

CONNECT 4

The Newsletter of Youth Participation in Education Projects
12 Brooke Street, Northcote 3070, Victoria, Australia.

June 1980

First National Workshop of Youth Participation in Education Projects

AUGUST 26-29

SEE PAGE 21

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This issue:

This issue contains three items that I wish to draw to your attention in particular. Apart from the usual features (and the usual raves about impending financial disaster) we have:

1. Two conferences (for the price of one?). On pages 19-20, there is information and a registration form for the Victorian Workers with Youth Conference on July 25-27.
And on pages 21-22, there is information and enrolment form for our own "First National Workshop of Youth Participation in Education Projects" from August 26-29 (Tuesday to Friday). Please photocopy this information; get the forms back to us as soon as possible; we will acknowledge and send you up-to-date information on location, programs, money and pre-Workshop papers.
2. The article on pages 4-8 is the opening address(es) from the US National Workshop of Cultural Journalism, held in St Louis, Missouri, from August 9-12, 1979. It is reprinted from Hands On, Vol. III, No. 2 (Winter 1980). Information about Hands On is contained in CONNECT 1.

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The Workshop is being organised by a group of people - teachers, students and others - actively involved in projects in Melbourne. If you would like to assist with the Workshop organisation, you would be most welcome. The Workshop organising group is meeting again on Saturday, June 28th. For more details, contact Roger Holdsworth on 489.9052 (h); 380.1817 (w).

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AUGUST 26~29

WORKSHOP

Attached to this newsletter is a Conference Enrolment form. Please fill it in and return it. Copy it and encourage others to fill it in. Final details of the Workshop/Conference will be sent to all those enrolled.

In the last weeks we have received good and bad news. The good news is that we have received a \$1000 grant for the Workshop/Conference from the Innovations Fund of the Australian Schools Commission; the bad news is that our larger submission for complete funding was knocked back by the Transition Education Advisory Committee. We're currently contacting other funding sources.

So ... we have money to subsidise accommodation and travel for a few students. Maybe we'll get more to enable the full "live-in" workshop/conference that we've planned to go ahead. If not, we'll need:

1. to ask people in Melbourne for billets for inter-state and country people.
2. people outside Melbourne to raise their own travel costs.

But we hope that won't be necessary.

On whatever grounds, we are going ahead. Details are in the attached document.

See you in Melbourne - August 26 - 29.

THE SOUND OF SILENCE

Unfortunately, that's the sound that CONNECT is getting from many of you. Our mailing list is derived from a number of sources - personal contacts, referrals, Innovations Grantees etc. In the last issue, we sent a note to all those from whom we had heard nothing, asking if they would subscribe or if they wanted to be deleted from the mailing list. We received about 40 subscriptions, 2 deletions and THE SOUND OF SILENCE from just over 100 of you. Subscriptions from all of you would bring in another \$400+ (and enable us to pay off the last issue!)

We'll mail CONNECT to the current mailing list for one more issue - see NEXT ISSUE - then cut the mailing list to those who have responded and to new contacts. The survival of CONNECT depends on you.

You can become a "living" part of CONNECT by doing three things:

1. SUBSCRIBE: The cheap rate of \$4 for 6 issues surely can't last long!
2. WRITE: Tell us about what you're doing - we publish all chatty notes!
3. SPREAD THE WORD: Get others to subscribe. We've got over 80 people on our paid list - we need 250 for a viable newsletter.

CONNECT FINANCES

You might be interested to see how we are going after 3 issues:

INCOME:

Subscriptions	\$320
Donations	\$ 34
Literature sales	\$ 13

\$367

EXPENDITURE:

Printing	\$516.00
Postage	\$ 91.31
Literature	\$ 6.00
Misc. (stationery etc)	\$ 23.19
	<u>\$636.50</u>

Thus the deficit on 3 issues is \$269.50. That's another 68 subscriptions even before we pay for this issue. SUBSCRIBE. DONATE.

Roger Holdsworth.

THE OPENING ADDRESS: TOUCHSTONES

By: Elliot Wigginton

I am, needless to say, delighted to be here. I go to conferences around the country constantly, but this one is unique in my experience. It is unique not only because of the subject matter that will be discussed, but also because it is absolutely unusual to find a working blend of students and teachers and professionals in the field at a single gathering.

I want to talk primarily to the teachers and students that are here, and I stress students, because the very fact that you are here indicates to me that you are either now, or someday will be in positions of responsibility, able to give to other young people some of the same energy and love that was given to you.

When I first started teaching school, and this is an old story, I knew it wasn't working. It's not too hard to tell, when you look at high schools around the country, that the

traditional methods of teaching young people aren't working very well anywhere. If English teachers knew what they were doing, then there would be no reason for a college freshman to take a freshman English course after having had 12 years of English. It didn't take me long to figure out that my 9th and 10th grade English classes weren't working either, largely because I was teaching the same way that I had been taught. So, what I did at that point was to look back over my own elementary and high school career and try to pick out those kinds of things that have stuck with me over the years, those kinds of things that have made a difference. I found that there were some general classifications of things that had remained with me.

One kind of experience which remained with me was times when visitors from the community came into the classroom, and suddenly the real world intruded. Those people became a part of a room where somehow they didn't belong; and because they didn't belong there for some warped reason, those experiences became memorable ones.

Another type of experience were the times when we, as a class, were

allowed to visit into the community - leave the classroom. Then, we found ourselves intruding into the real world in a school-related context. It was unique, totally different. You never went into the real world as a part of school, so on the occasions when we did venture out, the experience was memorable.

A third kind of experience which remained with me were the times when we, as students, were given responsibility. Usually, most of the responsibility gets doled out to those young people who have already assumed that role, and the rest of us sit in the classroom and wait for somebody sometime to make something happen in our lives. A good example of that is the high school newspaper advisor who goes into a class of 25 and asks, "Who in here knows how to take pictures?" And one kid raises his or her hand, and the teacher says, "Fine, you're the photographer." And the other 24 kids sit and wait and wonder what it's like to take pictures and to get into a darkroom.

The last kind of experience which stuck with me were the times when something we did had an audience beyond the teacher. Having an audience seemed to elevate the activity onto a totally different plane. The importance of having an audience is obvious. Ask yourself how many young people would try out for the high school football team if nobody ever came out to watch the games. How many people would put months of effort into learning their lines for a school play if nobody was going to hear them? When we know there's going to be an audience there, we know that somebody may walk up to us on the street and say "Hey, I saw you catch that pass," or "I saw the play you were in." It somehow makes a difference. Those experiences become memorable, we keep them.

