

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DIGEST

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ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT 2007-2008: ENGAGEMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN EDUCATION

"From Disengaged to Re-engaged - Young People's Right to Education and Training"

Over the next 12 months (starting in December 2007) The Youth Affairs Network of Queensland (YANQ) will be undertaking this Re-engagement project to challenge governments and communities to lift their game when it comes to supporting disengaged young people back into education and training.

As part of this project YANQ will be publishing a special, free & public edition of their On Line Journal, new Transitions, focused on this topic.

YANQ invite AYIN members to consider submitting a paper by **February 22, 2008**. Full details at: <http://www.yanq.org.au/content/view/726/71>.

To whet your appetite, you might want to submit a paper that responds to one of the following questions (or make up your own!):

- * What are we doing now with individual young people out of school that is or is not working? Why does/doesn't it work?*
- * If we know what works, why aren't we doing it everywhere? And should youth workers & youth services get more involved in advocacy to make sure that 'what works' is available to young people everywhere?*
- * Are our expectations of what disengaged young people can do too low? And if so, how does this affect our practice?*
- * What are the structural forces that push or pull young people out of education too early and, more importantly, what can we do to overcome them?*
- * Do we need new policies or practices to prevent disengagement in the first place?*
- * Are 'flexi-schools' the answer? If so, how do we avoid creating a '2nd-best' system for marginalised young people? And how do they relate to 'mainstream' schools?*
- * What role do mainstream schools play in disengagement? What role should they play in re-engagement?*
- * Is 'what works' for young women different to what works for young Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders and different again to what works for young people from the Pacific or South Sea Islands? Is there anything about 'what works' that is the same for each of these four groups?*
- * Are we focusing on the wrong topic? Is 'disengagement' a red herring that diverts our attention from more fundamental injustices?*

For more information visit <http://www.yanq.org.au/content/view/726/71/>

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HOT TOPIC: HUMANE EDUCATION

*The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools emphasises **care, compassion and responsibility**. Humane education embodies these values in action. Central to humane education is a key purpose of schooling recognised in the 1999 Adelaide Declaration on the Goals of Schooling in the 21st Century: contributing to students developing the capacity to*

- *exercise judgement and responsibility in matters of morality, ethics and social justice,*
- *make sense of their world,*
- *think about how things got to be the way they are,*
- *make rational and informed decisions about their own lives, and*
- *accept responsibility for their own actions*

Animal Welfare Education & Training: Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Workshop 5-6 December 2007

The Australian Government firmly placed humane education and animal welfare within the ambit of the work of schools in partnership with their community, through the adoption of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) in 2005

An important implementation strategy is to ensure that a comprehensive, high-quality range of teaching and learning materials and information resources are available to teachers in their training programme and to support and inform their curriculum and lesson planning for their classroom work in schools – and their informed interaction with their wider community. This is particularly important where schools keep animals as part of their curriculum resources or for research and experimentation.

And, similarly, that an appropriate array of information resources are available to young people and their families in their community interactions, with companion animals, farm animals, hobby animals (e.g. horse riding), feral animals or with wildlife and their environment

A national AAWS Education & Training Advisory Group of stakeholders has been established – including representation from the national parent organisations – and commissioned an extensive national stock-take of currently available information across the country. The initial stock-take papers will be reviewed at a National Workshop in Canberra on 5-6 December 2007.

We will continue to report on the further development of these important implementation processes of AAWS in future editions of this Newsletter.

Meanwhile, you can access further information about AAWS at: <http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/aaws>

Voiceless Foundation Awards 2008

Voiceless, the fund for animals, was established four years ago, with the mission to promote respect and compassion for animals, increase awareness of the conditions in which they live, and to take action to protect animals from suffering.

The Voiceless Grants Program offers financial support to non-profit organisations, councils and universities for the design and implementation of projects which improve the lives of animals in Australia .

School grants (or "seed funding") are also available throughout the year via Voiceless' educational initiative with schools, [Animal Club](#).

