Marsden students are capable of more than they think!

Is your child’s brain plastic? The short answer is YES! Brain plasticity, known in science circles as neuroplasticity is a very exciting area of brain-related research. Neuroplasticity is the lifelong ability of our brains to reorganize neural pathways based on new experiences. A neural pathway connects one part of the nervous system with another and serves to connect relatively distant areas of the brain.

In the area of learning, we acquire new knowledge and skills through instruction or experience; in order to learn or memorize a fact or skill, our brains make new, persistent functional changes that represent this new learned knowledge. So the ability of the brain to change with learning is an example of neuroplasticity.

Changes within the brain in response to new information, images, concepts, etc. can be quite significant. The brain creates new areas and connections, re-routing existing connections. Until recently, it was largely believed that as we aged, our brain’s neural networks became more and more fixed, making new learning and cognitive improvement efforts difficult. But an enormous amount of recent research has revealed that our brains never stop adjusting or lose their plasticity, even into very old age.

By making new learning a priority activity in everyday life, and by regularly exercising the brain, through exposure to new kinds of information, images, concepts, relationships, you can change your brain for the better. It will become stronger, particularly if you can devote some time to new learning and experiences as well as exercising your brain and existing skills.

Do not accept the excuse from your child that they are no good at certain kinds of learning. Often this prejudice is based on a poor experience. Often they carry this prejudice into adulthood believing that they are unable to learn some things or just have poor ability. Your brain can learn to be better at anything. As the research has shown, the brain is plastic and waiting, even into old age! Young people need to challenge themselves in their learning experiences and maintain this commitment to learning into later life.

At Marsden we strongly believe that ‘Learning for Life,’ our school motto is not only possible, but vitally important. We stress that each student is capable and ensure that we provide a wide variety of learning challenges for every student.

Gus Vrolyk
Principal

Reforms to P&C Federation

The NSW Parliament has introduced legislation to reform the NSW Federation of Parent and Citizens Associations, which has suspended operation pending Supreme Court action. While these reforms will not affect the day-to-day operation of individual school P&Cs, they will introduce a new executive structure which will ensure the Federation operates as a modern and representative body on behalf of school P&C Associations.

Each school’s P&C Association will be asked to vote for councillors and delegates who will represent their electorate at the Federation’s Annual General Meeting and councillors who will serve on the Federation’s Board of Management. More information will be available on the Department’s website at


Attention - Parent Teacher Night Years 7 & 12 Wednesday 4th June, 4pm - 6pm. All welcome

Uniform Shop News

The following are now in stock:
- size 24 boys short sleeve shirts
- size 14 girls short sleeve shirts
- size 12 unisex long sleeve shirt

School Photos

School Photographs will hopefully be out on Monday 8th June. Apologies for the delay, from Advanced-Life Photography, which is due to a software issue. I will get these out to the students as soon as they arrive.

Jim Simaitis
Year 10
Our Year 10 roll call groups continue to receive the benefits of the new initiatives we have introduced this year. Last week Mr Leece organized for the High Achievers group to visit Channel 10. It has become extraordinarily difficult to get access to the TV stations but somehow Mr Leece talked his way in (which is no surprise to those of us who work with this very articulate and persuasive teacher)! The students were the audience for the Channel 10 morning show, Studio 10, met the stars, had a back stage tour and were treated to a BBQ. They were also congratulated on national television as being the “very well behaved students from Marsden High School”.

The Johnson and Johnson group had the morning at Macquarie University where they were taught study skills from a university lecturer. After lunch on the grounds of the university they were given a behind the scenes tour of Macquarie Private Hospital, one of the most modern, state of the art hospitals in Australia. Students toured the hospital and a variety of professionals eg nurses, doctors, operating staff, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and hospitality services give the students an insight into their daily routines. A number of students have since expressed an interest in entering the health industry.

The TAFE group visited Ultimo TAFE and had a tour of a number of the faculties that are not offered at Meadowbank TAFE in order to expand their understanding of what courses and facilities are available at TAFE.

Ms Hoy organised for the International students to visit the Powerhouse Museum and Ultimo TAFE, and their story follows.

I would especially like to thank Mr Leece, Ms Swinkels, Ms Dalal, Mr Sarroff, Ms Hoy, Mr Simaitis, Ms Bernyk, Mrs Hart, Mrs Moore, Ms Bernyk and Mr Dubris for their organisation and supervision of our Year 10 students, because without their dedication and willingness to become involved, our students would not have these opportunities.

