EDITORIAL

Graeme Perry

Risk drinking, late night street assaults and deaths (Miller, et al., 2012, p. 1); chronic gambling—pokies, sports betting on TV, blatantly promoted in sports commentary; have now attracted broad media comment and government reaction.

Our society is being forced to review and reassess the consequences of expressed social values that are having alarming consequences in unexpected and unwarranted loss of life. Loss of life is usually considered as death, but is also expressed in a life that is less than optimal.

Alcohol is contributing to the disproportionate number of youth road deaths (25%) compared to their segment of the population (12%). Nearly half (40%) of the road deaths and trauma of 20–25 year olds involve alcohol (Lynch, 2013). Risk drinking is involved in about half of the assaults of men and 84% of sexual assaults of women. Seventy per cent of police time is taken up in dealing with alcohol-related issues (Weber, 2013). Collins and Lapsley (2008, cited in Miller, et al., 2012) calculated "The estimated cost of alcohol to the community is $15.3 billion including crime, violence , treatment costs, loss of productivity and premature deaths in 2004–5" (p. 1).

Problem gambling hides the emotional trauma of homelessness, loss of family, professional opportunity and productive life. King (cited in Dowling, 2013), reporting recent research (Dowling, 2013) of 13 to 17 year olds, claims 25% reported gambling as part of playing a video game. Forty percent (40%) of those who gambled in a video game or in online mode reported an intention to gamble with money in the future. Those who gambled online without using money were three times more likely to also report gambling with money. King claims that after downloading poker machine apps, "I tried to lose money, it was impossible" (p. 3). This misrepresentation of the odds of gambling is one of the dangers that establishing a learnt habit of 'play' gambling presents for a child's future, given the high probability for them to make this transfer.

Collier in this TEACH issue presents a model of Christian education that addresses the 'reality' of the world, addressing life 'with its fragility and horror'. Collier advocates engaging students in interactive pedagogies, exploration and discussion, wrestling with problems and consequences within a supportive environment to transmit values.

Nielsen suggests values sharing requires both support and acceptance of imagining, for it is required to envision situations within which values are challenged, the consequences of alternative outcomes assessed and specific responses more highly valued.

Teaching that 'is a sharing of realities' a 'weaving of connections', a 'binding together', a challenging of secular threats, is affirmed by Roy as actual 'ministry'. Parents appreciate these traits of school ethos but prioritise effective learning within a caring environment before ethos when selecting schools. Based on this Beamish and Morey advise school improvement strategies to address a broad spectrum of desirable characteristics, rather than focussing on specific traits. Educational change leaders can support staff 'voyages' through change, and Matthes offers staff asserted desirable strategies. A healthy behaviour modifying potential change is level of exercise, as investigated by Herman, Beer and Morton.

The basic resource for religious teaching is the Word. Choosing a Bible version, including an electronic form, Bruce and Thomson suggest can make use more effective. Watts expresses dependence on His Word in forming spiritual vision within government schools and invites participation in creating values within students that challenge pervasive negative social 'norms'. TEACH

> ***Loss of life is usually considered as death, but is also expressed in a life that is less than optimal***

References

Dowling, J., & Collins, S-J. (2013, May 19th). Gaming habits are learnt early. *The Sun Herald*, p. 3.

Lynch, R. (2013, May 13th). Push for P-plates until 25. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Retrieved from http://smh.drive.com.au/motor-news/push-for-pplates-until-25-20130520-2jx2s.html

Miller, P., et al. (2012). Dealing with alcohol-related harm and the night-time economy (DANTE). *Hunter New England Population Health* (HNEPH). Retrieved from http://www.ndlerf.gov.au/pub/Monograph_43.pdf

NSW's Westmead Hospital's Trauma Unit. (2011). *Bstreetsmart: Smart safer drivers. An event intitative of the Trauma Service at Westmead Hospital*. Retrieved from http://www.balnaves foundation.com/current_grants_details/bstreetsmart

Weber, S. (May 2nd, 2013). OPINION: Time to show some bottle in booze battle. *The Newcastle Herald*. Retrieved from http://www.theherald.com.au/story/1474808/opinion-time-to-show-some-bottle-in-booze-battle/



[Photography: Glenys Perry]

[Damon Quick (Head of Junior School Campus) engaging a class at Hills Adventist College, Castle Hill, NSW. Photograph: Hills Adventist College]