

Vol. 5 No. 2 February 2019



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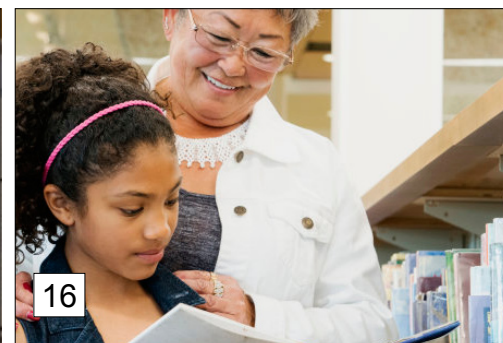
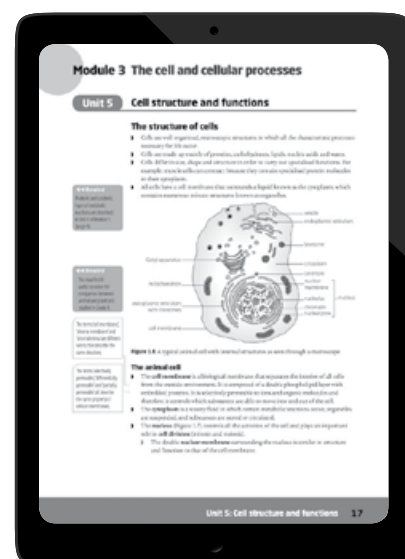


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Publisher

The Mighty Pen (Pty) Ltd
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Editor

Janos Bozsik

Contributors

- Kendal Makgamathe – head of marketing, Tshimologong Precinct
- Themba Mola – KST Chief Executive Officer
- Trudie Gilmore – General Manager at ADVTECH Junior Colleges
- Dr Naresh Veeran – Chief Commercial Officer of the Embury Institute for Higher Education
- Zobuzwe Ngobese – Marketing and Communications Executive at SAIPA
- John Luis – Head of Academics at ADVTECH Schools
- Dr Neelam Parmar – renowned global tech-ed expert
- Craig McMurray – CEO of Respublica Student Living
- Nola Payne – Head of Faculty: Information and Communications Technology at The IIE

Correspondence and enquiries

editor@themightypen.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

Sexual violence in schools

These past few months have heralded horrific headlines in the mainstream media about rape and sexual violence perpetrated in South African schools. In many of these cases the victims and aggressors are school children, with some violations even occurring in primary schools.

Over the years the Department of Basic Education (DBE) has submitted various documents about the issue to government task groups. In the global report of the International Tribunal for Children's Rights, the President of the Tribunal noted that despite the universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, all indications are that violence against children is on the rise and becoming more prevalent in schools.

Many of our schools like schools in other countries experience, to varying degrees, violent and criminal behaviour that includes bullying, substance abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, racism, gangsterism, guns and weapons, vandalism and a host of other antisocial behaviour. All of these make these schools an unsafe place to be for some of our children, suffocating many of their dreams and reducing the school experience for these children to a battle for survival rather than academic achievement.

According to the DBE, reliable data on the extent of sexual abuse in schools is hard to find but there is compelling evidence to indicate that both the nature and levels of abuse require immediate and urgent action from all of us. "Our country now has laws in place, which serve to protect the rights and dignity of women and children. It is these mechanisms that in turn create the space for the victims of abuse to report these matters to the relevant authorities both within the school and outside of the school," a spokesperson said.

From the information available to the Department it is obvious that sexual abuse takes various forms and is perpetrated by both learners and staff in schools. It ranges from sexual harassment, touching and verbal degradation to rape and other forms of sexual violence. This abuse takes place in dormitories, in empty classrooms, in hallways and in school toilets. And while all learners may be victims of abuse, girls and disabled learners are particularly vulnerable.

The Department of Basic Education in its response to sexual abuse in schools has avoided the temptation to come up with new recommendations and solutions that may not be transformed into concrete actions. The focus of the Department therefore is to intensify and ensure implementation of existing initiatives, and introduce new initiatives only where there are major gaps.

Yours in education

Janos Bozsik
Editor

Tablets – the tip of the iceberg for successful digital education

Public schools in South Africa can look forward to joining the digital education revolution as some of their private school counterparts have been experiencing for the past few years, but education experts have cautioned against a rush to provide tablets and other digital infrastructure before a solid strategy and fundamentals have been put in place.

"In the rush to get on board with the 4th Industrial Revolution – a term many are invoking without truly understanding the issues involved – private schools have increasingly been offering coding, robotics and digital learning on their campuses," says John Luis, Head of Academics at ADVTECH Schools.

"However simply offering content that previously used to be in book or paper format, and not investing time and money in a holistic approach to content and delivery, as well as proper educator and support staff training, will render such initiatives futile and expensive mistakes," he says.

Luis says while there is much talk about coding and ICT in schools, the key success factor when introducing technology in classrooms is the development of an appropriate and defined curriculum. And very importantly, tech in the classroom can never replace the fundamental core skills required for academic excellence.

In his State of the Nation address this month, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that government would, over the next six years, provide every school child in South Africa with digital workbooks and textbooks on a tablet device.

While the sentiment is welcomed, there is much work to be done before the time arrives to unbox devices.

"It is extremely important to understand that learning is *served* and not *defined* by technological tools," says Dr Neelam Parmar, renowned global tech-ed expert.

