

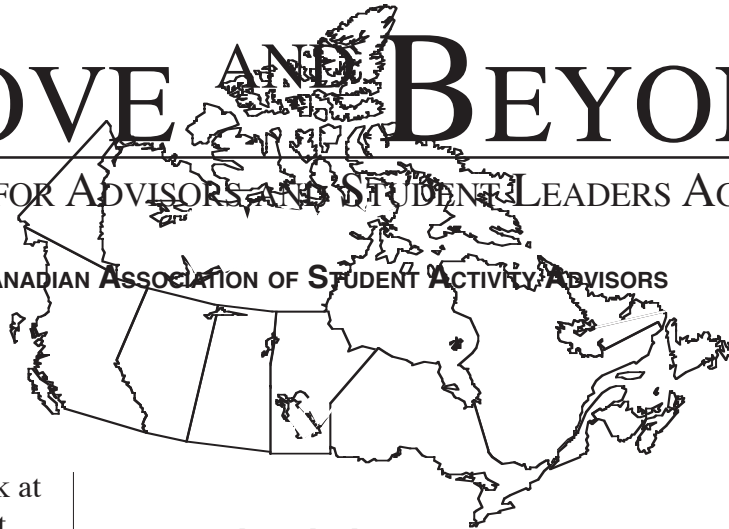
# ABOVE AND BEYOND

THE NEWSLETTER FOR ADVISORS AND STUDENT LEADERS ACROSS CANADA

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CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY ADVISORS

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## Healthy Questions

It is always healthy to look back at a successful year and ask why it happened that way. Taking the time to discover why things worked is a healthy checkup for your activity program. These are questions that can be asked by the outgoing leadership group and considered by the incoming student leaders as well.

- What are we doing that is working really well?
- What causes that to work so well?
- What would be the benefit to us of achieving our ultimate goal?
- What things can we do next to keep moving in that direction?
- What are we doing that is not receiving the support of our students? Why?
- What are we doing that is not receiving the support of our administration? Why?
- What are we ultimately trying to accomplish?

Taking the time to find the answers will guarantee that your program is operating on solid goals and programs, rather than the whims of the activity gods who can be fickle at the best of times.

## What skill will improve your leadership the most? —

I once asked a nutritionist what was the single thing I could do to improve my diet the most. What was the one single habit that would make the most difference? Her answer was, “Switch from white bread to brown bread.” This simple switch would make a major difference in one’s basic nutrition.

It sounds so simple. Switching to brown bread does not involve having to adopt a whole new regimen of eating different foods, going on a vitamin program, or taking up jogging. It is a slight change in your present behaviour that will bring about better health.

If you asked the same type of question about leadership, there is one simple answer as well. What single habit or skill would make the most difference in your ability as a leader? The answer: Learn how to set and implement goals. This will make an immediate and substantial difference.

We all set goals, but often they are the “white bread” type of goals. Learning the difference between saying, “I want to . . .” and actually practicing the basics behind goal setting will put more fibre into your goals and implementing them will be much easier. You don’t have to change your behaviour drastically to achieve this, but you do have to pay attention to the basics of goal setting.

The basic difference is that you must learn the difference between making wishes and setting goals. This is the slight change in your present behaviour that will make the most difference in your leadership skills. A goal is a concrete target with a plan on how to achieve it firmly in place. A wish is an airbreath dream that fills your want list.

Make the switch. Whole wheat goals will make the real improvement in your leadership diet.

*Dave Conlon*

CASAA

## **Graffiti Dance**

Line the gym walls with sheets of roll paper, so all walls in the dance area are covered. Tell students to wear old clothes (white t-shirts, old blue jeans work best), and the admission to the dance can consist of money and a marker. Their marker will be used throughout the dance. Students are welcome to bring yearbooks, senior memory books, or portfolios for people to sign and write on. Allow students to write graffiti on the walls (which are covered in roll paper), as well as write messages on each other's clothing. This gives them a chance to meet new people and get their yearbooks signed all at once! The shirts with their classmates' signatures on them are always very popular to wear to school and to football games! This is a great way to boost school spirit, and actually have fun doing it!

*Tonya Chmielewski*

## **Managing Change**

Facing change, a group divides into three factions — those for it, those against it and the fence sitters. Which group should you encourage?

Answer: Spend time with those who already favour the change.

Reason: Support those who favour the change. This group will then influence the fence sitters to accept the change. When this happens, the resisters will join in because they will see that change is inevitable. The resisters have not become stronger because they have not been confronted.

