



ABOVE AND BEYOND

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY ADVISORS

VOL 14 NO 3

Why I Attend the National Conference



CSLC 2011

The 27th Canadian Student Leadership Conference will happen in the fall of 2011 in Corner Brook.

Dates: Sept. 27 to October 1, 2011

Location: Corner Brook Regional High School, Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador

CASAA has applied to Heritage Canada for travel grants for students to defray the cost of travel to the conference. Check the CSLC website for further information on these grants.

Students will be billeted for the conference with local families. Advisors should book accommodations early at the Mamateek Inn (1.800.563.8300) or the Comfort Inn (1.709.639.1980)

Registration for the conference is now open online. You should register for the pre-conference tour to Gros Morne National Park early.

Your co-chairs for CSLC 2011 are:

John Dennison
(john.dennison@wnlsd.ca)
Reuben Austin
(reuben.austin@wnlsd.ca)

The website for the conference is found at www.cslc2011.ca

I am a self-confessed CSLC junkie. I have been to conferences in B.C., Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, and P.E.I. CSLC is a *can't miss* opportunity for me for many reasons:

I have attended many professional development sessions elsewhere, and sometimes I walk away with nothing. At CSLC, I always get new leadership ideas that I can try the very next week in my school. These ideas come from formal sessions or informal chats comparing and sharing ideas with fellow advisors from across the country.

I have had the opportunity to make lifetime friends all across Canada. CSLC is like a class reunion each year, catching up with each other about jobs, family etc. It is a great thing to be able to reach out to fellow advisors nation-wide for help and advice. These friendships can pay off in unexpected ways. Thanks to a fellow advisor, I had great seats to the Alouettes vs. Eskimos in Montreal last fall!

In our leadership room, we put up the pictures of kids that have attended past conferences. These kids come back infused with excitement and ideas that spread to the rest of the class. Our new students see their example and strive to be chosen to attend a future CSLC. It raises the quality of the whole program.

Upon our return from Montreal last fall, I had some teachers and coaches comment about big changes they had seen in one of the Gr. 11 students who attended CSLC. They talked about how she seemed more confident, happy, and selfless. Three weeks after CSLC we had Keith Hawkins speaking at Centennial. He asked me to recommend a student who he could speak with in front of all the Gr. 10s. He asked her to describe her CSLC experience to 600 Gr. 10s. With confidence she spoke about how she learned that We is more important than Me among other things. I was very proud. To me, this is the most important reason to attend CSLC.

So I encourage you to suffer through the forms, sub plans, and trip planning because CSLC is worth it!

See you in Cornerbrook, Fall 2011.

*Brent Dickson
Centennial High School*

Not for Sale

“Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little.”

Edmund Burke



RAK: KNOW IT TO DO IT

Students are often asked to participate in activities that they are not quite sure about the intrinsic meaning of. It is more helpful to run a Random Acts of Kindness Day after students fully understand what real kindness is. Try the following discussion questions before you embark on a Random Acts of Kindness Day.

1. What is your personal definition of kindness?
2. Have you ever felt disappointed or cheated because you did something nice for another person, but he or she did not return the favor?
3. If you expect to get something back, are you then performing a kind act or are you really trading favors for favors?
4. Has anyone ever done something for you anonymously, without expecting something in return?
5. Is volunteering to complete your community hours for school an act of kindness?
6. How do you learn how to be kind?
7. Why should we run a Random Acts of Kindness campaign?

Lights out. Gym quiet. We are live!

Auctioneer:

“Our next item up for bid is a lovely prize possession! IT stands 5 feet, 6 inches tall. IT has lovely blond curls, a submissive nature and will please ITs owner. Satisfaction guaranteed. Ladies and Gentlemen, let’s start this auction!!! Your DREAMS are about to come true! I present to you, travelling all the way from Ukraine, the lovely, Anastasia”

...and this is how we began the presentation to every class at Strathcona Composite High School. The students and staff were caught unaware that they were witnessing a modern day example of Human Trafficking. From this dramatization, we moved to a student-led and vice squad presentation on Human Trafficking. It was a session that began with laughter and ended with sadness.