"All too often we think that the technology will fix our teaching and learning problems in school but what is truly important is that the technology is embedded firmly and seamlessly within the curriculum and lesson delivery in the classroom," she says.

"There is great potential in creating online learning systems to close the widening educational gap," she says, "but to get to this point in education, it is vital that the government first understand the relevance of emerging technologies and the means of how to offer the necessary digital literacy skills for our next generation".

She says the right curriculum is essential for successful and sustainable digital transformation in classrooms, and while the market is inundated with companies that claim to offer bespoke educational solutions, private – and now also the public education sector in South Africa – must realise that one solution does not fit all.



"There is a great deal of hype around the 4th Industrial Revolution, and undoubtedly change is taking place at a phenomenal level, yet any change at this level needs to come with a vision, and with a vision we need a strategy."

The risk is often that visions are little more than ideas without substance or structure, Dr Parmar says.

"For technology to become relevant in education, a strategy considering the grand scheme of systems, teaching and learning, curriculum redesign, teacher training, community, new partnerships and the relevant stakeholders, has to be considered. It is now time to act on delivering the right education to our students by using the technology we know can make it happen." ▲

Conlog launches blockchain incubation programme

in partnership with Tshimologong Precinct



Leading smart metering solutions provider, [Conlog](#), has partnered with Wits University's [Tshimologong Precinct](#) to launch an innovative technology programme. With a strong focus on blockchain and smart city solutions, Conlog approached the Precinct to assist in developing and promoting innovation, skills development and entrepreneurship within South Africa through its newly established [Reapele](#) programme.

Hosted and run by the Tshimologong Digital Innovation Precinct in Braamfontein, Reapele will be delivered in seven phases and aims to innovate and nurture technology businesses, digital products and ideas, turning them into viable businesses: "We are excited to launch this new project, which will assist in developing Conlog's open innovation capability in smart connected metering technology," says Kendal Makgamathe, head of marketing, Tshimologong Precinct. "The programme will enhance Conlog's business transformation journey by forging technical advisory partnerships with Wits University faculties and its research students."

Designed to meet a variety of technology goals, the first phase of the programme calls for aspiring junior software developers and technologists to participate in a meet-up event, following which an online assessment will serve to identify the top performers using custom coding assessments in relevant programming languages such as Java, JavaScript, C++ or Python, C#. Once the successful candidates have been identified, the candidates will be trained on the core principles and foundations of coding using Blockchain.

Subsequent to the coaching, the candidates will use their new coding skills in a 3-day Hackathon, which is aimed at challenging the candidates to develop a Blockchain Proof of Concept in partnership with [BlockStarters](#). The Hackathon will provide an opportunity for top technologists to win the grand prize of R20 000, while a Design Sprint, which consists of a five-day intensive design thinking programme enables the candidates to address their new technology with real customers.

Furthermore, Reapele, offers an intensive incubation period for the incumbent software developers that have developed an existing Blockchain solution. Limited to a set number of individuals, the incubation will provide a platform for the Proof of Concept (POC) to be developed further, culminating in live demonstrations of the blockchain technology to potential clients. The incubation will also assist in



Kendal Makgamathe

developing a validated marketing plan and a tried and tested business model. "Conlog is world renowned for providing innovative solutions to everyday challenges. Disruptive design thinking and innovation are forged into our spirit which has enabled us to retain our position of leadership in the industry, whilst remaining relevant to the market. We are extremely motivated by the formation of the Reapele programme and look forward to working with Tshimologong Precinct to develop tomorrow's future Blockchain experts," says Lance Hawkins-Dady, Head of Engineering, Conlog.

Hawkins-Dady says that Conlog is passionate about solving challenges with innovative technological solutions and considers Blockchain a key part of digitisation innovation: "Reapele will assist in developing much needed skills while also encouraging a startup mindset for software developers."

To apply please visit:

<http://tshimologong.joburg/conlog/>



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Hope for families and
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PROCESS FOR INFORMATION PRESENTATIONS AT SCHOOLS

Al-Anon Family Groups regularly give information presentations at rehabs, clinics, corporates, schools, and to groups of professionals such as doctors, police, social workers, educators and more.

Alateen, part of the Al-Anon Family Groups, also speaks, on request, at schools to learners, educators, parents and other family members.

To request an information session at your school, a few simple steps should be followed:

1. Decide when – date, time – and duration of the presentation is required (we usually like at least 45 mins for a presentation)
2. Please put your request in an email and send to publicoutreachza@gmail.com. This goes to Bette, our National Public Outreach Co-ordinator. Please give at least 30 days notice. Otherwise we also accept a telephonic request to Bette at 082 576 9739, or our local Al-Anon Information office - alanontvl@absamail.co.za, or 011 867 0731 (the Office is open Mon, Wed, Friday)
3. We will confirm via email that your request will be placed in our calendar
4. Please also provide us with details of the audience (age spread), numbers, how many educators will be there & a contact person's details.
5. On the day:
 - a. The Alateen team will arrive 30 mins (at least) before the session to set up & test our laptop, audio & data projector, and to bring pamphlets for learners to take away
 - b. At start, one teacher should introduce us to the learners
 - c. We allow questions from the kids, but often find they are too shy to put up their hands. So we offer to stay behind for 30 mins or so to answer questions.
 - d. We will also bring a few small posters to display, and pamphlets for educators
6. There are no fees for any of the above

We are excited at this possible opportunity to speak at some schools and look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Bette Kun

Al-Anon Family Groups: National Public Outreach Coordinator, South Africa

082 576 9739: publicoutreachza@gmail.com : www.alanon.org.za

Tel: +27 (0)11 867 0731
Fax: 086 6203 897
Email: alanontvl@absamail.com
Website: www.alanon.org.za
Local Website: www.alanongauteng.co.za

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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.


