

Values Education

Volume 2 Number 7, August 2008

Read this on the web at <http://www.valuesineducation.org.au/valnews0808.pdf>

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ADDRESSING VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Violence is unacceptable

Hon Jane Lomax-Smith, SA Minister for Education & Children's Services 11 August

Violence among young people is absolutely unacceptable, whether it happens at school, at home or in the community.

We have seen some shocking examples of teenage behaviour in recent times and police and our schools are working together to address these matters.

Violence is an issue for all schools - Government, Catholic and Independent - the community as a whole and parents right across Australia.

The State Government's Coalition to Decrease Bullying, Harassment and Violence in South Australian schools is taking a lead role on these issues.

The Coalition includes local experts in dealing with school bullying, along with representatives of Government, Catholic and Independent schools.

They are looking at emerging trends, such as whether the use of mobile phone cameras is inciting violent incidents and the issue of violence among girls.

ALL State schools will this week receive a new training package - Your Classroom: Safe, Orderly and Productive and training will be provided to 2000 classroom teachers. It is part of a \$10 million investment in addressing student behaviour. Under this new program, teachers in their first five years will be trained first. They will take part in workshops before trialling new approaches in their own classrooms.

PROFESSOR Donna Cross from Edith Cowan University in Western Australia has accepted an invitation to lead a roll out of the Supportive Schools Program to South Australian secondary schools in 2009. This preventative program has been shown to decrease the incidence of bullying in schools by encouraging positive relationships between students.

Read more at <http://www.ministers.sa.gov.au/news.php?id=3555>

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FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Family-School & Community Partnership Bureau Launched

Boost for Family-School Partnerships

Canberra, 11 August 2008

The Australian government has funded a dedicated, parent-sponsored bureau to maximise the engagement of families with their schools, across both the government and non-government school sectors. The Family-School and Community Partnerships Bureau was launched in Canberra today at a gathering of parent groups from across Australia.

The two peak parent bodies - the Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO) and the Australian Parents Council (APC) - have collaborated for several years on research and activities around parental and community engagement with schools. It has earned the Bureau a government funding commitment of \$800,000 over four years.

"We are delighted with Minister Gillard's strong support for the Bureau," said Jenny Branch, ACSSO President and co-chair of the Bureau's governing committee. "It is clear recognition both of the importance of families' engagement with schools, and the solid work of the parent peak bodies in building the foundations for the Bureau".

Caz Bosch, President of the non-government schools' Australian Parents Council and co-chair of the Bureau, said that the Bureau will provide practical support and well-informed advice to schools and parents about building successful and sustainable relationships.

The Bureau will not only consolidate and extend action research on family-school partnerships. It will establish a 24/7 online advice and support service for parents and schools who wish to collaborate more effectively; conduct annual national parent surveys about schooling and related family issue; and assist in rolling out a National Family-Schools Partnership Framework that has been agreed to by all education ministers.

Read more of the media release at <http://www.familyschool.org.au/pdf/medrel080811.pdf>

Visit the website at <http://www.familyschool.org.au>

"Engage" e-magazine launched by TAS Department of Education

Engage magazine focuses on helpful hints, upcoming activities, and practical information about how parents can help their children experience a complete and enriching education.

The first edition of Engage - a magazine for parents and carers of Tasmanian Government school students - will be released early August 2008.

This magazine is the result of a recommendation from the Engaging Our School Communities Taskforce which looked at ways of better linking schools, parents and the wider community. It aims to improve communication between the Department of Education and parents and carers.

The publication will be delivered to all Tasmanian Government schools and child care centres together with a cover letter from the Communications Services Unit. Schools and child care centres are requested to distribute the magazine 'one per family' - i.e. given to the oldest child.

If you'd like to receive future issues of Engage magazine, complete the subscription form. Download a copy of Engage magazine [PDF 3.6MB]

Website: <http://www.education.tas.gov.au/school/parents/engage>

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OPINION

The pursuit of happiness - and the needs of education

Frank Furedi

Probably the most disturbing dimension of the happiness project is its focus on the emotional management of children. There is a reason for this. If you can get your hands on impressionable kids you are far likelier to succeed in influencing their emotions than when they become adults.

