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Magazine EDUCATION

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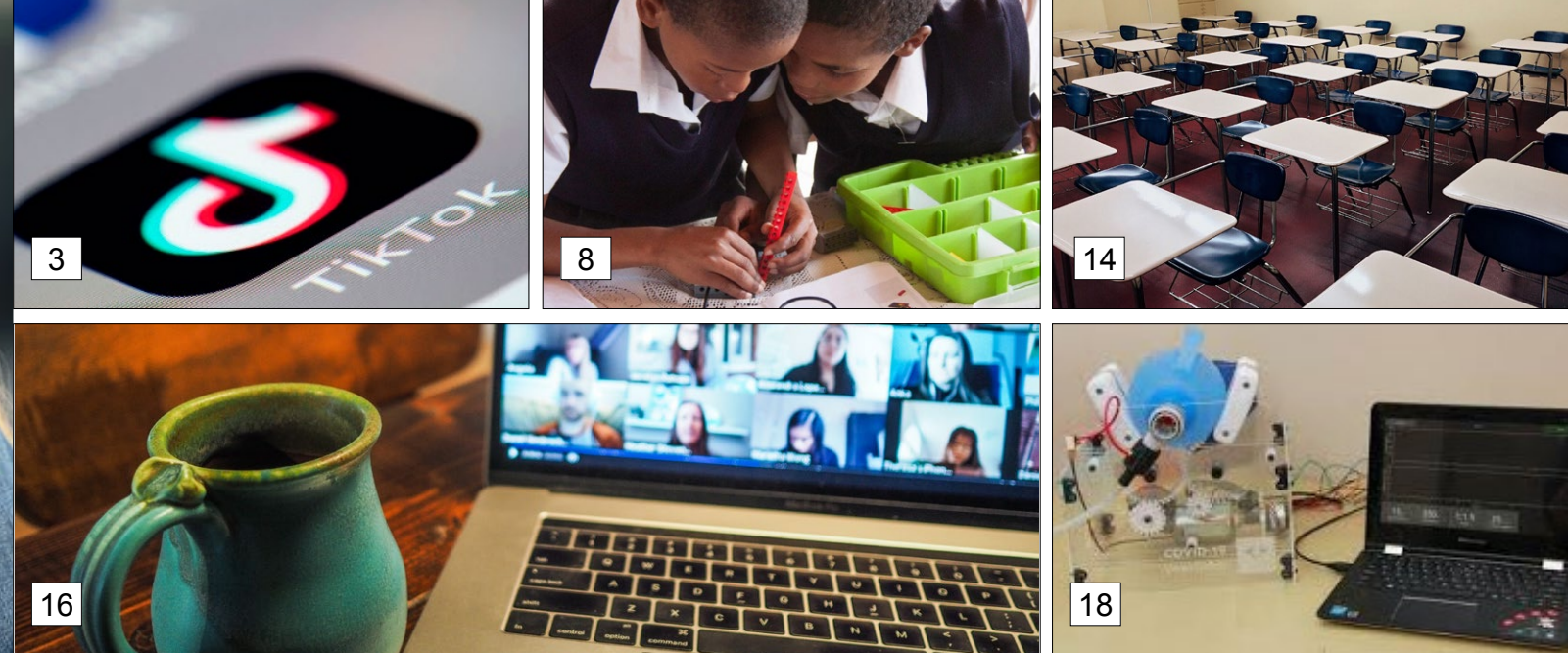
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Editor

Janos Bozsik

Contributors

- Jan Hnizdo – CEO of Teraco
- Helga van Wyk – Project Lead of the TVET Campus Connectivity Project
- Garth Scholtz – SABEN general manager
- Dean McCoubrey – digital lifeskills expert
- Wonga Ntshinga – Senior Head of Programme: Faculty of ICT at The IIE
- Quinton Mulder – Academic Development Coordinator at ADvTECH Schools
- Christopher Seewald – Head of Technology and Information Technology at ADvTECH's Pecanwood College
- Connie Kim – school principal of Hong Kong International School (HKIS)
- Professor Tshilidzi Marwala – UJ Vice-Chancellor and Principal

Correspondence and enquiries

themightypen@vodamail.co.za
082 940 3771

Advertising and publicity

marketing@themightypen.co.za

Production, design and layout

VLC WorX

Website

www.themightypen.co.za

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Editor's column

Is it 'Open Sesame' ... or Pandora's Box?

Only time, and prudent caution, will tell. We apologise for the late distribution of the magazine, but everything is on track now. We released two combined issues and the adverts of each single month is represented in the editions.

There have been mixed reactions to the basic education department's phased reopening plan. Unions and some community sectors are against the reopening. They say the department is not complying with occupational health and safety regulations.

Education specialist Professor Mary Metcalfe said that reopening schools amid the COVID-19 pandemic is going to require decision-makers to take collective and personal responsibility. "I think that what we all need to understand is that this virus is going to be with us for the next couple of years," she said.

Unions have cautioned against rushing teachers and pupils back to school. They say the agreed date for the return of management teams is 18 June, but the department wants schooling to resume at the beginning of next month.

The Federation of Governing Bodies of South African Schools called on the department to prioritise the safety of pupils when making decisions to reopen schools.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) together with provinces has prepared online and broadcast support resources comprising subject content and a focus on Grade 12 learners and the promotion of reading for all the grades.

The department is working closely with key Partners to coordinate and make available content tailored to support our learners' educational and health needs during this time. The DBE website has been updated with current and relevant content inclusive of reading resources and websites.

The DBE has postponed the May/June Amended Senior Certificate (old matric) and National Senior Certificate Examination. This is the matric examination which was to be written by more than 350 000 part-time candidates who include those who did not meet the pass requirements in the 2019 final exams, as well as those who sought to rewrite to improve their marks.

