



BIRRONG BULLETIN

The Newsletter of Birrong Girls High School

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PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

2013 has been another very rewarding year at Birrong Girls High School. The achievements and the spirit of the students combined with the dedication and commitment of the staff have certainly made this year highly successful.

This success is evident in the students' yearly reports which will be distributed to Years 7-10 students in Week 10 of this term. The reports show that the majority of our girls are committed to the first of the school values, personal excellence (*Ad astra*), and their own learning through their attendance, sound academic results and application to learning. I encourage all parents to read their daughter's report carefully, discuss the teachers' comments with their daughter and acknowledge and praise excellent achievement and offer encouragement for improvement.

We will meet our Year 7 students for 2014 at their **Orientation Day on Wednesday 4 December**. We have enrolled more than 140 Year 7 girls already for 2014 as many families in the local community have heard about the high quality teaching and learning that happens at Birrong and want their daughters to be a part of our success.

Michael Grose, regarded as one of Australia's leading authorities on parenting, will present a workshop on the Orientation Day. At this entertaining and engaging workshop entitled, *Help, I'm about to have a Teenager*, Michael will discuss a number of strategies and ideas for our new Year 7 parents on coping with adolescents.

On **Thursday 12 December** the school community will celebrate the outstanding academic, sporting and extra-curricular achievements of the girls at our **Presentation Day at the Bankstown Sports Club from 11:45am**. Parents and friends are warmly invited to participate in this important recognition ceremony.

The Year 12 class of 2013 worked hard and deserve to do well. I look forward to receiving notification of their **HSC results on Wednesday 18 December**. Many will achieve very high Australian Tertiary Admission Ranks (ATAR) and pursue further study at university or TAFE, while others will enter the workforce. Regardless of their results and ATAR scores, the values of personal excellence, respect, responsibility, cooperation, integrity, understanding, tolerance and inclusion integral to this school and public education, will serve them well. They leave this school well prepared for life-long learning with skills and knowledge to take their place as active and caring citizens in our society. They can be proud to have been students of Birrong Girls High School.

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ANNUAL PRESENTATION DAY

An invitation is extended to all parents and students of Birrong Girls High School to attend our Annual Presentation Day on

Thursday, 12 December 2013

Please arrive 11:45am for 12:00pm start

The venue for the function will be **Bankstown Sports Club Showroom
8 Greenfield Parade
Bankstown**

Congratulations to...

- **Isabella Johnston Araujo** (Year 10) who received the Auburn Reviews' School Citizenship Award at a ceremony on 6 November.



Ms Wilkins and Isabella

- **Phuong Tran** (Year 11) who received the Victor Chang School Science Award at the University of Western Sydney on 19 November. Phuong received this award for her interest in science and her consistently high results. The award was presented by Ann Chang, the widow of Dr Victor Chang, Australia's pioneering cardiothoracic surgeon and a respected humanitarian. Part of Phuong's prize is to visit the Victor Chang Institute which in collaboration with other medical and scientific institutions around the world conducts research into how to prevent diseases related to the heart and how to treat children and adults with heart ailments.



Phuong and her parents

Thank you to...

- All the teachers and the administration staff who have worked so hard and selflessly throughout 2013 to make Birrong Girls such an exciting, interesting, dynamic and successful school. Their efforts are appreciated and celebrated by our girls in classrooms every day.
- The small and dedicated band of parents who contribute their time and energy to the school's P&C.
- To the Deputy Principals, Ms Crossan and Ms Fletcher, and all our Head Teachers for their hard work and incredible support throughout a very busy and demanding year.

P&C meeting

I extend a warm invitation to all our parents to attend the final P&C meeting for 2013 which will be held on **Wednesday 27 November at 5pm in the Common Room**. We will be discussing the **school's targets and plans for 2014** so come along and have your say.

Happy Holidays!

On behalf of the school, I would like to wish you all a happy, healthy, safe and relaxing holiday, a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Best wishes.

Jenni Wilkins
Principal

REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

2013 has been a year of achievement across a broad range of areas, not the least being civics and citizenship. Thank you to every Birrong girl who has shown she cares by supporting many worthy causes. This year students raised over \$11,000 for those less fortunate. A mighty \$4,296 was raised for Sabina, our sponsored student in Tanzania. The school also continued the tradition of donating teaching aids to the Sierra Leone project, improving the quality of education for over 35 schools.