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

SAIPA National Accounting Olympiad 2019 – entries now open

Every year, the South African Institute of Professional Accountants (SAIPA) holds its National Accounting Olympiad. Entries for this year's competition are now open and the Institute invites all schools to begin registering pupils who wish to participate.

Zobuzwe Ngobese, Marketing and Communications Executive at SAIPA reports that, since its inception in 2002, the competition has continued to grow in popularity. "For 2019, we're expecting our best turnout yet," he says.

How it works

NAO 2019 entrants from grades 11 and 12 will write an accountancy test at their respective schools. Afterwards, representatives from SAIPA will mark the papers and select those with the highest scores. The top three students nationally in each grade will then be declared as the overall winners.

These champions will be awarded at a gala event whose date and venue will be announced nearer the time. They and their teachers will also receive prizes and be featured in the media.

Bring it on

Last year, thirteen winners tied for the top three spots provincially and nationally across the grade 11 and grade 12 categories. Eight pupils from Johannesburg public school, King Edward VII, reached the national top 50. Western Cape's Rondebosch Boys High placed one grade 12 winner and two in grade 11. And the province to beat this year will be Kwazulu-Natal, which shone brightly in 2018 with six winners out of the total thirteen.

"It was an incredibly tight competition," says Ngobese. "So we're excited to see what happens this time around. Will KwaZulu-Natal give a repeat performance or will another province rise to the challenge? And who will push the envelope to be the only winner in their spot? All I can say to the entrants is, if you're in it to win it, study hard and bring your A game."

Encouraging accountancy

The NAO competition is a key part of SAIPA's strategy to promote accounting as a career of choice among schoolgoers.



South Africa needs new accountants to continually enter the job market. A significant lack of interest now will mean a skills shortage of seven to eight years in the future. "Accounting is an exciting and rewarding career, so we want teens everywhere to seriously consider it as they prepare for tertiary studies," says Ngobese.

The NAO 2019 is also a good way for scholars to get a taste of the profession. They'll have the opportunity to interact with SAIPA staff, sponsors and potential future employers.

How to enter

Pupils wishing to compete must be registered by their schools on the NAO website at <https://www.saipa.co.za/national-accounting-olympiad-2019/>. The entry fee is R50 per student but free for no-fee schools. There is also no limit to the number of pupils each school may register. However, entrants must currently be taking Accounting as a school subject with the intention of studying a B.Com degree.

Entries close 14th June 2019. The exam will take place on 29th July 2019 and winners will be announced after all papers are scored. The NAO website will be updated as the competition progresses and participants should visit it regularly for the latest news and information. ▲



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Eight schools in the Motheo district receive infrastructure

Eight schools in Thaba Nchu which falls within the Motheo district in the Free State province received infrastructure as part of the District Whole School Development (DWSD) programme. In an effort to transform the quality of public schools KST in partnership with the Free State Department of Education (FSDoE) have been implementing the programme in quantile 1 to 3 primary and secondary schools in the Fezile Dabi and Motheo districts since 2014.

Infrastructure development is a key part of the DWSD programme and is awarded to schools based on two categories, basic infrastructure and incentive infrastructure. The provision of infrastructure is preceded by a thorough school's needs analysis, which determines what facilities are either built or renovated. Out of the eight schools, six received basic infrastructure and two received incentive infrastructure with an investment of over R8 million, which will benefit 4 208 learners and 151 educators from Ereskuld Primary, Kobue Primary, Moroka High, Tawana Primary, St. Pauls Primary, Namanyane Primary, Goronyane Secondary and Christian Liphoko Secondary.

Basic infrastructure

Refers to the building or renovation of ablution blocks and classrooms, perimeter fencing and the provision of desks and chairs. All programme schools receive basic infrastructure where it is required and where it is not already being provided by government.

Incentive infrastructure

Refers to facilities such as science laboratories, libraries, computer centres, maths centres, multi-media centres and sports facilities. Schools that perform above the target that has been set by the Free State Department of Education, qualify for incentive infrastructure projects.

"Our theory of change places the learner at the centre of our interventions and therefore the safety of both learners and educators are of paramount importance to us. The programme takes seriously, and satisfies all regulatory safety standards, including adhering to the Norms and Standards of the Department of Basic Education. Through a structured and consultative process KST works closely with each schools School Management Teams, an independent qualified Structural Engineer and the FSDoE's Property Officer during the planning and construction process. Once an Occupation Safety Clearance Certificate is issued by the Structural Engineer, the infrastructure is handed over to FSDoE to be launched and occupied," said Themba Mola, KST Chief Executive Officer.



