

Dear Grade 10 Epic Parents

This week, on Thursday, will be the annual Devil's Peak Epic Hike for all grade 10 boys. Details of this hike have been sent to all the boys. Boys should be back at Bishops by no later than 2pm. You are encouraged to ensure that your son attend, as this hike is a good indicator to your son how well he is going to fare on the two 3-day hikes in the Cederberg while on Epic, and if he struggles, there is still time for him to get himself ready for Epic.

There will be a Leopard Trust talk during the first week of next term and then a talk on food in week 3, when boys will be given their 24-hour solo boxes and 3-day solo-hike boxes. Details about when to return these boxes will go out then. In week 4 (31 October), the grade 10 exams will begin and will run for 2 weeks. Thereafter, the Epic Training Week will take place, followed by Epic on 22 November.

And now for the final night and Epic Letter.

We believe Epic to be a significant Rite of Passage in the lives of our Grade 10 Bishops boys. For many, it is a life-changing moment as they experience this time away from home in the company of other young men on their journey to adulthood and manhood in particular. We believe that your son will leave for Epic as a young boy and return, after his experiences, as someone further along the path to becoming a good young man. We believe that boys often look to men for examples of how to be a man. This does not diminish in any way at all the influence that women have on their journey. We believe that good people, both men and women, guide, nurture, protect and advise our young men with equal significance. It is just in this specific instance that we have found that a male role model plays an important part.

With this in mind, we invite a significant male figure (a father, uncle, grandfather, brother, godfather, close friend) to be part of the last night of Epic and to share in this experience with him. Usually, that significant figure is the father, but not exclusively, as several of our boys, sadly, will not have a father to play this role. Hence, we ask that any male role model take on this responsibility to welcome your son back from his experience. The evening will take place on Tuesday 6 December and if one leaves Cape Town at 12:00 that day, one can be back in town by 12:00 the following day.

HERE are the details: [DetailsforLastnight.pdf \(bishops.org.za\)](https://www.bishops.org.za/files/DetailsforLastnight.pdf)

During the Epic your son will spend 24 hours alone on a solo experience. For the same reasons above, we ask that this significant male figure either write or help write a letter to your son for him to read during his 24-hour solo, which we will give to him during this time. Being away from home will give your son/ charge the chance to think about all sorts of things, including his home, family and his relationship with you. The same will apply to you: having your son/ charge away for this length of time will also give you the chance to think about him and all that he means to you and your family.

The contents of the letter are entirely up to you, but in keeping with the concept of modelling goodness to boys, we ask that you reflect on what being a Good Man is about and how you can advise and help him in his life. We have found that this 'father's letter' is an extremely meaningful interaction for both the significant male figure and the son. It is entirely up to you what you want to include in the letter.

One colleague gave the following advice to someone who asked him what to write – ***"It is hoped the***

father/ father figure will say things in it which he would want to say to his son about their past, their present and the future. About what that son means to the father/ father figure and his hopes for him. About what it means to be a man in a tough world, a good husband, a good father, a man of faith etc. In short, we are looking for a personal letter from father/ father figure to his son. Only the boy sees it. It is sealed. For many boys (and dads) this has been a hugely significant experience. We are also happy for other family members to contribute to this letter.

The letter needs to be dropped off at the admin office before the end of school on Friday 11 November.

Please note the following:

- No parcels – just a letter! Remember he needs to carry it once read and we only allocate a plastic sleeve per group for all the letters.
- Put your son's name and group on the envelope – you can find this info on your son's pupil profile.
- Please contact Nikki Lewis on nlewis@bishops.org.za (at the BSU) if you need to make an alternative arrangement.
- The idea is that the letter is a 'surprise', so please don't ask your son/ charge to drop it off – we want him to see what it looks like only when he is on his solo.

Kind regards
Graeme Klerck
(Epic Director)