



## Want to blitz the HSC? Stress less

STUDENTS are not the only ones who struggle during the HSC.

Adolescent psychiatrist Toulou Tsovolos said it was common for parents to take on the stress of their children and this could cause more harm than good to their academic outcomes.

"It's not just children going through the HSC, their parents are going through it with them," Dr Tsovolos said. "But they don't know how to help their kids, how much to push them or how involved to get."

Dr Tsovolos recently held separate workshops for children and their parents at Kogarah Library to teach them how to work towards a common goal - without losing their relationship or their minds.

Marlene Lane, who attended the parent workshop, said she hoped it would help her better support her son with study preparation.

"I think I've just been nagging him," she said.

### Toulou's Tips

- Motivate children to do well but ensure they don't think the HSC is the be-all and end-all of their future
- Focus on helping them manage anxiety; it can prove detrimental to even the brightest students
- Ensure children get sufficient rest, exercise and nutrition. Health is often ignored by students stressed about achieving high marks

**CAPTION:** Working together: Dr Toulou Tsovolos and Kogarah Library youth services officer Justin Yeomans are helping students and parents through the HSC. Picture: Chris Lane

# Sydney armed raid: have-a-go John shot

*A daughter told yesterday how proud she was of her father, a cake-shop owner, who was shot while trying to help a fellow Sydney businessman in an armed raid this morning.*

Police are now appealing for help to track down the two gunmen as their victim recovers in hospital after an operation for a bullet wound. Police say the bullet, which they have found, passed through John's groin and out through his buttocks.

His daughter Samantha, who declined to give her family's surname, said she wished her 42-year-old father John had not intervened and been hurt.

"My father is always like that, he helps everybody who needs it," she said. "Everyone loves him. It is a family-run business so we are here today."

John was shot in the attack by two men on Clemton Park Newsagency on William Street, Earlwood, about 6.30am.

Samantha said she spoke to him just before he underwent an operation in hospital.

His condition was said to be serious but stable.

"He was fully conscious. He was awake. He's going to be fine. He promised me," she said. "He was just trying to make us feel better."

The newsagency had just opened when the robbers, both wearing balaclavas



and dark clothing, attacked, Detective Inspector Tim Calman said.

They ordered the newsagency owner and a neighbouring shopkeeper to the back of the store, closed the front door and demanded the safe be opened.

But the owner was unable to open it, Detective Inspector Calman said.

A woman who heard screams from the newsagency walked into the nearby cake shop and told John a robbery was in progress, Samantha said.

John ran towards the newsagency, while his wife called the police.

"He has confronted one of the offenders and [we believe this] led to a physical altercation," Detective Inspector Calman said. "He [was] not aware there was a second male offender in the store."

The second robber is believed to have pulled out a semi-automatic revolver and shot John before stealing cash and running off.

The offenders were last

seen in a black ute turning onto Bexley Road, police said.

### Very popular

John is well known to locals, said resident Wendolyn Melford, who wished him a speedy recovery.

"I've met John. He is very friendly and a very helpful person ... he is very popular."

Throughout the morning, customers arrived at the cake shop and were disappointed to see it was closed.

A sign outside the shop said: "Shop closed today due to family reasons, sorry."

Many of the customers said they had a personal connection with John.

One man, Jim, said he had a running joke with John about his currant scones.

"I always had a joke that I wanted the scones with the flies in," he said.

"When I came in, John would say 'I haven't had a chance to get the net and collect the flies.'"

Ross Papas, who owns a flooring business next door to the newsagency, said he was shocked to hear John had been shot.

John's act of stepping in to help a fellow business owner was typical of his good nature, said Mr Papas, who opened his store a few months ago.

"He would give me half-priced pies and always asked me how I'm trading."

### Visibly shocked

Amrita Kumar and Jai Karan, who lived above the cake shop, were shocked when they were told John had been shot.

Mr Karan described John as a hard worker, who would park his car opposite the cake shop about 5am each morning and not leave until late in the afternoon.

"He's a very nice guy ... sometimes if I went to buy something he'd just give it to me for free," Mr Karan said.

Anna Danas and her husband, who lived in a nearby street, said they came to know John in recent years.

"We all know John. He's such a good guy," she said.

"It didn't surprise me that John would help someone ... that's just like him."

She said her husband, who would occasionally go fishing and camping with John, was with him at the hospital.

Fellow shopkeepers said John worked in the shop for at least 20 or 30 years.

The Herald understands John is married with children.

Ten to 15 relatives walked into the cake shop about 10.10am, but refused to speak to the media.

### Exit wound

John was taken to St George Hospital and was in a serious but stable condition after surgery, Detective Inspector Calman said.

John appeared to have an exit wound in his buttocks, an ambulance spokesman said.

Police have found the bullet and have also seized CCTV footage from the newsagency.

## MY Big Fat Greek Wedding star Nia Vardalos has declared Russell Crowe is fat

Vardalos, who is in Australia promoting her new film, *My Life in Ruins*, has battled well-documented weight issues during her career.

She said a double standard existed in the media where women had their weight constantly critiqued, while overweight men were considered character actors. She said heavy-

weight star Crowe's extra kilos weren't a focus of the reviews of his most recent thriller, *State of Play*.

"He gets away with it because we allow it," Vardalos said.

"What exists right now, this double-standard, is perpetuated as much by women as it is by men.

"Let's just get over it and just say we are

more than our bodies. And yeah, Russell Crowe's fat.

"Whatever. Let's just talk about it for once instead of saying: 'Oh, that man is so good-looking as he ages,' and disparaging the woman for - good forbid - not having Botox."

Newly svelte Vardalos said her own 18kg weight loss had nothing to do with body im-



age.

"I had a blood sugar problem and my doctor said: 'You've got to do something,'" she said.

"I was quite furious because you don't tell a

Greek girl to do anything. But I had to for my health."

Vardalos will be in Melbourne to host a screening of *My Life in Ruins* on Thursday.