KST is encouraged that school infrastructure is at the top of the national government agenda as outlined in the recent 2019 State of the Nation Address and Budget Speech, where over R30 billion is allocated to build new schools and maintain schooling infrastructure and an additional R2.8 billion is added to the School Infrastructure Backlogs Grant to replace pit latrines at over 2 400 schools.

"We remain committed to the National Development Plan with the aim of creating a conducive teaching and learning environment for our learners and making education an empowering experience that equips learners and educators with the skills and knowledge to thrive and contribute to the development of our communities. Therefore, communities must take pride and ownership of this Infrastructure by protecting it from vandalism and theft so that future generations can also benefit from it," said MEC DR PHI Makgoe, FSDoE. ▲



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What makes a good teacher today?

Getting a good education is very important today, but having a good teacher or educator makes this process a lot easier for children. We all have that one teacher we remember so well from a certain grade in school, whether it be primary school or high school. The one teacher that stood out and made a difference in our lives.

Future Nation Schools take a look at some of the things that make a good teacher today:

Compassion

Having a compassionate teacher makes a big difference to a child. Someone that cares about their students in terms of their wellbeing, their performance and who is able to demonstrate this to a child, will have a lasting effect on the type of children that leave a classroom at the end of the year.

Kindness

Teachers need to be kind. Children react better to kindness than to harshness. Being too strict may cause a child to become rebellious.

Listening well

Children want to feel that they are listened to and heard. This provides them with a sense of belonging and acknowledgement. This is a very important trait to have as a teacher, which is the person responsible for moulding the youth of today.

Giving the needed attention

Some children need individual attention or extra attention. In order to ensure that the children who are being taught are flourishing, it is vital that teachers give them the attention they need.

Positive encouragement

Positive affirmations go a long way, especially with children. Encouragement can make a child want to do better and want to learn. Children seek approval, so it



is important to make sure that children are given the necessary encouragement, even when it is for something very small they have done correctly.

Going the extra mile

A teacher who goes the extra mile and above and beyond their calling of teaching, is an educator that will have a lasting effect on their learners. Whether it be suggesting interesting books to read to a child in their class, or giving them the name of a song, you feel calms you down, when you need to focus on studying, the smallest thing can make the biggest difference. ▲

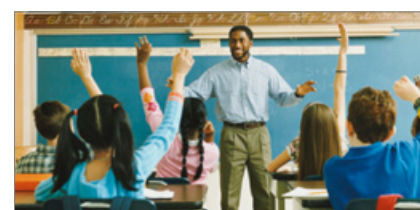
How to teach the essential skill of self-awareness to your children

Life on earth is a rollercoaster ride of emotions and our reactions to these emotions. All too often, we coast through life, unaware of our behavioural choices and even worse, unable to consider the possibility that we could have made better choices for ourselves along the way.

According to Cindy Glass, founder and owner of Step Up Education Centres, "Self-awareness is the first skill in emotional intelligence and it sets the precedent for the growth and development of all emotional intelligence skills. Being able to look at ourselves honestly, and without negative judgement, will enable and empower us to achieve greater success in all that we do. This, of course, applies to our children and their personal and academic learning as well."

She adds that self-awareness skills will help your children become aware of their emotions and behaviours and make better choices in all that they do. They will also experience better personal relationships as they become aware of the

emotions, behaviours and choices of others. "It is important to note that self-awareness includes skills in being aware of positive and negative emotions,



behaviours and choices. It is about learning to own these choices, learn from the mistakes and consider what behaviours will be best in any situation," Cindy explains.

She offers the following helpful tips to teach your child this essential life skill:

1. Create an environment where your children are free to recognise and acknowledge their mistakes and achievements in a non-judgmental, non-frightening way. Remember that it is fear of negative consequences that often hold us back from admitting mistakes to ourselves. And yet, if we cannot own a mistake, how can we find a positive solution to fix it?
2. Don't allow the blame-game. Blaming others for the choices that we have made disempowers us and reduces our opportunity to grow and learn from our choices and experiences.
3. You are your child's first and most powerful teacher – set the example! Teach your children the power of self-awareness by being self-aware! Remember that we are all on that rollercoaster that we call life and learning is a life-long gift. Teach your children to be kind to themselves in their uniqueness and imperfections, just as you are kind toward yourself.
4. Teach your children to recognise and honour their own talents and not to compare themselves to anyone else. We must remember that we are ALL on this journey and we all have interesting and wonderful ways in which we can



choose to live our lives. Different is not less. Non-judgmental self-awareness is essential. Positive self-worth is everything!

"Learning the essential skill of self-awareness will bring about more positive learning and it will go a long way in ensuring that we live happier, more fulfilled lives. Which parent would not want this for themselves and their children?" concludes Cindy. ▲

Why reading aloud means the world to children

For 10 years, World Read Aloud Day has drawn global attention to the importance of reading aloud and sharing stories. Celebrated on the 1st of February 2019, it is well worth taking time to consider the countless benefits of this activity, and mulling over some staggering statistics surrounding literacy.

Approximately 758 million people across the globe cannot read. According to South African government statistics, our youth literacy rate for those aged 15 to 34 sits at over 90%, whilst adult literacy (ages 35 – 64) sits at just under 80%.

Of tantamount importance is the enjoyment of reading; a responsibility that not only rests on the shoulders of educators, but also falls on parents.