In addition to this, students showed their support and care through school based programs such as Peer Support, Peer Tutor Reading, Peer Mediation, Amnesty International and the Environment Team. Students also volunteered their time, knitting and crocheting for Wrap with Love and with the usual enthusiasm, Year 8 students participated in Jump Rope for Heart.



It is also heartening to know that students look out for their local community. In the recent bushfires that ravaged the lower Blue Mountains and raged across areas of NSW bringing great devastation to individuals and families, our school responded generously.

Such examples are testament to the care, compassion and generosity of students and staff. Thank you to all involved.

As discussed in our last Birrong Bulletin, there have been significant changes to the DER laptop scheme. As of 2014, Year 9 students will not be issued with a laptop. Instead, students will be encouraged to bring their own laptops, netbooks and tablets to use at school.

If you are considering purchasing a device for your daughter's use at school you should ensure that the device:

- supports 5 GHz band wireless or 802.11 a/b/g/n (make sure it supports both 'a' and 'n')
- has a minimum battery life of 5 hours
- supports a minimum 16GB Storage and 2GB RAM
- uses the current or previous Windows 7 operating system or iOS 7 for iPads.

Some students were very fortunate to be given a laptop under the DER program, others will need to bring or purchase their own device. Whatever applies, all students must take great care of their laptops, and bring them to school each day fully charged.

Technology is a fantastic tool for learning, however, if misused or abused, it can have results that are nothing short of disastrous. In the wrong hands technology can become a forum for anti-social behaviour and cyber bullying. The most important message for students is to **think about the consequences of actions before hitting the send button**. Avoid coarse or rude language, be respectful and never post images of yourself or others that you are likely to regret. In short, treat others as you would like to be treated. The litmus test: would I be happy for my parent or teacher to see what I have written or posted? If the answer is 'no', then delete it.

Remember, the digital footprint lasts forever, exercise caution when using social networking sites.

To every Birrong girl: continue working hard to the very last day of the school year and aim to make a difference each day, no matter how small or humble.

Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday.

Ms Fletcher and Ms Crossan
Deputy Principals

ATTENDANCE REPORT

I am very pleased to report that during the course of this year, 1100 merit awards have been issued to students across Years 7–12 who have managed to come to school every day or who have not been late.

Not only do these students earn merit certificates, but an Attendance Activity Day on Monday 9 December has been organised to reward and celebrate their commitment towards their own education through their outstanding attendance. Worthy students have been invited to spend the day involved in fun and exciting activities at Teen Ranch. It will be a great day out for 140 Years 7–9 students.

The motto is:
YOUR ATTENDANCE REWARDS YOU!

Mrs George
Head Teacher Administration

WELFARE REPORT

Year 4 and Year 5 Enrichment Day

On Wednesday 13 November, Year 4 and Year 5 students from five local primary schools participated in a whole day enrichment program at Birrong Girls. Students enthusiastically took part in various interesting activities such as drama, using science equipment, baking muffins, creating art work and a team challenge quiz.



Enrichment Day activities



Vaccinations

The final doses of vaccinations for Year 7 students took place on Thursday 21 November.

