

# ABOVE AND BEYOND

THE NEWSLETTER FOR ADVISORS AND STUDENT LEADERS ACROSS CANADA

Vol. 5 No. 2

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY ADVISORS

Winter 2001–2002

## CSLC 2002

The 18th Annual CSLC makes its way back to Saskatchewan!

The leadership conference theme is: **Students • Putting • Ideas • Resources • Imagination • Together** in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Oct 1st - 5th, 2002. Conference keynote speakers will include Mark Tewksbury, Mark Scharenbroich and Tamara Hall. For the first time ever, the CSLC will also feature “The Journey”, an extensive adventure into team building with Rick Matishak.

Saskatoon high schools, heritage sites and local venues will enhance the aesthetic and historic aspects of the week. A variety show, big band night, multi-cultural evening and a stop at a local farm will keep delegates busy between workshops. Bring your toques, umbrellas and maybe some sunscreen because anything can happen in Saskatchewan!

The week begins with the official CSLC 2002 Pre-Conference Tour. See the enclosed conference brochure for more details, or send a request for more information. You will find us at:

<http://schools.spsd.sk.ca/CSLC/>

or contact us at:

[CSLC2002@sbe.saskatoon.sk.ca](mailto:CSLC2002@sbe.saskatoon.sk.ca)

Register online in February 2002.

## Why not?

“I’ve got a great new idea: I learned about it at the conference last week!”

As a beginning advisor, these can be the most dreaded words, but they shouldn’t be. Some experienced advisors have a tough time with them as well because they involve a risk factor.

Instinctively, as an advisor, you conjure up protective responses:

I am not totally comfortable with this.

We can’t afford this.

Our administration won’t support that.

It may be workable at other schools, but here?

I don’t understand how this works?

Stop right there!

Whatever the idea is, take the time to listen and try to make it work. After all, the best ideas are shared, modified, adapted and improved.

The key to this situation is knowing your students, staff, facility and yourself. The reality is that you can make most events happen in most schools. There are events that even the most experienced advisors won’t touch, but these are few and far between.

Try listening and starting your response with the “why not” question. It probably should be: “Well, I don’t see why not!” Gather more information, draw in the necessary people, and develop a plan. We are involved in activities at the secondary level to make good things happen; not to stifle enthusiasm. The process of modifying, adapting and enhancing is learning through student activities.

So, the next time your school learns about a new event start with “Why not!” I’ll bet you’ll have fun working and learning with your students through the process of making new things happen.

*John Thompson*  
CASAA President

CASAA

## Recognition Rules

- Recognition should spotlight little achievements — not always earth shaking accomplishments; attempt to highlight or showcase participation, involvement, and the little everyday happenings of the adults and support staff who help make the school a great place to be.
- Recognition should be visible and tangible. Written notes and not just a quick thanks; donuts and coffee, or simply decorate the faculty room. Something that can be displayed with pride - like a certificate, a desk set, a note pad, a photograph, or a school coffee mug makes a tangible difference.
- Recognition should be personalized. All notes and invitations should be signed by one or more students on behalf of the group. Hand write rather than just computerize. Deliver the recognition in person rather than using the school mail boxes.
- Thank you and holiday notes should always let the recipient know that the note was written especially for them. A quick remembrance of something they did or said should be included. Remember the simple truth in that old saying, “the sooner you send the thank you note the shorter it can be.”

*Peter Cahn*  
*www.DifferenceMakers.com*

## Successfully Smashing Apathy

Convincing some groups in your school to participate in spirit events is almost impossible. This apparent apathy occurs because these groups *choose* to be outside of the activities that you plan, and this choice gives them power and status as *the* outsider group. The key to attracting these outsiders is to provide an event that meets with their idea of spirited participation. These groups will participate; you just have to find an activity that will attract them as an audience or as willing participants.

A car smash is an event that will definitely draw the outsider groups to participation in a spirit event. It is relatively easy to set up, and the activity provides a stage for all students to show their spirit and participation. Swinging a heavy sledge is much harder than it looks, and modern cars are amazingly resilient to even the most smashing of blows. Support will be given to any person no matter what group they are from who makes progress in demolishing the car. Good spirit activities are designed to draw all the groups in your school together, and the car smash will give them a focus for safe mayhem and fun.

### Setup

A junker can be towed to a pavement spot at your school from a local wrecking yard or donated by someone willing to let their old rust bucket go out in a flurry of blows. Be sure to remove all windows, loose metal and fluids for safety.