I began to try and figure out some way of combining all four of these ingredients into a project that might engage my 9th and 10th grade English students in a way that they hadn't been engaged before. The "Foxfire" magazine, which does all four of those things, was the result. And then, later, as students began to tell me, "Look, we've been doing this for a couple of years, and we'd like to do something a little different. What else can we do?" I began a process of examination again.



Photo By: John Shore

I began to ask students who had formerly been in the project, "What kinds of things did you do in association with this magazine that you carried with you? What kinds of things made a difference?" I did the same thing with students I was working with at that point. "What do you see happening to yourself inside this project? What do you think's going on? What do you think you are doing now that's going to be useful to you later." I recommend this process to you, if you're not doing it already. It's healthy and informative.

Just for fun--I sprang this on a couple of people that are associated with our operation today, literally just a few hours before this talk--I thought it would be sort of fun to ask them to come up and talk to you about what's going on in their lives. One of them is a student who is currently involved in our operation, and I've asked him to talk to you about his experiences with Foxfire. His name is Wesley Taylor, and as Wesley talks, you might listen and ask yourself what he's saying in terms of the classification of experience I've just mentioned. The second person is one of our staff members, Mike Cook, who is a former student of mine. Mike was associated with the project for a couple of years as a high school student. He's going to talk a little about what he took away with him, and how he views the kind of work we're all doing from a perspective of having been a Foxfire student six or seven years ago.

Wesley Taylor: I've taken just about all the Foxfire courses that are offered--seven different types of courses--and I've taken all but one of them. I've learned lots of stuff that I find useful. One of the courses I've taken is video tape. In video, we put a show on the cable once a week. I did a show on quilting for video, and we put it on the cable. We made some mistakes and goofed around, but we got it done. That's the way you learn stuff. We also tape ball games and music concerts and stuff like that. But, the thing that I learned was--maybe I won't go into a field like that, and maybe I won't use it in any job that I take, but I learned stuff. I can look at TV and see what's going on. Most people just look at TV without thinking, but I can see it and say, "There's a good edit," or

"There's a good commercial." I know what goes on behind the lines, and to me that's important. I

learned something.

I've taken photography and learned how to use a camera and the procedure for developing film. And again, it may not be a career, but I can have it as a hobby. I can look at a picture and know how it got there, how the process works. I'll always have that.

In the magazine class, everyone does an article. I did one of Leonard Webb. He showed us how to take a long neck gourd and make a banjo out of it that he can play on. You learn a lot of stuff working on the magazine. You learn grammar because you have to edit and write your introduction; you learn math when you reduce pictures for layout; you learn history by talking to people about how things were in your area, and that's real important.

I've also had record production, and we're now working on an album. We recorded four men who are each about 70 years old, who live in western North Carolina. They make banjos and dulcimers and play the old timey way. We're learning a lot

about grammar because we had to transcribe the interviews then edit them for the record insert. But what's more important is that we're creating a document--that is, something that's historical, and that's never been done before. I get a good sense of satisfaction out of that. We worked on that all summer.

I've also taken the environmental class. There is a class on biology, but I took the solar class. It was an experimental class, and we made a solar collector. We didn't go by plans. We just saw one and tried to make one like it. We made a lot of mistakes and had to change things around a couple of times. We learned a lot making that. We learned wood-working and math and science.

In all these things I've done with Foxfire, I've learned stuff that I think is useful. I may not choose a career in them at all, but I've enjoyed doing them. I've had a good time. And that's the reason I take Foxfire courses, and I'll continue to take them.

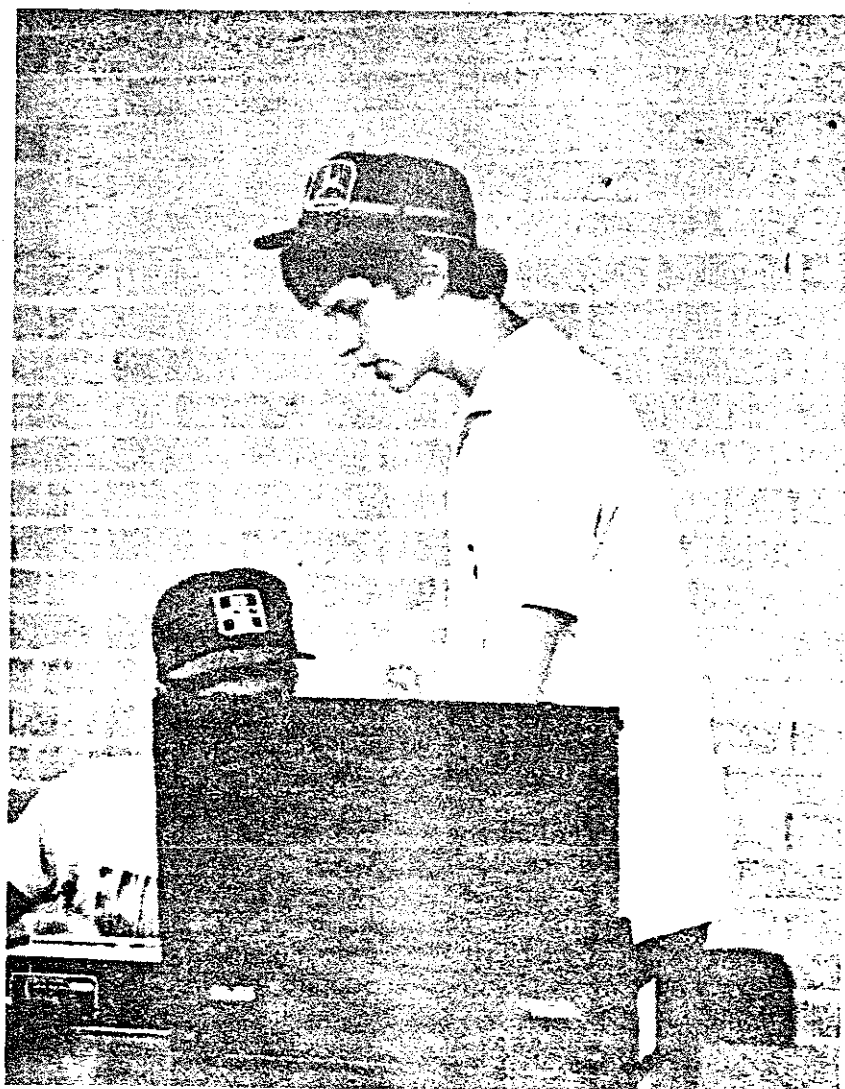
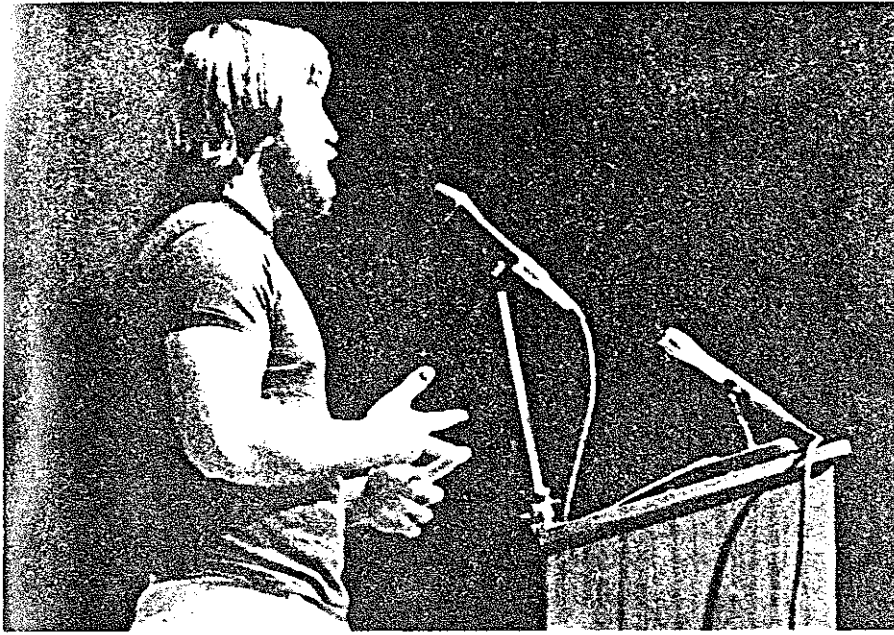