One of the things I love about teaching experiential learning is that I often find myself immersed in the “experience” and similar to the students we teach, in the role of the learner. When we launched our annual global service project to the student body, few of the “non-leadership” students had a clue we were tackling the issue of Human Trafficking, and like our audience, I was shocked when I first learned the facts about Human Trafficking on the local and global stage. I had no clue that there are 27 million people world-wide, that are in “Modern Day Slavery” or that Human Trafficking is now second behind only the drug exchange for trafficking crimes because unlike “drugs” or “weapons”, “people” are a renewable resource. I did not consider that “Modern Day Slavery” has more victims now than the African Americans enslaved in the United States prior to Abraham Lincoln’s call for emancipation of the slaves in the mid 1800’s. I did not know that people of all ages, genders and nationalities are being bought and sold for child labor, child soldiery and sex slavery. I also could not believe that Human Trafficking was happening in Canada, let alone my own city. For example, like many citizens, I thought “prostitutes” worked the streets because they wanted to or they needed to, and not because they are forced to. I have since learned that this is NOT the case. When children are dreaming about “what they want to be when they grow up”, not one of them thinks “I want to work the streets, many times a night... when I grow up”. Light bulb – on!

Instead, what I learned is that we can do something about this dark issue and all it takes is a dedicated group of citizens, non-profits, businesses and governments that care about equal rights for all people to spread awareness and create proper legislation. What I learned is that leadership programs across Canada can make a difference by educating their school populations and communities about the severity of this issue and how to look for signs of trafficking in neighborhoods and municipalities.

We have been fortunate to be mentored by Member of Parliament, Joy Smith, author of “Invisible Chains: Canada’s Underground Network of Human Trafficking,” Ben Perrin and a phenomenal organization called “Not For Sale Campaign” (www.notforsalecampaign.org). The Not For Sale Campaign are leaders of a global movement to abolish modern day slavery and have an exceptional number of programs aimed at rehabilitation of trafficked victims and prevention of trafficking in the first place.

To address this issue we have held a Fair Trade Day, Un-Mask the Issue Day (similar to Vow of Silence) and are concluding with a Not For Sale-sponsored “Free2Walk and Free2Play” Day. I am eagerly hoping, like any advisor would, that we will reach our financial goal of raising \$40,000 for the Not For Sale organization. However, in the big picture, this issue is about awareness because awareness equals prevention. As a result, our awareness goal has been to create 150,000 conversations about Human Trafficking (hopefully this article will help) and that we will write 1500 petition letters to the federal government advocating for the creation of an Anti-Human Trafficking National Action Plan. If your students might be interested in signing this petition, see this link:

<http://www.gopetition.com/petition/41128.html>

On a personal note, considering the nature of this issue, I have found grappling with Human Trafficking to be emotionally taxing. It would have been much easier to sway the choice of our issue in a new direction. However, isn’t this what Leadership programs are all about? Taking on challenges? A former student said the greatest thing she learned about leadership, is that leaders need to do the dirty work

and gravitate to the jobs nobody else wants to do. She was talking about cleaning up after school events, but I am confident that like her, when our students graduate and become future business and political leaders, more of them will be willing to do the “dirty” work. In closing, we believe in the words of Robert Alden, “There is not enough darkness in all the world to put out the light of even one small candle.” Please help spread the light!

For more information, please see:

Strathcona Campaign Website: <https://nfs.webconnex.com/sconalords>

Not For Sale Campaign Website: <http://www.notforsalecampaign.org/>

Tom Yonge

Strathcona Composite High School, Edmonton

“Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.”

Elie Wiesel

S³ SKILLS: SMILE, SHAKE, SHARE

A poke on Facebook is a way to encourage someone to respond to you. In real life, we call it getting acquainted. It is a learned skill that most politicians, pastors, teachers and sales representatives use expertly. Student leaders also need to become experts at the art of getting acquainted. One of your primary roles is to build positive relationships with the students and staff at your school.

Practice these getting acquainted techniques on Random Acts of Kindness Day. The goal is to use these skills in the hallways, at lunch and during class. Check them off as you do. These three simple things can instantly make your school a happier and more inviting place for everyone.

Smile: Display a kind and caring attitude each day.