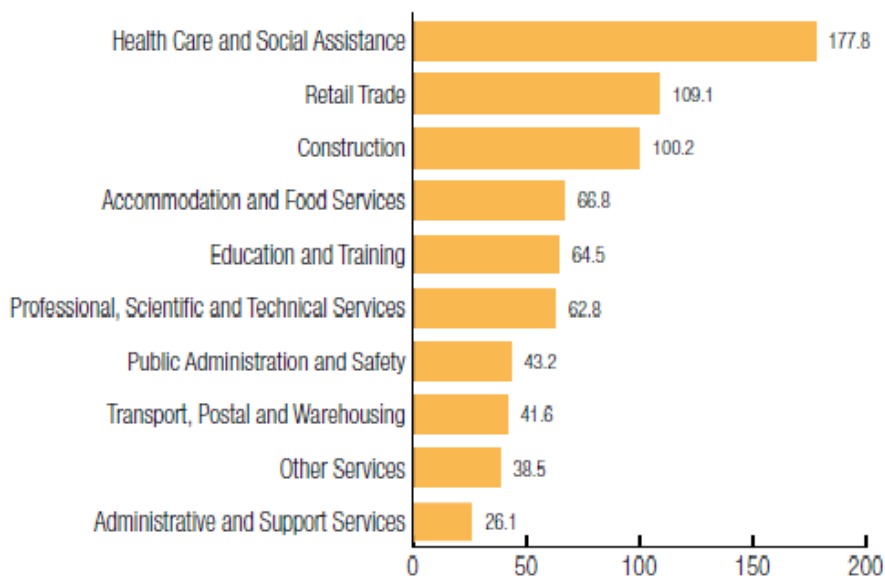
Thank you

The school's Welfare Team members would like to thank all the parents and guardians for their support and encouragement of our students over the year and wish all the students and their families a wonderful school vacation. We look forward to a successful 2014 school year.

Ms Salvagio
Head Teacher Welfare

CAREERS REPORT

These top 10 Australian industries are projected to have the largest employment growth to Nov 2017 ('000)



Source: DEEWR Employment Projections

Year 10 Work Experience Block 2

I hope your daughter had a successful week of Work Experience. When your daughter returns her fully signed Diary and the green Employer Evaluation she will receive a Work Experience Certificate which she can use when seeking employment.

Year 9 2013

The dates for Work Experience in 2014 have been changed.

The new dates are 2-6 June and 17-21 November.

Forms for the first block are due back (fully signed by the student, employer, parent and principal) by Week 5, Term 1 2014.

Any student who wishes to do Work Experience at Auburn Hospital, Blacktown Hospital or Westmead Hospital in 2014 must complete a special application by 20 December 2013. No late applications are accepted.

Year 12 2014

Thirty nine Year 12 students enjoyed UWS Day at Parramatta Campus on 7 November. Students were able to ask questions of current students and academics, and see a tertiary campus. For most of the students this was the first time they had attended a university campus.

Careers Overview

I have used BlogEd to teach careers classes to all students in Years 7-10 and I have interviewed Year 12 and most Year 11 students about their plans and aspirations for the future. Parents can see the work their girls have produced on BlogEd. Please ask your daughters to show you the blog.

Any student who has a question about their future please feel free to make an appointment to see me.

Have a great holiday, and I look forward to working with your daughters in 2014.

Ms Austin
Careers Adviser

ICAS RESULTS - ENGLISH

International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) Results - English

2013 has proven to be a successful year for students in Years 7-11 who participated in the internationally renowned ICAS competitions. This year there were record numbers of students participating in 3 separate competitions: English, Writing and Spelling (Year 7 only) with a total of 64 entries. These competitions support classroom learning but also provide the opportunity to stretch students' intellectual capacities.



Congratulations to all those who participated but particularly to the following students who achieved excellent results:

Distinctions:

Vivian Pham, Year 7, Spelling and Writing
Natasha Luu, Year, 8 Writing

Credits:

Vivian Pham, Year 7, English
Hafsa Abbasi, Year 8, English and Writing
Hawa Beg, Year 8, English
Jasmine Wong, Year 8, English
Natasha Luu, Year 8, English
Vyvy Nham, Year 8, English and Writing
Jacqueline Huynh, Year 8, Writing
Sabina Siddiq, Year 8, Writing
Tina Ta, Year 8, Writing
Linda Tran, Year 8, Writing
Jasmine Wong, Year 8, Writing
Hayley Brisenden, Year 9, Writing
Trang Dao, Year 11, Writing

Ms Andrews

Head Teacher English

THE PREFECTS GO SAILING



Geared up and ready to sail!

WORD TRAVELS WORD RUMBLE

On 11 October, twelve 8B students accompanied by Mr Davidson participated in a Spoken Word Festival held in The Rocks.

Two of our students, Salma Althifairy and Sabina Siddiq, performed their prepared pieces which were written in a series of school workshops led by poet, Skye Lonergan. Students had the opportunity to listen to a variety of poetry performed in two areas of The Rocks. Open air performance from memory is very powerful and the students were very impressed and engaged. After lunch the group watched a TV screening of a Poetry SLAM by a number of cutting edge Hip Hop poets.