Year 11
Congratulations to the Year 11 students for their exemplary conduct during the half yearly exams. Students will be receiving results this week and next. It is important to understand where you lost marks so that you are prepared for further assessments and yearly exams next term.

Year 12
All parent/carers should have received an SMS informing them about parent/teacher night on Wednesday 4th June, 4-6pm. In addition all Year 12 students should have brought home a note giving details of the web address and the code needed to book a parent/teacher interview.

Year 12 Lunch time sessions
Making the most of Year 12 and beyond
We have always prided ourselves on the fact that Marsden High School students have had a great understanding of the HSC, how it works and their options for training and work after the HSC. In order to maintain that tradition a series of lunchtime lectures have been planned for Yr 12 students. It is very important for all students to attend these sessions in the Common Room before they book their individual careers interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session</th>
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| Week 5B - Mon 26 May | How to get better results in the Trials and HSC  
How HSC marks and ATARs are calculated |
| Week 6A - Mon 2 June | University  
Applying, fees, choosing courses, which university |
| Week 8A - Mon 16 June | Am I eligible for any extra points  
Bonus points, ACCESS Scheme, Principals recommendation etc |
| Week 9B - Mon 23 June | TAFE  
Changes to TAFE, apprenticeships/traineeships, fees, pathways to university |

Sheryn Symons, Deputy Principal
PARTY PROGRAM

Recently 30 Year 11 and Year 12 students visited the Royal North Shore Hospital to participate in the PARTY (Prevention of Alcohol and Risk related Trauma in Youth) program. The day was designed to explain to students just how quickly their lives can change when they are not in control. We had talks from a number of doctors and trauma nurses who had come in on their day off to speak to the students. These very dedicated professionals feel so strongly about the carnage they see on a regular basis that they are prepared to give up their own time to prevent further cases.

During the day we met Nathan (see Ashley's account below) Ben and Jake. Each of the 3 boys was very honest with us and the message they all gave was "I thought it would never happen to me - these things happen to other people."

Nathan was such a powerful speaker that I asked him to come to Marsden on 13th June to talk to our Year 10, 11 and 12 students.

The students were also bandaged up (see photos) for lunch to give them an idea of what it would be like to be incapacitated or to be a carer.

Sheryn Symons, Deputy Principal

PARTY PROGRAM

On Thursday the 8th of May a group of Year 11 and Year 12 students met at West Ryde station for the hour long train ride to Royal North Shore Hospital to attend the P.A.R.T.Y program.

When we arrived at Royal North Shore we met Maura Desmond the co-ordinator of the P.A.R.T.Y program. We walked up and down stairs the whole day because as she said "we have legs so we can use them."

We spent the day learning the truth about drink driving and how our actions lead to risks. The motto of the day was "live once think twice". After we walked into the room she laid out a body bag to show that if we make one wrong move we could end up in one of them and it was left out for the rest of the day to show us that she meant it.

Then we were taken down to Accident and Emergency where we took part in scenarios where Weil Dandan (Yr11) had to play the boy who went to a party, had a few drinks and then jumped into a pool and broke his spine becoming a quadriplegic.

We met three young guys who became paraplegics due to alcohol related accidents. We got to hear their stories and how they became paraplegics because they were under the influence of alcohol. Two had been in car accidents and one fell off his balcony.

Nathan was 19 when his accident happened on 14th December last year. His friend picked him up from a party and while driving they both started looking for cigarettes, his friend swerved and hit the kerb and flew in to a tree. He told Nathan to get out of the car but Nathan could not move to get out of the car so the driver pulled him out on to the grass. Less than two minutes later the car went up in flames.

Nathan has spent the last five months in hospital and rehab since his accident. His friend walked away but Nathan will never walk again. Nathan accepts the responsibility for his accident because he chose to get in to the car knowing that his friend had been drinking. I found Nathan to be inspirational because of what he went through and how he now has the courage to tell everyone about the dangers of drink driving.

Over all it was a great day with lots of interesting things to do.

Ashley Blowes, Year 11
**Community News**

Would you like to be a Tech Girl Superhero? Your chance to network with women and university students in IT, learn about careers in the industry, participate in creative games, play on the Xbox and create your own Superhero! All school-aged girls and their parents and carers are welcome. Microsoft Head Office, 1 Epping Road, North Ryde, Wednesday 2nd July 9am for a 9.30am start - 12.30 finish. Cost: $10 per person. If you would like more information, please contact Katrina Wong - Microsoft - kat-wong@microsoft.com.