Shake: Connect with all people through handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, points of recognition. Try to call people by their names. Introduce yourself to new people.

Share: Build positive relationships by inviting people in to share your “space.” Discover commonalities: tell people about yourself and ask people questions about their experiences. Introduce people to each other .





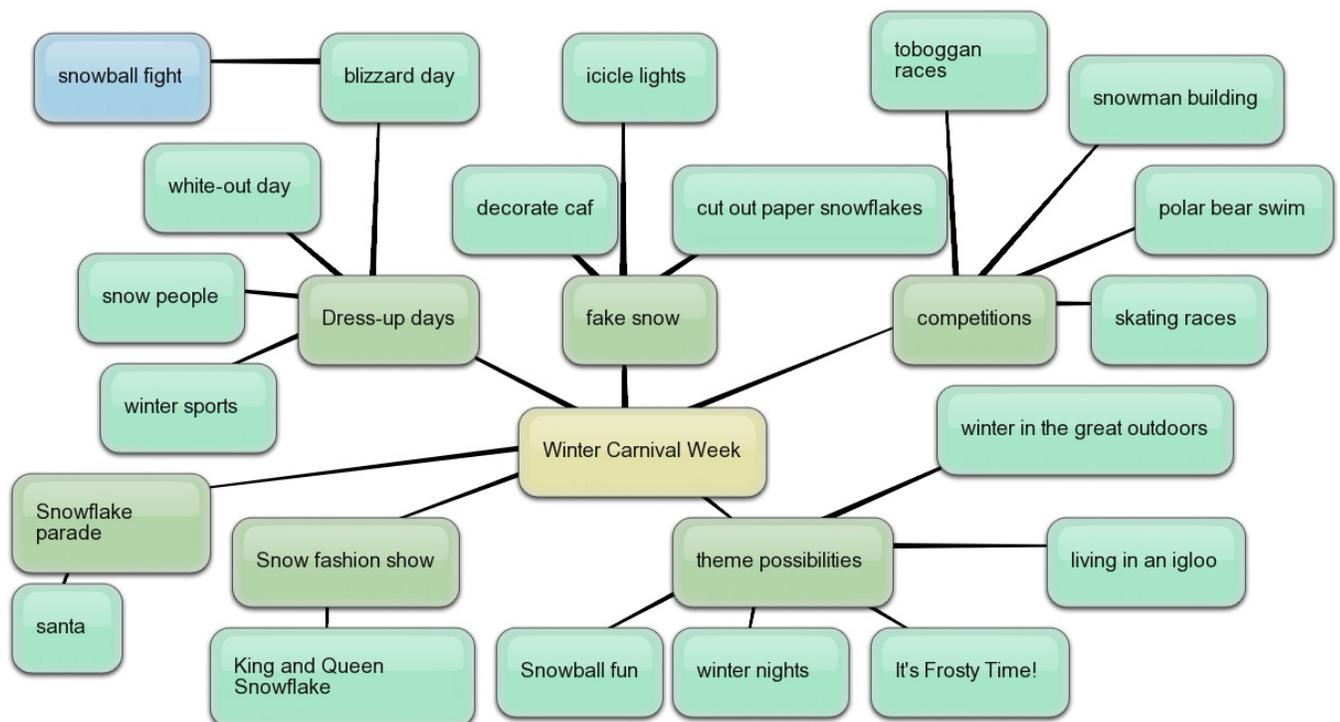
Generating Project Ideas

By Lyn Fiscus

Everything begins with an idea. Someone has an idea for a project, or an event comes up on the school calendar that your group has always been responsible for, and our members start asking, “What should we do for _____ this year?” If you’ve ever noticed that the activities your organization sponsors tend to be the same from year to year—oh sure, you might have a different theme for a dance, or sell ghost lollygrams instead of pumpkin shaped ones at Hallowe’en, but usually there are only minor twists on old ideas—you might want to invest some effort in creative brainstorming.

