

Values Education

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Read this on the web at <http://www.valuesineducation.org.au/valnews0810.pdf>

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AN INTERNATIONAL DEBATE: RELIGION IN EDUCATION

National Review of Religion & Belief in 21st Century Australia

A national review of what Australians think about religious freedom is being launched by the Australian Human Rights Commission.

The commission's race discrimination commissioner Tom Calma says Australia needs to understand what religious freedom means in the 21st century. He says in a secular, multifaith society, people sometimes have different expectations

about the way laws reflect those beliefs. Mr. Calma says there is evidence of a growing fundamentalist religious lobby, in areas such as same-sex relationships, stem-cell research and abortion.

Mr. Calma says there is a balance to be struck between the freedom to practice a religion and not pushing those beliefs on the rest of society. "The fundamental human right of freedom of religion and belief is protected by a number of international treaties and declarations," said Commissioner Calma. "It encompasses freedom of thought on all matters and the freedom to demonstrate and express our religion and belief individually, with others, in private or in public."

In calling for submissions from the public, the Commissioner pointed out that the intersection of religion and belief with human rights is illustrated daily in our news headlines. "The involvement of religious institutions in school curriculums and practices, religious and ethical concerns about scientific research, the status of Muslim communities in society, the involvement of religion in debates about homosexuality or abortion - these are just some of the stories that involve us every day at the intersection of religion and belief with human rights," said Commissioner Calma.

Read more at <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/frb/>

On 4 September 2008, the Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) changed its name to the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC).

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Turkey: Philosophy course syllabus to have religious influences

Sevim Songun, Istanbul, Turkish Daily News, October 4, 2008

As the Board of Education and Discipline works on a draft of a new curriculum for certain courses in high schools, academics warn the draft has been prepared carelessly and courses like philosophy are influenced by religious ideology. The draft of the new philosophy courses reflects religious beliefs and does not adhere to scientific knowledge, complain prominent experts in Turkey.

A draft bill to change the philosophy curriculum in high schools has drawn reaction from teachers and academics for its ideological connotations and lack of adherence to scientific knowledge.

The government, which has proposed the amendment, has also been criticized for instructing only one institution to prepare the bill without consultation with different universities.

The bill's critics claim the substance of the draft curriculum is too similar to the curriculum of religion and national security courses.

"The draft brings a view of parallelism between religion and philosophy and the two of them complementing each other. This idea started to be questioned in the 19th century and it has been abandoned in the 20th century altogether," said Halil Turan, an academic from the philosophy department of Middle East Technical University, or METU.

Read more at <http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/article.php?newsid=115513>

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US: Bill promotes school religion at expense of education

Dave McNeely, Edmond Sun, 7 March 2008

The Oklahoma House of Representatives Education Committee has just approved House Bill 2211. The bill is expected to pass the full House, and then to go to the Senate. Its authors describe it as promoting freedom of religion in the public schools. In fact, it does the opposite.

HB 2211 is identical to bills widely introduced into state legislatures across the nation, where they have met various fates. Texas's Legislature passed it, and Texas is experiencing serious problems as a result. Liberty Legal Institute of Plano, Texas, a group of fundamentalist Christian lawyers, drafted the bill and promoted to legislatures, including Oklahoma's. It was not written by its Oklahoma legislative "authors."

The bill requires public schools to guarantee students the right to express their religious viewpoints in a public forum, in class, in homework and in other ways without being penalized. If a student's religious beliefs were in conflict with scientific theory, and the student chose to express those beliefs rather than explain the theory in response to an exam question, the student's incorrect response would be deemed satisfactory, according to this bill.

The school would be required to reward the student with a good grade, or be considered in violation of the law. Even simple, factual information such as the age of the earth (4.65 billion years) would be subject to the student's belief, and if the student answered 6,000 years based on his or her religious belief, the school would have to credit it as correct. Science education becomes absurd under such a situation.

