

The Family Action Centre proudly presents Gadaku Institute - Rock and Water Program

A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE PRESENTED BY *FREERK YKEMA*
TEACHING BOYS - SELF CONFIDENCE SELF CONTROL AND SELF RESPECT

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Program Description

Aim(s) of program:

The Rock and Water Program aims to apply a physical/social approach to assist boys and girls in their development to adulthood by increasing their self-realisation, self-confidence, self-respect, boundary awareness, self-awareness and intuition. A specific goal for the course is teaching boys and girls to deal with power, strength and powerlessness. The program originally designed for boys only has proved to be also very beneficial for girls.

Target group:

The program is primarily designed for boys only (although females can be taught this program) 9 years of age and above. However experience has made clear that the program can be taught from the age of 6.

Demonstrated applicability to special groups e.g. cultural, special needs:

The program was developed for "normal" boys in a normal class situation as a school wide approach. Nowadays the program is taught in Indigenous schools, in Juvenile Detention Centres, in school situations with children with identified behavioural or anger management issues, in whole class contexts, in *Youth Care and Mental Care*

Outline of program content and components:

The program offers a framework of exercises and ideas about boys and manhood and aims to assist boys and girls in becoming aware of their purpose and motivation in life. Topics include; intuition, body language, mental strength, empathetic feeling and positive feeling. Discussion topics include: bullying, sexual harassment, homophobia, life goals and desires.

Theoretical basis:

(This category refers to information about the theory underpinning the development of your program, for example cognitive behaviour therapy).

Outline of program structure and implementation details:

The building blocks of the Rock and Water program are self-control, self-reflection and self-confidence. Building on to this foundation, it is possible to pay attention to the themes of safety, assertiveness, communication and finding their own way (the inner compass) that connects them to others (solidarity) and gives them direction (spirituality). The inner compass means that every person has different qualities and that these qualities manifest themselves in the psyche as forces that strive after fulfillment. Self-realisation gives a deep feeling of power, joy and meaningfulness. This is an important concept, especially for young people who are on the threshold of important choices. An answer to questions about meaningfulness and direction is very much related to becoming aware of one's own qualities and desires.

The themes mentioned above are interrelated in the program by 4 leading threads:

1. *Grounding, centering and focusing*: learning how to stand firm and relaxed, how to concentrate your breath in your belly and focus attention (first external, later transformed to an internal goal).
2. *The golden triangle of body-awareness – emotional awareness – self-awareness*. Emotions are expressed in the body by way of muscular tension. Therefore, increased body awareness can lead to more insight and experience of one's own patterns of reaction, which in turn can offer a chance to deepen and further develop the emotional awareness and self-awareness. In fact, this concept is the basis of every martial art that has an eye for the development of mental and inner power.
3. *Communication*: the development of physical forms of communication as a basis (took out space) for the development of other, more verbally oriented, forms of communication.
4. *The Rock and Water concept*: the tough, immovable rock attitude versus the mobile, communicative water attitude. This concept can be developed and applied at various levels: the physical, the mental and the social level. At a physical level it means that an attack can be parried by firmly strained muscles (rock) but also – and often even more effectively – by moving along with the energy of the attacker (water).

At a social level – for instance in a conversation – it is also possible to choose between a rock or a water attitude and the same choice applies to the way in which one maintains relationships with others. Finally, at a spiritual level, the apparent opposites between rock and water disappear. Then the insight and experience come about that both ways are needed to reach self-fulfilment and that people, in their deepest essence, are connected to each other and go along a path together.

Program Evaluation

a) List of evaluation studies

School Program Evaluations of Rock and Water

The majority of teachers who have been trained have implemented successful programs for boys or girls in Primary and Secondary schools or youth centres. There have been several small scale evaluations of these school programs. The recent Boys' Education Lighthouse Schools Program provided funds for several small scale evaluations of these programs

Two Case Studies are provided here:

Case Study A

Rock and Water has been systematically implemented in the Central cluster of school in the Diocese of Maitland/Newcastle for a period of two years. Four key groups of stakeholders were surveyed;

- 154 Year 5 and 6 students
- 77 who completed the program in 2001
- 254 Year 7-10 students
- 45 teachers who had been trained and taught the program

Analysis of the evaluation data suggests that the Rock and Water program has made a difference to teachers and students in the Central cluster. What can be said with some degree of confidence is that the Rock and Water program has contributed to the achievement of intended outcomes (increased self control, self confidence, improved social skills, greater awareness of self and others and skills to respond to difficult situations) for both students and teachers with student achievement being sustained over the two years of the programs existence in the cluster. Furthermore, it is asserted that available evidence supports the notion that the Rock and Water program has enhanced the quality of the teaching and learning experiences within the cluster.