Photo By: Todd Waterman



Mike Cook One of the things that I think was most important in looking back on my experiences with the project and something Wesley mentioned several times, was the freedom to make mistakes. Having been on both sides of the desk now, I know that one of the hardest things for a teacher to do is give students that freedom, but as a student, one of the things I got the most out of was the fact that we were allowed to do things on our own, and if we screwed up, then we screwed up, and we had to cover for it.

Once when I was in high school, we were trying to put a magazine issue together, and Wig, in his usual manner, had run off and left us to do it. We were going from Wig's place down to Paul Gillespie's house and had all the stuff stacked up in the back of the jeep. Somewhere in about a mile and a half stretch of the road, one of the pictures fell out and we had to go back and find it. In the dead of night hanging out of the side of the jeep and using a flashlight, we finally found it and finished the layout.

Another time I was supposed to go into a church to record some music. I checked out the equipment, got everything together, got the microphone stands set up. That person that was supposed to meet me didn't show up, which was not unusual. So I got all the way down to the church and all set up and discovered that I didn't have any tape.

Another unforgettable experience happened while Wig was away at school getting his Master's. He had

left us behind to continue producing the magazine, and one of the stories we did during that time involved moonshining. David Wilson and Paul Gillespie, who were both on the staff, went out to take pictures of the still. They had worked several weeks to get this man to take them back to see the still, and he blindfolded them and swore them to secrecy. David started taking pictures and, after going through what should have been a roll of film, he discovered that he didn't have any film in the camera. So, they had to go back and start all over again. We made a lot of mistakes, and we had to cover for them. That was important.

Another thing that stuck with me was the decision making process. When you're a high school student, one of the hardest things you can do is convince yourself that you can make all kinds of decisions, at least it was for me. When we worked on the magazine, we were responsible for all the facets of it--layout, photography, everything. I would continually find myself asking, "Is this right? Can we do it this way?" And usually Wig would respond with "Well, try it that way and see." So gradually you learn that you can make decisions and do things the way you want to, if you think them through. That stuck. We made decisions in class a lot of times. People would want something from us, want to use something from the magazine, and we would interview them to find out whether we wanted to work with them or not. This still goes on in our classes, and it really makes you feel like you have some say so about what happens.

Another thing that has really stuck in my head is the people I've met. I was on the first trip to go and see Aunt Arie, and if any of you are familiar with the Foxfire books at all, you know that Aunt Arie was a person who really epitomized the kind of exchange we are looking for. She was like everybody's grandmother and had this incredible strength about her. Despite the fact that she couldn't move one side of her body very well, she was able to live alone and raise most of her own food and do what she wanted to do. I met lots of people who lived their lives the way they wanted to and weren't ashamed of it. It made a big impression on me.

Those are the three things that stuck with me, and the things that I feel are most important, the fact that we were allowed to make mistakes that we had to take responsibility for, the fact that we got to make decisions that, again, we were responsible for, and the fact that we had the opportunity to meet people in our community who were not ashamed of who they were and how they had lived their lives.

Eliot: When I began receiving that kind of information from my students, it became fairly easy to distill out what kinds of components that should be at the core of anything further we tried. I took all of the information that I could gather and boiled it down into four touchstones, four basic rules of operation, four things that would have to be a part of any project that we did. I'm going to run through these, even though some of you have heard them before, because I think it's useful to be reminded of this kind of thing. And there are a lot of young people here today that are going to be working with younger students or may perhaps become teachers themselves someday, and they may find this information useful.

One of the things that becomes a core ingredient is the realization of the absolute necessity of personal experience. Students are, to a large extent, experience poor. Most of the information that they receive is secondhand, it has already been processed, it's in the form of a textbook or a television show. We all know that most of what we learn, we learn through personal experience. You don't learn how to ride a bicycle by reading about it; you learn how to

ride a bicycle by getting on it and falling off and skinning your knees eight times and finally mastering the damn thing. This belief is buttressed by the realization that once students have had some of the experiences that we are able to provide through our projects, they are never again the same human beings. The first time a student prints a photograph that he or she has taken and comes out of that darkroom with that dripping wet print, you *know* that you've got a different human being on your hands. You know that something has happened inside that kid's head.