All participants should wear safety glasses and only one person is allowed at a time. This is for safety reasons and also allows the participants to enjoy the stage alone for a minute or two.

Sledge hammers have wooden handles that will snap when a miss-swing occurs. This happens when participants try to take out a support post or door handle. Strengthen the sledge’s handle by duct taping (flat) metal rods to the area near the head of the hammer.

Charge a loonie for a minute of swinging or a toonie for three minutes. It seems like a short time, but when you take on an automobile with a sledge you will find that three minutes will tire even the most ardent swingers and provide a very quiet afternoon for your administration as the troublemakers are too tired to put up a fight.

Ensure that when your car-cass is towed away that the area where it met its final demise is cleared and swept of all debris.

Your event will be successful, because you are providing a common activity that interests *all* the students in your school either as participants or as an audience. This is the true key to attracting the outsiders and smashing apathy in your school.

*Dave Conlon*

## Creating Confidence

Confidence is not a tangible substance, yet it is something that can change attitudes, create opportunities and make you more powerful than you believe yourself to be. A lack of confidence turns a capable person into a nervous wreck and destroys good planning and careful organization. It causes groups to second guess themselves and spend more energy worrying than they spend working. Confidence, or a lack of it can reside within an individual, a committee or a whole activity program.

Thoughts can literally change the way you feel, changing the way other students perceive you and your group, based on the level of confidence you have. Unfortunately, many negative thoughts are generated by things that have no bearing on the success or failure of your activity or event.

With confidence, an unknown student of twelve years of age, named Craig Kielburger, can make a profound effect upon child labour in the world. Small clubs can raise thousands of dollars for relief aid in countries affected by famine or natural disasters. Minority groups can assert their rights in the face of ridicule, abuse and even death. Confidence wins battles and wars.

Recall the words of Winston Churchill: “We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and the oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be. We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills, we shall never surrender.” The words and confidence behind them stiffened the backbone of the British and gave them a weapon that was stronger than any bullet or tank.

A lack of confidence comes from fear of the unknown, anxiety, a lack of understanding and knowledge. Confidence comes from preparation, knowledge, practice and a sense of humour—being able to take a risk without taking yourself too seriously.

Eleanor Roosevelt said, “You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing which you think you cannot do.”

### How do you develop more confidence?

- **Emphasize strengths.** Everyone has strengths in certain areas of their life. Capitalize on them, enhance them, hone them and recognize the value you can give to others by sharing those strengths.

- **Act confident.** A change in your posture can create a change in attitude. Stand tall and walk with confidence and authority. This will create a confident aura about you.
- **Don't admit that you're nervous.** Self-talk can be defeating because it creates thoughts which challenge your abilities.
- **Get enough rest and exercise.** It's very hard to be confident when you're exhausted. Build your energy levels.
- **Take risks.** Once you know what they are, face up to the things you fear and confidence will grow. Be willing to make mistakes, get your knees scraped and come back for more. Ask yourself, what is the worst thing that can happen if you take that action?
- **Have a purpose beyond yourself.** If you think about the value of your contributions to the school, the service you can provide to change the atmosphere, and forget about yourself completely, then you can persevere and be confident.

According to Zig Ziglar, “Confidence is: Going after Moby Dick in a rowboat, and taking the tartar sauce with you. A Bullfighter who goes in the ring with mustard on his sword.”

*Wayne Vanwyck  
This article first appeared in  
Exchange Magazine for Business*

## Mascot Maximi

We have a house system: 6 houses of about 250 students each, who are part of 9 different teacher advisor groups. In our infinite quest to find ways to get more kids involved, we purchased six mascots to represent each of our houses. This is where we only had a vague idea about what we were doing but forged on into the fog. In over 20 years of STUCO advising I can tell you the idea of multiple mascots never once crossed my mind. The interaction between these six characters is unbelievable. For example, they have a routine where, along with their escorts, they have a twist contest at half-time in a basketball game. They get partners from the crowd—mom, dad, other students—and they simply have a twist contest. It is so simple, but you should see the crowd reaction. The reactions to these six characters along with the other parts of the program are beyond our wildest imagination.

Every single school has spirit, it is simply a question of digging it up and showing it off, yes it is most certainly is there! Our mascots are just one tool that has helped us to do the mining, and what a tool! The mascot idea would never have happened except that there are enough of us that focus on possibilities and really never spend much time concerned with what some believe can not happen.