The FREE STEM Lockdown Digital School has expanded into community television in order to reach an even bigger audience. It started on 21 April 2020 and the COVID-19 learner support programme is available on two DSTV channels; 1KZN (261) and Soweto TV (251) to increase access.

When a district moves to Level 3 of the strategy, then the reintegration of the next group of learners to return to schools located in that district will take place.

A final note on school fees, where parents become unemployed or it becomes unreasonably difficult for them to pay their school fees, they may rely on the contractual principle of supervening impossibility of performance.

Yours in education safety

Janos Bozsik
Editor

How do SA kids see #Coronavirus in a TikTok and Instagram-based world?

SA's Digital Life Skills experts offer 7 key tips for parents

As Covid-19 has exploded from a distant reality in South Africa to a global pandemic, with increasing local cases of the virus, we can count ourselves lucky to have almost instant access to information, education and updates on the status of disease. However, the sheer volume of information – fact based or hysteria-driven – can be overwhelming, even for adults. What does this information and the adults' concern look like to our kids, and how are they consuming information on apps like TikTok, Instagram, or Snapchat?

SA's leading digital life skills expert, Dean McCoubrey, whose company MySocialLife teaches an 8-module social media program in SA schools, explains that the skill of *critical thinking* – the ability to question what may be true or false, safe or dangerous, right or wrong – is a key life skill in an explosive world of self-publishing, fake news, and cyberbullying. Consider how much time some teens (and even pre-teens spend online), what is interpreted and then discussed at school, irrespective of whether it may be fake news. Early cases of the virus have seen online hate and memes on some apps towards those with the virus.

Children and teens need to be guided about how to choose what content they consume about the disease, in addition to ongoing engagement with the adults they trust. Schools and parents often overlook the source of their children's news.

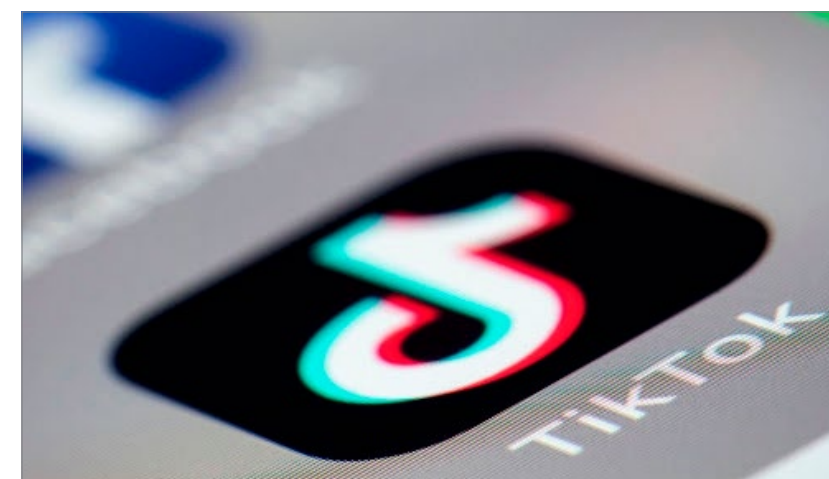
"We've got more access to information about Covid-19 thanks to the internet and social media than we've had for any other global epidemics such as SARS, MERS and the various Ebola outbreaks, which is helping to manage and treat it," McCoubrey says.



"The challenge with social media is that it can magnify our herd mentality. And anyone and everyone can publish information which may not be true or negative in a bid to get traction. In the middle of this are our children, who have yet to develop the ability to discern fake news from important facts, and can become overwhelmed or anxious if they are exposed to the wrong information."

There are a number of steps that parents can take to reassure children, discuss the implications of the disease, and equip them to self-manage their access to information. These include:

1. **Equip yourself** with information from trusted resources, like [UNICEF](#), the [World Health Organisation](#), the [US Centre for Disease Control](#), and the [South African Department of Health](#). Explain that many other sources are



>> to page 4

>> from page 3

less reliable, and check the date of articles and authors – are they credible, or does the headline and image look like fear-mongering ‘clickbait’?

2. **Keep calm** where possible, because children pick up on their parents’ emotions and [are more likely to panic](#) if their parents are doing so.
3. **Ask your children** what they’ve heard about Covid-19, and answer as many of their questions in age-appropriate ways as you can. If you don’t know the answer to a question, use the opportunity to research it on trusted resources together.
4. **Co-create a plan of action** – it helps them feel like they’re in control. Teach them the steps that they can take to protect themselves and others, including washing hands frequently with soap or an alcohol-based hand-rub, covering their mouth when sneezing or coughing, or doing so into the elbow, avoiding sick people, and alerting adults if they feel sick so that medical attention can be sought.
5. **Share the facts** to help them gain an understanding of the role that they play in society. For example, research shows that very few children get really sick or die from the virus, which may make children feel invincible. However, remind them that they can carry the virus and share it people who are vulnerable, like their grandparents.
6. **Talk about the social implications** of the disease, and remind children that the disease doesn’t care what the people it infects look like – and that there’s no basis for stigmatising any population group because of the disease. Remind them that everybody looking out for one another and working together is how diseases like Covid-19 are overcome.
7. **Keep the conversation going** – Covid-19 is here for a while, so consistency is essential. Challenges provide opportunities to educate so do some online



research on resources that you’ve identified as trustworthy, and discuss developments regularly and openly.

“Because we teach eight hours of life online to thousands of kids every year, we are closer to understanding how teens and tweens consume content online, interpret what they see and read, and how it impacts them (both positively and negatively).”

MySocialLife’s ‘Digital Life Skills Program’ equips children with the skills they need to be responsible digital citizens, able to discern fake news from real, explains the effect of cyberbullying, shows how to protect privacy and reputation online, and how our mind and body reacts to what we see which can cause mental health issues,” says McCoubrey.

