



# BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

**FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER**

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026**



## BARRABA RSL & RECREATIONAL CLUB LTD

Phone 67821379

For the information of members and guests.

### **THIS WEEK**

**THURSDAY 26th February**  
**BINGO**

First game starts at 6pm

**FRIDAY 27th February**  
**MEAT RAFFLES**

Tickets on sale from 5.30pm  
Membership Draw \$2000 (3 draws)

**SUNDAY 1st March**

**Aircooled Assembly Raffles**

Raffles on sale 12pm, drawn 1.30pm.  
Membership Draw \$1800

### BISTRO HOURS

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**MONDAY/TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY: CLOSED**

**THURS/FRI/SAT: LUNCH 12-2PM DINNER FROM 6PM**

**SUNDAY: 12-2PM**

## **Golf Day Fundraiser!**

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March**

**4 Person**  
**Ambrose**  
**10:00AM**

**\$25pp**  
**Inc. Lunch**

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**Driving for**  
**Prostate Cancer Research**



## **BARRABA CANCER PATIENTS FUND**

**RAISING GROUP INC.**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**THURSDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2026, 11am.**

**Andy's Guesthouse**

**All are welcome**

**Barraba Show information pages 2 and 5.**



as seven, riding their PeeWees, right through to seriously competitive adults on their powerful machines. It will be fun and great entertainment". Safety rules and regulations concerning clothing and bike capacity will be strictly enforced.

#### ALL COMPETITORS –

- Provide their own two-wheel motor bike
- Must have a minimum of two years riding experience
- Must wear a helmet, long pants, long sleeve shirt and boots
- Must be seven years or older.

#### ENTRY CLASSES –

1. **Mini-racers** (7 – 12 years) CC maximum of 125cc
2. **Tweens** (13 – 15 years) CC maximum of 125cc
3. **Seniors** (18 years up) CC maximum of 750cc
4. **Seniors: Clapped out Ag Bike**

**Now** is the time to work out who in your family will enter and what classes. Full information and the all the entry forms are in the Barraba Show Schedule which is available on line at [www.barrabashow.com.au](http://www.barrabashow.com.au) or you can get already printed copies by dropping into **Phil Denyer Mechanical Repairs**, corner Alice and Queen St, Barraba during business hours.

Entry forms with entry fees (\$10 under 18yrs, \$20 adults) can be lodged by email ([phillipdenyer@outlook.com](mailto:phillipdenyer@outlook.com)) at Phil Denyer Mechanical Repairs **before 5pm on Thursday 5 February 2026. NO entries will be taken at the Rodeo Ring before the event.**

**Remember the riding and clothing requirements will be strictly enforced.**

**EVENT STARTS:** 6 pm Friday 6 March 2026

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** Phil Denyer at *Phil Denyer Mechanical Repairs*: Phone: 0409 776 104



### ARE YOU ENTERING PHOTOS IN THE PHOTOGRAPHY SECTION AT THE SHOW?

Remember:

- Entries must be submitted to Show Office at the Showground.
- Entries close **3.30pm, Tuesday 3rd March 2026**. All exhibits must be with the Show Secretary at that time. All mail entries to PO Box 108, BARRABA must arrive by this date.
- All entries must have Exhibitor's name clearly marked on the back of mounting plus Class Number as per Schedule Entry Form

### **MOTORBIKE BARREL RACE – 6 pm Friday 6 March**

On Friday night the entertainment in the Rodeo Ring starts with Motorbikes, before the horses and bulls of the Junior Rodeo - the spectacular Barrel Racing on bikes. Competitors are timed racing around fixed barrels in the arena; the fastest to complete the circuit wins.

Chief Steward Phil Denyer told us: "This is a event for the whole family. There are entry classes for children as young

# BARRABA



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## Annabel Kanno – she’s a winner!



*Annabel on Monday evening having exceeded her swim lap target*

Annabel’s lap count was 32.2kms on Monday night with plans to continue swimming this week. The amount raised for sick kids, supported by the Starlight Foundation, is over \$3000. Congratulations to Annabel for a win/win: laps and funds raised both exceeded her target.

Annabel is off to the Zone Swimming Competition at the end of this week so there’s no rest time.

Thank you to Barraba for your generosity and encouragement for Annabel.

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### Message from the Editor

At *Barraba Community News* we welcome local news and stories from our community members about activities, events and news of interest to the Barraba community.

