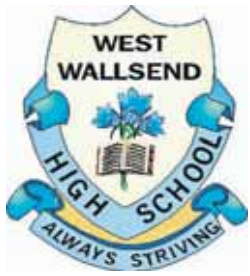


High school entry #10: West Wallsend High School



# The Westy Whisperer



**GLOWING:** Students take part in the Shine program.  
— Picture by Jared Dailey

## Girls get a big boost to confidence

By JESSICA TAYLOR

WEST Wallsend High School is working with the Shine for Life program to help boost young female students' self-confidence and perception.

The Shine for Life program, more commonly known as Shine, is a Hillsong Church program that explores common causes behind the issues young people face today, such as drug and alcohol abuse, eating disorders, peer pressure, unrealistic social expectation and youth suicide.

According to the Shine website, the program shows the role a strong sense of self-esteem and belief in personal ability play in everyday decision-making.

Every week the group of girls gets together with trained Shine workers to work on their self-confidence issues and talk about issues that are worrying them.

"The Shine program was inspiring and it has helped my self-confidence grow," student Kimberley Delaney said.

The program is being run weekly and is proving to be a huge success, with many of the girls feeling like they have more self-confidence.

"I feel this program has been a great success, many of the girls are now achieving at a higher level due to their increased self-esteem," school principal Mrs Ann Campbell said.

# Bridging cultural divide

By RHEARNA COX

WEST Wallsend has held a NAIDOC Day celebration to help bridge the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous culture.

NAIDOC celebrations are held around Australia in July to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The week is celebrated not just in the indigenous community but also in increasing numbers of government agencies, schools, local councils and workplaces.

NAIDOC stands for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee.

During the day the students came together in groups with teachers and made boomerangs out of cardboard and painted them in Aboriginal styles.

The Aboriginal students cooked some bush tucker for the other students, with kangaroo meat one of the most popular kinds of food for the students because many had never tried it.

Students also participated in painting a mural of Mount Sugarloaf and some Aboriginal animal motifs.

Throughout the day there were many showcases of Aboriginal dancing by the school's Aboriginal students, with many oppor-



tunities for other students to join in and learn about the history of Aboriginal dance.

The students who participated in the day enjoyed themselves and learnt about the history of Aboriginal culture.

By doing this, non-indigenous students have learnt to respect the indigenous students more.

The school has a number of indigenous students who participated in the day by helping the teachers with the workshops.

Taking part in NAIDOC Week was a great way to celebrate indigenous culture and build bridges between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians.

**CROSSOVER:** Max Markwort and Bianca Brown in front of the mural of Mount Sugarloaf.  
— Picture by Jared Dailey



**TRANSITION:** Students taking part in the Strive 10 careers program.  
— Picture by Jared Dailey

## Striving to gain place in workforce

By MELANIE ORR

WEST Wallsend High School has introduced a new careers program for Year 10 students called Strive 10.

Strive stands for school to work, tasks, resumes, interviews, vocations and excellence.

The program aims to help Year 10 students develop interviewing skills to help them enter the workforce.

The Year 10 students are split into small groups with a teacher/mentor and learn skills on how to write resumes and prepare for job interviews.

Towards the end of the year, Year 10 will undergo an interview in front of a panel including a Year 9 student from West Wallsend High School, a teacher and a business person from the community.

Year 10 will be presenting assessment tasks they have completed throughout the year and completing evaluation sheets.

"The program is running excellently and already the students are feeling the program is going to assist them in their life after school," the main organiser of Strive 10 and Year 10 advisor Mrs Stacey Wellbourne said.

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# Society based on alcohol in danger

## Editorial

By JARED DAILEY

A GROWING issue at West Wallsend High School is teenage drinking. In 2006, male and female teens aged 15 to 19 had the highest hospital rates for intoxication from alcohol among all age groups, with 124 males and 126 females per 100,000 people in Australia, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Community Alcohol Action Network director Geoff Munro has said that alcohol-related problems are usually shaped by the community in which they occur. Mr Munro has said that communities and individuals can take action on alcohol use and on access to alcohol.

Alcohol use by young people is growing more common, which is quite alarming. Many people in today's society often overlook the fact that every weekend there is at least one under-age drinking party in their community.