“As devices become increasingly ubiquitous, the issue is becoming less about about policing children’s screen time or access to digital content, because they’ll find a way to get online – it’s more about equipping them to think critically about the information they read, so that they can participate actively in their media consumption, rather than accepting everything that they read as the truth,” he adds. “Once they have that distance to question what happens online, we can teach them about other key topics like respect, empathy, resilience and responsible publishing. In one sense they need a digital values system to call on, but you can’t find that in a curriculum here in our country. That’s why we developed our own working with a global entity, resulting in eight 60-minute sessions to unpack it carefully. Schools need the help. And so do many parents – it’s a complex world out there.”



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LEARNERS WHO BENEFITED FROM THE ALATEEN PROGRAMME

Below are some comments from school children in the Alateen programme

(Names are changed to protect members' anonymity)

My daughter has changed so much in the past year since attending Alateen. There's a new confidence, a renewed happiness, and more openness. She has the courage to share in AA meetings, and to engage with people outside of them. She's growing into an amazing person, and I couldn't be prouder of her.

"Proud Mother".

It's amazing how much honesty there can be in Alateen when alcohol is full of lies. **"Maria" age 11.**



Alateen has relieved me of the stress in my life. I have more focus on my schoolwork and I have stopped overthinking everything. I have serenity in my life for the first time as I have stopped worrying about my Dad's drinking and am more confident.

"Jabulani", age 11.

I have been told by my friends & family I am much more relaxed, calmer and more mature. I have been going to Alateen for nearly three years and I don't worry so much about my Mom and am not so negative. **"Lucy" now age 13.**



Alateen has helped me stop worrying about what might happen at home if my parents are drinking and fighting. **"Ray" age 12.**

Alateen has helped me deal with the stress at home and my school marks have improved. I didn't want to go to meetings at first, but now I look forward to the weekend meeting and seeing my friends there. **"Rebecca", age 15.**

Before Alateen I found it very difficult to talk to other people at school. Now I feel freer, am much more confident, and understand it's not only my family that has this problem. **"Mark" age 14.**

I used to bottle up my feelings about everything, until my anger would explode. At Alateen I learned a better, calmer way to share discuss any problems with my group. **"Jay" age 16.**



FOR EDUCATORS & PRINCIPALS

What is Alateen?

Alateen is:

...a fellowship of young Al-Anon members, usually teenagers, whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking.

Purposes of Alateen

Young People Come Together to:

- share experience, strength, and hope with each other
- discuss their difficulties
- learn effective ways to cope with their problems
- encourage one another
- help each other understand the principles of the Al-Anon program

Alateen Members Learn

- compulsive drinking is a disease
- they can detach themselves emotionally from the drinker's problems while continuing to love the person
- they are not the cause of anyone else's drinking or behaviour
- they cannot change or control anyone but themselves
- they have spiritual and intellectual resources with which to develop their own potentials, no matter what happens at home
- they can build satisfying and rewarding life experiences for themselves

Sponsorship & Supervision

In order to be registered as an Alateen group, there must be TWO Alateen Group Sponsors at each meeting. These sponsors – Al-Anon Members in Alateen Service (AMIAS) – are experienced Al-Anon members, certified through the Alateen Service certification process, prior to serving, and are in possession of a SAPS Police Clearance Certificate, renewed annually.

2019 UPDATE

During 2018 we operated 2 Alateen Groups in Gauteng & 2 in KZN. Supported by our friends in AA, they brought their children to us and have reported amazing results both at home and in school through regular attendance at Alateen meetings.

For 2019 we are focusing on bringing our message to schools – to both learners & educators. We KNOW there's a need. We know families are in pain. If you'd like an information session at your school, call our helpline 0861 252 666

We believe alcoholism is a family disease because it affects all the members emotionally and sometimes physically. Although we cannot change or control our parents, we can detach from their problems while continuing to love them.



We do not discuss religion or become involved with any outside organisations. Al-Anon has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics.



UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECT OF ALCOHOLISM ON CHILDREN

For nearly 70 years, Al-Anon Family Groups, globally, has helped the families who live with the disease of alcoholism.

The disease of alcoholism in a family member or friend affects children and teenagers in many ways that impact on their behaviour and ultimately, their school work.

Frequently, students and educators do not realise that a relationship with an alcoholic could be a factor in poor performance, disruptive behaviour and other problems.

Alateen helps young people understand how alcoholism affects the lives of all who are associated with a problem drinker.

Alateen in South Africa

We have learned that learners are very cautious about attending Alateen meetings at their schools.

In some areas Alateen meetings are held in the evenings in a nearby church hall, community centre or somewhere secure.

Parents/guardians must give written permission for Alateen attendance.

Alateen South Africa has groups across the country.

A list of Alateen meetings may be found on our websites:

<http://www.alanon.org.za/meetings/>
<http://www.alanongauteng.co.za/>
<https://al-anon.org/newcomers/teen-corner-alateen/>

**alanongso@iafrica.com –
 24 hr Helpline – 0861 25 66 66**

Literature & more information is available. Just call us.

Al-Anon Family Groups
 Help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics

Time for SA schools to embrace STEAM education in 2020 and beyond

It is encouraging that in his SONA address the President gave clear signals that resources are going to be put behind the development of STEAM curricula which includes Robotics, coding and 4th IR technologies in SA schools. This is an area which needs to be addressed urgently – even where expensive resources are not yet in place, experts say.

“There is agreement that students need 21st Century skills like critical thinking, problem-solving and ICT skills as well as the ability to collaborate and communicate effectively if they are to be equipped to cope with a future in which the jobs they may land up doing hardly exist yet,” says Quinton Mulder, Academic Development Coordinator at ADvTECH Schools, SA’s leading private school group.

The means of doing this can range from the creation of dedicated spaces at schools such as the Makerspace at ADvTECH’s Crawford International campus in Ruimsig campus, which focuses on giving students the opportunity to explore, create, collaborate and communicate whilst using new age technologies such as 3D printers, iPads, laser cutters and Robotics.