Spoken Word Festival in The Rocks

The students, both as audience and participants, were exposed to meaningful and instructive experiences. We recommend the program highly and hope that BGHS has the opportunity to participate again next year.

Mr Davidson
Teacher Librarian

MULTICULTURAL PLAYWRIGHTS PROGRAM

Throughout Term 3, Helay Zarmati and I became a part of the Multicultural Playwrights Program in which we wrote, directed and performed in a play of our own creation. Our play, "Opposites Attract" was based on the challenges of beginning high school and evolving relationships with differences.

Through this phenomenal experience, we broadened our knowledge of dramatic techniques and play building and met some fantastic and dynamic people. Although it was challenging to manage our day-to-day commitments, we found it was worthwhile in the end as we explored different concepts of drama, gained confidence and experienced performing on a stage in a professional theatre (Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre) to a large audience.

We would like to thank our mentors, Lisa and Phil, for helping us write our play in many stressful situations, our fellow actors and directors for helping to make our time much more enjoyable, Fatima Khoder Agha and Latifah Zreika for taking their own time out and participating in our play and Ms Bolanca, Ms Andrews and Ms Wilkins for encouraging us to attend this Playwrights program. We had a wonderful time and hope that the school continues to support this very enriching program.

By: Aleyna Celik and Helay Zarmati, Year 9

PUBLIC SPEAKING SUCCESS

This year has been an exciting year for public speaking at Birrong Girls High School with Abir Al Hassnawi of Year 8 winning the local final of the Legacy Public Speaking Competition at Fairfield High School. Abir was one of the junior finalists of the school's Henrietta Wooster Public Speaking Competition and was selected, along with Hayley Brisenden of Year 9, to represent the school in the Legacy Competition. The Legacy Junior Public Speaking Competition is an inter-school public speaking award that requires students to present a prepared and an impromptu speech in competition against students from Years 7-9. Both students performed well against strong competition in the local final at Fairfield High School with Abir named as one of three finalists to progress to the next level of the competition. The South West Sydney Final was held at The Arts Unit in Lewisham. The competition at this final was fierce and although Abir did not progress to the next stage she represented the school admirably. In Term 3 Abir was chosen to write and present a speech at the Year 12 Graduation ceremony. The school is extremely proud of Abir's achievements in public speaking and wish her the best for next year's competition.

Ms Brown
English Faculty



Abir presenting her speech at the Year 12 Graduation ceremony

CAPA REPORT

The Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) faculty has been a hive of activity with an array of performances and art works being produced and a range of workshops and excursions on offer to our talented and creative students.

The 2013 Year 12 students ended their BGHS Visual Arts journey by sitting for their final Visual Arts paper in the hall. The 2014 Year 12 students have commenced their artistic journey of self-discovery by starting their Bodies of Work. They will also attend a HSC Study Day at the Art Gallery of NSW on 26 November to enhance their understanding of art history and criticism and to equip themselves with skills to achieve their personal best in the HSC.

Year 9 and Year 12 Photography and Digital Media students attended an inspirational Animation workshop in the library conducted by the Academy of Interactive Entertainment (AIE). The students were introduced to the program called 'Sculptris' and experimented with interesting 3-D modelling techniques.

Four talented Music students, Moala Laiafi (Year 8), Sabina Siddiq (Year 8), Alana Leha (Year 10) and Yvonne Nguyen (Year 10) were nominated by Mr Blair to attend a vocal workshop at Bankstown Arts Centre. This Talent Advancement Program (TAP) was sponsored by Bankstown City Council. The girls received tuition and valuable experience in performing.

Year 11 Music students revealed their musical talents with a fantastic assembly performance of 'Hold on We're Going Home' by Drake.

We would like to invite all staff and students to our final exhibition for the year, showcasing Year 10 sculptures inspired by domestic creatures, a glorious display of totem inspired ceramic work by Year 9 Visual Arts students and drawings by Samantha Garces, Nada Salama, Alaa Alfaraon and Yasmin Abdelkader all of Year 7. These drawings were selected for Operation Art and displayed at the Armory in Homebush.



Ceramic work

Don't miss the upcoming **outdoor lunchtime concert on Tuesday 3 December** (Week 9). The concert will be held in Tumbalong. Come along and enjoy the musical performances.

