



**Daily Telegraph**  
 Thursday 19/02/2009  
 Page: 9  
 Section: General News  
 Region: Sydney, AU  
 Circulation: 375000  
 Type: Capital City Daily  
 Size: 603.50 sq.cms.



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# Teachers to star in classroom movies

exclusive

**Bruce Mcdougall**  
 Education Reporter

SCHOOL teachers are promoting their work by filming their classes and selling the videos to parents.

The movies enable parents to monitor what their children are doing at school and rate the teacher's performance. The high quality videos are also set to become a powerful marketing tool as public education lures students back from the private school system.

ClassMovies, as the professionally-edited films are called, record a week in the life of a class, showing all aspects of a child's learning activities.

The DVDs — sold to parents for \$39 with 10 per cent of the proceeds returned to the school — are mostly shot by teachers but students are also encouraged to do some of the filming. Already about 30 of the state's primary schools have taken up the video plan, which provides a "fly on the wall insight" into a teacher's

work in the classroom.

Former merchant banker Phillip Lewis, who runs ClassMovies, said yesterday the videos gave parents a view of their child's class that they never had before.

"This is connecting and opening up the classroom to parents," he said.

"It is an opportunity to showcase the good work that goes on . . . parents are actually driving it and asking schools to do the movies."

Chatswood Public School on Sydney's North Shore has four kindergarten classes on the video program.

Relieving deputy principal Vivian Thompson said more than half of the families involved had purchased the movie giving a snapshot of their child's first year at school.

"It's just fabulous — it gives parents an idea of what happens in class and it is a great opportunity to promote the school," Ms Thompson said. "We film different parts of the school day, showing the children doing a writing activity, playing,

eating lunch or doing a project."

The scheme has been so successful that Chatswood plans to extend it to the students' final year at primary school — Year 6.

Phillip Lewis launched the program after finding a box of old home movies of his father, who died when he was four. After viewing them Mr Lewis got the opportunity to know his father again and his children got to know their grandfather.

The entrepreneur developed a passion for recording the important events in people's lives and left his merchant banking job with Morgan Stanley to start ClassMovies.

He said: "School principals have recognised the benefits of showcasing their school, building an emotional connection with parents and using ClassMovies as a unique marketing and fundraising tool."



Would you buy a DVD of your child at school?  
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**Action:** Teacher Vivian Thompson films Jules Vahl and Adam Murray at Chatswood Public School (above) and supervising a class with Maggie Lockwood, Shennei Barber and Jake Cetinich (left)  
**Pictures:** James Eisby