The consequence of the bill will be to create havoc and promote discord in the public schools. That's already happening in Texas, where the bill has been law for several months.

Read more at http://www.edmondsun.com/opinion/local_story_067125346.html

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UK: Imams to teach in state schools to tackle extremism

Joanna Sugden, The Times, 30 May 2008

Imams will teach in state schools under Government plans for tackling extremism to be announced next week.

Ed Balls, the Schools Secretary, admitted today that a minority of children could be "at risk" from extremists and said that schools must be able to deal with radicalisation.

British-born imams will be drafted in to schools to instruct children about Islam and the Koran as part of the Government's "Prevent" strategy, which aims to weed out extremism before it takes root.

Lessons will include teachings from the Koran and discussions about equality between the sexes, the sanctity of life and the rights of the individual. Mr. Balls said the citizenship lessons would help young people to feel "part of their society, and resilient to those who seek to divide rather than unite".

The battle against radicalisation in schools is a major plank of the Home Office's wider policy on extremism but the National Union of Teachers (NUT) met fierce opposition when it suggested a similar scheme in March. The NUT proposed that Muslim clerics and other faith leaders should go into every state school as an alternative to faith schools. Critics warned this could allow extremists to target pupils.

But the Government believes that if the imams are British-born they will imbue children with the multicultural values.

Read more at <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/education/article4035200.ece>

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UK: Preachers 'should visit all schools'

Alexandra Freen, The Times 25 March 2008

Imams, rabbis, priests and preachers from other faiths could be invited into state schools to provide religious instruction to pupils who want it, under controversial reforms to faith education.

The National Union of Teachers (NUT) is also recommending that schools provide "private prayer space" for pupils of all faiths, recognise the holy days of world religions, allow school uniforms and food to reflect "religious requirements" and turn the daily act of worship in schools into "inclusive school assemblies".

The radical proposals represent a calculated gamble by the union to come up with a policy that will both satisfy growing demands from Muslims and other faith groups for an increased number of religious state schools, and avoid what it regards as the negative impact of educating children from different religions in separate schools.

Steve Sinnott, NUT general secretary, said that the spread of faith schools threatened to undermine community relations. "There will be real benefits to all our communities and youngsters if we could find space within schools for pupils who are Roman Catholics, Anglican, Methodist, Jewish, Sikh and Muslim to have space for more religious instruction in schools," he said.

He made it clear that he was proposing that schools offer religious instruction in particular faiths, rather than the kind of unbiased teaching about religions found in RE lessons. About 7,000 state schools in England are faith schools - roughly one in three of the total - educating 1.7 million pupils. The majority are either Church of England or Roman Catholic schools - and only a tiny minority cater for other faiths.

Read more at http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/education/article3613918.ece

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UK: Poll forces Church to re-examine how it teaches religion in schools

Ruth Gledhill, The Times, 17 November 2007

The Church of England is to re-examine its approach to teaching religion in its schools after a "surprising" number of people told pollsters that church schools promote "narrow religious teaching".

Nearly half of more than 1,000 people polled by The Opinion Research Business said that church schools are different from state run schools, more than a third said they were the same and the rest said they did not know.

But of those who said they were different, more than a third, or 158 people, said church schools "try and force their own opinions on children rather than giving a balanced view of other religions or ideas" and promote "narrow religious teaching".

More than half of the same group felt that the sex education church schools provided was "incomplete or restricted" while nearly half said they felt that church schools discouraged open discussion of important social and political topics.

The survey comes as the Church is on target to open another 100 church secondary schools by 2011, mainly through the academies programme and in areas of economic disadvantage, increasing its existing number of secondaries by nearly half from 201. Ten new Church of England secondaries have already opened since 2001.

The Rev Jan Ainsworth, the Church's Chief Education Officer, said: "These survey results are surprising, given that all Religious Studies syllabuses used in church schools require students to learn about at least the six major world faiths. We are committed to giving all our students a solid grounding in a range of faiths, to help all students engage with issues of community cohesion, diversity and religious understanding.