Schools provide an ideal laboratory for the happiness experiment. Many educators have embraced the happiness agenda as a solution to the problems facing schools. In recent decades officials and education experts have sought to solve the problems afflicting the classroom through opting for the tools of behaviour management. Increasingly the focus is on children's wellbeing, "emotional literacy" and self-esteem.

Since the project of colonising children's internal world began, the ambitions of therapeutic education have gone from strength to strength. Yet decades of silly initiatives designed to raise children's self-esteem have not improved children's wellbeing and the new proposals designed to make pupils happy will also fail to realise their objectives. Worse still, therapeutic education encourages introspection, which distracts children from engaging with the world.

Perversely, the ascendancy of self-esteem education in the classroom has been paralleled by an apparent increase in mental health problems among children. The relation between the two is not accidental. Children are highly suggestible and the more they are required to participate in wellbeing classes, the more they will feel the need for professional support.

The teaching of emotional literacy and happiness should also be viewed as a cop-out from tackling the fundamental problems confronting schools. When many schools find it difficult to engage children's interest in core subjects such as reading, science and maths, it is tempting to look for non-academic solutions and therapies.

This is an edited extract from an article from The Australian of 7 August 2008 by Frank Furedi, Professor of Sociology at University of Kent, UK. The full text is at: <http://www.valuesineducation.org.au/opinion.htm>

Better report cards needed

Jennifer Buckingham

A problematic feature of school education in Australia is that there is a fair amount of choice available to parents, but there is very little information on which to base their choices. When it comes to choosing a school, parents have to rely on reputation and hear-say.

After a visit to Australia last year, American education expert Chester E. Finn Jr remarked that he was "jarred by how little information is available on school performance". He said that the level of secrecy seems "antediluvian and faintly undemocratic".

In a number of speeches and media statements over the past few months, Minister for Education Julia Gillard has taken up the cause of school performance reporting, arguing for a range of information about schools to be made public, including performance in national tests and contextual data, like the socioeconomic status of students.

Although some states, including Victoria, have been publishing school-level results for Year 12 students for a number of years, other states balk at providing such information. Given these differences, implementing national protocols on school performance reporting will be one of the first tests of the much-vaunted "modern federalism" promised by Labor.

The contentious part is whether parents and the wider community should be let in on what the data reveal.

One of the strongest reasons more information about schools should be made public is that it prevents underperforming schools from escaping public scrutiny. There are undoubtedly many schools both public and private which are not doing a good job for their students. Keeping this under wraps does nobody any good.

Read entire article at: <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/opinion/editorial/general/better-report-cards-needed/1241726.aspx>

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MIND

Are Humans Hard-wired for Fairness?

Science Daily (Apr. 18, 2008)

Is fairness simply a ruse, something we adopt only when we secretly see an advantage in it for ourselves? Many psychologists have in recent years moved away from this purely utilitarian view, dismissing it as too simplistic. Recent advances in both cognitive science and neuroscience now allow psychologists to approach this question in some different ways, and they are getting some intriguing results.

UCLA psychologist Golnaz Tabibnia, and colleagues Ajay Satpute and Matthew Lieberman, used a psychological test called the "ultimatum game" to explore fairness and self-interest in the laboratory. In this particular version of the test, Person A has a pot of money, say \$23, which they can divide in any way they want with Person B. All Person B can do is look at the offer and accept or reject it; there is no negotiation. If Person B rejects the offer, neither of them gets any money.