## **Recognition Ideas**

Imagine golfing all by yourself and sinking a hole-in-one. Your fantastic accomplishment means nothing if you can't share it with someone. A good school recognizes the efforts of staff and students and builds real school spirit through recognition. Here are some ways to recognize the people in your building whether they're over or under par.

### **Smile Mail**

Each Monday, staff members are given a postcard to mail to a student or a parent of a good student who deserves recognition for academic performance, good citizenship, improvement in some area, or just a smile. The emphasis is on trying to find something positive about every student during the year. Cards are turned in to the office on Friday and mailed.

### **Invisible Student**

Each student council member is to find 8 invisible students and send them a gram saying they're special.

### **Student Art**

Student art is set up in gallery format. Teachers sign their classes up for a tour of the art classes for any period of the day.

### **Dynamite Work**

To recognize someone who has done a great job, take a Pringles potato chip can, cover it in school colours and fill it with candy. Have a string coming out of a hole in the lid. Group efforts can be recognized by a bundle of sticks of dynamic candy!

### **Honour Roll Reception**

The administration and student council host an evening reception (or breakfast) for all honour roll students and their parents. A certificate is given to each member of the Honour Roll.

### **Attendance Sweepstakes**

Each week, one name will be chosen from all students in the school. A prize is awarded if that person had perfect attendance and no lates for the previous week. The prize is rolled over to the following week and added to that week's prize if the name selected did not have perfect attendance.

### **Positive Squeegee Kids**

One afternoon, go out into the teachers' parking lot and clean each windshield. Be sure to leave a note thanking them for their involvement, and sign the note.

### **MIMPS — Most Improved Student**

Find out which students have improved their overall average the most over two reporting cycles. Recognize their effort with a certificate.

## CD Cover Design

This assignment is designed to help a group or leadership class get to know each other. Each person will create and explain their own CD cover. The following materials can be provided: blank CD cover, construction paper, markers, glue, old magazines, song list, etc.

### Construction Criteria:

1. Select a name for the artist or group that represents the “Real You.”
2. Select a title and design for the CD cover that represents how others see you.
3. Select eight song titles—
  - a. One that best represents who you are.
  - b. One that represents your philosophy of life.
  - c. One that tells where you feel most comfortable and makes you feel good.
  - d. One that tells what you do well and would like to accomplish.
  - e. One that represents your family.
  - f. One that represents your goals/dreams in life.
  - g. One that represents the type of friend you are.
  - h. Your choice — explain

(These song titles can be actual songs or they can be invented titles. If they are real songs, they can be put together on a writable CD.)

4. Choose a producer—your most influential family member.
5. Choose an agent—your most influential non-family member.
6. List the six credits (individuals) who have helped you become who and what you are.
7. List your five best characteristics within the CD booklet.

Each person presents the CD cover to the class explaining the choices that he/she made. It is important to ask the class or group what they learned about themselves and others in the group. Also, consider why it is important for a leader to contemplate these things and share them with others. If there are real songs that have been recorded the presenter can select one and play it for the class.

*Tom Heethuis*

## Poster Questions

- Where do I find cheap paper?  
If you have a local newspaper, visit the office where it is published. Small papers will sell you end rolls of newsprint for a reasonable cost.
- How do I make neat lettering on mural sized posters?  
Use a type manipulation program on the computer to print out your message on a normal sheet of paper. Use a thermofax machine or a copier to transfer this message to an overhead. Project your letters onto your mural from an overhead and trace the lettering on by pencil. Paint in your letters and everyone will think you’re Mikey Angelo!
- How do I catch their eye?  
Think of locations in your school that have the highest traffic flow. The facing walls at the bottom of stairwells and T-junctions of hallways are most effective.
- What's the best size for a poster?  
Sometimes small is better. Think of the *Do Not Disturb* signs that are hung on hotel room doors. Make a series of posters that can hang on homeroom door knobs.
- What's a dynamic poster?  
Try using 3-D shapes and items that normally do not belong on a poster. You must compete with all of the material that students are bombarded with daily, but you can make it better than a beige wall of your school. Try putting a poster around a TV monitor and have a live camera hooked up so that the audience becomes part of the poster, or reverse this and have the poster *speak* to the people passing by in the hallway.

## **When You Disagree**

The next time you disagree with someone, keep these “is nots” in mind:

### **Hearing is not listening**

Many disputes begin—or get worse—because people hear what others say, but they’re not really listening. The three basics of good listening: Clear your mind of distractions. Concentrate on the words. Pay careful attention to the nonverbal gestures, including voice tone.