"That is why we support calls for the subject to be integrated into the National Curriculum, to further enhance standards of teaching and learning."

Read more at <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/faith/article2902699.ece>

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UK: Fear of fundamentalism hinders attempts to set up faith schools

Alexandra Frean, The Times, 11 September 2007

Public opposition is hampering plans to expand the number of state-funded Muslim schools, a leading Muslim head teacher said yesterday, as the Government confirmed plans to encourage the growth of faith schools.

Mohamed Mukadam, the chairman of the Association of Muslim Schools, said that while there was a "huge demand" in the Muslim community for more state schools, local Muslim organisations encountered "a lot of negativity" when proposing to set up new schools.

The perception that Muslim schools could be a breeding ground for fundamentalists could make negotiations with local authorities "quite difficult", he said.

Dr Mukadam, the head teacher of the Madani High School in Leicester, a state secondary, added that the Muslim community in Britain was still relatively young. Muslim leaders in Britain had first concentrated on establishing mosques, but now second and third-generation Muslims were turning their attention to schools.

At present there are seven state-funded Muslim schools in England, with a further 115 in the independent sector. At least 30 independent schools have expressed an interest in moving into the state sector.

John Dunford, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, called for the introduction of a national curriculum for religious education to ensure that all faith and non-faith schools bring a common understanding of major faiths to all young people.

Read more at http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/education/article2426737.ece

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UK: More faith schools are planned in an effort to integrate minorities

Alexandra Frean and Ruth Gledhill, The Times 8 September 2007

Thousands of Muslim children will be educated in new state faith schools under radical plans to extend state education to Britain's minority religions.

The move comes amid growing concern that a generation of British Muslim children, whose parents may speak poor English or be poorly integrated in British society, could grow up in segregated communities.

The move would give the Government greater control over Muslim schools at a time when questions are being raised about whether some are adequately preparing children for life in Britain.

It would also respond to the huge demand among Muslim parents for their children to attend madrassas and after-school Muslim education classes in mosques and to ensure that their children get a proper grounding in their faith.

A joint document signed by the Government and leaders of Britain's main faith communities, to be published on Monday, emphasises the important role of faith schools in fostering understanding between different religions and promoting integration and community cohesion.

A draft of the document seen by The Times states that the Government will work with faith organisations "to remove unnecessary barriers to the creation of new faith schools" and to "encourage independent schools to enter the maintained sector".

"We recognise that there are nearly 15,000 Muslim children and around 11,000 Jewish children, including those from low-income families, whose parents chose to send them to independent schools with a particular religious character and that the availability of places in the maintained sector could therefore provide an important contribution to integration and empowerment of these communities," the document states.

It adds that where independent faith schools want to enter the state sector, but do not have appropriate premises, local authorities may "offer premises, or arrange to acquire them, and also offer any capital investment that may be needed".

Read more at http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/education/article2409948.ece

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OPINION: Would we be better off without religion?

A.C Grayling

There is an increasingly noisy and bad-tempered quarrel between religious people and non-religious people in contemporary society. It has flared up in the past few years, and has quickly taken a bitter turn. Why is this so?

As one of those participating in it - and, confessedly, contributing to its acerbity - my answer might seem partisan. But both sides of the current dispute agree that it raises important questions about the place of religious belief in modern society.

Until very recently, people tended not to fall out with one another if they discovered that they held different views about religion. There were three main reasons for this.

Most believers did not brandish their faith publicly, society had become increasingly secular in most major respects, and memories of the past's murderous religious factionalisms had bequeathed a reluctance to revive the problem. The latter's lingering consequences in Northern Ireland anyway served as a distasteful warning.

But all the major religions have become more assertive, more vocal, more demanding and therefore more salient in the public domain. Followers of Islam were the first to push forward: protests against Salman Rushdie's Satanic Verses in 1989 were an early indication of what has since become an insistent Islamic presence in the public square.