But Christopher Seewald, Head of Technology and Information Technology at ADvTECH’s Pecanwood College, says while it can be daunting to start introducing Robotics at schools, particularly where high-end resources are not yet in place, it is essential for educators to start doing what they can to prepare for the entirely new economy of the future.

“Of course, not all schools can afford robots, but they can start introducing the basics of robotics. There is a myriad of resources online which can help start the ball rolling, and which can assist educators to see how they can enhance the existing curriculum and offering with theory and then application,” he says.



Mulder adds that schools need a clear vision and plan on how they will be implementing and developing skills within Robotics, coding and the maker revolution which should start as soon as Grade R. This is the approach taken at all ADvTECH schools – including the Crawford, Pinnacle and Trinity House groups of schools.

“The focus is on developing our students and getting them ready for a world full of possibilities and the unknown as well as focusing on vision 2030. By doing this we will contribute immensely in growing our future leaders,” he says.

But it is key for programmes to develop problem-solving and innovative, creative thinking and digital skills, and for them to be integrated into curricula rather than being approached as stand-alone extra mural activities, says Seewald.

“The skills needed can be built starting with the plethora of free resources available on the internet. And although we are privileged at our schools to back these up with some of the more exciting equipment, this is not necessary to get started,” he says.

Educators can visit the following sites where free resources are made available

- code.org
- scratch.mit.org
- tinkercad.com
- thingiverse.com
- blockly.games
- Swift Playground on iPad

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7. <u>Business Economics</u>	7. <u>Geography</u>
<u>OR</u>	<u>OR</u>
Economics	EGD (Minimum 20 Learners)
	<u>OR</u>
	Tech Civil (Minimum 20 Learners)

CHOICE SUBJECTS (20 CREDITS EACH)

1. English (Home) – 5 Hours per Week
2. Afrikaans (FAL) – 5 Hours per Week
3. Maths – 10 Hours per Week
4. Science – 10 Hours per Week
5. Life Orientation – 2 Hours per Week

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS (20 CREDIT SUBJECTS)

- Grade 10 to 12 : Maths – Must have 60% or above
- Science – Must have 60% or above

ENROLMENT CRITERIA

- Grade 10 to 12 : Maths – Must have 60% or above
- Science – Must have 60% or above



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Learners can access thousands of free ebooks during coronavirus shutdown period with Snapplify

Snapplify and publishing partners unite to provide free content for learners during COVID-19 school closures

As learners and parents enter a new term, many will engage with educators and continue the school year remotely for the first time – a potentially difficult transition. Although working together now means being apart for a short time, it is important to ensure that life and routines go on as best they can, especially when it comes to education. Snapplify has a long history of supporting educational institutions as they transition towards 4IR classrooms. Today, Snapplify have announced a new initiative to help learners as they embark upon their remote learning journey.

The new programme launched by the edtech industry leader is called **Free Access** – a programme to provide short term access to digital ebooks, e-textbooks and other resources for learners at **no cost**. The broad selection of digital content covers educational resources for the CAPS curriculum, including e-textbooks, readers, teacher guides and study guides, as well as [interactive products like the Zoom In series](#).

Snapplify's **Free Access** programme brings together partners from across the education industry. The local publishers who have pledged their support for the programme include Oxford University Press South Africa, Cambridge University Press, Via Afrika, All Copy Publishers, and Consumo Publishers, with more to be announced in the coming weeks.

Any user is able to access the free e-books with a registered Snapplify user account. Learners and parents are encouraged to register a free account to make use of this exclusive offer until 31 December 2020.

"The need for parents and educators to collaborate more closely in particular has never been more important than now – and both can be reassured that Snapplify is here to help them, every step of the way," explains Snapplify CEO, Wesley Lynch. "We're proud of our digital education community and the willingness of our partners to come together to offer the most extensive collection of free content available for remote learning."

Enterprise tier of Engage also unlocked for remainder of 2020

Further to this, Snapplify have also made the Enterprise tier of their [Engage e-learning platform](#) open to all schools at no cost until 31 December 2020. This

provides all schools access to top tier added benefits of the platform, including advanced administration tools and integrations, and user data analytics.

As he addressed the nation about a 17-day nationwide lockdown that was implemented from 27 March 2020, [President Cyril Ramaphosa](#) called on South Africans to unite, saying, "There is no doubt in my mind that we will prevail. South Africans have come together like never before to wage the struggle against this virus, together." This collaboration by several partners in the digital education space echoes this message, while working to support continued education with minimal disruptions.

This sentiment is shared by the **Snapplify Foundation**, which aims to improve accessibility, scale and quality of education across all communities in Africa. Digital tools are an essential support mechanism to break down barriers to access around education and opportunities for personal and professional growth. Going digital also presents an opportunity to diversify the standard curriculum offering with a variety of long-term benefits – such as teaching valuable [technical soft skills](#) and promoting [safe practices and communications online](#).

Hundreds of thousands of learners are already accessing educational resources from [Snapplify](#), digitally. [Register your Snapplify user account online for free to get started](#).

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Teraco Connect Foundation grant to support SABEN in a changing digital landscape

Providing resilient digital infrastructure for essential educational services

Teraco, Africa's largest vendor-neutral data centre provider, has announced a support grant valued at R7.5m to the South African Broadband Education Networks (SABEN) via the Teraco Connect Foundation. Over the next five years, Teraco will partner with SABEN to support the national drive to end bandwidth poverty among South Africa's schools and public TVET colleges.

Jan Hnizdo, CEO of Teraco, says that the grant will help to facilitate the changing landscape of education in South Africa. Digital infrastructure initiatives, including remote learning and educational streaming will become more efficient and easier to implement: "The Teraco Connect Foundation sees the grant as an investment in the future of this country at a time when all sectors are facing significant challenges. As a leading data centre infrastructure provider, we are proud to invest in education, one of the most important cornerstones to secure the future growth and development of South Africa," says Hnizdo.