2014 Tobacco Public Notice Campaign - Spectator areas at sports grounds are smoke-free. All public transport stops, platforms & taxi ranks are smoke-free. A $300 on the spot fine may apply to anyone who fails to comply with this law. For more information on the amendments to the Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 visit health.nsw.gov.au/smokefree

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**University of Sydney Year 10 Information Evenings**

Our Year 10 Information Evenings are fast approaching. Limited places are still available but are filling quickly. Wednesday 4 June and Thursday 12 June, 2014 Time: 6 - 7.45pm Venue: The University of Sydney. Final venue information will be provided to registered attendees.

Our annual information evenings are designed to help Year 10 students and their parents choose subjects for the HSC and navigate through the process of applying to University.

Topics include:
- ATAR, scaling and assumed knowledge
- Subject Selections
- Career Pathways
- Transition to University.

We look forward to welcoming you to the University of Sydney.

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**Drama**

Congratulations to Kitae Yoo of Year 11, who has been accepted into the NSW State Drama Camp. In a highly competitive field, Kitae’s application is a first for Marsden High School for a considerable time. He will work with professionals in the industry over a four day camp in June. Students will work toward a performance night at the end of camp, as well as participating in specific workshops designed for their skills. We wish Kitae well.

Thirteen Marsden High students from Years 8-11 attended NIDA Open Day on Saturday 17th May. Year 11 Drama students participated in improvisations, connecting knowledge gained from school to NIDA. Sally Dang stated, 'It was so good. We knew the stuff they were doing from what we’ve done in class. We had a ball'. It’s inspiring to know that when opportunities are offered, Marsden students take the initiative to make it happen.

Melissa Paris, Drama Teacher

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**Party Program**

To Maura

First of all I would like to say a huge thank you to you and all your staff for running this program. It was by far the best school excursion I have ever been on. It was a real eye opener to see what could really happen. The point that the two boys (Nathan & Ben) made ‘I didn’t think it would happen to me’ has really made me think about my decisions. I think that the program was very powerful and very good. I think that this program should be run in a lot of hospitals all over the country. I think you have done an amazing job with this program and I am going to recommend it to my friends. Again I want to thank you and all the people that help you out with this program.

Stephen Cole, Year 12
AN IMPORTANT NOTE TO PARENTS

Nationally consistent collection of data on school students with disability – 2014

Our school is participating in the collection of nationally consistent data on school students with disability.

We will be collecting information already available in the school about the support that is being provided to students with disability. Better data will help the Government plan for students with disability.

The data collection will have no direct impact on your child and they will not be involved in any testing process.

The NSW Department of Education and Communities will provide data to the Australian Government from all NSW public schools in such a way that no individual student or school will be able to be identified. In this way, we will ensure the privacy and confidentiality of all students.

All information is protected by privacy laws which regulate the collection, storage and disclosure of personal information. Information about the Australian Government’s Privacy Policy can be found here: http://education.gov.au/condensed-privacy-policy. Information about the NSW Government’s privacy policies can be found here: http://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/

If you do not want your child to be counted in the data collection you must complete the attached form and return it to the school before the end of Term 2, 2014. A decision to exclude your child will not affect the support they currently receive.

Further information about the data collection can be found on the Australian Government Department of Education website:

If you have any questions about your child being included in the data collection please contact Ms Karen King or Ms Pam Howes at the school on 9874 6544.

If you need help with English to make an enquiry contact the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 and ask for an interpreter in your language. The operator will get an interpreter on the line to assist you with your conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

Kind regards

Gus Vrolyk
Principal

If you do not want your child to be counted in the data collection, please complete below and return it to the school before the end of Term 2, 2014.

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Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability – 2014

I/we __________________________________________________

Name of parent/carer

do not wish my child ________________________________ to be counted

Name of child

for the purposes of the collection of nationally consistent data on school students with disability.

Parent/Carer signature: ____________________________ date: __________
MHS Science faculty is launching a Science Club on Thursday 25th May lunch 1. An exciting opportunity for enthusiastic budding scientists from Yrs 7 - 10. See flyer for further details.

Mrs M Mathew HT Science

Register with Mrs Nair in lab B4 or in the staffroom.

NOTE: Space is limited. So register your interest ASAP