

# Tenix Questacon Maths Squad

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The *Tenix Questacon Maths Squad* is a Questacon outreach program which demonstrates the importance of maths and numeracy. The aim is to positively influence attitudes to maths and highlight the broad application and relevance of maths in everyday life. The program demonstrates how maths and numeracy are fundamental skills in many areas such as science, technology, medicine and even art.

The *Maths Squad* is run by Questacon staff, experienced in science communication, with extensive experience in making maths interesting. The presenters use interactive, hands-on mathematical tasks, challenging puzzles, story-telling and multimedia presentations to demonstrate that maths is interesting, accessible, powerful and fun. The *Maths Squad* wants to inspire students to take a positive interest in mathematics.

Sessions are tailored for students from Year 3 to Year 8. A typical session includes an introduction followed by an opportunity for students to work in groups of two or three. Students are given an activity to suit their age/ability from a choice of 500 puzzles. The activities are grouped into the curriculum bands: space, number, measurement, chance, data, algebra and logic.

The *Maths Squad* is available to schools and community groups during each school term. Regular teacher evaluation of the *Maths Squad* program proves its effectiveness.

- 72% of teachers say that their students' attitude to maths became more positive as a result of a *Maths Squad* visit.
- 93% of teachers say that the *Maths Squad* program helped to increase students' enthusiasm for maths.
- 82% of teachers say that the *Maths Squad* increased their students' understanding of maths.

The *Maths Squad* commenced touring in 1992, to both rural and metropolitan Australia. Tenix Pty Ltd began sponsoring the program in 2005. The support from Tenix has substantially extended the *Maths Squad* reach and influence.

In 2007–08, more than 31,000 students from 177 schools participated in in-school workshops and presentations in Queensland, Tasmania, New South Wales, Western Australia, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.

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