Share your news, views and what you or your local organisation is doing.

Advertise in *News* at a competitive cost and reach 750 households in our area who receive a free copy each week.

Contact [news@barrabacommunitynews.org.au](mailto:news@barrabacommunitynews.org.au) or drop into the Community College on the corner of Alice and Fitzroy Sts.

## WELCOME HOME NANCY!

*By Geoff Hagan*

Last Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February saw twelve former classmates of Barraba Central School welcome home a fellow classmate, Nancy Brambley-More. Nancy hasn’t been back to Barraba since October 1988 – that is going on for thirty-eight years.



*L-R: Rhonda Phillips (nee Derrick) Kerry Kelaher (nee Grant), Nancy Brambley-More, Karen Hughson (nee Wilkinson)*

When Nancy arrived in town on Saturday, a welcoming party of three former classmates met her on the footpath in front of Polkadot Coffee Rooms, where we were meeting for coffee. Before our coffee, Nancy paid her respects to our six deceased classmates whose names and a plaque are on our class memorial table.

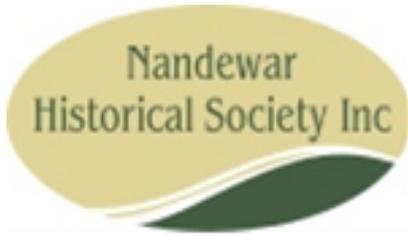
We gathered around 5 pm at the Commercial Hotel. After a few drinks, we ate around 6 pm. After a delicious meal and a few more drinks we said our goodbyes at about 11.30 pm.



*Some of the old faces: Mark Cummins, David Barrows, Peter Brodbeck, Mark Corney, Peter York, Geoff Hagan, Nancy Brambley-More, Kerry Grant.*

Nancy enjoyed her weekend at her old stamping ground, and said she won’t leave it as long before her next visit.

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## History Notes

Our Society has had a request for a photo of Fritz Simpson. He was descended from the more southern Simpson family – a grandson of Lewis Simpson who was born in Norway in 1836.

Lewis came to Australia on board the “Scotia” in 1856. Six years later he married Susan Potter, a member of the well-known Barraba family, and they had eight children including a son, Fritz, who sadly died soon after birth. He is buried in Manilla. Among the six surviving children was Thomas who married Jane Twoodle in Queensland in 1898. Thomas and Jane had a family of seven including a Fritz who grew up and married Ettie McGregor.

This Fritz Simpson married and it is a member of his family who would like a photo of him. He was twenty when he died while felling a tree, apparently in the Barraba district. He was buried in Barraba just before Christmas, 1931. Hopefully someone can help her with a photo – we can copy it if necessary.

By the time these notes are printed, our Society will have had another visit from the author of the two mining books that members have been reading and checking. As mentioned last week he has done a great job, and readers are learning a lot more about the mining areas. Hopefully more on this next week.

Possibly a few Society members read The Land each week and may have noticed on page four a photo of Barraba’s 2025 citizen of the year – Arlene Weekes – standing beside one of the planter pots she has organised and worked on in Barraba’s main street. This one is just outside the Museum gate and well worth noticing – a job well done and the publicity outside the Museum can always attract attention to the Museum. If you have missed it there will be a copy on the Society’s noticeboard from Sunday.

### 2026 LOCAL SHOWS COMING SOON!

**Barraba Show:** 6, 7, 8 March

**Manilla Show:** 13, 14, 15 March

**Bingara Show:** 21, 22 March



### Admission & Membership

**Gate Admission/Non-Members:**  
 Adult - \$20 (Friday/Saturday) \$5 (Sunday)  
 Child - \$5 (under 18)  
 Pensioner - \$5  
 Family Pass - \$60 (2x Adults and any children under 18 for 3 days).  
 Adult Pass - \$40 (1x Adult for 3 days)

**Committee Membership** (3 day show entrance):  
 Single Member - \$25 per annum.  
 Pensioner - \$8 per annum.  
 Family - \$60 per annum.

New memberships and renewals are to be purchased at the show office prior to the show.  
**Note: Membership fees will not be accepted at the gate and wristbands must be collected prior to the show.**

All patrons **MUST** wear their issued wristband whilst at the showground. Patrons found without a wristband will be asked to pay the admission price again.