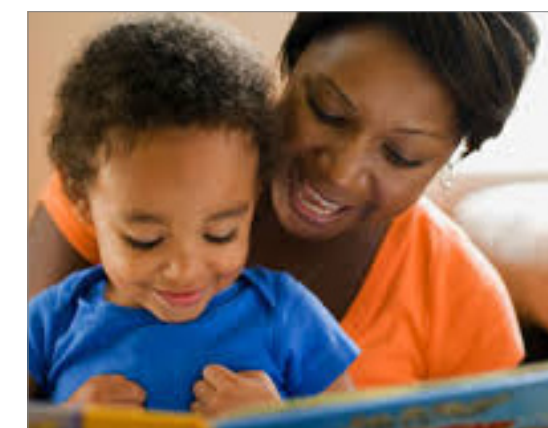
For those of us blessed with a parent who read aloud to us, we viewed it as a treasured, time-honoured tradition; one which surely had a hand in helping us reach our full potential in later years.

Reading aloud is a great way of connecting with little ones. Along with the benefit of spending regular time with your children, this activity supports healthy brain development that forms a priceless foundation for success at school and on the journey of life. Which toddler doesn't love sitting on their parent's lap and hearing that beloved voice reading aloud to them?

Reading aloud is invaluable when it comes to language development and promoting early literacy skills such as book handling and naming, understanding how stories work, recognising sounds and letters, expanding vocabulary and honing listening skills.

Reading aloud also boosts confidence, helps children cope better with anxiety, develops memory and expands children's worlds.

Sadly, surveys show that only half of parents read to their kids daily, and less than 10% of parents read to their children from infancy. ▲



From playschool to big school – how to help your child successfully transition

Moving from pre-school into a formal schooling environment is a big step not only for young children, but also for their parents. Doubts and anxiety often accompany this major move, but parents should aim to ensure a conscious transition which addresses specific issues that may arise, so that their child starts their school career on a solid foundation, an expert says.

“Some of the practical things can be very exciting – sorting out school uniforms and supplies, learning about the new routine, meeting the new teacher and exploring the new school grounds,” says Trudie Gilmore, General Manager at ADVTECH Junior Colleges.

“However, the increased demands and unfamiliar environment can be daunting, and children need to be eased into the new situation. Additionally, parental expectations can cause unnecessary pressure at this young age,” she says.

Gilmore says when embarking on this exciting new life chapter, parents and guardians should remember the following:

Allow for making mistakes

The lesson is in the learning, not only the outcome, notes Gilmore.

“At this age, parents should encourage their children to be more independent and, where possible, to think for themselves. Encourage your child to practise small ways to look after themselves such as dressing themselves, ensuring their bookbags are packed, and looking after their belongings. Encourage and praise them for trying, even when they don’t get it perfectly right.”

Practise perseverance

“It can be tremendously frustrating for young children if they are unable to complete a task to their satisfaction. Teach your child that when learning new things, it’s important that they keep on trying, even if they find things challenging. Don’t step in and ‘fix’ the situation, but rather guide, encourage and motivate.”

Play nicely

Junior school is an important social milestone, and the time when children need to start working and engaging in meaningful play with their peers, even if they don’t automatically get along. Encourage your child to be inclusionary and kind, which will help them develop emotional maturity, as well as confidence.

“You can also prepare together by acting out different situations with toys. Playing games that involve turns or rules, such as board games, are good for practising how to get along with others. This way, children can try out some of the skills they’ll need later to make friends.”

Encourage curiosity

“Being interested and curious about the things around us is really important for learning. Encourage your child’s natural sense of curiosity by talking to them about things, people and places when you are out and about. New research has shown clear benefits for children whose parents engage them in productive

conversation, that is, where each takes turns to listen and respond appropriately,” says Gilmore.

“Listen to and answer their questions, nurture their love of reading – an exciting and empowering new skill – and look things up on the computer together. Try to see the world through your child’s eyes, and talk and wonder about the everyday things you see and hear.”

Gilmore says parents must be prepared to help their children navigate and manage increased stress levels caused by more challenging schoolwork, homework, assessments, diversity within the school environment, after-school activities and possible bullying.

“Ensure your child is able to respond to the challenges they will face every day by limiting any additional pressure,” she says.

“And remember, sleep is key. Children who get enough sleep are likely to be less short-tempered and better able to handle school stress. Also beware of piling on extra-mural activities. We’ve come to believe that busy equals happy, but over-scheduling means less free time and family time.”

Our society is expecting more and more from children at younger ages, says Gilmore.

“Our job as parents and guardians is to help them understand and respond appropriately to these demands, and develop their emotional intelligence to set them up for a successful and productive school career.” ▲

What to consider when choosing to study after Grade 12

By Dr Naresh Veeran, Chief Commercial Officer of the Embury Institute for Higher Education

For all high-school learners, the National Senior Certificate (NSC) represents the gateway to further study. But what exactly are the options available to the average South African student and, more importantly, does one size fit all? Dr Naresh Veeran, Chief Commercial Officer at the Embury Institute for Higher Education, provides some valuable advice.

What should I study?

I have two daughters in high school who every so often raise the subject of further study with me. With my 16-year-old, it’s as clear as day. I see the makings of an artist who has little or no interest in pursuing anything remotely related to maths and science while, in the case of my 13-year-old, I see a scientist, a genuine problem solver, who enjoys the arts but who’d surprise us all if she pursued it as a career.