### **Acknowledging is not agreeing**

Use acknowledgment phrases to recognize others’ positions and feelings without agreeing with them. Examples: “I understand why you’re upset.” “If I’ve got this right, you believe we should ...” “That’s an interesting idea. Let’s look at it in more depth.”

### **Acknowledging is not yielding**

Once you acknowledge others’ views, it’s your turn to present yours. Offer constructive criticism and allow others to challenge you the way you challenged them. Possible approach: “I’ve listened to your views, and now I’d like you to hear what I have to say, OK? I doubt that plan will work, but here’s what we can do ...”

### **Compromising is not losing**

If you are able to reach an agreement, you have reached your objectives for this moment in time. Strong disagreements often stem from a difference in personalities rather than a real difference in goals. Keep the personal out of the negotiations and a compromise can be reached much more quickly.

## **Mission Impossible: The Spy who Tagged Me**

This two-day activity is similar to a gigantic, school-wide game of tag, only it involves no running and a lot of detective work.

Each participant, who signs up for the game and pays the \$1.00 fee to play, will be given the name and picture of another participant in the Mission Impossible event. This information is contained on a single mission card that each player receives when the Mission Impossible event begins. Each player’s mission is to find the person on the mission card and show the found person their picture, and say, “Mission accomplished!” Once this is done, they both must approach a cop (teacher) and have the cop sign the mission card as a witness. The found person must now hand over the mission card containing the name and picture of the person that they were looking for. This new card gives the successful catcher another mission to pursue.

The object of Mission Impossible is to track down and find as many people in the two-day period as possible, without being caught yourself. Once the event has begun, it will cost new participants \$2.00 to play. Those students who are caught can also rejoin the activity for \$2.00. The winner of Mission Impossible is the person who finds the most students (who has the most signed mission cards in their possession) at the end of the two-day period without being caught themselves.

Teachers receive a personalized police badge and are eligible to play in the teacher’s game of Mission Impossible that follows the students’ event. As cops, they are also asked to ensure the safety and success of the event. They are required to take mission cards away from any students observed not obeying the rules of the event. These confiscated mission cards are then returned to the Mission Impossible headquarters where they can be repurchased by others wishing to play.

The mission card pictures can be made from photocopies of the mug shot books that are used for yearbooks or done on a digital camera. Classes are not to be interrupted by players in the event, as the searching must take place during lunch and between periods. The event can be made harder by not including the picture of a participant on the mission card, but the time for the event must then be extended.

This is a great event to let the whole school act as spies and discover new people in your building that they haven’t met before.

*John Danger Thompson  
Preston High School*

## **Strong Individuals can become Strong Leaders** ———

Leaders get things accomplished by working with the people who support them. On the other hand, strong individuals get things done by themselves because they don't trust the people around them or don't know how to involve the people around them. The following tips can help a strong individual learn to be a leader with supporters.

### **Praise is powerful**

Praise people for the job they do. Many students and staff go through the school year without any recognition for the efforts they put into making things work. Often, a compliment is all they need to keep their momentum going. Unexpected praise is a powerful ego-booster and helps to create a positive atmosphere.

### **Emphasize good news**

When you share information with others, emphasize the positive and downplay the negative. People don't want to work with activities that always seem to have something wrong with them.

### **Be flexible**

Members should be encouraged to share their ideas. They will feel more a part of an event if their ideas were part of the planning process. Being the leader does not mean that you are supposed to come up with *all* of the ideas. In fact, if you are coming up with all the ideas, then you don't have supporters, you have passive participants who will influence the participants in your events.

### **Avoid the boo-birds**

You cannot demand that someone support you if they don't feel like it. Channel your energy into dealing with positive people. Just because you are the leader, doesn't mean that everyone will like you.

### **Keep your promises**

The leader must be punctual and keep appointments. You are setting the example for others to follow. If you don't follow your promises, others won't follow you.

### **People like personal attention**

Take an interest in who is helping you. Make time for people who need or want to talk to you. Once your supporters know that you are interested in who they are, they will be much more willing to be a supportive part of your team.

The success of a strong individual depends on the energy, time and skills of that individual. These are finite amounts. Good leaders will have success that is determined by what they can cause others to do. This infinite amount of energy, time and skills is dependent upon the strong leader making people feel comfortable in supporting the cause.