**NO WRISTBAND NO ENTRY**  
 Gates open at 6am from the 6th of March.

All livestock must be identified with an NLIS tag and must be accompanied by a National Vendor Declaration (NVD) or a Transported Stock Statement (TSS)

**PIC#: NG507971**



### Pavilion

Pavilion Ribbons Donated by Tamworth Regional Council.

**Entry Fee:** \$1 each. Bulk School Entries \$0.50.  
**Prize Money:** Money can be collected from the Secretaries office between 2pm-5pm on Saturday and 10am-2:45pm or between 3pm-4pm from the pavilion on Sunday. NO MONEY TO BE GIVEN AFTER THE SHOW.

Entries only permitted when accompanied by an entry form and waiver. Entries are to be made directly to the secretaries office at the showground between 10am-4pm during the week prior to the show (2-5th Feb) or delivered to the pavilion on Friday 6th March between 8am-10am.

**Photography:** entries close Tuesday 3th March at 3:30pm. Po Box 108 Barraba NSW 2347  
**Cut Flowers:** entries to be made to the luncheon pavilion from 2pm-4:30pm on Friday 6th March.  
**Farm Produce:** entries should be delivered to the luncheon pavilion from 2pm-4pm on 6th March.

Collection of exhibits from 3pm-4pm on Sunday 8th March

### Pavillion Officials

**Chief Steward**  
 Mrs M Cabot -  
 0429941978

**This years pavilion theme:**  
 Rivers and Creeks

The Barraba Show Society would like to say thank you to the following individuals and businesses for their support of the 2026 Pavilion Section

**From Barraba Friends Facebook page –**

**Bronwyn Laing writes –**

Hello and thanks for letting me join. I am helping my friend in Vienna research his wife's (Verena Kirchweger) family's history.

Last year during a visit with my friends we discovered that Verena's great great grandfather Anton Plankenbucher who lived in Laxenburg ( se Vienna ) is buried in Barraba NSW.

We joke that he popped out for some milk in 1891 and never came home. He left behind Anna Kirchweger and a 7 month old son called Anton Kirchweger.

Anton (Arthur ) came to Australia aged about 21 and then went on to marry Wilhelmina Diehm here in Lidsdale. His name became Arthur Plank (was Anton Plankenbucher) and they had about 8 children. Arthur is buried in Barraba, and Wilhelmina is buried here in Wallerawang.

I'd love to hear from anyone who has Arthur as a direct ancestor.

Bronwyn

**CATHOLIC CHURCH TIMES**

Barraba 1st Sunday of the month, Saturday evening  
Mass 6pm.  
All other Sundays 9am

**BARRABA UNITING CHURCH NOTICES**

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026  
Time 10.45am  
Please note new time till the end of April.  
All welcome

**ANGLICAN CHURCH TIMES**

**St Laurence's Barraba**  
Sunday service at 10.00am  
Woodsreef 11.30am, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month

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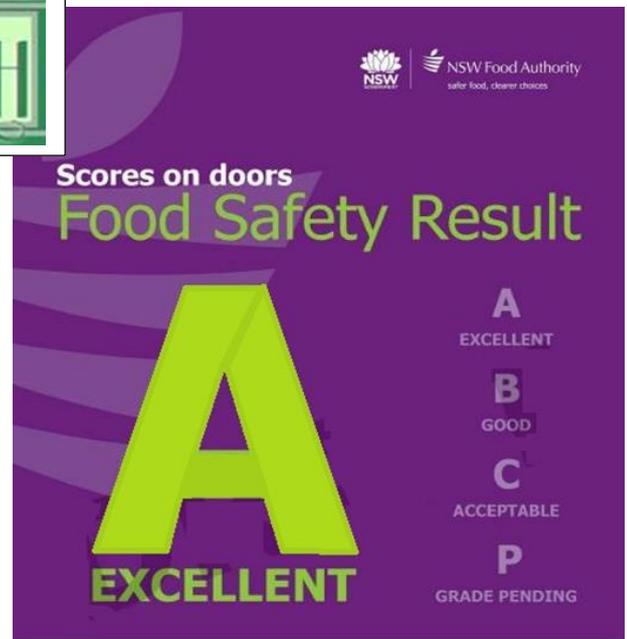
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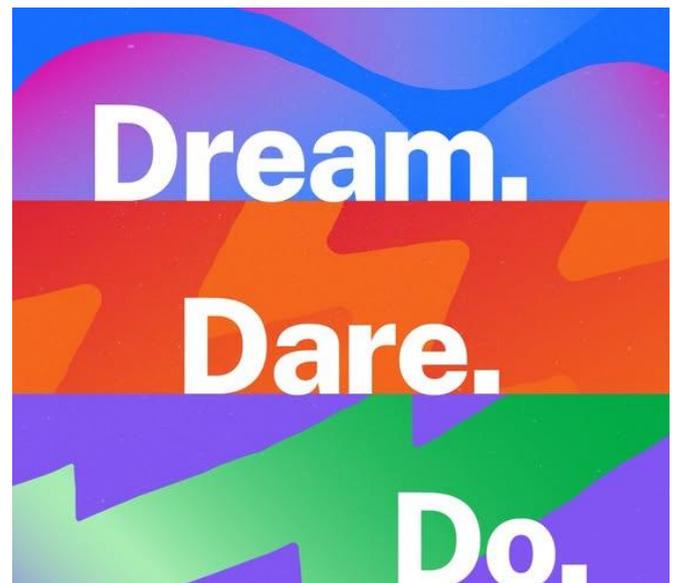
Contacts: Bronwyn 0447 165 008 or Office: 67821662