A second touchstone is, knowing the need for experience, and being convinced of that, to give students every opportunity to have those experiences. Kids can do far more than they are given credit for, if they are given the opportunity to do things. As teachers, you have to step back and let them do, and beyond that, you have to constantly put them in situations where they are challenged, where they can have experiences. Realizing the paucity of experience at the high school level, before you start to do anything related to your project, stop and ask yourself why a student can't do it instead. If you can't come up with a good reason, then go and find a student. Teachers are constantly making assumptions about what our kids are and are not capable of doing. In the early days of "Foxfire" magazine many teachers tried to discourage me from trying anything. They kept reminding me of the fact that I was a hot shot from Cornell University and that I didn't know anything about the Southern Appalachian Region. They said that the pupils in my 9th and 10th grade classes were reading and writing at way below the national average and would not be nearly as competent as I seemed to think they were. They predicted that the magazine would be an embarrassment to me and the students. Well, I'm delighted to be able to report that last November the *Foxfire Book* passed Billy Graham's *Angels* in sales, and in so doing became the largest best selling volume in Doubleday's 75-year publishing history. It was written by 9th and 10th grade students who, according to those other teachers, couldn't read or write. Teachers all over this country make kids cripples on a daily basis with the assumptions they make about what they can and can't do.

A third touchstone is that it's vital for the work we do with our students to be rooted in the community that surrounds our schools. The immediate community is the most logical experience base from which to work. It is the place where kids are wrestling the hardest to try to make some sense out of their lives. It is the place where students have to live and work and survive on a day to day basis. There is an astounding level of ignorance about the communities that surround our schools, a level of ignorance that we, as teachers, are supposed to be addressing. Young people should know how things get done in their communities, how the political system works, where the power structure lies. If they don't walk out of the doors of a high school knowing those things, then the stated goal of "training tomorrow's leaders" becomes a mockery.

I have a sort of perverse notion in the back of my head that one of the best things that could happen to the public school system would be for all the textbooks to just dry up and evaporate and go away. Then we would have to fend for ourselves, create our own texts, reprocess all that information ourselves, and every year have the kids do it all over again. Then we could make the information relevant to our communities and useful to our students.

The fourth touchstone concerns some basic facts about adolescent psychology. During early adolescence, the needs which exert the greatest influence on the day to day life of the young person are affection, esteem, security, recognition and belonging. The single most important thing that can happen in their lives at that time is that they get an unshakable conviction of their own self-worth. It is only after that need is fulfilled, and that sense is acquired, that a young person can begin to think about extending himself or herself to other people. It's hard to believe that you have anything valuable to give to others when you don't believe you have any value or self-worth yourself. We have to help young people achieve a sense of self-worth first, or everything we throw at them about comma splices or quotation marks is doomed to be shuffled off someplace and forgotten.

The second phase of adolescence is called, logically enough, late adolescence. During this phase the most important thing that has to happen to

a young person is that they be involved in real work in the real world. It is only through having the opportunity to do real work at this point that young people know they are capable of operating in the real world as adults. High schools, by and large, don't provide this opportunity, and that's the reason many young people would rather be washing dishes at the local Pizza Hut than sitting inside a classroom. Students are constantly giving us little verbal messages, "Why are you making us sit here? Let's do something. What are we going to do today?" They go home and their parents ask, "What did you do in school today?" And they say, "Nothing." The students probably did do something, but the fact that they perceive it as nothing is a pretty telling damnation.

An experience I had in high school gives a good example of how this fourth touchstone works. I wasn't a very good high school student. I failed the 9th grade and had to repeat it, and my father, who was a professor at the University of Georgia, was not amused. He sent me away to a special school. In the 10th grade, I had an English teacher named Jack T. He saw a composition I had written and took it by the office of the school literary magazine and said, "Here, I thought you might be interested in seeing this. I thought it was pretty good." They thought it was pretty good too, and they printed it. I got copies of the magazine and all the words I had written were there, just the way I wrote them, and they had my name spelled right, and I could take that magazine home to Mom and Dad and say, "See, this proves that I'm not as stupid as you've been led to believe." I went on to college and spent two years in pre-med, a year in archeology, and a lot of time fumbling around trying to figure out what it was that I wanted to do and become in the world, and I eventually wound up doing what I'm doing now. I'm convinced that the reason I became a teacher of English with 9th and 10th grade students who started a little magazine called "Foxfire" was because of that single act of generosity on the part of that 10th grade English teacher a long time ago.

That's the scary thing about our jobs, the fact that we have that kind of power. It's a little frightening. You students have that kind of power too, because you work with younger

kids, you teach them how to do things that you've already mastered. You can make that kind of difference in someone's life.

I have a dream that someday I'm going to walk into a public high school and find everything right. I want to believe that in this country there is one public high school that works. In every division of the curriculum and every class, I want to see students doing things that they perceive as being valuable and useful and important, engaged in a real life wrestling with the content and material of those courses, extending themselves into the community to participate in real work. I want someday to see students walking out of the doors of that high school being self-confident and competent and curious and sensitive and eager and willing to make a difference and able to take their own futures and their own destinies into their own hands.

Teaching is hard work. I know it is and you know it is. Every member of my staff puts in more than an eight hour day; none of us have summer vacations, we work straight through. We get to know our kids, we spend time with them. If they need a place to stay, we share our homes with them. Being the kind of teachers you are, you will also find yourselves in the role of nurturing other teachers. Teachers who are just beginning to take the first kinds of steps and need your help and encouragement. And sometimes, students will find themselves doing something that is an extraordinary thing for a high school student to do, and that is going up to a teacher who has just made a step and tried to do something a little different and saying, "Thanks, that was fun. Let's do more of that."

Teaching involves a lot of energy above and beyond and apart from "Read Chapter 26 and answer the questions at the back for homework." Sometimes we get discouraged. Sometimes we get tired, students and teachers alike. But we find strength in the knowledge that our lives are full in magical ways. I draw strength from that, and from seeing things happen in sort of a whirlwind around me. And while I put out a lot of energy, I can draw strength from the fact that often my students are giving me back more energy than I'm giving them. You students will find the same kinds of things happening to you as you share what you've learned

and as you watch younger kids grow, thanks to your generosity and your attention and your love. All of you draw strength from knowing that you're making a difference, and that's important.

A lot of times when I get discouraged, I think of a man I have a lot of respect for, a mentor, named Miles Horton. One day when I was discouraged, Miles said to me, "You just can't worry about problems on the national scale that you don't have any control over. Don't burn up your energy thinking about stuff like that. Spend your time trying to create islands of decency around yourself. Try to create sanctuaries around yourself where kids don't feel threatened and you don't play power games and you don't punish kids with grades, where mistakes are welcome and kids don't feel like they're wasting time and being wasted, where the world is our classroom and where we celebrate together the job of learning and discovering and our common humanity. Create those things around yourself, and then begin to get to know other people that are doing the same thing and find them and draw strength for the fight from knowing that they're out there fighting the same battle. And when possible, get together with them and fight together.