Communities have to take a stand on this behaviour and make clear to these people that the law is that you are committing an offence if you supply or buy alcohol for a minor without being authorised to do so by the minor's parents or guardian.

But even this law is contradictory because parents can buy alcohol for their children even though it is supposed to be illegal for people

under 18 to drink. Once these parents have provided the children with alcohol, the parents should govern where and when they can drink it.

Many of these children's parents are completely oblivious to what their children are doing and, meanwhile, the children themselves are also oblivious to what they are doing to themselves.

Some of these parents are hypocrites, telling children not to drink then going out themselves and getting completely drunk.

In some cases, binge-drinking can tear families apart and lead to hospitalisation of the teenage drinker.

The misuse of alcohol is growing but taking action can include making phone calls to the right people, mailing objections to advertisements or liquor licence applications and addressing sports clubs or community clubs about the problem of tolerance of alcohol misuse.

It has been reported that at some sports clubs, 30 per cent of 13 to 17 year olds had participated in unsupervised drinking and 70 per cent had not been asked for proof of age.

West Wallsend High School is holding a drugs and binge-drinking community forum with guest speakers from the police and medical personnel. The forum will be held on Monday, August 25, at 6.30pm at the high school's multipurpose centre. All people who care about this issue should attend.



Illustration by Rhearna Cox



CLOWNING ABOUT: Some of the students who performed in the variety night. — Picture by Jared Dailey

# Stars are out to show talent

By JESSICA TAYLOR

WEST Wallsend High School will hold on November 25 and 26 its first performance night to highlight the many talents of its students.

*Little Stars* will be held in the school's multipurpose centre, starting at 7pm on both nights.

It will follow a variety night held at the school last week which featured music, dance and drama.

*Little Stars* is based on the stress and antics of people appearing on television talent shows.

The performance has been put together by the school's drama teacher Mr Byron Christie.

It will star Year 10 student Jasmine Johnson as 'Quiet Jessica', Year 9's Breanna McDonald as the audacious and flamboyant 'Amanda

Amadeus' and Madeleine Colquhoun as the 'Nasty Judge Boswell'.

The cast involves 45 students acting, singing and dancing and 12 students playing in a band.

The story of the production is Jessica dreaming of being a star as she auditions for a TV show called *Little Stars*.

She is picked with five others but one contestant, Preston, threatens to derail Jessica's dream.

With a laugh a minute and catchy songs, *Little Stars* is going to be one of the best nights of the year at the school. It will be directed by teachers Kay Klein, Rosemary Smurthwaite and Mr Christie.

Tickets are \$7 for a single ticket and there are family deals available from the school's front office or by phoning 4953 2111.

# Outstanding athletics achievers' success

By JARED DAILEY

THE recent regional athletics carnival was a resounding success for West Wallsend High School.

Thirty of the school's students competed in athletics events for the Westlakes zone on July 30 and 31.

Many of the students made it to their respective finals, with five people gaining third place or better.

Each year the David Helmore Trophy is

awarded to the most outstanding male and female of the carnival.

West Wallsend High School student Kara Lorentzen, 15, took out the outstanding female award.

Jake Badior, Kara and Jared Dailey became regional champions in their events.

They will go to the state carnival in early September.

Nick Ryan and Erin Keating also gained admission to the state meeting.



TOP-NOTCH: David Helmore Trophy winner Kara Lorentzen. — Picture by Jared Dailey

# Awards to encourage excellence

By RHEARNA COX

WEST Wallsend High School has celebrated its achievements for the first semester with an awards ceremony.

At the ceremony on July 29, 170 of the school's 600 students gained awards for placing in the top five of their classes and another 20 students gained a silver award.

The principal Mrs Ann Campbell commented on how well the students had participated in the awards program.

"Students are trying harder to achieve an award," Mrs Campbell said.

At the ceremony the school also inducted its new school leaders. This year the school also used the ceremony to induct its prefects.

The award ceremony is used to encourage the students of West Wallsend High School to try their best in all academic areas.

A group of the school's dancers from the Star Struck performance, including Erin Keating, Kristin Labmore and Amy Blakemore, performed their routine from the schools spectacular for parents and students.

After the ceremony Mrs Campbell hosted 50 parents and their children at an afternoon tea in the school library to further celebrate their children's efforts and achievements.

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