Sky’s the Limit Brainstorming

Ever had a brainstorming session that was more of a gentle rain than a storm? Generating creativity on demand isn’t easy, so you need to prime the pump for a good brainstorming session. To do this, begin with the task at hand that will get people thinking beyond the usual. For example, before brainstorming themes for an upcoming dance, take five minutes and ask your group members to come up with all the ways life would be different if we had two thumbs on each hand—or if animals could talk, or if our elbows bent the other way, or any oddball question. It’s kind of goofy, but once people start thinking about the question they’ll come up with many unusual ideas. You can segue into a brainstorming session on an upcoming project by saying something like, “These are great ideas. Now how can we apply that same creativity to making our winter dance theme something fun and different?”



Another technique that can stimulate out-of-the-box thinking is to change the normal parameters for a project. Ask members to pretend for a few minutes that the budget for an upcoming project is \$100,000. With that kind of money, what would you do? Many outrageous ideas are bound to be mentioned, but write them all down. Using a mind map is a good way to help people build on others' ideas and link related items. (Check online for free mind-mapping software like that found at www.bubbl.us. The mind-map on the previous page was generated with this software.) After members have gotten all their ideas out, take a look at what is listed and ask them to come up with ways that these impractical ideas could be tweaked into something usable. For example, instead of having a celebrity at the event, how about having a celebrity look-alike contest? Or, instead of a famous band, what about an air-band contest or a lip-synch contest? Instead of hiring a skywriter to write a message to publicize an event, how about a radio-controlled model airplane pulling a banner around the parking lot after school? Ask yourselves, "What can we do with little or no budget that would be like this expensive idea?"



Borrow with a Twist

While we're on the subject of adapting ideas, consider all the ways you can adapt things that are popular in our culture right now and convert them into successful activities at your school. Television shows are a goldmine of ideas for activities.

- How about sponsoring a [Your School's] *Got Talent* contest instead of the usual tired old talent showcase?
- Do a take-off of *The Amazing Race* for a class competition during spirit week.
- Pair students with staff members to have a dance-off similar to the *Dancing with the Stars* television show.
- Get a couple of teachers to agree to trade classrooms and do a *Trading Spaces*-style redecorating.
- Have an *Iron Chef* cook-off between faculty members or coaches.
- Organize an evening of game shows with students or faculty members as contestants.

Advertising is another element of popular culture that can be mined for ideas. Millions of dollars are spent each year by marketing firms to research what works so they can produce more effective ads. Take a lesson from what works for them and see if you can adapt a successful campaign to work for your activity. Don't copy trademarked or copyrighted campaigns, but consider what makes the ads appealing or effective, and strive to replicate the look or feel of the original by translating it into words and images that work for your activity.



Sometimes just making students aware that it's good to do things differently can stimulate more creativity. When everyone knows "that's the way we've always done it" isn't necessarily the right way or the best way, you'll be amazed at the innovative ideas that may start bubbling up as your group members work to put their own creative stamp on group activities. ■

From the book *Adviser Essentials: Project Planning*

You can purchase the book from the website run by Lyn Fiscus:
leadershipteacher.webnode.org

It's Just a Chicken

"I've missed more than nine thousand shots in my career. Twenty-six times I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

Michael Jordan



We would all like to believe that the world should operate fairly—that every playing field is level. Yet we all know this isn't true. Sometimes things aren't going to go our way—we won't get every promotion, win every lottery (especially the ones we don't play), or place first in every competition. We can't let that discourage us from pushing ourselves. We need to acknowledge that there are forces at work that are beyond our control, and we need to try harder to keep things moving forward. If we fall into the "that's not fair" game, refusing to acknowledge the realities that affect our lives, we'll get stalled.

When I was a kid, our big vacation was traveling to Brainerd, Minnesota, to visit the famed Paul Bunyan Land, which is just like Disneyland . . . only different. Next to the Stearns County Fair, this was as good as it got.

One of the great joys of parenthood is taking your own children back to your favourite vacation spots. You get to reconnect with your childhood and share the experience through your children's eyes. So, of course, Sue and I took the kids to Paul Bunyan Land.

As you enter the park, a twenty-six-foot-tall talking Paul Bunyan statue greets you by name. (Prior to entering the gates, the parents slip their children's names to an attendant and the giant booms out a personalized welcome.) We loved this when we were kids! It was a lot easier to impress us back then.