You're doing that, right? That's what you're about the business of doing every day--putting around yourselves islands of decency where people feel that good things are happening to them. Sometimes you feel

lonely. Sometimes you feel frustrated. Sometimes you're tired. So draw strength for what's coming from the people that are here, and draw strength from the fact that you are making a difference. You know you're making a difference, and I know you're making a difference, and I salute you for that and I wish you well.
Thank you.

B. Eliot Wigginton is the founder of the well-known Foxfire project in Rabun Gap, Georgia. He is the editor of the five FOXFIRE Books, and has taught and lectured all over the United States, usually with students in tow.

Photo By: Mary Schmalstig



YOUR COMMENTS

With this letter you will see, finally, a copy of SPOTLIGHT.

The Saturday of our lay-out weekend was chaotic and we found to our dismay that we were not as far advanced in our planning and had to spend most of our time typing, typing and more typing. Josi (from ASCOLTA) was great, obviously bored as there was little she could do, but she patiently answered our questions and somehow just gave us the feeling that all this chaos was quite normal and not to worry, it would all happen. And it did.

The paper has generated a lot of enthusiasm here; the students are excited and complaining that August is too late for the next edition; they want to do another one right now. Morale is high amongst all those involved in the Project. Attached is a blurb for CONNECT (see elsewhere, this issue).

Karen Carkner
40 Phillip St.,
Broadmeadows 3047

Thank you very much for copies of CONNECT 2 and 3 which were very interesting. I am enclosing a cheque for my yearly subscription.

I also draw your attention to an excellent Masters thesis entitled A Comparison of Two Approaches to Reading Development by R. Semmens of Melbourne State College.

I hope to give you further details of our program, in particular how cross-age tutoring appears to be ideally suited to working with Special Schools with the intellectually and physically handicapped. At Naranga (Special School), the friendship bond between tutor and tutee is very strong and the tutor feels very needed and useful. However, this will follow at a later date.

Vic Wilson,
Ballam Park T.S.

The Poverty Education Project has been established by the Brotherhood of St. Laurence to build up a resource centre of materials related to poverty in Australia. We develop new resources e.g. a video and kit for senior secondary school students made possible by a grant from the Schools Commission and available for borrowing (of video) - kits can be purchased separately. We can also provide a speaker on poverty and related issues.

Joan Benjamin,
Poverty Education
Project,
67 Brunswick St.,
Fitzroy 3065

I have sent off the booklets on cross-age tutoring which we have finished with. All the material ... is very useful ... We have now developed a programme which involves a work observation project, community aid programme, in-school work experience and cross-age tutoring. We are at the moment enrolling volunteers onto the course and will start running on July 15. I'll try to write you something in August for CONNECT.

Margaret McElhinny,
Lyneham High School,
Lyneham A.C.T. 2602.

I like the CONNECT material and will write a gambit on holiday programs and youth participation. At the moment I'm working on getting a state "Workers With Youth" conference together for July 25 weekend, also around the idea of networks as an alternative change system for youth issues... It would be well worthwhile having space for workshops on "CONNECT topics".

Gina Fiske
Youth Worker,
Sunshine Council,
Alexandra Ave.,
Sunshine 3020.

We in Townsville, Queensland, want to produce a magazine for migrant children in Townsville itself. Once organised, we want to publish the paper itself as it would increase children's incentives and self concepts. Can you give us any information on who we could contact to publish the magazine itself. We have written to the Queensland Education Department but have no word yet.

Val Threlfall
Sue Baatz
C/o Post Office,
Rollingstone 4816.

PROJECTS:

Publication Projects: Update

Australia: SPOTLIGHT (see elsewhere this issue);

KARNU 2, Essendon High School, Buckley St., Essendon 3040.

FOUR WALLS, Baltara School, 930 Park Street, Parkville 3052.

WORKOUT, Queensland Career Education Association, Curriculum Branch,
Department of Education, PO Box 33, North Quay 4000 Qld.

America: THREE WIRE WINTER, Box 664, Steamboat Springs, Colorado 80477 USA

SADDLEBAG, Box 1418, Wickenburg, Arizona 85358, USA (Wickenburg HS)

Yet to be named: William R Fernekes, Hunterdon Central High School,
Route 31, Flemington, New Jersey 08822.

"ALIVE AND WELL"

Yinbilliko Ltd., (Alternative School), 42-44 Bobbin Head Rd., Pymble NSW 2073.

Currambena Alternative High School, 203-5 Longueville Rd., Lane Cove NSW 2066.

Australian Association for Community Education, 14th fl., Nauru House,
80 Collins Street, Melbourne. 3000.

Genesis - A Christian Alternative School and Learning Centre (still in planning stage): Joe and Julie Morris, 54 Perry St., Fairfield 3078.

Young People's Forum, C/o Youth Council of Victoria, 511 Lt. Collins Street,
Melbourne 3000.

Cross-Age Tutoring Program, Dromana Primary School, Dromana 3936. (Carolyn Wadda)

SPOTLIGHT

The multi-lingual school-based newspaper SPOTLIGHT originated from the Broadmeadows School-Community Project. This project seeks to develop close ties between schools and their communities. The three schools participating in this project at present are: Broadmeadows High School, Broadmeadows West Technical School and the senior Catholic school, Geoghegan College.

The first edition, April 1980, was produced in cooperation with the local CYSS program Support for Jobless Youth in Glenroy. This group put together a supplement on unemployment. By combining funds, both the CYSS and BSCP were able to get out a substantial looking publication with a wide distribution that individually would not have been possible. The second edition is planned for August.

Karen Carkner,
Broadmeadows School-
Community Project,
40 Phillip St.,
Broadmeadows 3047.

5 MMM-FM

PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR 5MMM-FM RADIO

Applications are invited from qualified registered teachers ... to co-ordinate a 5MMM-FM radio project with secondary schools in the Central Western Region (of South Australia). The project will be trialled and evaluated for an initial period of three months i.e. for term 2, 1980, with the possibility of renewal for a further nine months. The Department of the Arts and the Education Department will provide joint funding for the position....

- Duties
- (1) Visit secondary schools to facilitate formation of groups;
 - (2) Arrange training sessions ...
 - (3) Coordinate programme production and sequencing including some production work to put together student segments;
 - (4) Arrange suitable in-school and general publicity about programmes.
 - (5) Pay regular visits to school groups;
 - (6) Liaise with 5MMM to arrange suitable studio use schedules;
 - (7) Liaise with curriculum committees as appropriate.