As different as they are, the advice I offered them both, though, was the same and it was the very same that my dad, a music teacher, offered me when I was in high school: find something that you really enjoy doing and you’ll never have to work a day in your life!

Look to your own family. Chances are that the happiest among them are the ones who love what they do.

While it is a given that your choice must also be able to support you financially when you eventually enter the world of work, choosing a field of study that you feel passionate about is the first step in the process. Passion fuels purpose but, more importantly, purpose fuels life.

Where should I study?

The South African tertiary landscape is a fairly regulated one which means that a particular qualification from University A is in fact considered to be no different from one obtained at University B.

Against the above, obtaining a qualification is more than just about a piece of paper waiting for you at the end of the road. It is in fact a journey; a journey made more meaningful when accompanied by an experience and strong institutional support along the way.

A great “journey”, then, would ideally incorporate opportunities for students to also grow holistically (vs only academically). Such growth could come from institutional support of students to participate in formal platforms for collaborating and co-creating, or the provision of both space and context for students to network. Participation in exchange programmes and having access to world-class learning technologies also contribute significantly to the overall learning experience.

Having worked in both the university and private higher education environments, I have found that some institutions are far better resourced and equipped to deliver a meaningful and value-laden “experience” than others. My recommendation here



Dr Naresh Veeran



would be for you to score your short-listed institutions against such factors as reputation, image, infrastructure, safety and security, social life, the availability of formal support mechanisms and, most importantly, against what employers and/or other practitioners in the industry where you intend working think about Institution A vs Institution B.

In the public education space, you can study at a University, a University of Technology, or a Technical and Vocational Education and Training or TVET college. Universities generally focus on academic research, degrees

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and post-graduate qualifications, while Universities of Technology focus on higher certificates, diplomas and, to an extent, degrees. TVET colleges offer mostly certificate courses that enable you to work in a technical or vocational field. In order to gain admission at a University or a University of Technology, you have to pass Grade 12 and meet specific admission criteria. However, TVET colleges generally allow admission with a Grade 9 pass.

Choosing between private and public institutions

Tertiary education in South Africa currently comprises 17 state-owned Universities, 9 state-owned Universities of Technology, and 50 state-owned TVET colleges. While this may seem like a large number of available public institutions, capacity at each institution is limited. This means that not everyone who applies and meets the entrance criteria are automatically accepted.

Many students thus choose to obtain a qualification at a private institution.

South African private higher education institutions or PHEIs, unlike their PHEI counterparts such as Harvard or Stanford in the US, are not allowed to call themselves universities, but may offer the same levels of qualifications as a public university. Embury Institute for Higher Education, for example, is the institution I help lead and it specialises in degrees, diplomas and higher certificates which, over the last two decades, helped produce some of the country's very best teachers.

At present, some 300 private providers of higher education currently help bolster the country's tertiary capacity.

Choosing a mode of study

Nearly half of all higher education students study through distance learning. Popularly known in some circles as the "learn while you earn" option, it is highly cost effective and offers flexibility. Distance learning students generally have the option to take a little longer to complete their qualifications than their contact learning counterparts and save money not having to travel to or live near a campus. Distance learning students also have the space to hold full-time jobs.

While distance learning is a viable option in both the public and private education spaces, it requires discipline and dedication together with a fair amount of maturity and focus.

How much will all this cost?

The first year of a Bachelor's Degree in Education at a public institution costs around R 70 000, of which the state subsidises half. Student fees are thus responsible for half that amount. At Embury, the full private experience will cost around R 48 000 in 2019.



If you're considering a private institution, keep the following in mind:

- **Choose a registered institution**
All private institutions must be registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training who issue a Registration Certificate. Ask to see it if in doubt.
- **Choose an accredited programme**
Ensure that the specific qualification is accredited. All accredited qualifications will appear on the Registration Certificate.
- **Choose a well-respected institution**
Employers and past students are your best sources to gauge institutional reputation. Google is another great way to find out what current students think of the institution.
- **Choose a specialist**
Most large private institutions offer a variety of qualifications while a handful specialise. Specialist institutions, e.g. those operating in the film, teaching or IT sectors, offer a unique learning experience given their singular focus, and that, in most instances, their lecturers are either industry practitioners or former sector professionals. Most importantly, specialist providers are generally respected by the industry, which means that employment rates among graduates from specialist institutions often reach in excess of 90 percent. ▲

Myth-busting: here's the truth about varsity life!

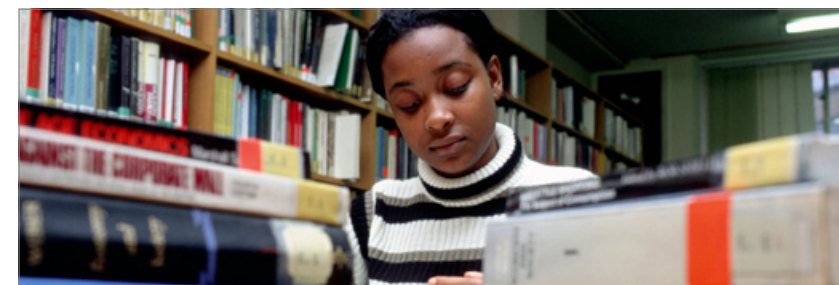
You've got 12 years of school behind you, and you've survived all the surprises that those years have thrown at you. But do you know what to expect of varsity life – and what are the chances that reality is going to meet your expectations?