Congratulations to every girl who has "reached for the stars" in Music and Visual Arts this year and we look forward to an exciting 2014.

Mr Colley
Ms Winchcombe
Ms Anthony
Visual Arts

Mr Blair
Ms Caponas
Music

QUICKSMART PROGRAM

The *QuickSmart* program provides intensive learning support to students who are experiencing difficulties or delays in numeracy.

Students are grouped in pairs and work with the *QuickSmart* instructors, Ms Carson, Mrs Lam, Mrs Araujo and Mrs Vella. The instructors strive to ensure the *QuickSmart* program is a positive and motivating learning experience for each student.

The aim of the program is to support students to 'speed up' their basic skills in numeracy. It is a practice program that helps students to better know and understand basic number facts. Improvements in these basic skills are likely to benefit students in all areas of their learning.

Ms Carson
Head Teacher Mathematics



QuickSmart presentation during assembly



Mariam Fathallah, *QuickSmart* Trophy recipient



BIRRONG GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS & CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

Parents are invited to attend the
P & C MEETING
on **Wednesday, 27 November 2013**
at **5pm in the Common Room**

PARENT TIPS

Choosing the right shoes

School shoes may all look the same but the cost can vary from about \$30 to \$120 and beyond. Does a more expensive shoe mean a better shoe? Find out more:

<http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/wellbeing/health/choosing-the-right-school-shoes>

Community languages

Do you speak a language at home other than English? Would you like your child to learn that language or improve their skills? Saturday School of Community Languages enrolments for 2014 are now open. Find out more:

<http://www.sscl.schools.nsw.edu.au/how-to-enrol>

YOUTH WEEK 2014 – GET INVOLVED!

If you're aged 12-24 years and want to help organise activities for next year's Youth Week celebrations, please come to the first youth planning meeting which will be held on **Wednesday evening, 27 November from 5-7pm at Bankstown Library**. Light snacks will be provided, however RSVP's are essential. Please call 9707 9605 to RSVP or email your interest to Justine.foo@bankstown.nsw.gov.au

The dates for Youth Week 2014 are 4-13 April.

Check out:

www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au/youthweek for more information.

TRANSPORT NEWS

2013 School Rail passes will be recognised for travel as a 'flash pass' (to be presented to rail staff for access via the wide gate) for the first few weeks of the 2014 school year, until Friday 21 February 2014.

The school will distribute 2014 School Rail passes to eligible students, in year group order, at the beginning of the new school year and within the above timeframe.



BIRRONG GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL CALENDAR
For your diary / noticeboard

November:

- Monday, 25th to Tuesday, 26th
 - Year 7 Swim School + Year 9PASS
- Wednesday, 27th
 - P&C Meeting, Common Room, 5pm
- Thursday, 28th to Friday, 29th
 - Year 8 Swim School + Year 10PASS
- Friday, 29th
 - Year 9 Maths excursion to Luna Park

December:

- Tuesday, 3rd
 - Lunchtime concert in Tumbalong
- Wednesday, 4th
 - Year 6 Orientation Day, 9:15am – 12:30pm
- Thursday, 5th
 - Year 8 Mathematics Activities Day at school
- Friday, 6th
 - Year 10 Activity Day at Dolls Point
- Monday, 9th
 - Attendance Activity Day at Teen Ranch (selected students from Years 7-9 only)
- Thursday, 12th
 - Presentation Day at Bankstown Sports Club, 11:45am – 2pm
- Wednesday, 18th
 - Last day of the school year for students
- Thursday, 19th
 - School Development Day
- Friday, 20th
 - School Development Day

Very best wishes for the festive season to all.
Enjoy the holiday break!



January 2014:

- Monday, 27th
 - Australia Day Public Holiday
- Tuesday, 28th
 - School Development Day - staff return to school
- Wednesday, 29th
 - Years 7, 11 & 12 return to school
- Thursday, 30th
 - All other year groups return to school



Parents are reminded that the last day of the 2013 school year for Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 students at Birrong Girls High School will be **Wednesday 18 December**. School development days will be held on Thursday 19 December and Friday 20 December.
School development days at the start and end of semesters allow teachers to undergo further professional training.