Personal Qualities

- (1) Applicants must be highly skilled at motivating students, aware of a wide range of adolescent interests, pre-occupations and values and be committed to the notion that teenagers have a valid point of view of the world.
- (2) Prepared to provide a structure which will allow students the opportunity to express their opinions, tastes etc. while developing democratic decision-making processes, co-operative behaviour and good communication skills.....
- (5) Committed to public radio and the concept of student involvement

This advertisement is for a new media project in Adelaide. 5MMM-FM is a new public radio station which has, as an important part of its promise of performance, a commitment to teenagers and their radio interests. One hour, from 5pm to 6 pm every week day is "Stark Raving Radio" produced by and for teenagers.

The idea was put to the Central Western Regional Education Office by a couple of teachers involved in the station, and they were really keen. The Education Department applied for assistance from the S.A. Arts Grants Advisory Council which resulted in one year's half time salary - the Department made up the other half. We are now in the process of getting our seconded teacher to organise the whole process.

"Stark Raving Radio" itself is already running three afternoons a week with three separate teams. Each of those kids - and there are about 30 in all - will become a team leader for another group. Three kids from each team will be technically trained in desk operation etc.

It is not really a new project for South Australia - Primary School Radio from Disadvantaged Schools has been going on 5UV for some twelve months. This project is much bigger and will involve more kids who will assume more responsibility.

Pat Thomson

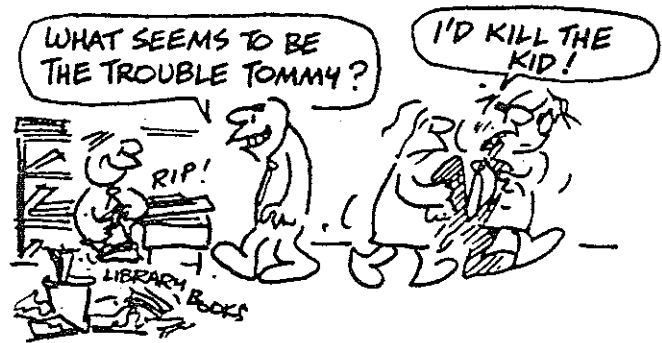
NEXT ISSUES

In the next issue, there will be an up-to-date account of the workshop/conference of August 26-29. Some pre-workshop papers may be reprinted for circulation to everyone. Also, the account of the Cross-Age Tutoring Program at Princes Hill High School will be continued.

We would like to also carry reports of the Workers With Youth Conference, some reports from Work Transition programs and further accounts from student governance projects. Those depend on YOU getting material in by about the middle of July.

In the issue following that (October) we hope to publish full details of proceedings at the August 26-29 Workshop/Conference. This issue will be mailed ONLY to subscribers, conference/workshop participants and new mailing list names. So if you haven't subscribed by the end of September, we bid you a sad farewell.

PRINCES HILL HIGH [2]



The following comments on the cross-age tutoring programme at Princes Hill High School are taken from A Comparison of Two approaches to Reading Development, an unpublished M.Ed. thesis by Bob Semmens (of Melbourne State College). Many of the comments in this section are drawn from the reports of the coordinator, George Querol. An outline of the whole program is contained in CONNECT 2, page 21.

Methods for tutor-training were strongly influenced by the perceived need to give substance to the proposed newly acquired status of the student-tutors - that of "teacher". The important aspects were considered:

1. Given that students at this school were not accustomed to accepting (and of course, being given) responsibility and authority, how were we to establish their status as "teacher", as a credible alternative? (Both to the students and to regular classroom teachers.)
2. Should the students come to accept their new status as a "real" option, how would we then ensure that tutees would not be disadvantaged by say, gross academic incompetence and/or over-enthusiastic authority?

It was predicted that as there had been no precedent for this sort of programme, "success" for the cross-age project would be a function of the inter-dependence of the three principal bodies involved, namely: the regular classroom teacher, the student-tutor working in that classroom, and the student receiving tuition from the student-tutor. For instance, if a student-tutor was to respond aggressively to childish teasing from his/her tutee, the receiving teacher would be disinclined to retain that tutor in the classroom. On the other hand, a student-tutor might find that his/her assistance was being constantly rejected by a very shy tutee, and feel that tutoring was therefore not for him/her.

It seemed imperative then, that all concerned should "survive" the first tutoring sessions. Consequently, the following strategies were implemented immediately and retained throughout the programme:

1. Training sessions were carried out in such a way that a "professional" atmosphere was generated. This was effected by:
 - a. Conducting training sessions in a room that looked and felt more like a tutorial or professional conference room, rather than a regular classroom.
 - b. Adopting (on the part of the coordinator) a specific set of behaviours when relating to tutors, namely:
 - i. Use of first person pronoun "we" instead of "I" when discussing, say, teaching methods. This reinforced team-work atmosphere and tutor's perception of themselves as "teachers". (Tutors saw that "we" included the coordinator who was a teacher and they eventually came to associate themselves professionally with him.)
 - ii. All round use of first names. (Although not initiated by the coordinator, neither was it discouraged.)
 - iii. Avoidance of didactic style. Presence and language adopted by the coordinator did not reinforce the unavoidable (initially) perception on the part of tutor, that the coordinator was meant to "teach" (with all that that implies).
 - iv. Ignoring "off-task" behaviour on part of tutors, except for the occasional reminder that the "offending" tutor was meant to be a "professional".

- v. Remaining open and honest at all times. It should be noted that the coordinator was well aware that the "reality" was that there could never be complete equality between tutors and their coordinator. Age, knowledge and the fact that the tutors were in a programme because it was organised by the school, all tended to reinforce the status quo. However, it is felt that the strategies outlined above, went a long way in assisting the tutors to perceive themselves as "teachers" with something very positive to offer their tutees, receiving teachers and the school as a whole. This opinion is strongly supported by the comments made by receiving teachers.

Problems of the Coordinator:

From the outset, tutors were very concerned that the tutees at the high school were rejecting their assistance. Tutors perceived rejection in the following tutee behaviours:

- i. tutees gave "cheek";
- ii. tutees were openly aggressive;
- iii. tutees openly refused assistance;
- iv. tutees "covertly" refused assistance by covering up their work when their tutor tried to see how they were going; pretending that they were not interested in the work anyway; claiming that their responsibility to work lay with the regular classroom teacher and not with the tutors;
- v. some tutees began to truant on the days that the tutors were in the classroom (although this behaviour was restricted to certain tutees who had a history of truancy).