Not willing to be left behind, other faiths have followed suit. In 2004 Sikhs closed a play in Birmingham, Hindus complained about Christmas stamps Christianising an Indian theme and, in 2005, evangelical Christians protested against Jerry Springer: The Opera.

But it has not all been about protests. In Britain public funding has gone to Church of England and Roman Catholic schools for a long time; now Muslims, Sikhs and Jews receive public money for their own faith-based schools. BBC radio has steadily increased the airtime available to religions other than the established one.

Requests for extra protections in law, and alternatively for exemptions from the law, to cater for religious sensitivities soon followed these developments: criminalising offensive remarks about religion, and allowing faith-based organisations to be exempt from legislation outlawing discriminatory practices, are the main examples.

Read more at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/portal/main.jhtml?xml=/portal/2007/03/26/nosplit/ftreligion126.xml>

Professor Anthony Grayling is Reader in Philosophy at Birbeck College, University of London. This article appeared in the London Telegraph on 27 March 2007 in conjunction with a public debate on "would we be better off without religion?"

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OPINION: Do we need to recover secular education?

Hugh Wilson

Resolving the role of religion within public institutions is becoming more and more important throughout the world. It is not, however, a recent issue in the Queensland context

In the 19th century, Australian and Queensland schools were run mainly by 'the Church'. Victoria had established a public education system that was free and secular by 1870. By 1875, having investigated the Victorian system, Queensland had its own Education Act that introduced free secular primary school education.

But on April 13, 1910, as the nation was engaged in a federal election, Queensland ran a referendum to determine whether or not to introduce both Religious Instruction (RI) and Bible reading to the public school system. This move was resisted by the then minority Roman Catholic community.

The question posed asked voters:

Are you in favour of introducing the following system into State Schools, namely:

- The State Schoolmaster, in school hours, teaches selected Bible lessons from a reading book provided for the purpose, but is not allowed to give sectarian teaching;
- Any minister of religion is entitled, in school hours, to give the children of his own denomination an hour's religious instruction on such day or days as the school committee can arrange for;
- Any parent is entitled to withdraw his child from all religious teaching if he chooses to do so

From 130, 909 votes cast, 74, 228 voted Yes, while 56, 681 voted No.

The effects of that action, nearly 100 years ago, are still being played out in Queensland, Australia's 21st century 'smart state'.

In order to allow for the promotion of Christianity within Queensland's once secular schools, the Education Act of 1910 expunged the word 'secular' from the realm of education. Since 1910, in spite of what many people have believed, Queensland parents who sent their children to state schools have not enjoyed the protection of the state from the evangelising and proselytising ambitions of religions, or more particularly, from Christianity.

Read more at http://www.brisinst.org.au/issue-details.php?article_id=325

Hugh Wilson is a PhD candidate researching the role of religion and faith in Australia's foreign policy development during the Howard era. This article was published in the Journal of the Brisbane Institute on 1 October 2008

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VALUES AND THE GOALS OF EDUCATION

New standard on the way for pupils

Farrah Tomazin, The Age, October 6, 2008

AS STUDENTS brace themselves for a new national curriculum, state and federal authorities are developing goals that every child should reach by the time they finish year 12.

A draft copy of the so-called "national declaration" shows an increased emphasis on Asian culture, religious and sexual tolerance, climate change, and information technology compared with the standards set in schools 10 years ago.

While literacy and numeracy remain the foundations of learning, the proposed goals state that "values as well as skills must form part of the school's legacy to young people".

According to the declaration, the economic rise of India and China sparked a need for all Australians to be "Asia literate", while environmental pressures such as climate change demanded students "engage with science and approach problem-solving in new and creating ways".

According to the draft goals, students should also:

- Have a "sense of optimism, self-esteem and are able to manage their emotional, mental and physical well-being".
- Respect others, have "control over their lives" and be "well-prepared for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members".
- Understand government, Asian culture, and indigenous people.
- Have the "capacity and inclination to act with moral and ethical integrity".