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businesses



At Richardson House we are proud to announce that we have once again received an A rating in our recent Food Safety Audit. A round of applause for all the staff involved in achieving this fantastic result.



**Dream it. Dare to express it. Do something bold.**

Gen Z Selects is a youth-led exhibition launching as a precursor to NSW Youth Week 2026 and one of many initiatives planned for Tamworth's Youth Week celebrations. Curated by young people, the exhibition highlights the ideas, stories and perspectives shaping today's generation through artworks inspired by identity, digital culture and social change.

Join us to celebrate youth creativity and community at the opening night, Thursday 26 February 6:00pm – 7:30pm at the Tamworth Regional Gallery, a free event.

Come along and support the next generation of artists and changemakers.

# Give your bins some breathing room



Keep at least  
**0.5m clear**  
between bins



# Give your bins some breathing room



Keep at least  
**2m clear**  
of fences, cars  
letterboxes, etc.



# Give your bins some breathing room



Keep at least  
**1m clear**  
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poles, walls  
& power lines

Ensure handles  
are facing  
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## Why do we blush? Turning red may have surprising social benefits



*Amanda Meyer, Senior Lecturer, Anatomy and Pathology in the College of Medicine and Dentistry, James Cook University*

*Monika Zimanyi, Associate Professor in Anatomy, James Cook University*

We've all had the feeling. You're embarrassed and then there it is: a warm flush creeping up your neck and across your cheeks. The more you think about it, the hotter and redder you get. If someone asks "are you blushing?" it only makes you blush more.

So, why do we do it? When we're already self-conscious, this involuntary response can feel like an added punishment. But evolutionary science suggests blushing may actually have social advantages. Let's take a look.

### What is blushing?

Blushing is our body's visible reaction when we feel emotions such as embarrassment, shyness or self-consciousness. It's caused by a short burst of increased blood flow to the skin of the ears, face, neck or chest.

When an emotion triggers blushing, the sympathetic nervous system – which controls automatic body functions – becomes active and releases adrenaline (epinephrine). This makes the tiny muscles in blood vessels relax.

In the body, adrenaline tightens blood vessels, but in the face it does the opposite – they dilate. This means more blood flows through to the skin and makes the face feel hot.

We turn red because of this sudden rush of blood close to the surface of the skin. People with lighter skin tones show this redness more clearly. In darker skin tones, the change may be less visible or not visible at all – but the same physiological process still happens. No matter whether others can see it, you'll still feel warmth or tingling in your face.

### The social role of blushing

People blush when they are feeling highly self-conscious, which is generally brought on by unwanted social attention. So even though the "fight-or-flight" system is involved, blushing isn't about preparing for danger. Instead, scientists think it evolved as a social signal, a way of showing others that we recognise a mistake or feel embarrassed.

This can actually help build trust, because people often see blushing as a sign of honesty or sincerity – especially as it's involuntary. Blushing can signal a non-verbal apology for a social misstep that can help to maintain social bonds after a transgression.