As these behaviours became evident very early in the tutoring programme, it was possible to discuss these implications with the tutors and suggest strategies whereby the negative effects, for the tutors, could be overcome. Discussion and role-play helped to create the awareness that such behaviours were not directed at specific individuals, in the sense that the tutees were being deliberately malicious in their rejection of assistance - rather, that the behaviours were a natural reaction to being placed in a "one-down" position by declaring to the world that certain individuals were not clever enough to work on their own. That the tutors came to such an awareness, is evidenced in comments such as:

Mark H: "They were sort of tense and tight when we were there."

Kathy W: "Deep down, they really need help, but they just don't want to show it."

This awareness gave rise to the following attempts at resolution:

Coordinator: Make the classroom teacher your model. Adopt behaviour that suggests that your role in the classroom is official (e.g. suggestions made in tutor hand out No. 1).

Coordinator: Wear "official" identity badges.

Coordinator: Receiving teachers were asked (confidentially) to play a low-key role in the classroom and to direct questions asked of them by their regular pupils to the tutors, either directly or by ignoring them e.g. "I'm too busy now. Go and ask"

Tutor: If tutee is rejecting assistance, move on to someone else, or move on to a friend of the tutee (jealousy a weapon) or relate to tutee plus his/her friends (confidence in numbers).

Despite the implementation of the strategies mentioned above and the familiarity that comes with time (between tutor and tutee) the problems of rejection at the high school were never really overcome.

The report will be continued in the next issue of CONNECT. Many of the above problems did not occur when the programme was extended to the primary school and this is analysed. Training sessions are described in more detail, and comments from tutors and other students are recorded. Some more up-to-date comments about the 1980 programme are also included.

BALTARA

Baltara Special School is in the grounds of Baltara Reception Centre. This centre caters for boys aged approximately 10-14 years from all over Victoria. They are placed in Baltara by the courts for a short period of time.

The Cross-Age Tutoring Program at Baltara covers three venues and peer counselling:

1. Errol Street Primary School,
2. The Brotherhood of St Laurence, Fitzroy,
3. Milparinka Special Development School,
4. Peer Counselling.

Before each session, the boys plan their lesson or program format, and after each session they self evaluate.

The Cross-Age Tutoring Program proved extremely successful in 1979 and is being further expanded in 1980.

Below are some comments written by boys involved in the Cross-Age Tutoring Program:

Milparinka:

Every Wednesday morning I go down to Milparinka and play games with the retarded children. I really like it because I am helping them learn.

Brian.

Brotherhood of St Laurence: *Every Tuesday I help old ladies and old men. I listen to them, I play with them and I try to understand them. I enjoy working with them because I learn things from them and it is fun.*

Stephen.

Every Tuesday I go to the Brotherhood of St Laurence and help old people. I play games like chess and billiards with them and have a talk with them and make them happy because then they are not lonely.

Dean.

On Tuesday I take two boys from Baltara to the Brotherhood to work with the old people there. While they are doing this I try to get around to see as many of the people as I can and talk and listen to them. They like to talk about things in the past and about their families. They also are interested to hear about Baltara and about my work there. They are usually glad to see someone different and they particularly like to talk to and see the boys because they are young.

Mrs Forrest
(Teachers Aide)

Errol St Primary School: *Every Thursday, Fred and I go to work with two Grade 1 boys - Morgan and Ben. We help them to read, spell and count. We want to play games with them too. I like doing it because it is fun and I am helping them.*

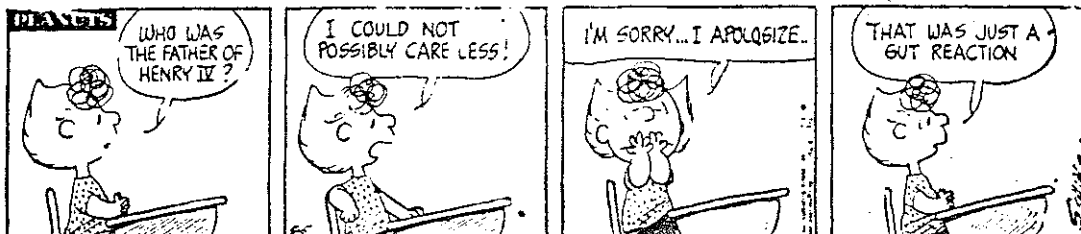
David.

Peer Counselling;

Every Tuesday afternoon, I have been finding out where kids can go if they have problems. One place I have found out about is 'Stopover' and next Tuesday we are going to 'Stopover' to find out about the place.

Stuart.

For further details of the program, contact Leonie Morgan at Baltara School, 930 Park Street, Parkville 3052. Phone: 380.6205 Ext. 327.



GOVERNANCE

MOUNT BARKER HIGH SCHOOL,
WELLINGTON ROAD,
MOUNT BARKER 5251
PHONE 388 1509



Inside Mount Barker High School, amongst lots of buildings, there stands an old house. It is the original school building. This house is now occupied by one of the four sub-schools of Mt Barker High and is called 'Wellington Road'. The five teachers, Anne, Dave, Bob, Tess and Rob, work together to coordinate the school and keep it running smoothly.

To a person on the outside looking in, it may seem strange and badly run. However, unless you are an actual part of the community, you can't understand the open-ness and freedom that exists there, and the opportunity to be yourself, and to work side by side with teachers and students of all ages. Those involved with the decision-making, learn that their own ideas can be important and appreciated, so it really helps us more to express what we feel to others.

Welly Rd is based on students' involvement and participation in decision-making at the school. Rules are not made by a group of teachers who gather together for ten minutes and end up with a set of boundary lines that are not to be broken or questioned. Rules at Welly Rd are discussed and talked over by the whole school at our regular weekly meetings. Perhaps, after a while, a rule may not work. In this case, the problem is considered again at another meeting.

At the beginning of the year, school was started with a camp. The main purpose of this camp was to get to know people and to work out our individual timetables. A camp was the ideal place for this, for the teachers had lots of time to talk to students separately. So we went to school the next week knowing each other better and also with our own timetables worked out.