Case Study B

Stromlo High School in the ACT attempted to re-engage a group of Year 8 boys, some of which were amongst the most difficult and dis-engaged boys in the school. They underwent a semester of work that combined Rock and Water, RAP (Resilient Adolescent Program) with some Global Classroom lessons.

Evaluations were completed by the boys following the program with the following observations of the boys made:

- *Our boys have become more focused and aware of their responsibilities and learning potentials.*
- *They are more settled and able to concentrate more fully on their classroom tasks leading to a considerable decline in Semester 2 mid term assessments of 'showing concern'.*
- *Certain boys have recorded an increase in 'highly satisfactory' assessments.*
- *Disciplinary interventions have reduced and are now more controlled, reasonable and productive.*
- *The boys are more informed about their choices of behaviour and are aware of more options with regard to these choices.*

Rock and Water is often run in conjunction with other programs in schools to enhance the self-esteem, self-control and self-confidence of both boys and girls. It can support and contribute to the aims of other school programs, and can be integrated into school curriculum in a number of ways.

Protective factors

From the Mind Matters booklets a number of factors have been identified as contributing to a persons ability to cope with the demands of every day living. Many of the factors are enhanced through the Rock and Water program. For example:

- *Handling demands of school*
- *Belief in own ability to cope*
- *Sense of control*
- *Individual disposition*
- *Support, belonging and role models*
- *Easy temperament*
- *Sense of personal efficacy*
- *Ability to learn from mistakes*
- *Spiritual beliefs/spirituality*
- *A caring and positive school environment*
- *Capacity to self-monitor*
- *Sense of purpose or mission in life*

Aspects of student alienation

Mind Matters identify four main elements causing student alienation.

1. **Powerlessness.** Rock and Water helps students identify and work towards achieving goals. It teaches the skills that enable students to control their reactions and lives and helps them to set and move towards realising their goals.
2. **Meaninglessness.** Rock and Water develops a sense of purpose and links the future with the present.

3. **Normlessness.** By bringing a balance to what is expected in school and society in general, Rock and Water helps provide a set of behaviour norms that the students can identify with.
4. **Social estrangement.** Rock and Water provides a safe environment for the students to work in. It develops opportunities for students to participate together and develop connections with others.

Further evaluations have been completed by various schools which will be show cased at the first National Rock and Water Conference to be held in October 2006.

Professional development required:

Training can be either conducted in a one-day introduction seminar (which focuses on the first four lessons of the program) or a three-day seminar (all lesson plans 1-14 are taught). After working with the 3 day program there is an opportunity to complete the Advanced Training Level II, this will enable you/participants to conduct one-day introductory workshops with in your own school to enable a whole school approach to the program.

Program Materials and Costs:

The cost of the three-day seminar is \$685.00 (including GST, lunch and Manual). The Rock and Water Manual – needed for everyone who wants to work with the program costs \$55.00 (inc gst)
 The Rock and Water Perspective- a booklet for everyone interested in boys' education. It contains basic ideas about the dynamics behind boy's behaviour and links up with the theoretical background information of the program. This booklet is recommended for everyone who wants to work with the program, costs \$35.00 (inc gst)
 The Rock and Water Basic Physical exercise video / DVD- contains the most important, difficult physical exercises of the program, costs video \$55.00, DVD \$60 (inc gst)

About the Author:

Freerk Ykema has been a Physical Education and Remedial Teacher and Counsellor at Schagen in the North of The Netherlands in a comprehensive school. In 1995 he trialed the Rock and Water course at his school to address boys' motivation and self-confidence. He now trains teachers in countries throughout the world to deliver the Rock and Water course. In 2000 the course won a national award in The Netherlands for targeting boys' education.

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Tours

Presently there are two tours per year. February – April and October to December each year. The Inaugural Australian Rock and Water - 'Bringing it together' Conference will be held in Newcastle on the 16th October 2006.