Different emotions can make us blush – but the mechanism is the same: increasing blood flow to the face and making us feel hot. The difference is that blushing in anger, for example, comes from arousal and frustration, while blushing from embarrassment comes from self-awareness and social emotion. People will blush for different reasons. For example, one study found children with social anxiety blushed from embarrassment when given exaggerated praise, compared to moderate praise or none.

In a follow-up study, the researchers found kids found who scored highly for narcissism – meaning they had an exaggerated sense of self-importance, wanted admiration and lacked empathy – blushed only when given moderate praise. Researchers suggested this was because the praise given didn't match how well the child believed they performed.

### Who's most likely to blush?

Women and younger people blush more. This may explain why it is often associated with youth, vitality and fertility. People with social anxiety are also more likely to blush.

But as we age and have more life experience, we tend to blush less. This may indicate we are more familiar with social norms – or less bothered if we transgress them.

People with facial erythema (persistent facial redness) are often mistakenly seen as blushing. But this condition can have a variety of causes, including rosacea, allergic contact dermatitis, reactions to medication and lupus erythematosus (a chronic autoimmune disease).

## Animals can blush too

Some primates have pale facial skin that can blush, such as Japanese macaques and bald uakaris.

For mandrills, another kind of primate, blushing plays an important role in fertility. Females have a dark face when young and after giving birth. But their faces become bright red during the follicular phase of their menstrual cycle, advertising their fertility. When male mandrills are in the presence of fertile females, their faces become redder as they produce more testosterone.

Human make-up trends may be evoking similar fertility and attraction rituals, whether consciously or unconsciously. For example, TikTok and Instagram are awash with people “addicted” to blush using hashtags such as #Blushaholics and #BlushBlindness. Heavy blush is also popularly worn by K-Pop bands – and not only female groups.

## When to get help for blushing

Because blushing is an involuntary reaction, you can't stop a blush once it's coming on. However, if you have a blush that lasts more than a few days, is accompanied by pain, or is distressing to you due to cosmetic concerns, talk to your GP or health professional.

Cognitive behavioural therapy (a kind of talk therapy that helps reframe unhelpful thoughts and behaviours) may benefit people who blush because of social anxiety.

In rare cases where the cause is an overactive sympathetic nervous system, surgery may be recommended. There are two kinds: a sympathectomy removes a piece of the sympathetic chain – a long chain of nerve fibres running beside the spine; while a sympathicotomy cuts this chain near the second rib, where it joins this spine. Evidence suggests these procedures are effective and can improve quality of life for people with severe symptoms.

But for most people, blushing won't require medical intervention. If you can get through the embarrassment, this involuntary response can be a chance to reflect on your body's signals, and what they reveal about yourself and how you connect with the world.



## RECENT ANNIVERSARIES

- Rome officially becoming Italy's capital after the country's unification (1871)
- the establishment of the world's first commercial cheese factory in Switzerland (1815)
- the discovery of the world's largest alluvial gold nugget, the Welcome Stranger, weighing between 66kg and 72kg - in Moliagul, Australia (1869)
- Queen Elizabeth II marking her Platinum Jubilee - 70 years on the throne (2022)
- the colonial Tasmanian Parliament passing the world's first secret ballot (1856)
- the Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria, which killed 173 people (2009)
- Stanley Bruce being sworn in as the 8th Prime Minister of Australia (1923)
- the first flight of a Boeing 727 jet (1963)
- the Beatles performing their first-ever gig at Liverpool's Cavern Club (1961) and their first appearance on The Ed Sullivan Show (1964)
- the Anglican Church of Australia ordaining women as deacons for the first time, a precursor to the ordination of female priests (1986)
- the debut of the Tom & Jerry cartoon (1940)
- the sinking of the HMAS Voyager after colliding with aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne near Jervis Bay, NSW, killing 82 people (1964)
- a 20.2kg lobster being caught off Nova Scotia - the heaviest crustacean ever caught (1977)
- the National Apology to the Stolen Generations (2008)
- the death of Captain James Cook (1779)
- the first draft of the complete human genome is published in Nature (2001)
- Pope Gregory the Great decreeing “God bless you” as the correct response to a sneeze (600)
- the deaths of 21 Australian nurses in the Banka Island Massacre in WWII (1942)
- the birthday of Banjo Patterson (1864)
- General Motors announcing it will be retiring the Holden brand (2020)
- the founding of the Battle Creek Toasted Corn Flake Company, now known as Kellogg's (1906)
- the bombing of Darwin by Japanese forces (1942)
- Australia reopening its international borders for fully vaccinated tourists (2022)
- Scottish scientists announcing they have cloned an adult mammal, producing a lamb named "Dolly" (1997)
- the first mass inoculation against polio (1954)



## Back to school: what are the money lessons to teach your kids at every age?

*Angel Zhong, Professor of Finance, RMIT University*

As parents prepare for another school year, there's one subject that often gets overlooked: money.