Whatever Person A offers to Person B is an unearned windfall, even if it's a miserly \$5 out of \$23, so a strict utilitarian would take the money and run. But that's not exactly what happens in the laboratory. The UCLA scientists ran the experiment so sometimes \$5 was stingy and other times fair, say \$5 out of a total stake of \$10. The idea was to make sure the subjects were responding to the fairness of the offer, not to the amount of the windfall. When they did this, and asked the subjects to rate themselves on scales of happiness and contempt, they had some interesting findings: Even when they stood to gain exactly the same dollar amount of free money, the subjects were much happier with the fair offers and much more disdainful of deals that were lopsided and self-centered.

Read more at <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/04/080416140918.htm>

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BODY

Parents bite back: Survey says time to ditch junk food ads

Tamara McLean, Canberra Times, 6 August 2008

Most Australian parents oppose the use of celebrities and toys to promote junk food to children and want to see tougher advertising regulations, a survey shows.

A study by nutrition and obesity specialists has found that more than two-thirds of parents are concerned about unhealthy food advertising to children, with older or wealthier parents the most alarmed.

Almost 90% of the 400 parents questioned said the practice should be banned and the current system of industry self-regulation changed to give government more control.

The study, published in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, looked at concerns over the techniques used by food advertisers as well as at awareness of the children's television standards outlined by the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

It found only 47% of parents were aware that the industry standards were largely set by manufacturers rather than by government.

A recent review by the Queensland University of Technology found that the USA and Australia had the worst policies on junk food ads of seven OECD countries it studied.

Read more at <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/parents-bite-back-its-time-to-ditch-junk-food-ads/1236116.aspx>

Qantas dubbed 'cancer kangaroo'

Sydney Morning Herald, July 16, 2008 (AAP)

Anti-smoking lobby groups have attacked a move by Qantas to resume inflight cigarette sales as a "greedy cash grab" at the expense of good health. The national airline reintroduced tobacco sales on board this month, almost 10 years after they were stopped.

Legislation prohibits the packs from being advertised in the shopping catalogue but it is legal to stack them on the duty-free trolley and wheel them through the cabin.

A letter recently sent to Qantas staff by management states: "It's vital that duty free carts are taken out into the economy cabin, with the cigarettes displayed prominently on top."

Qantas has defended the move as a response to customer demand, but lobby groups argue it is an unacceptable return to the "bad old days".

"At a time when Australian governments are moving to put tobacco displays out of sight to protect young people in particular, Qantas has gone backwards," said Anne Jones, chief executive of Action on Smoking and Health. "Retail tobacco display is a powerful form of advertising, especially in association with a highly respected brand name like Qantas, and research shows it normalises and encourages young people to smoke."

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/travel/qantas-dubbed-cancer-kangaroo/2008/07/16/1216162931659.html>

SOUL

Government funds model students

Robert Burton-Bradley, Sydney Central, 29 July 2008

A number of schools are using funds from the Federal Government's National School Chaplains Program to buy the Shine program from Hillsong.

The grants of up to \$20,000 were announced by the Howard government in 2006 and are available to any school wanting to pay for a spiritual chaplain of any religious persuasion.

Former Democrats senator Lyn Allison said schools in NSW and Queensland had been successfully applying for the grants, and some chaplains, from various Christian sects, were buying the Shine program.

"I am concerned because the Federal Government is spending \$165 million to encourage schools to take up the chaplain option but does not require them to have any particular training in working with children and young people," Ms Allison said.

"I had a school support worker tell me that a Shine session in her school resulted in girls making posters of celebrities and the virtues of being thin and attractive."

Ron Williams, who has children in Queensland state schools, said he was horrified schools allowed the program.

"They have infiltrated schools in the last few years," Mr. Williams said.

"The schools don't tell parents about it, we find out by chance and it's terrifying what they teach girls.

"I would not let my children near it."

A statement issued by the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, which administers the National School Chaplains Program, said the department had no idea how many schools were using Shine.

"Schools may choose to purchase a program with their own funds and run that program within their school," the statement said.

"It is a matter for the principal and local school community to make judgements on such matters."