SABEN is a non-profit company serving the public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector in South Africa. It is purpose-built to solve the digital requirements of this sector. Hnizdo says that the Teraco Connect Foundation grant will not only enable these educational institutions to access content directly and grow their collective digital strategy, but will also assist in laying essential foundations for future digital remote learning strategies: "To enable digital transformation, SABEN's need for direct access to a rich ecosystem of content and cloud providers can be realised, enabling efficient connections to education cloud services, streaming, and remote learning possibilities."

Helga van Wyk, the Project Lead of the TVET Campus Connectivity Project, an initiative funded by the National Skills Fund, says that the Teraco Connect Foundation grant enables SABEN to solve their digital requirements: "We are now better equipped to improve the transformative potential of each institution in this rapidly evolving digital age with Teraco's generous support. The preparedness of all colleges is a top priority and SABEN needs to be able to support this digital transformation adequately."

Technically, the grant provides SABEN a physical presence in Teraco data centres located in Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg and gives colleges direct network access to Platform Teraco, where the institutions will benefit from highly secure and direct interconnection to Africa's largest digital ecosystem. Platform Teraco allows for the configuration of scalable interconnections to all the major cloud onramps, 250 network providers (including carriers, terrestrial fibre, satellite connectivity and submarine cables), 50 global content providers, 130 IT service providers, 130 enterprises and financial services providers and access to several Internet eXchange Points (IXPs) at NAPAfrica and INX.



Jan Hnizdo, CEO of Teraco

Garth Scholtz, SABEN general manager, says there has been a renewed focus on post-school education, in particular the TVETs, which over the past three years has also become an increasing priority for Government: "It is thus vital for SABEN to do all we can to support all endeavours and to put systems and structures in place to level the playing field for all South Africans. Collaboration with industry is key, and the grant from Teraco will greatly assist us in meeting the evolving digital requirements of all the institutions."

He says that South Africa's skills shortage cannot be addressed unless our education system produces a labour force with the right skills to meet the industry's demand. Additionally, Scholtz believes that poverty and inequality can never be genuinely eliminated unless the next generation of previously disadvantaged citizens are economically empowered: "It is here that the role of all of these educational institutions will play a significant role and as SABEN, we need to ensure that this journey is not only just supported but enabled." ▲

An E-learning ecosystem – the holistic solution

The gamification of learning & App development

Providing E-learning tools through supplier partnerships

Created 5 000+ E-lessons for the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership

Sharing the vision of MEC Panyaza Lesufi: 1 learner – 1 tablet; 1 teacher – 1 laptop

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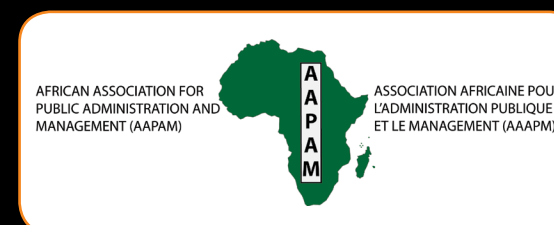
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 Blueprint E-learning school



Finalist in the 2015 United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA) for Improving the Delivery of Public Services



WINNER of the 2015 Centre for Public Service Innovation Awards (CPSI) for Innovative Use of ICT for Effective Service Delivery



SPHS E-learning project nominated for the African Association for Public Administration and Management Awards (AAPAM)

Managing Matric

in a time of turmoil

For the majority of learners, Matric is the most challenging year of their school careers – even under normal circumstances. The current circumstances facing the Class of 2020 are unprecedented, and have caused massive upheaval and uncertainty on top of the challenges they would ordinarily have faced. Even so, there are ways learners can adjust and respond to ensure they still make a success of the year, an education expert says.

“When some speak in the media about the year being a ‘write-off’, it is easy to be even more anxious. What they are trying to communicate is how difficult it is going to be to assess progress normally and that a two year perspective should be taken – but even this is not a comfort for Grade 12s who don’t have two years available to them to recover from this,” says Wonga Ntshinga, Senior Head of Programme: Faculty of ICT at The Independent Institute of Education, SA’s largest and most accredited private higher education institution.

“On top of this, the amount of support available to Matrics before classes can resume is very varied. Even those who are able to get high-quality online or paper-based or televised support are needing to work without the security of the presence of their teachers and peers,” he says.

Ntshinga notes that even then, there are many who don’t have access to the aforementioned resources.

“It is clear that the Department of Basic Education is aware of this and there is little doubt that this group will be the first that will be allowed to return and time will be created to ensure that they can catch up – even if that means moving examinations into December.”



“Any individual student is not alone here and can at least draw comfort from the fact that the decision-makers are as worried as you are. It follows that what makes the most sense right now, is to take what you do have and what you must face, and make the most of it so that by the time you get back to whatever the new plan will be – and there will be a plan – you have managed to get ahead of your peers and in front of your own anxiety.”

Ntshinga notes that while Matric learners will indeed lose out on some of the experiences normally reserved for this year of school, they are also now, forever, the cohort that had to succeed faced with these challenges, which will earn them a measure of respect.

“Everywhere you look there is advice on how you should be coping and what you should be doing, and that you should have a healthy daily routine which includes learning, revision, exercise and sleep. When you are struggling to do this, it adds to your anxiety.”

Ntshinga says that instead of trying to do it all, learners should keep their eyes focused on small victories and goals – getting through today, or a particular chapter, or a past paper are all achievements. Stacked on each other, they will carry learners through.

“Identify the one or two things you can do every day that will mean success for you, and strive to then get these done.