## **Eggsellent Fundraiser** ———

This activity can be done in a community to raise money and advertise a school event at the same time. Break up your neighbourhood into separate areas for small groups to cover. The individuals go to the first house and explain who you are and that you are doing a fundraiser. Ask them to please donate an egg. Thank them for their donation, and leave an advertisement for your upcoming event. Go to the next house and explain who you are and that you are doing a fundraiser. Ask them to buy the egg from you for a donation. Go to the next house and ask for an egg donation again and then continue on to sell it. Many times people will simply donate money without buying the egg, which is great, but you may want to switch your egg once in a while to keep it from getting scrambled. You can raise money and advertise by personal contact at the same time.

## **Trike Challenge Race**

It is difficult to find a challenge event that favours a junior group over a senior group. Seniors always seem to have more size, appetite and money than the Juniors in any school situation. This does not mean that the Juniors have less spirit, but the Seniors like to think so.

A trike race is one of the few challenge events that favours the smaller participant. Even though it looks easy, a large person finds the trike race a *very* difficult challenge—you just don't have to tell them that their size is a handicap.

## **Take your best shot!** \_\_\_\_\_

Our principal and the two VP's agreed to don full goalie equipment and stand in nets to face the students' best shots for our United Way charity drive. It was three shots for a buck and you could blast away at one, or take one shot per administrator. The beauty of it (for the goalies) was that the harder the students tried to shoot, the wilder the shots became. (However, there were a lot of shots off the facemask — hmmm . . . wonder why?) The person with the most goals won a school t-shirt. It was a good event to get the students participating in our campaign — also less messy but more sweaty than the usual pie-in-the-face event.

## **Vending Surprise**

Contact your machine vendors and have them staple or tape free dance tickets to a few packages of potato chips or pop cans and distribute them in the vending machines or at sports event's concession stands. This not only creates interest in the event but also increases sales!

## **Advance Tickets**

Always sell tickets in advance at a cheaper price (by one or two dollars) than what you sell them for at the door. Use coloured concert-style wristbands instead of tickets. This will act as additional word-of-mouth advertising for you when students ask the purchaser what the wristband is for. Temporary tattoos will work as advance tickets as well, and purchasers can become walking billboards for your event.

## **Fries with that?** \_\_\_\_\_

Question: We have a very small school and even though we have great turnout for dances, we still lose money. What can we do?

No matter what event or dance you run, it is important to have multiple streams of income. Many schools plan a successful main event, but have no backup source of revenue. A hundred years ago circus owners discovered that people would come to their circus and would be a perfect "captive" audience to buy more products. When you go to a circus, hockey game, or play, you are hit with a wave of people selling popcorn, pop, candy floss, ice cream, etc. Remember that "Would you like fries with that?" is not an attempt to satisfy your hunger. It is a method called cross selling that improves the bottom line each time you enter a fast food joint.

Adopt the same plan of profit diversification. Buy a couple cases of pop, a few bags of ice and a plastic garbage can. Sell the cans for \$1 and you'll make a great profit. Other products in the same ice bucket can be bottles of water or juice. Popcorn is 99% profit, and people buy it just because of the smell that hits them when they walk in. Why else would movie theaters have their popcorn machines going as you walk into the show? Students love to buy glow sticks and bracelets at dances and the great thing is that they only last for one dance and you can sell to the same people at the next dance.

Does it work? You bet. Is it work? Yes it is. But 100 kids at a dance buying \$1 to \$2 worth of goodies after they have paid their admission can add up. It could seriously put a dent in any loss.

Remember that professional companies are more than happy to HELP you be a success. Think about it. If you lose money, you are not likely to have them back. Their success comes from your success. They make their money on repeat business. Plus, when you are happy, you are very likely to recommend the services of this company to another school.

Don't forget to ask. When you book something, ask the company "What can we do to make this the most successful event possible?" If they are good at what they do, they will be delighted to assist you. If you stump them with that question, then they probably won't be worth getting.

Finally, remember that you sometimes will have a loss while building a foundation. Not everyone will take a risk on going to the show the first time, but if you have a successful event the positive word in the hallways the next day will generate more people through the door next time.

*Adapted from a message posted on the CASAA email mailing list by Blair Robertson. Blair Robertson is a hypnotist who performs for school audiences across Canada. He is interested in your school making a profit because that makes him a living.*

*[www.blairrobertson.com](http://www.blairrobertson.com)*

## Spring into Fall

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Within the comfort of our school surroundings, we sometimes forget how intimidating the transition from junior high to senior high can be. School spirit, the by-product of successful student leadership, is attained when students feel connected to school. There is no time like the present to connect with the students arriving in September for the first time. At our school, we have adopted a few strategies that we'd like to share.