ARE YOU A SINGLE PARENT?

Each week **Single with Children** provides fun and exciting activities especially for single parents and their children (many activities are subsidised or free)



It's a great way to meet and get to know people in your area.

To find out more and get a FREE copy of our social calendar, contact us today.

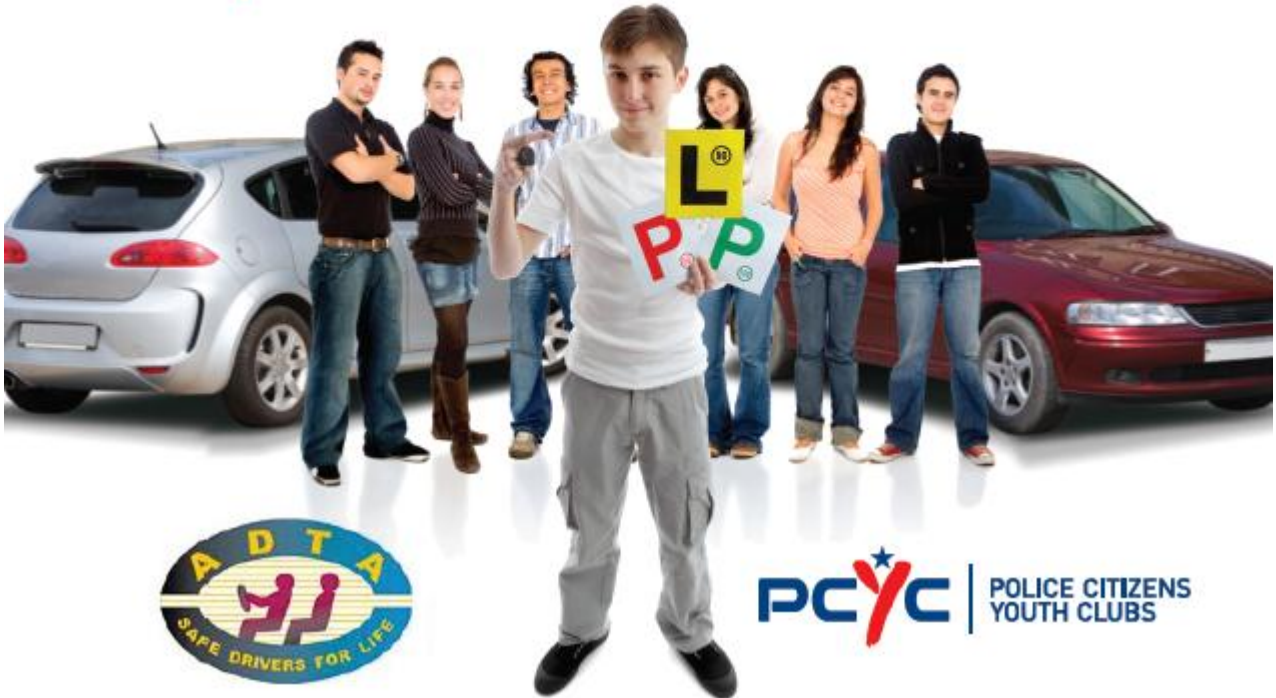
Call 1300 300 496

Or visit our website:

www.singlewithchildren.com.au

PCYC | Safer Drivers Course

For Learner Drivers



PCYC are an accredited provider of the Safer Drivers Course.
Guiding young people in the right direction since 1937



The Safer Drivers Course involves two modules:

Module one: A three-hour facilitated group discussion on how to manage risks on the road. This will involve a maximum of twelve participants and will be delivered by a facilitator.

Module two: A two-hour in-vehicle coaching session to develop low-risk driving strategies. This will involve two participants and a coach. Course cost: \$140

Participants must have completed 50 hours of actual on-road driving experience to be eligible for the course. Credits gained under the 3 for 1 scheme cannot be included.

Participants who complete the course will receive 20 hours credit recorded in their learner driver log book.

To find your closest club or book into the next available course check out our website:

www.saferdrivers.org.au

Call us on 9625 9111 or drop into your local club to find out more

PCYC Bankstown 55 Meredith St, Bankstown, 2200 Ph. 9796 1287