



NEW PLYMOUTH BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL

TE KURA TAMATĀNE O NGĀMOTU

Assembly Speech June 15, 2015

Music and Culture is an important part of our programme and I would like to mention some outstanding results.

Smokefree Rockquest.

3rd placed for band '*Maybe Next May*' – NPBHS / Francis Douglas Memorial College consisting of Adam Stuart, James Murphy, Austin Spicer, Cormac Griffin
1st place solos and duos - James O'Donovan. Year 13, Singer / Songwriter of exceptional talent.

Many students performed with distinction at the Regional Chamber of Music Awards competition. I really enjoyed the performances I saw and it was an extremely high standard.

Scott Whitter and Thomas Foy - leading roles in the New Plymouth Cathedral's drama group production of 'The Lion The Witch and The Wardrobe'.

Thomas Cole has been selected to compete for the 2015 New Zealand Junior Kayak Team. This team is due to leave New Zealand on 23rd June and return on 29th July 2015. Thomas will partake in a training camp in Hungry prior to competing in the World Championships scheduled for 17-19 July in Portugal. I would like to invite Thomas to come up on stage while we recognise his achievement.

Today school I want to talk to you about one of the best and worst things about living in 2015.

One of the best things is just how accessible and connected the World is. You are literally a thumb click away from anyone in the world and any material / content in the world.

What an exciting time to be a teenager. You can talk with one or multiple people and your messages and online content can be viewed by one or millions. Anywhere any time.

You have many tools to communicate through. Voice, text, video, actions. It is generally affordable and the ever increasing speeds of the internet and the rapid development of apps are making our lives easier and easier every day. The pace at which we now work and consume information has dramatically increased.

Whether that is things like internet banking, apps that control other devices or social media like Facebook, communicating is fun, easy and instantaneous.

It is quite hard for the older generation to get used to. If we wanted to catch up with a friend after school we had to pre-arrange a time. If they weren't there or were late we missed them. We couldn't text or facebook them, we had to go back home and ring them on a landline or bike around the neighbourhood until we found them.

We had to talk to girls face to face or ring them up on a landline, normally their parents would answer and we would sheepishly ask to speak them. Most houses had the landline in the kitchen near the dining-room table, there were no cordless phones, so we stretched the cord as far as it could away from hovering parents or siblings. I know how terrible that must sound to you all.

I am not that ancient, but that was my reality as a student. Some of the staff are so mature they may have used smoke signals or even pigeons to carry messages to their friends. Instead of bikes they may have ridden horses.

Here are some interesting facts:

1. Every minute, 100 hours of video are uploaded on YouTube by individual users.
2. There are 350 million Snapchat messages sent every day.

3. There are 6.8 billion people on the planet and 4 billion of them use a mobile phone. Only 3.5 billion of them use a toothbrush.
4. About 1 out of 8 couples met their spouse on the internet within the past few years.
5. Today, the number of text messages sent and received every day, is more than the total population of the planet.

So we have the best thing in technology and the availability of communication but it is also can be the worst thing.

There are four themes I want to talk to you about:

1) You have a digital fingerprint. Some people say a digital footprint but I say a fingerprint. A footprint can be rubbed out. A fingerprint can't.

Your digital fingerprint is your life etched on the internet forever. Forever. Whatever you do on Facebook, email, Snapchat is set in stone. For example a Snapchat maybe temporary in principle but what you send is only a screen shot away from permanency. Maybe a screen shot away from ruining your day or even your life.

That means like a tattoo or a criminal record, a future employer, future spouse, your future children will see that fingerprint. That is very, very important to remember. Will you be proud of your conduct in the future? Do you have anything to be worried about?

It's not too late boys to form a digital fingerprint you can be proud of now and into the future. Swearing, racism, sexism, bullying, antagonism, inappropriate photography video are all things that will make your fingerprint undesirable. They are all things that could affect your life in the future.

2) While on the Internet and social media, walk in the shoes of others. To deliver criticism, hate and hurt via the internet is cowardly. To have negative opinions about people and situations you don't actually know is even weaker. Whether that be a celebrity sports star or acquaintance.

The only person you have a right to judge, the only person who could, receive your commentary, receive your harsh evaluation and judgement is you! For everyone else keep your opinions to yourself. Walk in the shoes of others before you judge them. If you can't walk in their shoes you can't and don't have a right to comment.

Never use the Internet social media in anger or in hatred. It will never end well. If you are upset, sleep on it and if you couldn't say it to the persons face with respect don't say it. Situations always are different the next day.

If you feel yourself typing or texting when you are emotional don't send it. Or, ask someone you trust, an adult, before you send it, and again, review it the next day before sending it.

3) Integrity - I have talked in other assemblies about what do you when no-one is watching is important. Another way of looking at it, is everything you write and do on the Internet, should pass the grandmother test.

Or if not grandmother, your mother or key caregiver test. What would they think if they read or received your content? If they wouldn't be shocked, offended, ashamed, then you are probably OK with your content. If they would be any of those things then don't put that on your digital fingerprint.

Finally:

4) YOLO - You Only Live Once. Yes that's true, I agree with that term, but that is exactly why you need to live a life with integrity and improve the world. Why you need to 'Be The Example'.

Do good. Use the power of social media to do good. Build people up, be positive, support and reward. Pay it forward with respect and kindness. Be a good man. Do the right thing since you don't get a second chance at life.

I will leave you with this quote:

“Technology is nothing. What’s important is that you have faith in people and that they are basically good and smart and if you give them tools, they'll do wonderful things with them.”

Steve Jobs

Paul Verić
Headmaster