The new goals will replace the standards set under the Adelaide Declaration of 1999, which nominated the eight key learning areas in the curriculum: English, the arts, health and physical education, languages, science, social studies and technology.

State and territory leaders believe that while those areas had "served schools well" it was time to rethink school goals so they took into account societal changes over the past decade.

Source: <http://www.theage.com.au/national/new-standard-on-the-way-for-pupils-20081005-4uc7.html>

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DIGITAL EDUCATION

Promoting access, equity & opportunity for all students

Hon Julia Gillard MP,

We have positioned our Digital Education Revolution as one of the central initiatives of our broader Education Revolution. We see our \$1.2 billion investment in the Digital Education Revolution as a critical investment in preparing students for further education and training, for the jobs of the future, and to live and work in a digital world.

And we know if we are to prosper in an intensely and increasingly competitive marketplace, we must all change the way we operate, learn and interact.

As the recent report from Dr Terry Cutler on National Innovation has made abundantly clear, innovation will be at the heart of a successful Australian economy in the 21st Century. Innovation must play a central role in the process of education and training and it must be embedded in our classrooms and in the way we teach.

When you think about how the world of the child has changed in the past 150 years it's hard to imagine any way in which it hasn't changed. Kids today are immersed in all kinds of things that were unheard of 150 years ago, and yet if you look at schools today they are more similar than dissimilar.

The fact that we live in a technology-driven world is something our school system is still coming to terms with in embracing. And we must if we are to prosper in the 21st Century.

Read more at

<http://mediacentre.dewr.gov.au/mediacentre/Gillard/Releases/AddressToTheAustralianComputersInEducationConference.htm>

This is an extract from a speech given by Ms Gillard to the Computers in Education Conference on 1 October 2008.

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OPINION

Should Gillard Repudiate Education Chancellor Klein's questionable methods?

Trevor Cobbold, 8 October 2008

Julia Gillard has invited New York Schools Chancellor, Joel Klein, to Australia to counter widespread criticism of the Rudd Government's policy on reporting individual school performance. She wants Klein to help clear the ground for her to introduce school performance reports similar to those used in New York.

She should know that the Klein's reporting model is widely derided by educationalists, teachers and parents in New York. She should also know that Klein's response to their criticisms involves much skulduggery which she should repudiate.

Klein has employed a huge public relations staff to "spin" his policies in the media and counter criticism. He apparently has more PR staff than education policy advisors in his office. One of their key functions is to spread misinformation about the success of his policies. Of course, this is standard practice in government nowadays, and mostly people have become fairly immune to it.

However, a more sordid feature of Klein's administration of the New York school system has been to use taxpayers' resources to silence dissent and intimidate critics.

Last year it was revealed that New York City Education Department officials were compiling dossiers on its critics to besmirch and discredit them. Such a dossier was used to orchestrate an attack through the Murdoch press on one of the key critics of Klein's policies - renowned US educationalist, Diane Ravitch, Professor of Education at New York University.

The whole incident served only to highlight and sustain one of Ravitch's most serious criticisms of Klein's Department and the Mayor's office - the way they respond to criticism. She told the New York Sun: "The legislature eliminated the independent [school] board; they eliminated the community boards - and now the mayor and the chancellor are trying to shut down all independent critics."

Read more at <http://soscanberra.com/national-issues/gillard-should-repudiate-kleins-skulduggery>

Trevor Cobbold is convenor of independent national education advocacy and research group Save Our Schools.

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VALUES EDUCATION IN ACTION IN RURAL AND REGIONAL AUSTRALIA

Australian Rural Education Awards 2008

The Australian Rural Education Award has been awarded annually to an institution, organisation or industry to recognise excellence in rural education since 1994.

The Australian Rural Education Awards are managed by the Society for Provision of Education in Rural Australia and announced at their Annual Conference. The recipient is sponsored to attend the conference and invited to showcase the successful project.

