

## News

### Grow your own

We are keen to establish a garden plot for Menslink at the Narrabundah Community Gardens, Kootara Crescent, Narrabundah. No more complaints about the meat-only focus of a Menslink diet: grow your own veges! If you are interested in being part of the team that will organise this garden, and enjoy its produce, contact Nicholas on 6295 0173.

### The Annual Menslink Camp

Every November the Mentoring Programme has its annual camp. This years was to be at Congo Reserve – but we have had a change of venue.

The camp will now be at Depot Beach – just north of Batemans Bay. It is a very beautiful spot. The camp will be held from Friday Arvo 21st November to Sunday arvo 23rd November.

All Mentors and Mentorees are invited to attend. There is no need to RSVP just yet, that comes a little later in the year. There will be more information on this in the coming months.

## Link Up – May

### Climbing the Rock Wall

April's Link Up activity was actually held in early May – so how about that.

We met up on an absolutely beautiful Autumn Canberra day down at Erindale PCYC for a spot of Rock Wall climbing.

Everyone assembled in the Gym where the kindly people of the PCYC have set up their rock wall. The intricacies and safety points of climbing were expertly described to us by the manager of the centre and then away we went.

There are multiple levels of difficulty on the climbing wall – so beginners to quite proficient and daring climbers are catered for. All the Menslink dudes climbed quite well with a few discovering a real penchant for going up the wall.

For an activity that sounds quite intimidating – it really is quite safe and a lot of fun. It's also a damn good workout.

After the climbing we all headed outside the gym to where the BBQ was set up, and in the typical Menslink way we cooked and ate till we were stuffed. Then it was time to pack up and head off into the beautiful sunny day to enjoy the rest of the weekend.

I reckon a few of the fellas will be returning for a bit more climbing. Good luck to 'em and thanks to everyone who turned up.



# CEO's Message



A sense of community !...what does it mean? We often hear this phrase spoken, and we have a 'sense' of what it means, but it seems to be one of those intangible (sometimes tangible) things that we find hard to define.

At two recent Menslink activities I left with a pretty tangible 'sense of community'. A few weeks back Mentors and Menslink staff attended SafeTALK suicide awareness training and just last Friday we held another Mentoring Matters event. Both activities created an opportunity for 'catching up', sharing a few laughs and discussing some of the reasons why we are all interested in mentoring, Menslink and generally making a meaningful contribution to our community.

What is important about all this? Well, as we all strive to find balance in our busy lives it is increasingly important to take a break from our usual routines and make the effort to 'catch up' with friends. It is these opportunities that can reinvigorate and sustain us. So, I hope we can all 'catch up' again soon.

## Link Up

### 10 Pin Bowling

May 31st saw us rock up to the Tuggeranong 10 Pin Bowl for a bit of skittling action. We checked in with the lovely staff at the place who gave us our very stylish bowling shoes.

There was some heated competition on the lanes as everyone hurled down some heavy balls with the intention of knocking those pins into oblivion.

I did notice Mark H excelling himself in his first game – I may be wrong but I think he bowled a 145 game. Very impressive and enough to interest the bowling scouts who were seen prowling the lanes.

After the bowling shenanigans we adjourned to the nearby park on the Lake for a lovely BBQ. The weather on the day was beautiful and the dudes in attendance filled themselves on good food and good company.

The next Link Up will have an injection of new Mentor/Mentoree matches – which is great. There is always a sense of renewal with the new guys, and it gives Link Ups a fresh sense of energy.

### Menslink Business Breakfast

The Menslink Business Breakfast was recently held to highlight the work of Menslink and the importance of mentoring boys and young men in our community. The purpose of the event was for business people to become more informed about the issues Menslink focus on, and to provide an opportunity for the business sector to explore the meaning and value of mentoring in our community.

Mark Whithear from Upmarket Constructions (Menslink sponsor) gave an emotive talk on his own personal experience of mentoring and gave an insightful perspective on why Upmarket Constructions choose to support Menslink; Mark sighted the personal connection with the people and issues that are Menslink's focus.

Jeff Knowles from Canberra Grammar School (CGS) was the other guest speaker. Jeff entertained the audience with a juggling demonstration—all part of his work

This year the the Menslink Business Breakfast was held in conjunction with International Men's Health Week (IMHW). Men and boys face different health concerns than women and girls, and IMHW is an opportunity to both acknowledge these differences and look for ways to improve the health and wellbeing of men and boys. IMHW is also an opportunity to acknowledge the diversity of men and boys in Canberra and to celebrate the positive contributions of men and boys to their communities.

### Men's Health Week

Men's Health Week provides an opportunity to increase awareness of important male-specific health issues. It celebrates the contribution men make to family, work and the community, but reminds us that men don't need to 'tough it out' or 'go it alone'; and they shouldn't.

With this year's theme bringing a focus on rural men's health, the teams playing the three country games on 7 June - and the 'Legends of League' event - typify the week's main message of mateship and strong family ties being important for a man's happy and healthy life. It's not just about the benefits of physical fitness and playing a good game, it's also about doing something positive with your mates and your community - and that's all good for your health.