Source: <http://sydney-central.wherelive.com.au/news/story/government-funds-model-students/>

Hillsong's school grooming talks "help girls"

ABC News Jul 28, 2008

The Hillsong Church has defended its personal development and self-esteem program in New South Wales schools, which includes a personal grooming aspect for girls.

The Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations says about 30 schools are running the Shine program as part of their Personal Development Health and Physical Education courses.

Federation president Dianne Giblin says members are concerned the program encourages girls to be subservient by teaching them that they need to be attractive to men.

Premier Morris Iemma says the program is voluntary. "If parents do have a concern, then they have the right and they have the power under our existing regulations to take their kids out of these classes and not participate," he said.

The NSW Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations discussed the program during its annual conference over the weekend.

Federation president Dianne Giblin says the Department of Education had no role in approving the program, and some parents are worried about its content.

"There's been some concern about the Shine program run by Hillsong and the way it addresses young women, particularly the stereotyping of women's behaviour and inappropriate role models," she said. Ms Giblin says the Government needs to start investigating the merits of all programs being taught.

"What we've seen happening in schools is a growth of various activities, including religious activities, that we believe are not fully endorsed by the Department of Education and I don't believe the content is fully known by parents within the school," she said.

Read more at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/07/28/2316580.htm?section=australia>

NSW Greens call for Hatz to stand up to Hillsong & suspend Shine

John Kaye MP, 28 July 2008

Acting NSW Education Minister John Hatzistergos should not be intimidated by the political power of Hillsong. He should immediately suspend the controversial Shine program being run by the church in at least 20 NSW public schools, according to Greens NSW MP John Kaye.

Commenting on a call by the NSW Parents and Citizens Federation for the Lemma government to regulate programs in public education delivered by external organisations, Dr Kaye said: "Shine has been criticised for damaging the self-image of girls and for pushing religion.

"John Hatzistergos must immediately suspend the program and instigate an investigation into the allegations.

"He needs to resolve the suggestions that Shine is pushing the Assemblies of God religion, that it undermines teachers in the school and that it could be damaging the self-image and mental health of girls in the program.

"The Lemma government has responsibilities under the NSW Education Act to protect the secular nature of public schools. It also has an obligation to parents and children to ensure that students are cared for appropriately.

Read more at <http://www.johnkaye.org.au/media/greens-call-for-hatz-to-stand-up-to-hillsong-suspend-shine/>

Hillsong's miracle make-up cure

Laura Ealing & Tom Cameron 9 August 2008

The conservative Christian group Hillsong has launched a controversial new youth program "Shine", aimed, it says, at "promoting self-esteem" in teenage girls considered to be "at risk", due to personal problems or behavioural issues.

The program purports to teach "practical, life-equipping" skills, but then lists some of these as the application of makeup, including nail polish, how to dress "properly", and improving posture by walking with books balanced upon one's head.

Unsurprisingly, the program has angered teachers, adolescent development experts and parent groups who query the focus on beauty, etiquette and deportment lessons. They argue that this approach is wholly ineffective in addressing the needs of troubled young women. They are also concerned that it reinforces sexist gender stereotypes.

Despite Hillsong's claims that the Shine program is now "community-based, not religious-based", critics say it represents a Trojan Horse to bring conservative Christian values to secular schools. It is well known that Hillsong opposes the teaching of evolution, and encourages staunch anti-abortion and anti-homosexual beliefs.

Read more at <http://www.greenleft.org.au/2008/762/39336>

Made up to shine

Robert Burton-Bradley, Sydney Central, 29 July 2008

A Hillsong self-esteem program which encourages girls as young as 10 to wear make-up and aspire to professions including waitressing and hairdressing is being taught in Redfern-Waterloo schools, alarming teachers, parents and health workers.

Called Shine, the program is sold by Hillsong to public and private schools and community groups. It is being used by Alexandria Park Public School and originated at the former Cleveland Street High School in Surry Hills in 1997.

Critics have said the program stereotypes women and could damage their self-esteem. There are also claims Hillsong is using Shine to recruit new members.