Financial literacy isn't just about numbers. It's about building skills that will shape your child's future decisions, from buying their first car to planning for retirement.

The good news? You don't need to be a finance expert to teach these lessons. Start with age-appropriate concepts and build from there. Here's what to focus on at each stage.

### Primary school (ages 6–12): Making money real

Young children understand money better when they can see it and touch it. This is the perfect time to introduce pocket money – a regular allowance that teaches them money doesn't appear magically. And once it's gone, it's gone.

Start small. Five dollars a week gives a seven-year-old enough to make choices without overwhelming them. Should they buy that chocolate bar now, or save for three weeks to get the Lego set they really want?



*Making saving visible can help young kids.*

This waiting game is crucial. It teaches delayed gratification which research shows is linked to better financial outcomes later in life. When your child saves for weeks to buy something they've been eyeing, they're learning that big goals require patience and planning.

Use clear jars or piggy banks so kids can literally watch their money grow. It makes saving visible and satisfying. Some families use a three-jar system: spending, saving, and sharing (for charity or gifts). This introduces the idea that money serves multiple purposes.

Let them make small mistakes too. If your eight-year-old blows their entire allowance on stickers and regrets it by Wednesday, that's a five-dollar lesson that could save them thousands later.

### Secondary school (ages 12–18): Real-world money management

Teenagers are ready for more complex financial concepts. This is when you shift from teaching about money to teaching with money.

Open a bank account together. Walk them through how banks work. Tell them that banks are not just storing money, they're businesses that pay you interest to keep your money there and charge interest when you borrow. Explain that the interest you earn on savings is usually tiny, while the interest you pay on debts is much higher.

Introduce the concept of debit cards, but explain how they differ from credit. A debit card only spends money you already have. This is a good time to show them how to check their account balance and track spending through banking apps.

Talk about wants versus needs. Your teenager needs school shoes. They want the \$200 branded pair. This isn't about saying no. It's about showing them trade-offs. "If you want those shoes, you'll need to contribute \$100 from your savings. Are they worth it?"

If your teenager gets a part-time job, teach them to check they're being paid correctly. The Fair Work Ombudsman website has easy tools to calculate award rates, the minimum pay rates set for different industries and age groups. A 16-year-old working in retail should know what they're entitled to earn.

This is also the time to introduce the concept of paying yourself first. When money comes in, savings come out first. Even putting aside 10% teaches the habit of treating savings as non-negotiable – it's not whatever is left over.



Many young people get their first part-time job in hospitality.

### **School leavers (ages 18+): Building wealth basics**

Young adults entering work face a new financial landscape. They're earning more, but expenses grow too, such as transport, social life, and maybe rent.

Start with superannuation. This is money an employer must put aside for an employee's retirement. It may seem irrelevant when your child is 18, but a young person who understands super early has a massive advantage.

Here's why: compound growth. Money invested at 18 has 40+ years to grow. Even small amounts become significant. If you put an extra \$20 a week into super from age 18, you could have at least an extra \$300,000 by retirement, thanks to compound returns. That's the snowball effect, when the investment gains on your contributions start earning returns as well.

Introduce investing apps, but with caution. Digital investing apps such as CommSec Pocket and Stake make investing accessible with small amounts. They let young people buy into diversified funds, which are collections of many different investments, rather than trying to pick individual shares.

Explain the fundamental trade-off: higher potential returns come with higher risk. Shares can grow more than savings accounts, but they can also fall in value quickly.

Teach them about the share market without jargon. When you buy shares, you own a tiny piece of a company. If the company does well, your share becomes more valuable. If it doesn't, your share can lose value.

Diversification – spreading money across many companies – reduces the risk of losing everything if one company fails.

### **The lessons that matter most**

Financial education isn't really just about money. It's about decision-making, delayed gratification, and understanding

that every choice has trade-offs. It's a life skill you build over time, one conversation and one decision at a time.

