

Teacher Staffroom Episode 3: Sharing expertise with your peers

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Hello and thank you for downloading this episode of *Teacher* Staffroom – where we catch you up on the latest evidence, insight and action. I'm Rebecca Vukovic.

In today's episode I'm going to share some of the interesting interviews and articles we've published on *Teacher* this month. There were plenty to choose from but I've gone ahead and selected the pieces that I think you'd find the most useful in your own school settings. After all, here at *Teacher* we're always focusing on the practical ways that you can use the research in your own classrooms.

Throughout the episode you'll hear me posing lots of questions. They're designed to get you talking with your colleagues – in staffrooms or team meetings perhaps – and to get you thinking critically about the content we're sharing.

Here at *Teacher*, we're always hearing from educators who are keen to contribute to the magazine and share their stories. So, in this episode I'm going to share with you some of the [reader contributions](#) we've published on *Teacher* this month.

And while you're listening, if you feel that you might have a story to share with our audience, please feel free to get in touch. We've got [a handy guide](#) to help you to get started and I'll share the link to it in the transcript for this podcast.

The first article I'd like to share is a reader submission from [Dr Kevin F. McGrath and Dr Penny Van Bergen](#) who have written a piece that discusses their new research into how teachers build close relationships with disruptive students.

Their research acknowledges that while it's difficult to form successful relationships when your interactions frequently involve reprimands, some teachers do experience close relationships with disruptive students. Here's a quote from the article that I found particularly useful:

While close student-teacher relationships are remarkably important in all years of schooling, this is particularly so in the first three years of school. Students who experience close relationships with teachers in these years are likely to experience positive social, behavioural and academic outcomes throughout schooling.

There are benefits for teachers too. Close relationships with students can protect against teacher burnout and promote wellbeing, whilst having a positive impact on the classroom climate more broadly.'

So clearly, this research found that building relationships with disruptive students took time, effort, and persistence. In your classroom, how do you manage your own feelings whilst also considering the emotions of your students?

Here's something else to think about: As a classroom teacher, how do you work to form relationships with students with challenging behaviours? Have you found an approach that works particularly well?

The next article I'd like to discuss comes from [four academics from the University of New South Wales](#) – Dr Emma Burns, Keiko Bostwick, Dr Rebecca Collie and Dr Andrew Martin.

Their contribution explores findings from a recent Australian study that examined different forms of social support in a school setting and looks closely at the role of teachers in reducing adolescent girls' disengagement over three years of high school.

Here's an interesting quote from their article:

We found that as girls transitioned to and moved through high school, many did indeed become more disengaged over time. This means that self-handicapping and failure-acceptance increased for most girls.

Importantly, however, we found that teacher support played a significant role in reducing this escalation. This means that more support from teachers during the transition to and throughout high school may be an important buffer against disengagement for girls.'

Here's something to think about: How do you work to build relationships with the girls in your class so they know they can come to you for support?

In addition, how do you ensure that you're providing girls with clear and positive feedback on their school work? What impact has this had on their engagement at school?

[Our next contribution](#) comes from a primary school teacher at Jells Park Primary School in Victoria. Andrew Noordhoff has been involved in a program called reSolve: Mathematics by Inquiry – which is a national program from the Australian Association of Maths Teachers and the Australian Academy of Science. The whole aim of the program is to encourage more engaging mathematics for F-10 students.

In this contribution, Andrew discusses how students responded to their most recent reSolve lesson sequence. Here's a quote from his piece that I'd like to share with you:

My teaching partner and I recently team taught another reSolve lesson sequence for our Year 4 students focusing on the properties of odd and even numbers. The aim of this lesson sequence was for students to experiment with adding (and subtracting) odd and even numbers to form generalisations about the properties of odd and even numbers.

What is supposed to be a two-lesson sequence with a teaching time of one hour for each lesson, ran for double that – such was the engagement of our students in the tasks.'

If you're interested in learning more about the reSolve program or taking a look at the free teacher resources, I'll pop [a link to the website](#) in the transcript for this podcast.

This month we also heard from regular [Teacher contributor, Greg Whitby](#). He sits down with Kelly Bowden, a Stage 3 teacher at St Luke's Catholic College in Marsden Park, New South Wales. Here's Kelly discussing her schools unique approach to teaching and learning.

Kelly Bowden: *We really value student empowerment so we've really tried to, especially in this term in particular, we've had adventure learning, which was where students were able to choose a particular course which they would like to participate in and that could have been from early Stage 1 mixing with up to Stage 4 students.*

Greg Whitby: *So they design the course...*

Kelly Bowden: *Well the teachers designed the ideas of the course and students got to choose from ... there was multiple, students got to choose where they wanted to go and what part they wanted to...*

Greg Whitby: *What interested them...*

Kelly Bowden: *Yeah, what interested them and then from there, the outlook of what the unit was, was up to them so it was very broad and they were able to really explore what they wanted to do and how they wanted to learn the content.*

Kelly Bowden says team teaching allows her to bounce ideas off her colleagues. Think about your own school setting: how often are you afforded opportunities to collaborate with your colleagues? Is this something that helps you to consolidate your own ideas?

The next piece I'd like to share with you comes from a podcast [we recorded this month with Gail Smith](#), Principal of Rosebery Primary in the Northern Territory. She joins us to discuss how co-teaching has improved outcomes for students at her school and how trusting co-teacher relationships are maintained.

Here's Gail discussing why co-teaching is an approach that works for her staff and students.

'I think co-teaching is fantastic. Team teaching is one part of co-teaching, but a lot of people get them confused. Co-teaching, for me, is definitely the way to go.'

...For me, co-teaching is that you co-collaborate, you co-work through everything so it's done together. And you know what each other is going to be doing, and you know where you're at with your lessons, you know what you need to be doing next. If you are a team teacher, you still have your class, you still have your own planning, you just do some things together. It's quite different in the sense that co-teaching is you're responsible for all of these students, and this is how we work as two, as a pair.'

Here's something to consider: Thinking about your own school context, how do you demonstrate adult collaboration to students?

And finally, in research news, the latest results of the Australian Early Development Census have been released. The census is a nationwide snapshot of how children have developed by the time they start school and this month we published a piece summarising the main findings from the 2018 report.

It notes that boys are more likely to be developmentally vulnerable in all areas. Echoing the 2015 report, the largest gender divide was in emotional maturity; boys were 3.4 times more likely than girls to be developmentally vulnerable in this domain.

If you're interested, you can visit the [Australian Early Development Census website](#) to download a copy of the 2018 report and we'll also include a link to it in the transcript for this podcast.

Well, that's it from me so thank you for joining me for this episode of *Teacher Staffroom*.

If you have any feedback on the episode or the questions I've posed, please leave a comment on the website or reach out on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#). And if you would like to contribute to *Teacher*, please make sure you take a look at our handy guide before you get started.

Of course, if you want to access anything I've mentioned here today, you'll find all the links on [our website](#). That's also where you'll find the sign up form for our email bulletin, which delivers new content directly to your inbox each week.

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