The objectives of the Award are to:

- promote a positive image of education in rural Australia
- acknowledge individual or group achievements in rural education
- celebrate and promote creative ways of meeting the education needs of students and families in rural locations.

This year's award went to the Clean Green Energy Park established by Talbingo Public School, a small, isolated school located in the Snowy Mountains area of NSW. With funding from DEEWR through the ASISTM Program, many renewable energy workshops, camps and excursions occurred at several sites across the region.

Read about the Award at <http://www.spera.edu.au/area/pamphlet.pdf>

Read about the winner at <http://www.spera.edu.au/area/2008areawinner.pdf>

Read about the other finalists at <http://www.spera.edu.au/area/submissions2008.pdf>

Read more about SPERA at <http://www.spera.edu.au/>

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Virtually Farming - networking with technology.

Wendy Bortolazzo, RWN Assistant Coordinator, 1 October 2008

In the week 28 July - 1 August 2008, NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Rural Women's Network (RWN) ran a pilot project called Virtually farming. The purpose of the project was to explore the use of technology for networking and educational purposes and address some of the time and cost barriers associated with bringing together people located at great distances from each other.

The project provided 'on-line work experience' linking Year 10 agricultural students with women working in primary industries. During the week-long project the students accessed the women's on-line diaries and had the opportunity to interact by asking questions and making comments directly to the women about their work.

Seven women working in primary industries participated in the pilot project and represented a wide range of industries including: a self employed horse breeder/agri-tourism operator, an agribusiness analyst with a major bank, an aquatic conservation manager, a meat science technical officer, a weeds extension officer, a horticulturalist and a stock and station agent.

The students were from a Year 10 agriculture class at James Sheahan Catholic High School in Orange. Year 10 student were selected because this is the year students consider career options if they plan to leave school or select subjects for the HSC if they plan to continue at school.

Blogs were set up at blogger.com along with an introductory web page on the RWN website to provide some background information at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn/activities/vf/blogs>.

A networking and educational model was developed and tested using the internet to connect people in different locations. The selected 'blog' technology allowed easy and meaningful communication between the women and students. RWN demonstrated a capacity to set up and manage the model.

The participating students have an increased awareness of work options in agriculture. A Report has been produced documenting the process - including lessons learned, evaluations and an Information Package that can be used by others to adapt the model for their own purposes and context.

Read more at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn>

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FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

\$12.8 million for Kitchen Garden Program in Primary Schools

The Australian Government has committed \$12.8 million to fund infrastructure for the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden National Program in up to 190 primary schools across Australia. Infrastructure grants of up to \$60,000 per school will be available over a four year period. Australian government schools with primary enrolments will be eligible to apply for these grants.

The grants provide funding for the development of a productive vegetable garden and the construction of a home-style kitchen on the school grounds. Implementation of the Program once the infrastructure is established requires the employment of two part-time specialists to deliver regular garden and kitchen classes - a Garden Specialist and a Kitchen Specialist - and the allocation of several hours per week to a program coordinator selected from existing staff. It is important to note that funding is not available for the payment of these staff salaries and priority will be given to schools who can demonstrate that they can resource this component.

Schools which receive a grant from the Australian Government will need to demonstrate an initial commitment to continue the project for two years, and in the longer term, work towards integrating the project into the school curriculum

Information Sessions on the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden National Program will be held in each State and Territory. These sessions are highly recommended for schools intending to apply for a grant. Details of dates and locations in each state are set out below.