Shine newsletters include testimonials from girls as young as 10 talking about being allowed to wear as much make-up as they want, and using tips learnt on a video called Pretty Woman. A careers page on the Shine website encourages career paths including waitress, dance teacher, florist, travel consultant and hairdresser.

A Waterloo women's health worker said many health and welfare services were deeply concerned by the program. "When I looked at the program I thought there's a lot of emphasis on appearance and make-up," the woman, who did not want to be identified, said.

Read more at <http://sydney-central.wherelive.com.au/news/story/made-up-to-shine/>

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PUTTING VALUES INTO PRACTICE

Anti-Poverty Week

12-18 October 2008

Our aim is to encourage as many schools as possible to do something during Anti-Poverty Week. Some simple ideas to promote activities include:

- use your community networks to encourage organizations who work with poverty (local welfare agencies, international aid or development organisations, etc) to think about focusing on schools during the week, through
 - o school- linked or school-based projects;
 - o speaking to classes or
 - o conducting information sessions at school assemblies;
- contact other schools in your area and encourage them to participate with your community; or find out what they are doing and how you can coordinate your activities with them

Think about the idea of a competition or challenge...

- After the week, a number of interesting school activities in each state or territory will be featured on the Anti-Poverty Week website; so now is the time to brainstorm some really creative thoughts
- Explore with teachers and parents ways in which the anti-poverty week themes can be linked into the activities in each subject area of the school; such as
 - o an art competition
 - o an essay competition
 - o a research assignment on community welfare agencies in your area
 - o explore the issues around poverty in the countries where they speak the languages you teach
 - o a Home Economics research assignment research on healthy nutrition on a tight budget...
 - o what is Australia doing internationally e.g. with Indonesia?
 - o focus on an initiative or charity you already support
 - o hold a debate.

• The South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) has produced some great Anti-Poverty Week resources and class material in previous years, you can access them through: www.decs.sa.gov.au/learninginclusion/antipovertyweek. DECS are in the process of developing material for this year, which will have a Design and Technology focus, with the theme Designing for a Better World and targeted at 5 -15 year olds. The planned release date is 8 September, when it will be available through the same link.

• SA is producing a poster to promote Anti-Poverty Week in schools, which can also be accessed through the same link - available soon. You could think about using it in your state or territory or about producing something similar, particularly if you wanted to promote a particular activity or initiative.

- Victoria has established an Anti-Poverty Week sub-group, which has decided this year to focus on a statewide initiative to showcase and encourage school breakfast programs, which will include highlighting the involvement of unions and business.
- ACT has sent an email out to school pastoral care coordinators encouraging them to participate in the week and suggesting ideas for activities.
- see the Schools page of the Anti-Poverty Week website for a good range of materials and resources; see <http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au/>

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HUMANE EDUCATION

(Some) Animal groups cry fowl over Jamie Oliver's shock tactics

Claire Bugg, The Age, July 25, 2008

Jamie Oliver's shock television tactics appear to be paying off, with Network 10 claiming a ratings win after Fowl Dinners was aired last night. The show won its timeslot with almost a million viewers nationally - but Oliver's actions, including the slaughter of a hen, have sparked outrage from animal welfare groups.

Animal Liberation said that Oliver's demonstration was animal abuse. "They are going about it the wrong way," spokesperson Noah Hannibal said. "These birds were going to die anyway, but it's sending the wrong message if you were going to prevent animal abuse.

"To draw a parallel, what if a dog was being abused and Jamie Oliver rescued that dog - and then bashed that dog to get the message across that dog abuse was wrong," he said.

The Australian Egg Corporation Limited said it was "appalled" by the program and stressed that farmers care for their birds. They questioned whether Oliver's program was an accurate reflection of poultry farm operations.

"For education to be effective, it must be an accurate and relevant portrayal and not one designed to shock and disgust the consumer at the expense of the birds' welfare," managing director James Kellaway said.

While some animal welfare groups were furious with Oliver, the RSPCA applauded the program.