“Aim for small successes every day, which will help to make sticking to routine the next day progressively easier as you go along. And don’t beat yourself



up if you are struggling to get to grips with this new way – it is challenging for everyone, and there is a lot of empathy and understanding for that, also on the part of your teachers. However, for your own sake, you must try to show yourself every day that you are doing the best you can under the circumstances.”

Ntshinga says getting things done might also call for some creativity on the part of Matrics.

“If you are sharing a small space with your family, and it is hard to get quiet focus time, you might try reaching an agreement with them regarding which times of day they need to give you some peace and quiet for studying,” he says.

“Or you could, for instance, change the times you study – perhaps late at night when everyone else is sleeping, or an hour or two before everyone else wakes up.”

It’s also worth taking some time to get to grips with the actual logistics of learning remotely, Ntshinga says.

“If your school is one of those who have been preparing for digital and online delivery and now offer dedicated learning platforms, it might take some time getting used to the ins and outs of the apps they are using. Practise the ins and outs of these platforms, so the actual work that you are doing isn’t being slowed down by trying to navigate the app itself,” he says.

“And also keep in mind your data usage if you are studying this way. You can, for instance, download something with your night-time data and come back to it the next morning, and also save your data for your work, rather than wasting time and data watching movies online.”

Learners must also resolve to make the most of online classes by showing up, engaging and preparing as they would have for contact classes, he says.

He adds that those learners who do not have access to resources from their schools, should find out about the ones that are generally available, such as classes broadcast via the SABC (see links below) or through the platforms of

some telecoms providers. Learners can also share ideas and resources with friends using WhatsApp.

“If your school was not able to assist you, find someone or something that can – the skill of this investigation is already a life skill that last year’s Matrics did not have to learn the way you do. We are in the midst of an unprecedented global crisis and everything is in a state of change. There is much you can’t control, but you can set yourself up to be prepared to live out your dreams in the new world order. Use this time to expand your vision of what your future might look like,” he says.

“The message is to keep on keeping on, and to spend your days as productively as possible, whatever that may mean for you personally. Focus your energy on what you can do, and keep building your future with small positive achievements every day.”

Resources for Matrics

<https://www.sabc.co.za/sabc/ukhozi-fm-extends-its-programming-on-term-1-matric-revision-content/>

<http://www.sabceducation.co.za/media-office/4769-sabc-and-the-department-of-basic-education-launch-covid-19-tv-and-radio-curriculum-support-programme-for-learners> ▲

Teaching remotely

Focus on the essentials, less is more

The temptation to do it all as if it is possible to maintain the pace and volume of contact education remotely must be resisted, an education expert says.

“As educators adapt to teaching remotely and online, there may be an attempt to mimic what a school day would normally look like, by filling learners’ days according to pre-lockdown timetables, and pace and content of learning,” says Dr Felicity Coughlan, Academic Director at ADVTECH, SA’s leading private education provider.

“However this approach is counter-productive, and can lead to further frustration, anxiety and tension under what is already challenging circumstances for all concerned, including for parents, learners and educators,” she says.

Dr Coughlan says there is an important difference between focusing on essential skills during this time, as opposed to trying to keep the curriculum going in full.

“Much of the stress people are experiencing arises from this well-intentioned attempt to ‘keep up’. It is far more conducive to learning and well-being to make deliberate choices and to pare back and focus on those skills around which we can then build content knowledge again later,” she says.

In quite unexpected ways the lockdown and the unique and unprecedented circumstances in which we now find ourselves, provide a perfect opportunity to develop and entrench those global competencies which otherwise might not receive the requisite focus during normal school time, Dr Coughlan says.

“We have known for some time that the world is changing, that the skills required in the workplace are evolving and that the workplace of the future is going to look much different from what used to be the status quo only four weeks ago. Now, all of a sudden, we find ourselves thrown into a completely new paradigm and it is quite clear that the world will not be the same.

“So what better time to develop those global competencies and master 21st Century Skills than during the biggest global disaster in recent history?”



Dr Coughlan says SA teachers have risen to the challenges of remote and digital teaching with remarkable resilience and zeal, with very little warning or lead-time. They have been wonderfully innovative whether or not they have had access to extensive educational technology or been required to use WhatsApp or other day-to-day communication tools to keep in touch with the children they were teaching. The mindset of making do and re-inventing is a precious one we should not lose.

She says ADVTECH Schools have integrated Global Competencies in their curricula for several years, and that those schools and educators who have not yet had the time to do so or have treated these as peripheral, now have the perfect opportunity to embed them in “normal” teaching and learning.

“The world of the future just came crashing through our door,” says Dr Coughlan.

The Global Competencies of THINKING skills (creative, critical and reflexive), RESEARCH skills (collecting, recording, organising, interpreting), COMMUNICATION skills (personal interaction with others), SOCIAL skills (personal behaviour) and SELF-MANAGEMENT are the only ways that teachers and students will navigate this period and what follows it, successfully.

“So, for teachers developing lessons and content, and schools still grappling with how to approach learning at this time, consider that less really is more. If there is therefore a little bit of a silver lining to this disaster, it is that we

now have the ideal opportunity to develop these skills, and that even those schools and educators who are not as well-positioned as others can include them.”

Now is the time to focus on the basics, and to aim for consolidation, says Dr Coughlan.

“It is true that for some this is easier than for others. There is particular concern about the Grade 12 class as well as the millions of children being left behind as education continues for some. These social justice imperatives are not trivial, but are not addressed by the entire system freezing. It is however vital that those in positions of privilege who are able to still be learning effectively acknowledge this privilege with humility.



“If your school or class can continue learning then this time needs to be used to develop global citizens just as much as it must be used to entrench skills. Content can and will follow. Don’t mistake quantity for quality. “

Tips for teaching remotely during Covid-19

By Connie Kim, school principal of Hong Kong International School (HKIS)

Don’t force yourself to replicate a typical school day. In the early weeks of the shutdown, Kim’s school set up a block schedule reminiscent of the one student’s experience in person.