Remember the person who said that luck is courage meeting opportunity!

*Dave Garvie*

*J. G. Diefenbaker High School*

## Getting Discussion Going

Activity based learning is a great way to make students actively aware of a concept or reality. However, getting people to talk after an activity lesson has always been one of the toughest parts of leading the discussion that must follow for true learning to occur. The following technique is a great way to generate input from people who normally say very little.

Take pieces of bristol board or 4 x 6 cards, and print feeling words on them with marker pen. Print one feeling word per card. After the activity has been completed, spread these cards on the floor or a table. Direct the participants to look over the words and choose the card that most closely explains the feelings that they experienced during the activity. Have duplicates of certain feelings available, if you think that many students might have shared the same feeling. They will have experienced more than one feeling during the activity, so direct them to choose a card that is left which most closely describes a feeling they had. If you have a small enough group or there are a lot of feeling cards left after they all make their first choice, offer to let them make an additional choice.

Once they have chosen their cards, have the participants sit down. When everyone has been seated, have them share their cards with the group. During the sharing, have them explain why they chose that particular feeling card and what happened during the activity to make them feel that way.

The feeling card acts as a crutch that allows them to hide behind the paper as if it is the paper talking rather than them. By choosing the card, they have already made their decision about what they want to talk about. This is an especially good tool when dealing with younger kids who have trouble verbalizing or older groups who don't discuss easily.

A list of feeling words can be generated by those that your students frequently use, but the following are a start:

excited	mixed up	challenged	bossy	terrible
angry	emotional	organized	surprised	relaxed
determined	stupid	powerful	disappointed	calm
proud	hurt	confused	sad	disagreeable
embarrassed	irritated	defeated	scared	nervous
important	lazy	ignored	frustrated	threatened
anxious	silly	cheerful	picked on	quarrelsome
effective	bored	flexible	overwhelmed	disoriented
restless	worried	helpless	infuriated	lost
intelligent	lonely	bitter	exhausted	puzzled
pressured	happy	tense	eager	

This article is from the introduction to *More Activities that Teach* by Tom Jackson. This resource is available from CASAA.

## Why Class Competitions?

With today's families often disjointed and scattered, we do not always feel we have that place to "belong" that we as humans so desperately need. We have experienced the negative power of the "need to belong" in the gang movement and in the actions of two students at Columbine High School. Fostering belonging in a positive way is difficult at best. Personal motivation, the reason for action, is tied up not only in our self-esteem and self-image, but also in our sense of community or belonging. Providing that sense of positive belonging is essential to a successful school. Class competitions can be tools for building that belonging and creating a positive sense of *esprit*.

Individuals seek linkage with others in small groups of like-minded individuals and form themselves into cliques. The most natural link is based on age or social grouping, and common interests. So schools end up with sometimes hundreds of small groups working for their own benefit and for their own special interest. ( i.e. band, newspaper, dance team, cheerleaders, "gothic's," "skaters," ) Bringing these groups together in positive ways to accomplish things for the greater good is challenging. The one common identity that all students can link to however, is their year. Feelings toward their class definitely effect and affect their interaction with "the school" and school in general.

Studies repeatedly reveal that one of the most important traits for success in this century will be the ability to be a good "team player." Class competitions can offer an excellent means for promoting that concept. They provide a *reason* to come together and to work together. While athletics also teaches many of the lessons available in Class Competitions, many of our students are not involved in athletics. Well-designed class competitions do not require athletic ability, but a wide range of skills and abilities. The smallest students can help their team be winners as well as the students who can balance the most cotton balls on a spoon or what ever the activity. Any student, not just the athletically talented can experience the lessons of being on a winning or a losing team.

Taking time with students to process the feelings of failing and/or winning can and should be a major focus of the overall competition. Carefully designed competitions can provide an opportunity for each class and therefore each individual, to experience both those sides of life in a safe environment. The competitions need to be structured so that each class has a good chance of winning at least one or two of the events and the schedule of activities needs to be flexible enough to make sure it can be tweaked to insure that no class "runs away with" the competition. A close contest will prevent any class from becoming disenchanted and mentally dropping out.

