

## DR ROBERT G SMITH: "BOYS BUSINESS" – TUNING INTO BOYS USING MUSIC & THE ARTS

An afternoon- or one-day workshop for educators working with boys.

### Program Overview:

"Boys Business" is unique! It's a music program where you don't have to be musical. Although it uses music as its vehicle, it's not about creating a Vienna Boys Choir; it's more about helping boys evolve into collaborative, creative and independent operators.

Over the past years, Doctor Bob has been developing and refining Boys Business in schools throughout the Northern Territory and regional Australia, with the help of many passionate and dedicated teachers.

### Doctor Bob shows how to place the emphasis on the way you work with boys:

'We invite boys to participate in our activities and constantly affirm supportive behaviour and performance. We want the boys working together so that they feel that they belong. Boys' Business is intended to make boys, and thus young men, feel good about themselves, about what they are and do.'

### Before we work towards quality musical performance we need to get boys engaged, enthusiastically.

The songs, games and activities are designed to encourage co-operation but also give boys the chance to be creative and let their wild spirits roam free. Most importantly they are fun. As the boys themselves attest:

*'I like taking part in Boys Business. It's fun and you get to learn all about what you can do and what you can't.'* *'Boys Business helps me feel good about myself. I've even found out I'm a leader!*

Originally designed for Middle Years boys, "Boys Business": works on boys' behaviour and motivation, appeals to boys who would never join the choir, keeps boys engaged in school activities, fits in with other programs for boys at risk, is guaranteed fun for everyone

involved AND the manual includes all the games, activities and music you need to run the program so you don't have to invent them yourself.

### The Workshop

This workshop supports participating educators in the process of setting up and running "Boys Business" type programs in schools. The workshop is packaged preferably to be run over five hours or it can be compressed to run across two hours as follows;

**Section One:** The Background - introducing theoretical background to the process;

**Section Two:** The Modules - engaging participants with practical strategies and;

**Section Three:** The Tools - working with the songs, games and activities, and closes with time for discussion, reflection and evaluation.

### The "Boys Business Manual" (helpful but not obligatory for workshops)

is available from the Family Action Centre, University of Newcastle, the Boys Business package includes the theoretical background, module outlines, games, activities, CDROM and sheet music required to run the program.

### Contact details:

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#### The Presenter: "Dr Bob"– Dr Robert G Smith

Bob has over forty years of successful international experience in diverse learning settings. These include time working in Polynesian schools in New Zealand and the Pacific, in Tanzania, East Africa, in Mexico, and with Metis and Inuit children in Canada. Bob Smith recently retired as Music-in-Schools Adviser, based at the Northern Territory Music School (NTMS) in Darwin. Now he is often found interstate and overseas, actively promoting his egalitarian view of music in education. He is a recent Past President of the Australian Society for Music Education Inc (ASME). Bob can be contacted by e-mail at <[bobsmith@octa4.net.au](mailto:bobsmith@octa4.net.au)> More information is available through his website URL <http://members.iinet.net.au/~bobsmith/>

#### What others say about the presenter and his workshops...

**Year Three Teacher, Palmerston:** "Taking part (in Bob's 'chalk-face' workshops) has encouraged me to reflect on my own practice. My students have learnt more not only about other people but also about themselves."

**Asked to comment on 'Boys Business' at the Essington School Darwin, Jill Kuhn, the Music Coordinator says,** "We found this program innovative and exciting. The boys were genuinely and joyfully in the business of making music and the fact that you combined some "boy games with sportmanship" was a bonus. Many of the boys joined in the singing who might never have otherwise in a different setting." (February 2008).

**Jill Tudor, Principal, Alice Springs School of the Air adds,** "I have had the privilege of working with Bob Smith or Dr Bob as he is affectionately known by students in two schools, one a school of Distance Education, the other a mainstream urban primary school over a period of at least ten years in music and in more recent times with Boys Business."

Without doubt students and teachers alike learned enormously from, not only the strategies he modelled, but also the enthusiasm, motivation and creativity he brought with him on every occasion. Students in both contexts were invariably delighted to hear that their class was to have the opportunity to work with Dr Bob as were teachers who rushed to secure timeslots for his professional development sessions.

I have seen Dr Bob work with the most difficult of students and quickly develop very positive working relationships and a real pride in their learning. This was evidenced by the extent to which boys were happy to share their learning at the end of a Boys Business program with their classmates without shame and clearly put their hearts and souls into polished performances.

I have no hesitation in recommending Bob Smith's work. From an Administrator's point of view he is flexible, easy going, reliable and willing to adapt and adjust programs to meet school needs with great creativity, frequently using original work. He is highly professional and maintains excellent communication before, during and after his visits to schools. At both schools in which I have worked with him I have found his insights into the students with whom he has worked very valuable.

I am happy to speak further on his behalf should that be required. (February 2008)

**...and from David Glyde, Principal of Gillen Primary School;** "Dr Bob Smith's "Boys' Business" has run successfully at Gillen School for many years. Bob has the knack of engaging even the most challenging boys and it is incredible to see the way he melds the group into a cohesive, well functioning team in a short period of time. The boys work together in a supportive environment and they genuinely feel good about themselves. A highlight of the program for the boys is the opportunity to showcase the musical, artistic or social skills they have learnt at a public performance. Our boys love "Boys Business". It is fun, challenging and educational in so many ways." (February 2008)