When Sue and I arrived at the park with our kids, I slipped the attendant their names, and sure enough, Big Paul bellowed out, "Welcome, Matt, Mike, and Katie from Minnetonka, Minnesota!"

I was impressed and excited for my family. "How about that kids?" I asked.

Matt, our eldest at ten years old, replied, "Did you give him our names on the way in, Dad?" So much for the awe I expected to see in my kids' eyes.

The park seemed a lot smaller to me as an adult and not quite as magical as I had remembered it. But things got better when we rounded a corner, and there they were—the tic-tac-toe-playing chickens! I had squared off against these chickens as a kid, and I couldn't wait for our children to do the same.

There were about five chickens, each in its own cage. You put a quarter in a slot, and the chicken pecked at some food to trigger the tic-tac-toe game.

Our son Matt took on a chicken as an X hit the lighted display. Matt picked an O; the chicken pecked again and an X went up. Matt picked another O, and before you knew it, the game was over, and the chicken had won.

"Dad, that was stupid, and it wasn't fair!"

"Why wasn't it fair, Matt?"

"Because the chicken got to go first, and whoever goes first in tic-tac-toe has an edge."

"Matt, it's a chicken," I reminded him.

20/20 PROJECT

Our two leadership classes committed to 20 days of 20 good deeds. I did this assignment along with them and realized that this was more difficult than it seemed. I asked the students to step out of their comfort zones and try to do good deeds that went above and beyond. The students recorded their good deeds in their journals on a daily basis, and then at the end of the project they had to write a reflection.

At first I thought many students were not taking this project seriously, but when I read their journal entries I discovered that most of them had definitely gone above and beyond the call of duty and really performed some amazing good deeds.

*Joni Blaxland
Riverside Secondary
Port Coquitlam, BC*

Our second son, Mike, who was eight years old, took his turn with the chicken. The quarter went in, the lights turned on, the chicken pecked, and an X appeared. Mike picked an O, and the game was on. Three moves later, the game was over, and the chicken had won.

“Well that was dumb, Dad. It wasn’t fair!” cried Mike.

“Why wasn’t it fair, Mike?”

“Because that chicken plays tic-tac-toe every day, and I haven’t played in over a month!”

“Mike, it’s a chicken.”

Our youngest child, Katie, aged four, stepped up to take on the chicken. “Come on Katie,” I cheered, “show the boys how to do it.”

The quarter went in, the lights turned on, and the chicken started pecking. An X went up, Katie picked her O, and a few pecks later, the chicken had won.

The score? Chickens: 3. Scharenbroich children: 0.

“That wasn’t fair, Dad!” exclaimed Katie.

“Why is that, honey?” I asked.

“Because I’m only a little kid, and that is a professional chicken.”

“Honey, it’s just a chicken.”

Frustrated, we left Paul Bunyan Land and went to KFC for a bucket of chicken.

My point? Life isn’t fair, and sometimes, the chicken wins.

How many of us let the chicken get to us? How many of us let the little stuff impact how much we enjoy life? How many of us acknowledge when we’ve been beaten and learn from it, instead of taking refuge in excuses and denial? Instead of dwelling on the fact that life isn’t fair—acknowledge that it’s not fair and move on.

If life were fair, you’d always beat the chicken. You’d get that promotion, buy that new car, or take that fun vacation.

But life isn’t always fair, and the other person gets the job, drives the car, or brags about the cool trip . . . and we curse the chicken for it.

Face it: For whatever reason, we sometimes don’t get a fair shake, and we have to acknowledge the situation and adjust accordingly. Sometimes, the chicken is going to win, and we can choose to see life as unfair or shrug it off, giving ourselves a second run at it.

Remember that it’s just a chicken, and sometimes we have to put up with fowl play.

Mark Scharenbroich

article from: *Nice Bike: Making Meaningful Connections on the Road of Life*

You can learn more about Mark and purchase his new book from his website found at:

www.nicebike.com

“Start by doing what’s necessary, then what’s possible and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”

Francis of Assisi

ELECTION TIP: BE VISIBLE

One of the most common phrases heard at voting time is, “I don’t even know who is running.” Don’t let this happen to you. Try these tips:

Make sure that your posters are visible. This is a very important way to get noticed during student elections. Get your posters printed professionally on 11x17 paper—it makes a big difference. Also, it is not really very expensive since you would have to pay for ink and paper on your home computer anyway.