The most valuable lesson you can teach at any age? Money is a tool, not a goal. It gives you choices and security. Teaching your children to use that tool wisely is one of the greatest gifts you can give them.

Start these conversations early. Make them normal. And remember, you're teaching as much by how you handle money as by what you say about it. Children notice when you compare prices, when you talk about saving for holidays, when you decide something isn't worth the price.

---

From The Conversation

### **If you get lost in the bush, can you really survive by drinking your own pee?**

*Matthew Barton, Senior Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Griffith University*

*Michael Todorovic, Associate Professor of Medicine, Bond University*

TV adventurer Bear Grylls has built a global reputation through his often unconventional and sometimes extreme survival feats to stay hydrated. He has squeezed moisture from elephant dung, sipped the contents of camel intestines, downed yak eyeball juice and, perhaps most famously, drank his own urine.

If you've seen Grylls gulp down a mouthful of his own urine on camera, you might conclude it's a legitimate survival hack. After all, Grylls used to be in the SAS. In one episode, he tells viewers urinating on the ground would be wasting fluids, drinking your own urine is "safe", and grimaces while taking a warm, salty mouthful.

Let's see if this is fact or fiction.

### **Your urine is like a bin**

Fluids make up about 60% of your body's total weight. To maintain the correct balance of substances in this internal environment, your kidneys will continuously filter about 180 litres of blood fluid (plasma) every day. Thankfully, we don't pee out 180L of urine, because our kidneys "throw back" or reabsorb about 99% of what they filter back into the bloodstream.

The best way to imagine this process is by picturing a messy garage. If you tried to pick through the chaos and remove only the unwanted items, you'd be there all day. A more efficient method is to empty everything onto the driveway,

keep what matters, toss the rest. Your kidneys use the same strategy.

They ignore the large cells and proteins, and filter the plasma portion of blood, which essentially empties the entire garage. They then selectively return the useful substances back to the bloodstream. What's left behind becomes urine, the physiological bin.

Its final contents depend on a few factors, including your hydration status, metabolic activity and recent diet (including medications and supplements).

Typically, urine is about 95% water. The rest is:

- urea (about 2%, a byproduct of breaking down protein, which we'll come back to shortly)
- creatinine (about 0.1%, a by-product of muscle metabolism)
- salts and proteins.

### So, does urine hydrate you? Is it safe?

The answer ... yes and no. The answer isn't always clear-cut because, as we saw above, what's in your urine depends on what was in the garage. If you are well hydrated and healthy, your urine will likely appear clear to straw-coloured, meaning it is mostly water (but will still contain urea, salts and other waste products). A drink of this "first pass" urine will indeed provide you with some degree of hydration.

But in a Grylls-type survival setting, you'd be losing water from your body via other means. For instance, you'd lose about 450 millilitres a day via skin sweating and about 300mL a day via water vapour in your breath. If you were in a hot, humid environment, these volumes would increase significantly. As a result, your kidneys would need to work harder to hold onto precious water and keep it in your blood. This will further concentrate the waste products, and what ends up in the bin will be pretty toxic to your body.

So, by drinking urine in a survival setting, you'd be consuming higher concentrations of waste products, including urea, that your body explicitly intended to remove. By drinking urine with higher concentrations of waste products (and/or if your kidneys are impaired), urea and other metabolic waste products can accumulate in your body. This can become toxic to cells, particularly those in the nervous system.

This can lead to symptoms such as vomiting, muscle cramps, itching and changes in consciousness. Without treatment, this toxic state (known as uraemia) can be life-threatening.

### Is your urine sterile?

Toxins aren't the only issue.

While urine leaving the kidneys is likely sterile, the rest of the urinary tract (bladder and urethra) isn't. Our bodies are full of resident bacteria that maintain our health and support daily functions – when they stay in their usual place.

So, when urine passes through the bladder and urethra, it can collect these bacteria. If you drink that urine, you are re-introducing those bacteria into parts of the body where they don't belong – mainly the gastrointestinal tract.

In healthy conditions, stomach acid often kills many of these bacteria. But in a survival situation where dehydration, heat stress or poor nutrition can compromise the gut lining, the risk of those bacteria crossing into the bloodstream increases. This can set the stage for life-threatening infections.

That's the last thing you need while lost in the bush.

### In a nutshell

Please don't rely on drinking your own urine if you're lost in the bush. It's basically the equivalent of drinking from the bin.