We've all watched TV sitcoms based on university life, but they don't reflect the reality of what it's like for South African students," says Craig McMurray, CEO of Respublica Student Living.

"Varsity life is very different to what's seen on TV, and we've seen so many of our students struggle to adapt to the changes and learn to become more independent living away from home," he explains. "Our ResLife programme offers support to students as they adapt to their new lives, helping them avoid some of the most common pitfalls."

Respublica's team of ResLife counsellors have delved into some of the most common myths of student life so that you know what to expect when you arrive at campus:

- **Myth:** There's no register taken in classes, so there's no such thing as 'bunking' if you don't feel like going!
Busted: At school, there was always someone else to hold you accountable – now there's nobody else but you to make sure you that you show up when you're meant to, for the classes that you've paid for.
- **Myth:** Your lectures will hold you captivated, as you hang onto every word your lecturers utter.
Busted: Some lectures will be more interesting than others, while some are sure to be a little boring. But each lecture is a building block to your degree – so go to as many as you can!
- **Myth:** Wearing what you feel like every day is so much fun, and you'll get to put your best fashion foot forward every day, even when you're studying and writing exams.
Busted: With so many people on campus, nobody really cares what you're wearing – which makes this the perfect time to experiment with your own personal style. And yes, wearing shorts and slip slops counts as style too...
- **Myth:** Living a half-hour commute from campus is fine if the accommodation is cheaper, I'll use the time on public transport to study.



Busted: Firstly, no you won't study on public transport – it's too noisy, too crowded, and there's too much going on around you. Secondly, check whether it really is cheaper to live so far off campus by adding up what your transport is going to cost you each month. Perhaps you could spend your time and money better by being closer to campus – and you'll be closer to all the social action too.

- **Myth:** Living in a residence just distracts you from your studies – it's better to share a flat with friends.
Busted: Living in an all-inclusive residence like those offered by Respublica means that you don't have to worry about life admin stuff, like cleaning, setting up and paying for Wi-Fi, doing the laundry, and finding a gym close by.
- **Myth:** Student loan + study grant = ALL THE MONEY, BABY!
Busted: This is probably the first time you're managing all your expenses without the help of a parent – so rather be overly cautious with how you spend any allowances you have. Apart from the fact that it's never too early to start saving,

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you want to be sure that you don't run out of money before you run out of month. You also don't want to extend your student loan with its high interest rate, as this is expensive money that's only going to get more expensive once you leave varsity.

- **Myth:** It will be easy to manage my expenses when I'm living on my own
Busted: Living in your own flat or digs means you're responsible for all the expenses your parents have always taken care of, like electricity, water, Wi-Fi, laundry and gym, and you'll be surprised how quickly these all add up – and how quickly they can break your budget. Choosing an all-inclusive res, like those offered by Respublica, means that you know what your expenses will be each month, and there won't be any unpleasant surprises...

"The best approach to any new situation is to do your research, and manage the reality of it when you get there," says McMurray. "Every university is different,



just as every residence is different, but resisting the temptation to live the varsity life you've seen on TV and to plan for the real varsity life you're about to experience is key to making a success of your academic career." ▲

Johannesburg: 2nd best African city for students

The 2018 QS Best Student Cities survey saw Johannesburg ranked 79th out of the 100 top cities to study in. Johannesburg has risen from its previous rank of 84th in 2017.

Johannesburg achieved a particularly high score for affordability in the Best Student Cities index, reflecting its fairly low tuition fees and living costs. The only two cities in Africa that received a mention were Cape Town and Cairo. London was voted the world's number one student city, ending Montréal's short-term stint at the top.

QS's Student View indicator is based on the survey responses of 18 000 students worldwide. Students were asked to name the city in which they would most like to study, their experience studying in a particular city, and their intention to remain post-graduation. Cities were ranked according to performance in six composite indicators: Desirability, Rankings, Student Mix, Employer Activity, Affordability, and Student View.

For students looking for a welcoming environment to study with all the perks of a big city feel but a supportive friendly environment, Johannesburg may not always come to mind. However, it is easy to see why so many students love living in the City of Gold.

10 reasons why Joburg is the best place to study:

1. **Affordability and quality of life**
Johannesburg is one of the world's cheapest cities for students in the QS survey, reflecting its status as one of Africa's most affordable major cities. It ranks eleventh globally for affordability. QS measures the cost of living in a city, based on a range of factors like tuition fees and the cost of key consumer goods.
2. **Strong support culture for foreign students and expats**
Johannesburg has a strong expat network with foreign student support at many campuses. Monash South Africa, for example has over 50 nationalities on campus and a strong student advisory centre offering support and assistance for learners new to SA. Johannesburg has phenomenal private tertiary education and attracts students from across the continent.



3. Multitude of cultures

Johannesburg is home to a large number of residents from all over the world, with cultural mix including a China Town to an Indian market known as the Oriental Plaza, there are numerous cultural hubs to explore. Our city plays host to mosques, churches and shuls, all a testament to our varied cultures and traditions.