RSPCA spokeswoman Lisa Chalk said the organisation supported Oliver's form of activism.

"Whilst the RSPCA does not condone the killing of animals for entertainment, the program was about educating people," Ms Chalk said.

"People should be able to enjoy chicken and eggs, but they should also strive to buy the highest welfare products that they can afford."

Source: <http://www.theage.com.au/national/animal-groups-cry-fowl-over-olivers-shock-tactics-20080724-3k9k.html>

Celeb chef sets feathers flying

Rachel Brown, The Age, 20 July (extracts)

Australian Chicken Meat Federation executive director Andreas Dubs questioned Oliver's motives, saying the show seemed to be more of a stunt than an educational piece: "It was a bit dramatic because he was killing birds on the stage and in my view that was just designed to shock."

Mr. Dubs said conventional farming practices in Australia were strictly monitored and humane. "Oliver's argument is that people should consume welfare-friendly birds - that is, free-range or organic birds. We are OK with that," he said.

"Our industry produces a range of different types of chicken, from conventionally farmed birds to organic birds. People can buy whatever they feel is appropriate for them. They can make their own choices."

When the program aired in Britain at the beginning of the year sales of factory farmed chickens dropped by 10 million within weeks and sales of free-range eggs increased by a third. Animal rights group Voiceless said it did not condone cruelty but factory farming practices were abhorrent.

Read more at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/people/celeb-chef-sets-feathers-flying/2008/07/19/1216163232348.html>

Jamie's Fowl Dinners: A window on universal suffering

Compassion in World Farming (CIWF) Australia 24 July 2008

If you were shocked and offended by the living conditions of intensively housed chickens, seen on 'Jamie's Fowl Dinners' (Channel 10, 23/7), please help to change these appalling scenes.

Buy chicken and eggs from alternative systems that allow the animals, ideally, more normal growth rates and the freedom to express natural behaviours.

Such viewing is a brutal learning curve for the viewer, but the reality is worse for the chooks. Intensive farming systems are universal so Australian birds are reared and housed similarly, with similar welfare implications.

The British public was shown the background to cheap chicken and egg production on a series of TV programs early this year. Sales of intensively reared chicken fell by 7% immediately afterwards while free-range chickens sold out. In May, the British National Farmers' Union (NFU) advised this trend was continuing.

And according to the British Egg Information Service (BEIS), in February consumers bought more free-range than cage eggs for the first time. This trend has continued and in the European Union the portion of non-cage eggs is also increasing, amounting to 31.4% in 2007, up from 22.7% the year before.

Read more at <http://www.ciwf.org.au/oliver.htm>

Schools switch to free range eggs

BBC 6 August 2008

Schools in Lancashire are to use free range eggs in pupils' lunches in a bid to improve the lives of chickens.

At the start of the new academic year in September, no school will receive eggs laid by battery hens.

Lancashire schools get through about 500,000 eggs each year. The £8,000 cost of changing to free range will be met by new government funding.

Other council departments with catering provision are also now looking at sourcing free range eggs.

County councillor Tom Burns said: "This has taken time to arrange due to the large numbers of eggs we use each year.

"After talking with different suppliers we have a deal which balances animal welfare against the small cost increase.

"It is my opinion that this is a relatively small increase and, ultimately, what price do we put on improving the lives of chickens?"

Source: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/lancashire/7545651.stm

Animal Welfare vs. Human Rights?

Russell Paul La Valle, Sydney Morning Herald, July 29, 2008

In Spain, a funny thing is happening on the way to the circus — all the monkeys are disappearing. At least, that is what a group of legislators on an environmental committee is hoping will happen, now that the Spanish parliament is considering a resolution to grant certain human rights to "our non-human brothers" - great apes, gorillas, bonobos, chimpanzees and orang-utans.

The measure has broad support and, barring the unexpected, is likely to become law within a year. After enactment, harmful experimentation on apes, as well as their use for circuses, television commercials and films, will be prohibited. It will be legal for the 350 apes in Spanish zoos to stay there, but their conditions will have to be drastically improved.