2007 has been another hugely successful year for the Voiceless Grants Program. Grants ranging from \$15,000 to \$1,500 were awarded to a range of fantastic projects all with the common purpose of helping animals at a special Awards Event held at the Sydney Opera House flagship restaurant, Guillaume at Bennelong on Monday 3rd December 2007.

For full details of the recipients of this year's grants, and the impressive array of important initiatives which these will support, visit

http://www.voiceless.org.au/Grants/2007_Grants_Program/2007_Grants_Program.html

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HOT TOPIC: CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

UNICEF Celebrates 18th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

UNICEF's first Advocate for Children Affected by War, former child soldier Ishmael Beah, has pledged to give a voice and hope to children whose lives have been scarred by violence.

Mr. Beah's appointment was announced in New York on 20 November to mark the 18th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which aims to protect the basic rights of all children.

The 18-year milestone is considered especially significant because it represents the point at which an entire generation has grown up under the auspices of the CRC, which aims to protect the fundamental rights of every child.

ICEF has launched a special 'CRC@18' [website](#) to raise awareness about the anniversary and involve young people in advocating for their rights. The site includes videos, educational materials and a special 'magnetic poetry' game provided by Moonstone Interactive.

New book, launched at UNICEF, examines legal framework for child rights

"Protecting the World's Children: Impact of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Diverse Legal Systems"

Shaheen Sardar Ali (*University of Warwick*); Savitri Goonesekere (*University of Colombo, Sri Lanka*); Emilio Garcia Mendez (*Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina*); Rebeca Rios-Kohn (*International Expert on Human Rights and Human Development, Uruguay*)

The book contains four studies that compare experiences from countries with similar legal traditions and examine how the Convention on the Rights of the Child has been integrated and harmonized with national legislation in specific countries.

It demonstrates how the CRC can be implemented in different country contexts in an effort to achieve children's rights uniformly across widely divergent legal traditions. It highlights key developments, identifies trends, and draws general conclusions that provide insight into the legal traditions at issue for advocacy in relationship to the implementation of the CRC, as well as to encourage practical actions.

The book proposes a framework for enhancing compatibility of national legislation with human rights instruments and with the CRC in particular. It is a powerful advocacy tool for supporting the implementation of the CRC and Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

AROUND THE STATES & TERRITORIES

ACT – Praise for Canberra College Inclusion Program for Students who are Pregnant or Young Parents.

Minister for Education and Training, Andrew Barr, today praised the work of a Canberra College program helping students who are pregnant or young parents, complete their education.

Mr Barr was attending an end of year celebration for the program, which offers an individual learning schedule for students in years 8 to 12 who are juggling the demands of being a parent with trying to complete their education.

“Canberra College Cares is about supporting our young people to be the best parents and carers they can be,” Mr Barr said.

“It is about acknowledging strengths, encouraging learning and providing our young people with a variety of pathways for the future.

“I would like to congratulate the students, young parents and carers, here today. It takes a lot of courage and determination to return to school and complete your studies at the same time as caring for, or bringing up a family.

“By taking advantage of the opportunities Canberra College Cares provides, you are developing the skills, understandings and personal strengths you will need in the coming years.”

The dedication of the Canberra College Cares volunteers and mentors was recognised with an accolade at last month’s ACT Children’s Week Awards.

The ACT Department of Education and Training and the Community Inclusion Fund have jointly funded the program, which was set up in 2005.

ACT: Hawker College in Unique Partnership with Local High & Primary School

Minister for Education and Training, Andrew Barr, today met with the principals of Hawker College, Belconnen High School and Hawker Primary ahead of the three schools forming the Hawker Collegiate in 2008 and announced that \$10 million will be invested in upgrading the schools.

The Collegiate will see these three schools forge closer links, support transitions through the different stages of schooling and share teacher expertise, specialist teaching spaces and resources.

“The ACT Government is committed to high quality education for all Canberra’s students and is committing record funding of over \$350 million to build new public schools and upgrade existing ones,” Mr Barr said.

