed 140 of our indigenous trees on campus have been labelled. Our school is committed to educating our school community on the benefits of planting indigenous trees – especially in light of our current water crisis. Each tag has the scientific name, common name and both the isiZulu and Afrikaans names. A QR code can be scanned taking you to the *Plantza* website providing a host of additional information on plant description, distribution etc. Activities will be created for the boys and girls on campus to get them identifying and familiarizing themselves with our trees on campus. Please keep your eyes open and try to learn some of the names



BEKABEE RECYCLING

Recycling still remains a focus on campus. Every classroom has a recycling station for classroom waste and our focus is to get the boys and girls in a habit of making correct choices as to where to dispose of their rubbish. From the classrooms, our waste is cleared and taken down to our recycling station, which is serviced by Bekabee.

A full time Bekabee employee sorts through all the waste separating and sorting our waste into categories before it leaves the school. The old drop off points for home recycling have been removed from the car parks, but please feel free to drop off your home recycling at our recycling station at the bottom of Grief Road. For children to see recycling at home as well as at school helps build a new environmentally aware generation.

LADIES LUNCH**WEEK AHEAD**

Tuesday	2018/01/30	08:00:00	09:00:00	Class Reps Meeting	JP Artroom
Thursday	2018/02/01	18:30:00	20:00:00	<i>PA Meeting</i>	Mvukuzane Pavilion
Friday	2018/02/02	09:30:00	10:30:00	Hot Dog and Civvies Day (R35)	<i>Keys Pavilion</i>