

**Dear Editor**

In response to Chris Dobson's article (*ACT Now*, Summer 2008) I believe we should start by asking whether Brain Gym is effective and appropriate in terms of intended educational outcomes and desired pedagogical processes, rather than writing it off straightaway because it is not overtly 'Christian' and/or draws upon knowledge from non-Christian sources of wisdom and knowledge.

Mr Dobson himself quotes the words of Jesus: '*Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit*' (Matthew 7:16-18, NASB). Hence, if BG produces good fruit it is, itself, good.

All I can say is that BG exercises work wonders for my class. We have feasted on the calming fruit on windy days, energising fruit on hot, sticky, breezeless summer afternoons, and focussing fruit when our minds start to wander. I thank God for Brain Gym, and so do many of my colleagues.

Geoff Sigmund

Subject: Animal welfare  
*ACT Now* issues: Spring 2008 and Summer 2008  
 Items responded to: articles by Freeman Wicklund and Naomi Webster

Dear Editor

As a life-long animal lover, I enjoyed reading 'Human education for animal emancipation' (*ACT Now*, Spring 2008) by Freeman Wicklund and 'Zoos: good for education, not for entertainment' (*ACT Now*, Summer 2008) by Naomi Webster. Each article was well-written. So much so that I found myself agreeing with both!

I wonder, are there any other *ACT Now* readers out there who are beginning to feel guilty about keeping pets at school? For years I have unquestioningly kept rabbits, guinea pigs and fish in my classroom because I thought they were good for the children. In all this time, I never stopped to ask if it was good for the animals!

Karen Smith

Subject: Prayer Diary  
*ACT Now* issue: Summer 2008  
 Item responded to: Prayer Diary

Dear Editor

Whilst I have greatly enjoyed recent issues of *ACT Now*, I find the prayer diary disjointed and unhelpful. Personally speaking, I would much prefer a return to the one-prayer-per-day layout used by ACT prior to 2004.

Mark Lessing

Subject: Prayer Diary  
*ACT Now* issue: Summer 2008  
 Item responded to: Prayer Diary

Dear Editor

The 75th issue of *ACT Now* was interesting and varied – well done! – but I still don't like the format of the Prayer Diary!

Alison Wilson

**Dear Editor**

I'm pleased the words about Jesus and alcohol included in my book review (*ACT Now*, Spring 2008) have given joy to Sally Cox (*ACT Now*, Summer 2008). They were not mine, but were largely quoted from Chris Cook, the author of the Grove booklet I was reviewing. Nevertheless, I agree with them. Early in my Christian life I decided that some total abstinence arguments from the life of Jesus were, frankly, silly.

Today, however, I am a practising, though not a card-carrying, total abstainer, with an exception for Anglican communion wine. I am happy about Christians drinking so long as they can look grown-up about it. So I hope I can show that you don't have to be a lush to be broadminded. But I still think King Lemuel's mother (Proverbs 31:4-7) deserves the attention of Christian teachers.

Richard Wilkins

**Dear Editor**

The claim made by Richard Wilkins (*ACT Now*, Spring 2008) and repeated by Sally Cox (*ACT Now*, Summer 2008) that 'Jesus ... supplied 120 gallons of good wine to a wedding party already too drunk to appreciate it' is unfounded. John 2 says the master of the banquet, far from being 'too drunk to appreciate it', immediately recognised that the new wine was superior to what had been served earlier.

What of the other guests? Nowhere in the account does it say that at this particular banquet the guests, who of course included Jesus himself and some of his disciples, were already drunk. There is simply a comment from the master of the banquet that it was customary to serve the poorer wine once people were in that state.

Wine is certainly seen as a blessing in the Old Testament. However, it consistently condemns drunkenness (as does the New Testament). It is inconceivable that the Lord Jesus, who 'went around doing good' (Acts 10:38), would have so flouted this teaching, and have harmed people by increasing their drunkenness.

John Lord