Schools wishing to attend the Information Session or to find out more about the grants should visit <http://www.kitchengardenfoundation.org.au>

South Australia - Monday 20 October, 5.30pm - 7.30pm
Bradley Forum, Hawke Centre, University of South Australia, West Campus
Speakers: Stephanie Alexander and Maggie Beer

Northern Territory - Tuesday 21 October, 5.30pm - 7.30pm
Alawa Primary School, Pett St, Alawa, Darwin.
Speakers: Stephanie Alexander

Queensland - Wednesday 22 October, 5pm - 7pm
Jagera Arts Centre, 121 Cordelia Street, South Brisbane.
Speakers: Stephanie Alexander, Rosemary Stanton and Jan Power

NSW - Thursday 23 October, 5.30pm - 7.30pm
Leichhardt Town Hall, 107 Norton Street, Leichhardt
Speakers: Stephanie Alexander, Rosemary Stanton and Kylie Kwong

ACT - Friday 24 October, 5.30pm - 7.30pm
Griffin Centre, 20 Genge St, Canberra
Speakers: Stephanie Alexander and Rosemary Stanton

Tasmania - Monday 27 October, 5pm - 7pm
Geilston Bay High School Textile room, Hobart
(Take first left to the small car park, and enter via Curriculum Team section.)
Speakers: Stephanie Alexander, Sue Dyson and Roger McShane

Western Australia - Tuesday 28 October, 5.30pm - 7.30pm
Fox Theatre, Arts Building, University of Western Australia, Perth
Speakers: Stephanie Alexander and Ian Parmenter

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EVENTS

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

30 September - 19 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>

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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/>

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VALUES IN ACTION

Anti-Poverty Week

12-18 October 2008

Our aim is to encourage as many schools as possible to do something during Anti-Poverty Week. It's not too late to gear up! 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
 - school- linked or school-based projects;
 - speaking to classes or
 - 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
- 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
 - an art competition
 - an essay competition
 - a research assignment on community welfare agencies in your area
 - explore the issues in the countries where they speak the languages you teach
 - a Home Economics research assignment on healthy nutrition on a tight budget
 - what is Australia doing internationally e.g. with Indonesia?
 - focus on an initiative or charity you already support
 - 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: <http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/learninginclusion/antipovertyweek>.

Read more at <http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au/>

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International Human Rights Day

10 December 2008

December 10, 2008 is the 60th anniversary of the adoption by the United Nations (UN) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). An Australian delegate Dr Herbert Vere Evatt was involved in the process of drafting the document, and Australia was one of the 48 original countries to vote in favour of the UDHR in the UN.

The UDHR sets out a certain set of rights which are the basic and minimum set of human rights for all citizens.

Setting aside a day to celebrate, educate and reflect on the principles that form the UDHR means celebrating the rights we exercise everyday as Australians, and acknowledging that enjoying those rights carries with it the responsibility of promoting these rights for all people.

Things that many of us take for granted - such as the right to an education, the right to receive medical care, and the freedom to practise our chosen religion - are not equally available to all Australians and people in other parts of the world.

Many individuals and communities will be commemorating and celebrating December 10, and pledging a commitment to maintain and improve people's human rights wherever possible.

Read more at http://www.humanrights.gov.au/education/hr_day/index.html

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RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS, PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Parenting in Practice

Joseph Degeling & Christine Langridge - 2nd Edition 2008

Review by Rupert Macgregor, ACSSO National Projects Manager

The first edition of this excellent book - strongly recommended by both ACSSO and the Australian Parents Council - was rapidly sold out; and its success has encouraged the authors to develop a second and expanded edition in response to continuing high levels of interest from parents and schools across the country.

Children - notoriously - are not delivered with a User Manual: an oversight in the scheme of things which this very useful booklet seeks to address.

The strategies outlined reflect the learnings from a hands-on parenting program and extensive experience in working with parents. The skills and strategies which it presents can be applied in every parent's daily life. Starting from the very early years - and continuing progressively from there...

While it certainly does not ignore the negative influences that can impact adversely on a young person's development, its emphasis is on building positive habits into the parenting process right from the beginning, in terms of:

- Establishing realistic boundaries and expectations appropriate to the child's age and stage of development;
- Focusing on the consequences of behaviours - with an emphasis on the positive consequences and recognition of positive behaviours and achievements;
- Looking after yourself and your own supportive relationships, so you can maintain your focus and balance as a reflective, positive and nurturing parent.