With a single stroke, Spain will also become the first country to acknowledge unequivocally the legal rights of non-humans.

The resolution urges parliament to adopt the recommendations of the Great Ape Project, a consortium of philosophers, ethicists, primatologists and psychologists formed in 1993 to ensure the protection of apes from "abuse, torture and death".

"This is a historic moment in the struggle for animal rights," Pedro Pozas, the Spanish director of the Great Ape Project, told The Times of London. "It will doubtless be remembered as a key moment in the defence of our evolutionary comrades."

The real force behind the initiative is Peter Singer, a professor of bioethics at Princeton University and co-founder of the Great Ape Project. Singer is widely viewed as the father of the international animal rights movement. His rationale is simple: "There is no sound moral reason why possession of basic rights should be limited to members of a particular species."

Read entire (challenging) article at: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/environment/dont-monkey-with-human-rights/2008/07/28/1217097144504.html?page=fullpage#contentSwap1>

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy International Conference 2008

31 August - 3 September: Gold Coast, Queensland

ACSSO represents all parent and families on the Education & Training Working Group for the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) - jointly convened by Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and Department Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry (DAFF) - to develop national education, training and information resources to inform humane education in schools as an essential element of values education.

The AAWS International Animal Welfare Conference 2008 is this year's flagship event in the implementation of AAWS - a national blueprint to improve animal welfare for all Australian animals and across the entire community.

The Conference will bring together national and international leaders in animal welfare science, practice and policy.

Read more at <http://aaws08.blogspot.com/>

GREEN EDUCATION

Liverpool Students' clean creek message

Kerry Coleman, Sydney Morning Herald, August 13, 2008

FOUR year 7 students from Liverpool Boys High School are taking their environmental message all the way to their local council. John Huynh, Ahmad Alrifai, Nouredine Chamma and Haany El-Hajje, all 12, have created a multimedia presentation documenting the pollution and litter in their local creek.

"We've shown our presentation to our class, year 10 and year 11, and a group of parents and ex-students. They couldn't believe how disgusting our creek was," Ahmad says. "Now we want to show the council so they can hear what we think needs to be done to stop our environment getting even worse."

The boys are members of Creek Rescue, an environment action project funded by the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority and organised by the Georges River Environment Centre.

"The program is all about getting kids to engage with their environment and community," says Sharyn Cullis, head teacher at the Georges River Environment Centre. "A lot of kids out this way have never seen a unspoilt creek, a piece of natural environment that hasn't been ruined by pollution, so they've got no idea how bad their local creeks are."

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/environment/students-clean-creek-message/2008/08/12/1218306901758.html>

"Hope for Nature" - Dr Jane Goodall's Australian Lecture Tour

September - October 2008

Dr Jane Goodall DBE, internationally renowned author, primatologist and founder of programmes to promote community empowerment and engagement for the future well-being of young people and our planet, is visiting Australia and New Zealand from 30 September to 19 October 2008

In a series of events across the country, Jane Goodall will highlight the effects of climate change on the planet's biodiversity - and raise awareness of what we as individuals can all do to make a difference.

Jane will share stories from her new Book 'Hope for Nature' which highlights the scientists that are working on flora and fauna which are being saved from the brink of extinction from around the world. Also, each lecture will introduce local scientist "heroes" who will share their research results on native flora and fauna.

These events will also promote the work of the Jane Goodall Institute in Australia, and the rapidly growing network of young people and communities working together under the banner of her international "Roots & Shoots" program which promotes community interaction and engagement. There will be a Roots & Shoots component at each State's lecture, to involve the children that have been doing their own projects on the environment, involving their community and its conservation

Read more at <http://www.janegoodall.org.au/attachments/db/jgd/3.pdf>

Greenfest 2008: 10-12 October Brisbane

Greenfest is Brisbane's free green festival and place for full community participation in the issues around climate change and global warming

View presentation by Dr Jane Goodall, who will speak at the opening of and become the patron of Greenfest green education. View SEED International's locally produced film Think Global Eat Local.

