Why Camping Is Like Life

One of the beauties of ‘Walk In / Walk Out Camping’ is that it teaches kids the reality of how much excess crap we tend to carry around in our lives which in reality has little practical use. More often than not, left to their own devices, kids will pack ‘essentials’ such as Tim Tams, chips, make-up, iPods, jeans, pillows, mattresses, lollies, soft drinks and hairdryers, but forget those ‘lessor known essentials’ such as water, cooking materials, insect spray, sunscreen, sleeping bags, waterproof gear, medical and wash bags.

But as the walk begins, kids soon realise these so called essentials are actually a burden. Tim Tams and chips dehydrate you; make up comes off with sweat, jeans are hot and uncomfortable; soft drinks do not quench a thirst and Dolce and Gabbana might smell nice but it’s no replacement for insect spray when the mozzies are biting.

As the walk continues, the lessons emerge. Six kilometres through the bush, walking on sand and through the mangrove swamps; knee deep in mud, hot, sweaty, bitten by bugs and tired. The world slowly devolves into immediate actions and consequences. If you put your pack down and refuse to carry it, it either has to stay behind or someone else has to carry your load. If you drink all your water too quick, either you get thirsty later, or someone else has to give you some of theirs. Forget sunscreen, you get burned, forget spray, you get bitten, take a wrong turn and you get lost… and the list goes on.

More importantly action consequence activities reveal character. Storme’s initial refusal to pull his weight transformed into him eventually carrying the heaviest pack for the entire return journey. Issy Andrews, who has more legitimate physical reasons to complain than most of us astounded us all with her resilience in walking the entire distance (in a jumper mind you!) without complaining at all. Others like Dean, Shanti and Marty travel totally self-sufficiently. They are never a burden and always willing to help because they have their own situation under control.

When setting up the camp site, preparation is the key. Build a bad bivvy and you will get wet. Leave your food out and it will get eaten by wild animals like birds, wallabies or goannas!! But best of all however is the lesson learned by the amount of rubbish we create when travelling light. Twelve people over 48 hours resulted in 3 full size garbage bags full of waste. Also consider, we did not use petrol, electricity or power or any of the other normal infrastructure which we rely on such as hot water units, transport, houses, air conditioners etc. It is not until you actually have to carry the weight of your own waste that you realise how much you actually create. So while each of walked out with about 25 litres of waste from two days, over a year our individual waste would have looked something like this.

Now imagine carrying that on your back aged 20!
DECV

This week is the final week for VCE submissions. Please contact Kate if you have any questions in regards to your child’s progress. VCE Semester 2 will commence on 9th of June and students will need to complete three weeks of work before the holidays. There will also be opportunities for students to attend the centre in the holidays to get ahead or commence exam preparation.

This week is week is module D week 2 for juniors. There are 2 more weeks of submissions for juniors before semester reports will be written.

Birthdays

May is the month for birthdays (and expanding waistlines). Cory kicked off the month with a traditional chocolate cake. Thanks to Storme and Ching for a combined birthday bonanza. Hannah and Cat’s joint birthday ensured peanut butter brownie (both vegan/ gluten free and the traditional sugar laden variety) abounded. Shanti celebrated her birthday on a deserted island (but there was still cake!)

Term Dates

Monday 8th June: Queen’s Birthday
Mon 22nd June - Wed 24th June: Junior exams
Wednesday 17th June: Gender Bender
Friday 26th June: Term 2 concludes
The Call of the Wild!