But that schedule wasn’t entirely effective in a remote context. Students in elective courses were struggling to complete projects in time for scheduled class sessions. Administrators also hadn’t figured out the ideal use of time teachers were spending on videoconference sessions with their students.

Build in screen-less time for students. Many schools in the U.S. have students who don’t have access to Wi-Fi or digital devices at home. But for those that do, Kim recommends being mindful that they’re not being overexposed to those devices, particularly given recent research linking screen time with delayed language development.

Don’t sacrifice professional development. Teachers are overwhelmed by the new technology tools they have to start using and the new approaches they have to take to keep students engaged. Kim’s school has maintained regular collaborative sessions, via Zoom, for educators to “calibrate” their teaching and share tips and insights.

Kim wishes those sessions had been more robust when the shutdown started. But now they’re a valuable time to examine how virtual lessons are going, and how they might be fine-tuned.

“They had to build the plane as they were flying it,” Kim said. “They’re just as resilient as the kids.”

It’s important to make sure students feel supported by the entire institution during a time of crisis, so Kim has asked each department to share resources

“Your video lesson that you see as a sixth grade math student may not be your teacher on the video, but you know that’s one of the teachers in the math department,” she said.

Be consistent. Early on, letting individual teachers devise their own teaching plans made for a chaotic and confusing landscape for students and parents to navigate. The school has since emphasised common protocols, like sharing information primarily on the learning management system Schoology.

“For a student who has seven classes, he or she can find the information the same way no matter what class they have,” Kim said.

That approach also helps parents with multiple students in different grades.

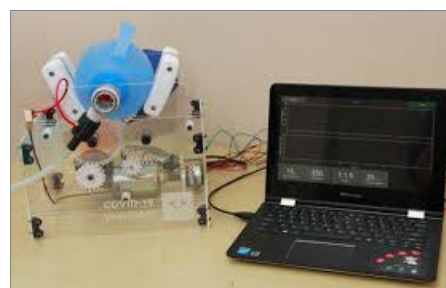
Take it slow, for everyone’s sake. It’s not going to be possible to teach at the same pace as usual, Kim said. That’s especially true as the pandemic wears on. “Our kids have been doing this for over eight weeks, and we’re sensing a lull of enthusiasm. The novelty of being on Zoom and working from home is wearing out now,” she said. Some students who are typically outgoing in class have also been more reticent to speak up while dealing with the awkwardness of a virtual chat. ▲

Committed to assisting students with access to devices and data

The University of Johannesburg (UJ) has noted information circulating on social media that seeks to portray its Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Tshilidzi Marwala, as uncaring and indifferent to the needs of our poor and rural students. This is with regards to the provision of access to devices and data, as the University shifts from contact face-to-face learning and teaching to a remote online mode of delivery of the academic programme.

The national lockdown is an unprecedented response to COVID-19, but one that has necessitated that we shift to online teaching and learning. We are navigating this shift as effectively as possible. We are aware of the challenges, the inequities of access as well as the anxiety and uncertainty caused by this mode of teaching and learning. As a university, we are committed to closing these gaps to the best of our ability.

The University wishes to set the record straight that as it shifts to an online mode of teaching and learning from Monday, 20 April 2020, it is committed to ensuring that all its students have access to the necessary devices and data. We are pleased to announce that the University has invested significant financial resources to secure 30GB of data per student per month. Further details about this will be communicated on the relevant platforms.



It is worth noting that this year alone, we have distributed 1 750 laptops to qualifying first-year NSFAS students, and that we have a further 4 000 available to distribute. It is also worth noting that the university has issued 21 000 devices to qualifying students. We continue to work

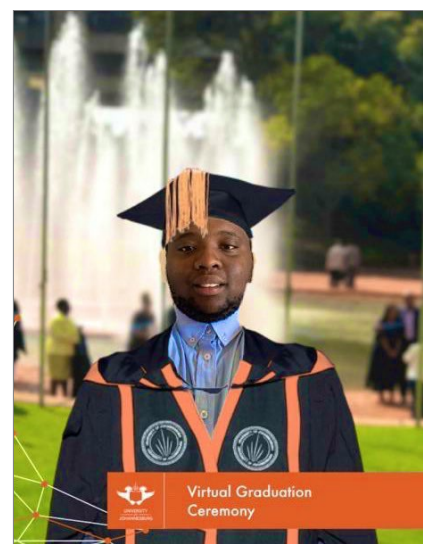
closely with telecommunications providers with the view to provide more data solutions to our students, so that they may perform their studies efficiently. This demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that none of our students is left behind, as we move to online modes of teaching and learning.

We realise that some of our students operate in environmental conditions that are not conducive to learning. For the next two weeks, there will be no formal assessments or assignments. Students will have the opportunity to catch up on assessments. The university will continue to engage with students as we roll out the online teaching and learning.

Our success as an institution depends on how we respond to this as a community and as management. We are committed to addressing as far as it is reasonably possible the matters that our students have raised, and others as they emerge.

UJ goes virtual for graduations, unveils graduation app

The University of Johannesburg (UJ) unveiled its virtual graduation ceremony this week where its 13 000 graduates had the opportunity to don graduation attire in the comfort of their own homes.



Close to 10 000 undergraduate diplomas or degrees and almost 3 000 postgraduate degrees, including 669 Master's and 133 Doctoral degrees were virtually awarded by the University's Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Tshilidzi Marwala.

Due to restrictions on public gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic, the University had to suspend and postpone its autumn and winter series of graduations, which would have comprised of more than 60 graduation ceremonies from 16 March to 13 May.