Without class competition, a school deprives itself of tools to help boost

group identity, and individual esteem. Being a member of a "winning" group lifts the entire group. Class competitions provide the educator with an opportunity to provide each team with the feelings associated with accomplishment. It further provides the opportunity to process the feelings that go with "falling short." The lessons learned on the team about handling defeat and failure can be less painful and very valuable to the socialization process. It is easier to be objective about a "we failed" than an "I failed" and handling failure is an important part of our social education.

What good is a competition if it has no winner? How do we teach the lessons of both gracious winning and thoughtful losing without wining and losing? The "class of the year" competition provides that vehicle. The real benefit of class competition comes: when winning homerooms come together to become winning "Spartans" or whatever their mascot might be; when everyone feels good about the competition and the efforts they put forth and when the power of the group identity is transferred from the class to the school, from the school to the community, and from the community to the country.

The best guidelines for such competitions are that each event needs to be three things: fun, fast and fair. When they are, the results will be good for everyone.

Mike Smith

[www.differencemakers.com](http://www.differencemakers.com)

## Class Competitions

### Refrigerator Box Relay

Get a large box for each team. Cut a 2" x 6" eye hole in each box. Six team members participate in this relay. At the whistle, team-mates place the box over the head and body of the first participant so he/she can walk/run thirty feet to the second competitor. The team-mates then assist the first person out of the box and the second person into the box. And so on...

### Tarp Roll

Divide the students into bleacher sections by class. Place a long roll of plastic tarp in the hands of the students sitting in the first row of bleachers. The class must successfully unroll the tarp all the way to the top of the bleachers, then re-roll it back down. The first team to hold the re-rolled tarp in the first bleacher row wins! (You can use big balloons or balls and pass them up the bleachers or through the rows as a competition also)

### Marble Transfer

Six students per class, three boys, three girls. Participants take off one shoe. At the signal, the first competitor runs thirty feet to a pie tin that has a marble in it. He then runs picks the marble up with his toes and transfers it to a jar that is six feet away. Then he runs back and tags his team-mate who does the same thing. If the participant drops his marble while picking it up, he is allowed to pick it up again with his toes. As soon as someone has deposited a marble in the jar, a judge drops a fresh marble in the pie tin for the next participant. How many marbles can the teams transfer in three minutes?

## Counting on Leaders

Working together in a group is an effective way to get a project completed. However, students must realize that working together is difficult even when people are *trying* to work together. Student leaders have been told to work with their groups or committees, but they must learn effective strategies for working with groups that seem to be pulling in different directions at the same time.

**Time required:** 10 minutes

**Materials needed:** A group of fifteen or less. Make more groups if the initial group is larger.

**Activity:** Explain to the group that they are to count out loud from 1 to 20 in consecutive order with a single person saying each number. As a group they cannot discuss strategy on how to accomplish this. They cannot point or direct people to say a number. Each person must say at least one number. If your group is small enough, they will need to say more than one number and they may not say two numbers in consecutive order. The group must not just count in order, but they must work together. If anyone says the same number as someone else at the same time, the group must begin at the number one again. (Increase the difficulty by telling them to close their eyes when the counting begins.)

### Discussion:

1. What made this activity a challenge?
2. What strategies were used to attempt to solve the challenge?
3. What happened when the group was unsuccessful with one strategy?
4. What was the most effective strategy? Why?
5. What makes it difficult to work with other people even when you have the same goal and strategy in mind?
6. What can a person do to make a group more successful?

This activity is from the resource, *FOCUS: 36 Ten Minute Lesson Plans*, which is now available through CASAA.

### Three precepts for leadership and life:

1. Never be afraid of something because it is new.
2. Never discard something simply because it is old.
3. Measure your life not by what you get, but by what you give.

*T.C. Tommy Douglas*

## **What to do? How do we decide?**

With leadership students, it is often difficult to decide what activities the group should attempt. Strong personalities can dominate meetings and direct their agendas, while the group may quietly feel differently about what they want to do. The following process allows for group brainstorming and input and can be used in many different situations.

Give each participant four blank cards and instruct them to fill in four different activities that they would like to see run by the leadership group this year. If the activity is new, a brief description of the activity should be added. Give them about three to five minutes to complete the writing, then collect the cards, shuffle them, and randomly deal three cards to each student leader. (Note: If desired, the advisor can make up four cards of her own, but they should be unacceptable with the types of activities normally presented.)

Ask everyone to read the cards they just received, and then to arrange them in order of personal preference.