4. Vibrant social scene

No one can deny Johannesburg is amazing social environment with everything from sophisticated bars, shebeens, shisanyamas and clubs to laidback trendy markets and outdoor spots. Johannesburg offers a great deal for the student looking to enjoy their free time with newfound friends.

5. Strong urban regeneration

The CBD of our town has seen a surge in regeneration bringing with it strong African pride, interesting gathering spots merged with history and idiosyncratic elements, great for exploring with friends.

6. Business opportunities and great networking

Johannesburg is the heart of African business and studying in this hub will provide great networking, job training and internship opportunities for you. Many South Africans aim to live and work in Johannesburg due to higher salaries and greater demand for graduates.

7. Good transport network

Although Johannesburg has limited public transport, the network is growing daily.

The Gautrain connects many hubs, and with Gautrain busses, ReaVaya, bike paths and metro buses providing more links than ever. Using taxi services will help students travel to local spots outside of business hours.

8. Friendly people

Johannesburg has some of the friendliest people, from your Uber driver to supermarket teller, to lecturers and fellow students, Joburg citizens are always helpful and ready to share a joke or bit of banter. Jo'burgers believe in service with a smile!



9. Shopping and brands

Johannesburg hosts some of the largest and most highly regarded malls in Africa, from Clearwater Mall, to Sandton City, Rosebank and The Mall of Africa, great brands from high-end luxury to cheap and cheerful are available to students with a flair for fashion.

10. Amazing parks and recreation

Johannesburg is surrounded by amazing nature in every direction, from Hartbeespoort dam and Magaliesburg mountains to nature reserves like Lion Park and the Cradle of Humankind, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. But the heart of Johannesburg is equally green with six million trees in the city itself, and amazing Botanical Gardens providing green lungs for the city. The National Botanical Gardens in Roodepoort provide local students with a remarkable picnicking spot. Johannesburg enjoys a temperate, pleasant climate throughout the year.

Johannesburg is certainly a top city in Africa and it's easy to see why studying here is a great option. ▲

Great results, no Uni: study options if you performed better than expected

Many Matrics from the Class of 2018 currently find themselves in the fortunate position of having performed better than anticipated in their National Senior Certificate examination, achieving a Bachelor's pass and qualifying for higher education access.

But while they are now in a position to apply for further study, these prospective students need to ensure they do their homework before signing up with institutions still accepting applications for study in 2019, an expert says.

"In particular, parents and Matriculants must ensure they don't fall prey to institutions that are either not registered and accredited, or whose qualifications

are not recognised," says Nola Payne, Head of Faculty: Information and Communications Technology at The Independent Institute of Education, SA's largest private higher education institution.

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“The good news however, is that there are still exciting study options available, particularly in the private sector, where good institutions have a strong focus on work-ready programmes,” she says.

Payne says now is also a good time for even those prospective students already accepted into a programme, to consider whether they have chosen the right study path. If there are any doubts, they should have another look at available options rather than adopting a potentially expensive wait-and-see approach in their first year.

“This coming month provides an opportunity for prospective students to investigate all their options and sign up for a quality qualification with an accredited institution, whether they left it too late, or performed better than envisioned. And those who have already signed up, should honestly assess whether they are excited about the degree on which they will soon embark, as well as the institution they will attend.

“It is better to change course now, before spending time and money trying to make the wrong thing work, and becoming part of SA’s high first year dropout statistics,” says Payne.

“Make sure that you are studying for the right reasons, and that your qualification will provide clear access to a specific career, whether it be a professional qualification such as accounting, law or teaching, or in a new exciting career path such as brand management, digital marketing, network engineering, game design and development, and application and cloud development. Don’t just apply for any degree at any institution for the sake of earning a qualification,” she says.

Payne says South Africa’s single quality assurance system and one National Qualifications Framework means that any institution offering a registered and accredited qualification – whether public or private – is offering a qualification of equal standing.

She says all registered and accredited higher education institutions – whether they be public universities or private – are registered by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). They are only registered if they have been accredited by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and registered by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).



“To look up a qualification on the NQF, search for it on the SAQA website, or ask the institution for its SAQA identity number, which should be readily available. If the institution is recognised by the DHET and the programme is listed on the NQF, prospective students and their parents can be confident about the bona fides of any qualification they want to pursue,” says Payne.

She says that as the world of work changes and evolves, new programmes are constantly developed in response to workplace demands.

“This means there will regularly be new and more exciting options on offer compared to the past, and potentially fields of qualification that are more aligned with the career aspirations of prospective students. However, it is imperative that one does one’s homework carefully, because unscrupulous operators have become increasingly sophisticated in their methodology. Fraudsters are making the most of the often hard-to-understand language related to legitimate private higher education, which means that they are able to present offers that appear legitimate, but are not.

“It is good to have more choices, but make sure you make smart decisions,” says Payne. ▲

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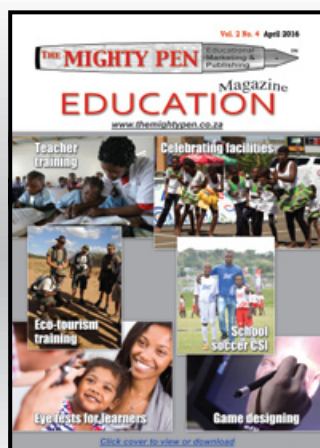
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