- Visit the feeder schools in the spring of the previous year. Book a period with each incoming class and break them into small groups that will rotate through stations you have set up. Some station suggestions are: Students' Council, theme weeks, special events, clubs and activities, athletics, academics, dances etc. Each station talks to the students, fields questions and shows the photographic records we maintain throughout the year on laminated posters. We have a video yearbook, so one of the stations is a video presentation of the most recent events at our school.
- Run elections in the feeder schools for the incoming class. At the Students' Council table, we hand out applications to students wishing to run for a grade 10 representative position. We return to collect applications, set the campaign and election dates and return with ballots on voting day. The advantages we have found with this procedure are:
  1. Each junior high has a representative on the high school council.
  2. It is a spirited event for the junior high graduating class.
  3. You have a full council in place for a summer retreat.
- After you have visited the feeder schools, hold a grade nine orientation day for all schools before course selection day. School is cancelled for our students so that the incoming students have the building to themselves. Our administration looks after the morning sessions; teachers present an overview of classes. Students' Council takes over at noon, providing a BBQ for all students. The afternoon is hosted by large number of our students who take the students on a tour of the school (scavenger hunts work) and then to the gym for a pep rally where we highlight some of our more successful teams, have contests, get them to do competitive cheers etc.
- After these two events, invite the feeder schools to your upcoming dance. We have already informed them of this invitation during our visit to their school and again during orientation day. Given the appeal of the show "Who wants to be a millionaire?" this year during our pep rally we played "Who wants to win a dance ticket?". Questions were based on a general knowledge of our school.
- In the second week of September, we hold a Grade 10 Olympics. This has been pumped at the previous events. It consists of two days of zany activities (not of the humiliating kind; remember the goal is to make them feel good about your school). Students compete in groups of 10. The third day is Grade 10 Olympic Ceremonies. We have music, a BBQ for all students 10-12 (The team leaders are grade 11 and 12 students. The event is a big tradition and draws a lot of spectators), and Olympic-like medals are given to the 1st and 2nd place winners as well as the team with the most spirit.

We have been told by the feeder schools and by parents that these events have greatly reduced the fear students have about coming to high school.

*Tam Fawcett  
Sackville High School, NS  
Future Hosts of CSLC 2001*

## Quotes

How do they train killer whales to jump over the rope at Sea World? Do they hang a rope 20 feet over the pool and then shout to the whale, "Up, up, up!" No. They start with the rope under the water. When the whale swims over the rope, it gets rewarded. Then the rope is gradually raised. Each time the whale swims over it, again, a reward is given. How often do you give a "reward" to those with whom you work? Only when the final goal is reached or do you give praise along the way as incremental progress is made?

*Ken Blanchard*

Two heads are better than one only if they contain different opinions.

*Kenneth Kaye*

I like my tailor. He takes my measurements anew each time he sees me, whereas others expect me to fit old measurements.

*G.B. Shaw*

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.

*Mahatma Gandhi*

I can live for two months on a good compliment.

*Mark Twain*

Wearing the same shirts doesn't make you a team.

*Buchholz and Roth*

Gettin' good players is easy. Gettin' 'em to play together is the hard part.

*Casey Stengel*

## Leaders for Good

In response to recent increasing violence in some Victoria area secondary schools, a group of law enforcement personnel are undertaking a violence prevention project. Called "Rock Solid" after the popular Victoria Shamrocks lacrosse champions, the goal of the program is to promote a safer school environment where kids are not afraid or concerned about their safety when attending school. The law enforcement personnel were concerned with the escalation in both the amount and the intensity of youth violence.

The clear message of Rock Solid is not to be intimidated by bullying or threats and to report violence, petty thefts or talk of gang fights. Tom Woods is one of the presenters, and he doesn't mince words when it comes to bullies. "I have no tolerance whatsoever for these people. They are cowards who infuriate me." He makes it clear that there is absolutely no evidence that people who report crimes experience retribution by the criminals involved. He says that this is a myth that only gives the criminals more power.

He takes on the prevalent teen anti-snitch attitude with his statement, "There is no such thing as a rat! The criminals are the cowards, not those who call the police on them!"

After attending Tom's presentation, I was reminded of the following quote by Edmund Burke:

*The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.*

Students must learn that they have the power to do good by doing something against violence. Look to your local community policing groups for more information and support. This is an excellent project for student leaders to make a positive impact on peers and their community. Students presenting to students is a very powerful tool against the present attitudes towards violence and reporting crimes.

(A *Rock Solid* presentation package and video is being prepared. For more information in British Columbia, call 250.386.7625)

*Dave Conlon*

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