



Research findings on ‘The Effectiveness Of Chaplaincy’ by Edith Cowan University and University of New England

- At a glance

PROFILE OF CHAPLAINS:

- 59% of chaplains are female and 41% are male;
- Chaplains provided pastoral care in a way which complemented what was being provided by other members of the school staff. Chaplains could often be seen as the bridge to activate community building in the wider sense for the benefit of the school;
- A chaplain was not a teacher, nor a psychologist, but a neutral person;
- Part of a chaplain’s ‘neutrality’ was related to the fact that chaplains did not have a disciplinary responsibility and could listen non-judgmentally. Chaplains saw an important part of their work as building relationship skills;
- The largest part of chaplains’ time (30%) was spent in informal pastoral care (meeting students in the playground and talking to them) or structured pastoral care (pre arranged one-on-one sessions in an office) of individual students. An additional 34% of time was spent in group activities with students;
- Of the 1, 031 chaplains surveyed, 74% worked in just one school whilst 26% worked in two or more schools.

CHAPLAINS’ ACTIVITIES:

Chaplains indicated that during the past year:

- 82% had run needs-based programs such as handling of grief or behavioural management;
- 79% of chaplains said they had done off-site visits to parents and care-givers;
- 73% had led in school events or special ceremonies and
- 49% had participated in school camps.

Two weeks prior to the survey:

- 95% of chaplains reported dealing with behaviour management issues such as anger;
- 92% with bullying and harassment; 92% with peer relationships and loneliness;
- 91% with student-family relationship issues; 85% with sense of purpose and self esteem;
- 81% with grief and loss; 77% with community involvement and social inclusion;
- 76% with spirituality and ‘big picture’ issues of life; 72% with mental health and depression;
- 50% with alcohol and drug abuse and 44% with self harm and suicide.

For the full report on ‘The Effectiveness of Chaplaincy as provided by the National School Chaplaincy Association to Government Schools in Australia’, go to: www.socialsurvey.com.au/chaplaincyeffectiveness.pdf

“My chaplain is cool.”

- Student



Thumbs up for Chaplaincy ... Amaroo Primary School students Kate Varis (pictured left back), Jared Lovell (left front) , Matthew Reuben and Travis Papalia (both from Wilson Park Primary School) show their commitment towards the National School Chaplaincy Program which runs in their respective schools. Looking on, are, pictured back left to right Colin Chisholm (Principal of Amaroo Primary School), Robyn Gillies (Chaplain), and Peta Morgan (Principal of Wilson Park Primary School).

“Every school should have a funded chaplain. The position has become such an **integral part of our school**, I don’t know what we would do without it. He has added immense value and purpose to our school and community.”

“As a young male in an all female school, the chaplain has provided a good **male role model** for our boys in particular.”

- Principals

“Our chaplain is a **second parent** when I am not around.”

“Chaplaincy is a **very good thing** to have – something that may not be utilised by every student, but important to have if the need arises. The chaplain can be a good influence, just by his/her example at school.”

- Parents

High distinction for chaplaincy

‘School chaplains offer a vital service that should be available to all schools.’

- National study

WHAT PRINCIPALS SAY

According to the 688 principals who participated in Australia’s first ever national study on the ‘Effectiveness of Chaplaincy as provided by the National School Chaplaincy Association (NSCA)* to Government Schools in Australia’, chaplains helped to:

- build the sense of community in the school,
- support the school ethos and
- assist with the integration of potentially ‘at risk’ students, including recent immigrants and Aboriginal students.

98% of principals said that chaplaincy was making a major contribution to school morale; it was proactive, unique, effective and important. They urged that Government project funding should be continued when the three year cycle of project funding ended.

The quantitative and qualitative study, commissioned by the National School Chaplaincy Association (NSCA) involved feedback from school principals, chaplains, teaching staff, parents and students.

The research also found that Chaplaincy in government schools was not only unique, proactive and effective, but also a neutral and non-judgmental service that added long term value to the wellbeing of Australian Communities.

“Chaplains are able to **dig a little deeper** than what we have time to do.”

“ I love watching the chaplain working with the students – **the kids shine!** ”

“The chaplain helps you **feel good about yourself** as a teacher.”

- Teachers



UNITED IN THEIR SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY ... Mequa Hill (grade 6) Andrea Bolten (Chaplain, Kununurra District High School), Rick Bolten (grade 7), Kim Moore (Chaplain, Kununurra District High School) and Saeed Amin (Principal, Kununurra DHS) are united in their support for School Chaplaincy.

***National School Chaplaincy Association (NSCA) providers:** ACCESS Ministries(VIC); GENR8(NSW); Scripture Union (QLD); Scripture Union (TAS); Scripture Union (ACT); SMG(SA) and YouthCARE (WA). The study did not include chaplains in schools in NSW as the Department of Education in NSW did not allow the research to proceed.

“Chaplains in government schools are helping to build the sense of community, support the school ethos as well as assisting with the integration of potentially ‘at risk’ students, including recent immigrants and Aboriginal students.”

- Principals