Place the extra cards on the table and allow participants to replace the cards in their hand that they do not like. Next, ask them to exchange cards with each other. They must exchange at least one card.

After about three minutes, form them into teams and ask each team to select the three cards they like the best. Give them time to choose, then have them describe the activities that they have selected.

The random nature of this activity allows people to speak for activities that they did not pick, yet would like to support. It takes the power of the personality away from the decision making process and lets the group select the ones that are important to them.

## **Romeo and Juliet Activity**

This activity should take place over two days, any two days around Valentine's Day. The first day, give all the boys little construction paper hearts. Then tell the boys they are not allowed to speak to girls, if they want to keep their hearts. The girls will try to get the boys to speak. When a girl succeeds, the boy who spoke must surrender his heart to her. The girl with the most hearts at the end of the day is crowned Juliet.

The next day, the activity starts over, with the girls wearing the hearts (of a different colour) and the boys trying to get them to speak. The winner is crowned Romeo. The prize can be anything, for example : a free lunch for two at the cafeteria or a nearby restaurant, or even a box of Valentine chocolates.

*Gabrielle McLaughlin  
from the CASAA listserv*

## **Procrastination Inflation Demonstration**

Time is an intangible quality that is the most important element in getting things done. When students can be made aware of the size of time and its effects on a project, they may be able to deflate their inclination towards procrastination.

Try this demonstration: Take a balloon and have a student blow one short breath into it. Identify the partially inflated balloon as the "activity that needs to be done." Now, have the student blow one full breath of "time" into the balloon. This time can be identified as one hour, one day, or one week depending on the project. Have the student blow a second breath of "time" into the balloon. Observe and identify what is happening. The "activity that needs to be done" had a certain amount of time inside it that had to be expended (expelled), but as time passes the "activity" appears larger and larger. When things are left to the last minute of time, the amount of time that is needed to be expended is much larger than that amount that could have been expended earlier.

If you can show your student leaders that procrastination time inflates the size of any project that they attempt, they may be able to get to work earlier and save themselves time in the end. After this lesson, have a few balloons available in the office, and when someone appears to be procrastinating, simply ask them to inflate a balloon for you. The unspoken lesson often works better than the lecture.

*Dave Conlon*

## Quotes

Everybody has inside him or her a piece of the good news. The good news is that you don't know how great you can be! What you can accomplish! And what your potential is!

*Anne Frank*

To build may be the slow and laborious task of many years. To destroy may be the thoughtless act of a single day.

*Sir Winston Churchill*

The game of life is not so much in holding a good hand as playing a poor hand well.

*H.T. Leslie*

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.

*Martin Luther King Jr.*

There is no experience better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.

*John Andrew Holmer*

Be the change you want to see in the world.

*Gandhi*

It is not selfishness to live as you see fit. Selfishness is insisting that other people live as you see fit.

*Anthony De Mello*

Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadow.

*Helen Keller*

## Goal Setting

It is very difficult to convince people of the importance of goal setting when everything is going their way. The wind is at their back and they seem to be accomplishing things with the greatest of ease. These people have set some goals either consciously or sub-consciously, and life has conspired to make this trip very easy.

The normal situation in life occurs when people don't achieve their desires easily, and this is where a goal setting process is most important. The best analogy for this is from sailing. Those people who achieve their goals easily are lucky to be sailing in the same direction that the wind is blowing. With very little effort, they make a few minor adjustments but arrive on course at their destination.

The beauty of sailing is that you can achieve your destination even when the wind is blowing against you. All you have to do is realize that you can reach your destination by a series of small steps called tacks. Instead of pointing your sailboat directly at your destination, you point your boat to the right or left of it. This will allow you to zig and zag your way to your destination. Once you have made your first small zig of your trip you assess how far you have come and then you adjust your sails and zag the other way. The final destination is always in mind but never directly aimed for. Some trips only need a few zigs and zags, while others will demand many adjustments always keeping the end in sight.

It is amazing to watch a regatta and observe sailboats racing against the wind. Under the same conditions, many different paths can be chosen and even amongst those boats who choose the same path, different results are achieved. The results depend upon the skill, experience and choices made by the sailors. The same happens in life. The more experienced you are at goal setting, the better you will become at it. Many different choices are made, and the choices themselves can dictate how long you can be on that leg of your journey. However, if you see the end of the race as the culmination of a series of small tacks, you will reach your goal no matter which way the wind is blowing.

*Dave Conlon*

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