“Today I am announcing that \$10 million will be committed to upgrading the three schools that will form the Hawker Collegiate, to the benefit of students in this area of Belconnen.

"The funding includes \$3.5 million for a new gymnasium at Belconnen High School, \$2.76 million for improved disabled access at Hawker College, \$1 million for a general refurbishment at Hawker College and \$280,000 for refurbishment at Hawker Primary School.

"The Collegiate is set to help change the way students in this region progress through their school years and is just one of the ways the ACT Government is responding to the evolving needs of students and their parents and carers."

Mr Barr also announced that the Government is investing \$30,000 on top of an already committed \$138,000 to help in the smooth running of the Collegiate next year.

"We recognise that some research and work still has to be done to ensure that these schools can move into the new collegiate system as seamlessly as possible," Mr Barr said.

"This funding will go towards allowing staff from each of the schools involved to have time away from their regular duties to continue establishing the collegiate in time for 2008."

The move to the Hawker Collegiate system has involved widespread consultation among members of the community and the distribution of a collegiate newsletter updating progress being made.

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CONFERENCES & EVENTS

10 December: Human Rights Day

On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the full text of which appears at: <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html> .

Following this historic act the Assembly called upon all Member countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and "**to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories.**"

9-11 December E-Learning Symposium, RMIT University, Melbourne.

For educators from all sectors (teachers, principals, teacher educators and researchers) to explore new directions in e-learning. Main speakers at the Symposium will include leading thinkers in the field of e-learning, as well as numerous paper, colloquium and workshop presentations. Key questions will be addressed about the nature of learning using digital media and tools. For further information: <http://www.LearningSymposium.com>

8 February, 2008: Quantitative Analysis of Teaching and Learning Forum, (all day) – run by the Teaching and Learning Unit in conjunction with the Department of Economics at the University of Melbourne. The Forum, one of the few national forums for quantitative research in teaching and learning, is now in its fourth year.

Registration http://tlu.ecom.unimelb.edu.au/contact_us/register.html

Paper titles are listed: http://tlu.ecom.unimelb.edu.au/teaching_staff/forum/.

Previous paper titles can be viewed here and copies of previous proceedings can be purchased for \$30. There are no parallel sessions at the Forum and normally around 100+ people attend from 38 universities nationwide. For further information please contact Sonia Borg: sborg@unimelb.edu.au or Dr Martin Davies: wmdavies@unimelb.edu.au

3-6 June 2008: International Conference on Learning

The 15th annual Learning Conference is to be held at the University of Illinois, Chicago, Illinois, USA,. Details at <http://www.LearningConference.com>

26-28 June 2008, Adelaide “Being, Becoming and Belonging”

World Education Forum SA – International Conference

How do we care for and educate children and young people for the world in which they live now and in which we hope they will flourish as citizens of tomorrow?

The World Education Forum, South Australia, thinks that it is time to take stock of the effectiveness of the effort that has been made to date. They urge you to join them and share your expertise and re-examine the values which underpin many of the assumptions that drive modern educational policy.

For more information, go to <http://www.infront.com.au/evt/wef/>

25-27 July 2008: NSW Federation of Parents & Citizens Associations State Conference, Albury NSW. <http://www.pandc.org.au/>

8-9 August 2008: The Education Show. Caulfield Racecourse, Melbourne

The inaugural Education Show in 2007 was a great success, with more than 100 exhibitors, and the 2008 event is shaping up even better; to include seminars on key education issues in the classroom and the school community. For more information: <http://www.educationshow.com.au>

27-29 August 2008: Society for Provision of Education in Rural Australia (SPERA) Conference, Melbourne

20-21 October 2008: Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO) National Education Conference, Brisbane. <http://www.acsso.org.au>

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RESOURCES

Fundraising Directory - www.fundraisingdirectory.com.au Also: www.fetesandfestivals.com.au

Drug Awareness Website - www.drugawareness.com.au/

Australian Schools Directory - www.australianschoolsdirectory.com.au

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