More information available at [menshealthweek.com.au](http://menshealthweek.com.au)



## MYM Report

The Mentoring Young Men program has had a wonderful beginning to 2008, many good things to report.

As Gaz has been keeping everyone up to date with the Link-Ups this year I will just recount the activities the guys have enjoyed together:

- January - It was movie night as we went to "No Country for Old Men"
- February - Kayaking on Lake Burly Griffin
- March - Cycling around Lake Burly Griffin
- April - Indoor Rock/Wall Climbing
- May - 10 pin Bowling

Which brings us to the June Link-Up which will be held at the Kingston Baptist Church Hall, where we will welcome the May intake of new mentor/mentoree matches ... plus the first instalment of "Financial Fitness" will be presented (a brief two part module designed for our mentorees discussing relevant financial matters).

This time of year is very exciting for MYM as we've just completed our first intake of mentor/mentoree matches for

the year. May saw us welcome in a new crop of mentors to experience the MYM training process which culminates with a Residential Weekend after two training nights. This year we utilised for the first time Camp Cottermouth, the new Scouts complex out at the Cotter. The fires of 2003 had gutted the old Camp Cottermouth but as the Phoenix rises from the ashes the new facility is truly a cut-above. The Residential Weekend went extremely well thanks to our solid team of mentor volunteers that looked after us better than our mothers could have ... perhaps? Sincere thanks go out to Tim, Ralph and Ron for their help in making our May Weekend a memorable success.

By the time this newsletter goes out Menslink staff and mentors will have taken part in "SafeTalk" an evening workshop discussing the signs of suicide prevention, presented by Oz Help.

Next month will see the annual Car Rally plus the second instalment of "Financial Fitness" for Link-Up and August will have our annual Mentor Retreat followed by the September intake of the new mentor/mentoree matches.

Lastly I would like to welcome Mark Harbottle to the MYM team. He has come to us from POSM and having already helped out with all of our Link-Ups this year he is a very valuable addition to our team. Mark also completed the mentor training with the May intake mentors thereby being fully prepared to take on the tasks assigned to him in the coming months. I look forward to his forthcoming contributions to the MYM program.

Please feel free to drop in for a cuppa with Gaz and me on our famous blue lounge.

Bryan

## POSM

The POSM program continues to provide students with a positive and worthwhile experience. Staff at all schools have enthusiastically replanted themselves after the term break. Summer crops are being pulled, and winter crops planted as Canberra's dramatic weather spirals into the cold and dark winter months.

Unfortunately like many of the plants, POSM as we know it, will not bud for spring. The programs core funding ends June 30, and has failed to receive follow on funding in the ACT 08/09 budget.

What this means for POSM is that the program will remain only in the three schools funded by St. George Bank. Moruya and Batemans Bay on the Coast, and Majura and Charnwood in Canberra, will cease to operate the POSM program beyond term two.

The POSM program has been a great success for schools involved, and demonstrates how alternative programs enhance student's experiences at school.

Without dedicated staff, the POSM program would not exist and we thank Nick, Dazza and Mark for their support.



# Menslink Calendar – Important Dates to stick on your fridge...

Date	Day	Start	End	Where	Food	What
19/6/08	Thursday	6.30pm	9pm	Kingston Baptist Church	Menslink Catering	Safe Talk
26/6/08	Thursday	6pm	8.30pm	Kingston Baptist Church	Pizza	Welcome New Guys
4/7/08	Friday	4.30pm	5.30pm	Menslink Office	BBQ	Mentoring Matters
26/7/08	Saturday	10am	1pm	Menslink Office	BBQ	Car Rally
8 – 9/8/08	Fri – Sat	Fri 4pm	Sat 3pm	Caloola Farm	BBQ etc	Mentor Retreat
28/8/08	Thursday	6pm	8.30pm	Menslink Office	Pizza	Movie Night
25/9/08	Thursday	6pm	8.30pm	Zone 3 Belconnen	TBA	Zone 3 laser game
30/10/08	Thursday	6pm	8.30pm	Kingston Baptist Church	Pizza	Welcome New Guys
18/11/08	Tuesday	6pm	Depends on the meeting	Menslink Office	Light Nibblies	Annual General Meeting
21 – 23/11/08	Fri – Sun	Fri 5pm	Sun 3pm	Depot Beach	BBQ etc	Annual Camp
6/12/08	Saturday	3pm	6pm	Cotter River	BBQ	Chrissy BBQ



**Programs that Menslink run include:**  
**MYM** (Mentoring Young Men),  
**YMSN** (Young Mens Support Network)  
 and **POSM** (Project Oriented School Mentoring)

## About Menslink

Incorporated in 2002, Menslink is a dynamic, non-profit community association that promotes the value, well-being and social participation of men, in particular young men and boys, by providing appropriate and professional services with outreach activities.

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