Speaking ahead of the virtual graduation session, Prof Marwala noted that a graduation ceremony is such a momentous occasion in a student's life. "We trust this virtual ceremony will afford graduates, family and friends to experience some elements of a

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graduation ceremony. The University is also planning an in-person celebration at a later stage providing government restrictions are lifted on public gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

These qualifications indicate a personal triumph for each of our successful students, but they are also the means towards an improved livelihood for more than 13 000 families, as well as for their communities and our society. It is important to celebrate the occasion and thus during the virtual graduation tribute, graduates will be able to take a graduation selfie (photo), in the graduation attire, while “standing around” virtually at the graduation ceremony.

In a first for a South African university, UJ not only introduced a virtual graduation selfie application, but also electronic academic records. Graduates (and current students) can now send a secure electronic academic record to themselves or a third party, for example a prospective employer (free of charge). The electronic academic record is an official document that is digitally stamped and signed by the Registrar.

This follows on the introduction, in the recent years of a qualifications verification system that enable its graduates to access their qualifications digitally (and share with third parties or possible employers, also at no cost.

UNFESTIVAL SA announced



non-workshops and a smorgasbord of nothing that may or may not take place during May (depending on how you look at it).

According to Pieter Jacobs, Head of UJ Arts & Culture, “We all know that festivals, arts centres, theatres, galleries and other cultural institutions have been forced into cancelling events and shutting their doors, amid the chaos of the COVID-19 pandemic. UNFESTIVAL SA is a conceptual event inspired by the Czech Festival of Nothing, and was conceived as a means to help independent creatives and the most vulnerable in the arts sector.

UJ has been a BASA member for several years now, and we saw the opportunity to partner around this symbolic concept for the benefit of students in the Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture and the sector as a whole, through our partnership with BASA and its artist relief efforts.



Jacobs announced that arts lovers, supporters and stakeholders across a spectrum of creative disciplines will be able to buy tickets to non-events at UJ: “Fifty per cent of UNFESTIVAL SA’s proceeds will be distributed to needy students via the UJ FADA Dean’s Bursary Fund, which provides support for academically deserving students, and presents an opportunity for the public to give hope to the academic journey of the youth. The balance of 50% will be distributed via BASA’s Supporting Grants programme, which now offers artists and creative practitioners once-off, short-term financial aid for COVID-19-related medical care or to offset the loss of income due to the cancellation of confirmed engagements (resulting from the nationwide lockdown or other emergency measures).”

Click here to check [the full UNFESTIVAL SA programme](#). Jacobs added that many people will have had access to free entertainment, to the point where few artists can say they have not been asked to perform for the exposure, and said that UNFESTIVAL SA is an opportunity to reciprocate and pay it forward.

Visit www.arts.uj.ac.za or www.basa.co.za for more information and to show your support by buying a ticket – but please don’t come. ▲

FOR EDUCATORS & PRINCIPALS



What is Alateen?

Alateen is:

...a fellowship of young Al-Anon members, usually teenagers, whose lives have been affected by someone else’s drinking.

Purposes of Alateen

Young People Come Together to:

- share experience, strength, and hope with each other
- discuss their difficulties
- learn effective ways to cope with their problems
- encourage one another
- help each other understand the principles of the Al-Anon program

Alateen Members Learn

- compulsive drinking is a disease
- they can detach themselves emotionally from the drinker’s problems while continuing to love the person
- they are not the cause of anyone else’s drinking or behaviour
- they cannot change or control anyone but themselves
- they have spiritual and intellectual resources with which to develop their own potentials, no matter what happens at home
- they can build satisfying and rewarding life experiences for themselves

Sponsorship & Supervision

In order to be registered as an Alateen group, there must be TWO Alateen Group Sponsors at each meeting. These sponsors – Al-Anon Members in Alateen Service (AMIAS) – are experienced Al-Anon members, certified through the Alateen Service certification process, prior to serving, and are in possession of a SAPS Police Clearance Certificate, renewed annually.

2019 UPDATE

During 2018 we operated 2 Alateen Groups in Gauteng & 2 in KZN. Supported by our friends in AA, they brought their children to us and have reported amazing results both at home and in school through regular attendance at Alateen meetings.

For 2019 we are focusing on bringing our message to schools – to both learners & educators. We KNOW there’s a need. We know families are in pain. If you’d like an information session at your school, call our helpline 0861 252 666

We believe alcoholism is a family disease because it affects all the members emotionally and sometimes physically. Although we cannot change or control our parents, we can detach from their problems while continuing to love them.



We do not discuss religion or become involved with any outside organisations. Al-Anon has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics.

UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECT OF ALCOHOLISM ON CHILDREN

For nearly 70 years, Al-Anon Family Groups, globally, has helped the families who live with the disease of alcoholism.

The disease of alcoholism in a family member or friend affects children and teenagers in many ways that impact on their behaviour and ultimately, their school work.

Frequently, students and educators do not realise that a relationship with an alcoholic could be a factor in poor performance, disruptive behaviour and other problems.

Alateen helps young people understand how alcoholism affects the lives of all who are associated with a problem drinker.

Alateen in South Africa

We have learned that learners are very cautious about attending Alateen meetings at their schools.

In some areas Alateen meetings are held in the evenings in a nearby church hall, community centre or somewhere secure.

Parents/guardians must give written permission for Alateen attendance.

Alateen South Africa has groups across the country.

A list of Alateen meetings may be found on our websites:

<http://www.alanon.org.za/meetings/>
<http://www.alanongauteng.co.za/>
<https://al-anon.org/newcomers/teen-corner-alateen/>

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Literature & more information is available. Just call us.


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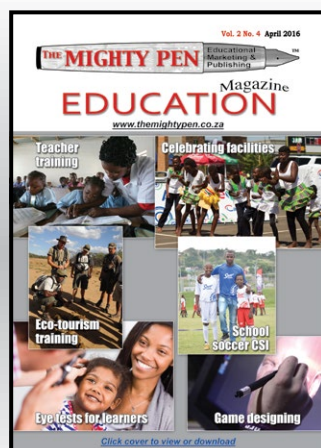
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