This booklet packs a vast quantity of very practical wisdom, experience and good advice into its pages, and is highly recommended to parents at any stage of their shared journey as the primary educators and role models for their child. It retails at \$14.99 (inclusive of GST) -with big discounts for multiple copies ordered - and proceeds go to support the Berne Education Centre for young people at risk.

Read more at <http://www.johnberneschool.org/PDF/PiPFlyer.pdf>

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Passport to Australia: The Australian Travel Game

Find out more about our amazing country the fun way:

Strap yourself in for a learning adventure like no other with Passport to Australia, the new board game from Brisbane based company Barker Boys (Australia) Pty Ltd

This is a fresh and exciting way for players of all ages to learn about Australia - the ultimate board game that takes players on a fantastic journey to every state and territory

The game is a brilliant way to improve your general knowledge on places that are in our own backyard. Though you hardly notice you're learning because it's so easy to get carried away with the thrill of the chase.

New questions will be added to later editions of the game and supplementary question packs will be available online and through recommended retail outlets.

"Best of all, with every purchase of a Passport to Australia buyers will be contributing to the establishment of a school camp to provide learning and recreational experiences for young people," said Managing Director Bruce Barker.

"Our intention is to continue to create opportunities to share knowledge and learn in fun and interesting ways."

Passport to Australia is available through ABC shops, selected retail stores and online at www.passporttoaustralia.com.

Read more at <http://www.passporttoaustralia.com>

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LOTE@HOME

Learning languages at home from the early years

"Children who have grown up learning two or more different languages are better problem solvers"

LOTE@HOME is an innovative way for parents to participate with their kids as they all learn a second language.

LOTE@HOME packs are not intended to replace formal LOTE lessons, however they are intended to build an "in country environment" in the home that will support the formal learning of a second language.

Devised by a parent who was unable to identify an approach to learning a language other than English that focused on a home, family-based setting, these family-friendly kits are now available in five community languages (including Japanese and Mandarin) with others to follow shortly.

By using the cards, and reinforcing words around the house, kids will learn a new language in exactly the same way they learned English - by immersion and absorption.

Read more at <http://www.lote-at-home.com.au>

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Educational Experience

learning resources, equipment and fundraising

Educational Experience began its operations in Newcastle NSW in 1977 and today is Australia's leading supplier of educational resources and equipment to child care centres, preschools, OOSHs and primary schools. We remain dedicated to the supply of creative and practical ideas to help children learn and develop and are the Teacher's choice for variety, quality and customer service.

At present Educational Experience's product range consists of over 8,500 product lines showcased in our annual Teachers Catalogue. Our speedy delivery is recognised as being the most efficient and reliable service offered in the industry. The products sold by Educational Experience are sourced from Australian suppliers where possible or imported from reputable international suppliers. To ensure all our products are of the highest quality and meet safety standards, our suppliers must show product compliance testing to Australian standards.

To view our product range please visit www.edex.com.au

Educational Experience initiated our generous Toys and More fundraiser to help Australian children's education. Early childhood centres and schools who participate in this fundraiser, are rewarded with a credit voucher valued at 20% of the total value ordered by parents and friends and may qualify for additional resources. For more information please visit www.toysandmore.com.au

Educational Experience remains committed to the educational needs of all Australian children.

Educational Experience, PO Box 860, Newcastle NSW 2300

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ACSSO EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

- **Australian Education Digest** : <http://www.acsso.org.au/aed.htm> (weekly)
- **International News Roundup** : <http://www.acsso.org.au/roundup.htm> (monthly)
- **Values Education** : <http://www.valuesineducation.org.au/news.htm> (monthly)
- **Languages Education** : <http://www.languageseducation.com/news.htm> (monthly)
- **Ensemble - Music Education** : <http://www.ensemble.org.au/news.htm> (monthly)
- **Public Education Voice** : <http://www.acsso.org.au/pev.htm> (quarterly)
- **Family School Partners** : http://www.familyschool.org.au/?page_id=6 (quarterly)

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