Hang out in common areas. If your school has a cafeteria, lounge, or other gathering spot, make sure that you spend time there between classes. Don’t be afraid to approach students and introduce yourself. Be friendly and polite, but keep your conversations brief if students do not seem very interested. If you like, hand out individual goodie bags, with your campaign information attached.

Speak in front of classes. Ask your teachers if you can spend a minute introducing yourself at the very beginning of a class. This is an easy way to let many students know who you are. Keep your talk very brief (you are interrupting a class, after all) and provide your contact information for any questions. Speak in front of classes that you are in as well as classes that you are not in.

Kathleen Rose
Suite101.com

“Our grand business in life is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand.”

Thomas Carlyle

Above and Beyond

is the official newsletter of the Canadian Association of Student Activity Advisors. The newsletter is published 3 times a year for schools all across Canada.

To learn more about membership, go to www.casaaleadership.ca/join.html

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Canadian Association of Student Activity Advisors

Resources

Be sure to visit the CASAA website for more lesson plans, activity ideas and a complete list of resources.
casaaleadership.ca



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY ADVISORS
EMPOWERING YOUTH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Alvin Law: There's no such word as can't

Over 13,000 babies around the world were deformed in the early 1960's because of a morning sickness drug, Thalidomide. Alvin Law was born without arms after his birth mother, thinking it was completely safe, used just a couple of the tiny pills and their lives were forever altered. Yet, what may have become a tragic life-story did not turn out that way. Today, Alvin is not only a completely independent, remarkably successful professional speaker, but proof that out of nothing can arise one of the most inspiring stories you will ever witness.

Alvin speaks across Canada to school audiences and his program challenges the audience to believe that anything is possible with the right attitude. Alvin talks about growing up in the sixties when attitudes towards disabilities were anything but positive, including being stereotyped as severely crippled.

Over 1.5 million students across North America and around the world have been touched by Alvin's inspiring self-image. The most consistent comment from school administrators is Alvin's ability to keep a full-school assembly not just captivated, but asking for more.

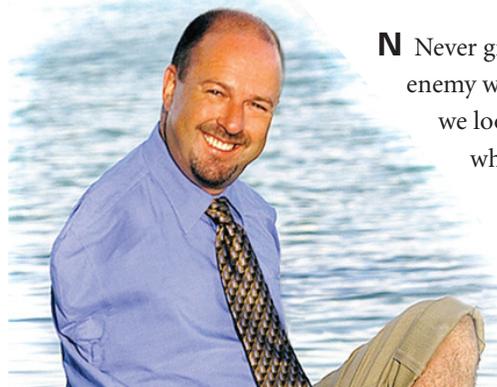
Alvin's Laws of Life

A Attitude is more than just being positive... it's a way of looking at life, ours and everybody's. It is said to be Everything because it is Everything. It defines who we are and what we become!

L Learning is the greatest gift we give ourselves. It can transform us from nobody to somebody and is the great equalizer. To not learn as much as we can is to disrespect the gift of life. In learning, we must also ask questions. That's good because people need to listen more and talk less. There is knowledge all around us... we just have to listen for the answer. To listen is to learn and to learn is to grow.

V Value your life and spirit. Too many people live another "V", that of Victim. It's true, bad things happen to good people and there are victims. The trouble is there's no answer to the question, "Why Me?" Even worse, Victims often get stuck in their past when what they need is to live for today and move toward the future. When you focus on moving forward, you never know what you'll discover. Everyone has value... finding it, that's the real trick.

I Imagination is the key that unlocks the power of potential. It is not owned by the young but they are best at using it. It defines the difference between Obstacles and Possibilities! Imagination leads to dreams and dreams make life worth living. Dreams can come true ... this I know.



N Never give up!! Easy to say, hard to do. The biggest enemy we will ever have we encounter every time we look in a mirror. Yet mirrors do not reflect who we truly are...our lives do.

CASAA now carries Alvin's DVD and book, *Passages*, as a great way to bring this talented Canadian speaker to your students. You can find more about Alvin at: www.alvinlaw.com