All exhibitions, speakers and performances are free. Participation by new and renewed generations together is a formula for resonance and by just turning up you will have taken action for sharing a greener world. Greenfest offers real benefits to schools and universities and is committed to working towards conserving Australia's natural habitat.

Read more at <http://www.greenfest.com.au/>

GLOBAL VALUES

World's primates in danger of extinction

Sydney Morning Herald, August 5, 2008 (AP)

Nearly half of the world's 634 types of primates are in danger of becoming extinct because of human activity, a scientific review says.

Scientists meeting at the International Primatological Society Congress in Edinburgh, Scotland, a six-day conference that opened on Sunday, hope the report - which counts species and subspecies of primates across the world - will help spur global action to defend mankind's nearest relatives from deforestation and hunting.

In the most comprehensive review of the world's apes, monkeys, and lemurs in 12 years, primatologists warned that species from the giant mountain gorillas of central Africa to the tiny mouse lemurs of Madagascar are on the Red List for threatened species maintained by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, or IUCN.

The review was funded by Conservation International, the Margot Marsh Biodiversity Foundation, Disney's Animal Kingdom and the IUCN. It is part of an examination of the state of the world's mammals due to be released at the 4th IUCN World Conservation Congress in Barcelona, Spain, in October.

In Asia, more than 70 per cent of primates are classified as vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered - meaning they could disappear soon.

"What is happening in South-East Asia is terrifying," said Jean-Christophe Vie, deputy chief of the IUCN Species Program. "To have a group of animals under such a high level of threat is, quite frankly, unlike anything we have recorded among any other group of species to date."

Read more at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/conservation/primates-in-danger-of-extinction/2008/08/05/1217702030229.html>

Read more about conservation projects in our region at <http://www.arazpa.org.au/WCF-Projects/default.aspx>

Population lost in the global debate

Alison Bashford, Sydney Morning Herald, April 7, 2008

The world population is 6.6 billion. This far exceeds early 20th-century predictions that it would reach about 3.9 billion by 2009. And yet overpopulation barely registers now as a public issue. Not even as part of climate change discussion, which is, after all, about planetary sustainability.

This would have been inconceivable for earlier generations. And not just the 1970s generation, who read texts like Paul Erlich's *The Population Bomb*. Debates about planetary sustainability began much earlier. In 1911 the Australian statistician Sir George Knibbs warned: "The limits of human expansion are much nearer than popular opinion imagines. The exhaustion of sources of energy is perilously near."

At the time, influential experts the world over were listening to Knibbs. His warnings circulated through the US and Britain, and from India to France. He was the Al Gore of an earlier generation.

His message found a ready audience: population growth was cast, not just by him, as "the world's greatest crisis", "the world's basic problem" and "the greatest disaster of all time". (Sound anything like the climate change warnings?)

Casting population growth this way is more remarkable given that these were the generations who lived and died in the world wars, witnessed famines far more common and widespread than today's localised tragedies, and for whom the influenza pandemic of 1918 to 1919 touched most families. Population growth rates were considered potentially catastrophic for familiar reasons such as limited global energy sources and disparate standards of living in a world newly assessed as having finite resources.

The unfamiliar angle, though, was that, for thinkers like Knibbs, population was a security issue: solve disparities in densities across the globe, and you would secure lasting peace.

Some early attempts to solve the population "problem" - the Indian Government's forced sterilisation programs for example - were hugely problematic. But we can learn a great deal from other attempts to find a solution.

When John D. Rockefeller III called together world experts to his Population Council in 1952, his team still thought of the problem as Knibbs did: catastrophic, urgent, global. "Time is running out - there will be a crisis in a few generations," Rockefeller wrote.

Read entire article: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/environment/too-many-people/2008/04/06/1207420195790.html>

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