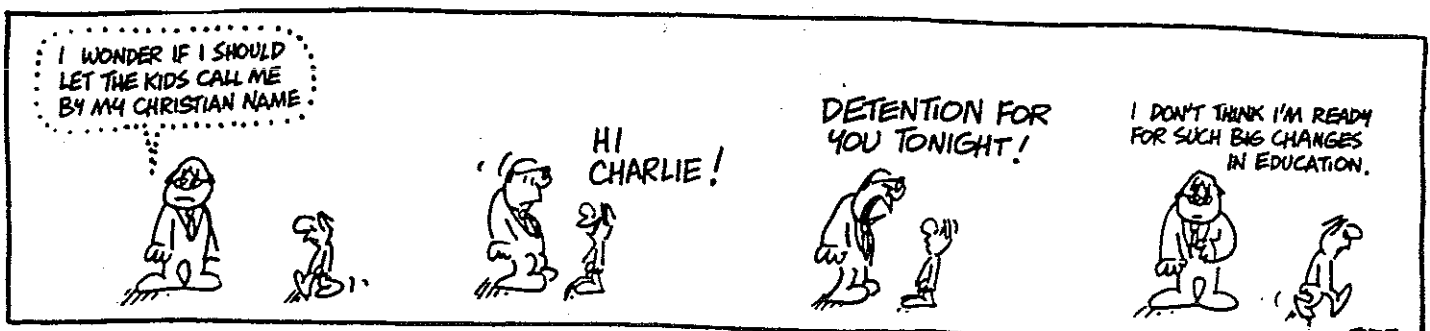
All lessons except for Maths are units in which we are given a choice of topics, then we are expected to work alone, with the teacher as guide. Deadlines are set for which our work is to be completed.

Whether or not this school works for people really depends on how much of a part of the community each student chooses to become. It teaches people about cooperation and acting together as a group.

Jane Sanderson
Year 10.

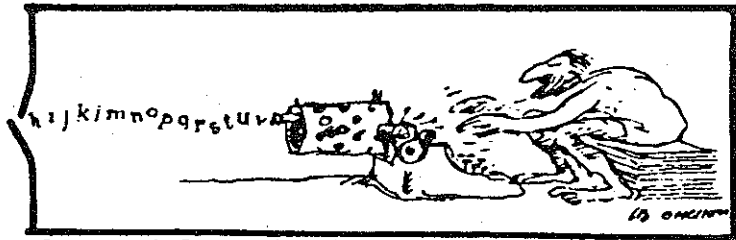
Our school, Wellington Road, is run in a very pleasing way. What I mean by that is - we try and make it so it pleases most everyone in the way timetables, excursions, rules and progress are planned by students and teachers. The over-ruling hand is held by the teachers but most of the time, if our suggestions are fair, then our teachers often agree. To have a say in the things we do, we must have self-responsibility. That's how we all try to make our school work, and to be one happy family.

Student at Welly Rd
Lea Bentley



Resources:

MATERIALS



Publication projects use a lot of materials such as transfer lettering, tapes, etc. As prices soared, these items have swallowed larger and larger amounts of budgets. Recently, I visited a number of bookshops and suppliers and costed a range of materials. These prices and comments are correct as of the end of May 1980.

1. TRANSFER LETTERING:

Brand name:	Letters per sheet:	Cost (pre-tax):	
Letraset	Uppercase: 194	\$8.75	
Mecanorma	Uppercase: 168	\$7.20	
Rapitype	Uppercase: 100	\$7.40	(Upper and lower case on same sheet for both Rapitype and Transfertech)
	Lowercase: 121		
Transfertech	Uppercase: 130	\$7.20	
	Lowercase: 145		

The numbers of letters per sheet is taken for all brands on 60 point Helvetica Medium.

In all cases there appears to be a satisfactorily large range of styles. Rapitype is not initially in point sizes, but in metric measurement of height. A conversion table is included in their catalogue.

2. TAPES:

Brand Name:	Price (pre-tax):	
	1/16" = 1.59 mm.	2 point.
Normatape (Mecanorma)	\$3.25	\$3.00
Letraline (Letraset)	\$4.05	\$4.05
Zipaline (Rapitype)	\$2.30	\$2.85

As far as information is published, lengths seem similar.

We also have seen a sheet advertising Nensco tape: 95¢ for 2 point tape, but haven't been able to check that out.

3. KNIVES ETC.

Brand name/Description:	Price: * pre-tax # shelf price	Blades price:
NT Cutter: D 500	\$4.80 #	
S 200	\$1.30 #	pkt 6: 52¢ #
A 300	\$1.75 #	
Lance scalpel handle No. 3	\$4.95 #	pkt 10: \$3.60 #
Pop and Lock Cutter	\$3.95 #	pkt 10: \$2.30 #
Mecanorma No. 1	\$3.00 *	pkt 10: \$3.00 *
Letrknives DK (Letraset)	\$2.75 *	pkt 5: \$1.45 *
		100: \$38.20 *

With scalpels, make sure that the blades fit the handles - there are at least two incompatible styles.

The NT Cutter D 500 has two different styles of burnishers, a blade and a sharp point all in a cunning pen holder.

4. BURNISHERS (FOR LETTERING):

Brand name:	Material:	Price (pre-tax):
Letraset	glass	\$1.65
	teflon	\$4.90
	spoon	\$4.90
	ball	\$4.85
Mecanorma No. 1	plastic	\$1.10
No. 2	plastic	\$1.60

5. RUBBER CEMENT:

Brand Name:

Prices:

	250 ml.	500 ml.	1 l.	2 l.	4 l.	5 l.
Kleer Tak Rubber Cement (Mecanorma)	\$6.50 *		\$10.70 *			\$40.50 *
Nuart Rubber Cement		\$1.70 #		\$5.75#	\$8.70#	

6. Availability:

The above information was obtained in Melbourne from the following sources:

LETRASET: Eckersley's, 55 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne.
Artistcare, 8 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne.
Camden Art, 188 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy.

MECANORMA: Melbourne University Bookroom, Melbourne University.
A G Barker, 107-115 Howard Street, North Melbourne.

RAPITYPE: Folk's, 25-35 Rae Street, Fitzroy.

TRANSFERTECH: Eckersley's (above)

They are also probably available at other locations, and several of the above firms have branches in other states.

CROSS-AGE TUTORING

Vic Wilson from Ballam Park Technical School (see article in CONNECT 3) provides information here about self-esteem tests used in Cross-Age Tutoring Programs:

The pre- and post-test used in our program is an Intermediate level, Self-Appraisal Inventory published by the Instructional Objectives Exchange of Los Angeles, California. This test is part of a number of similar tests included in a booklet entitled "Measures of Self-Concept K-12" available from the Australian Council for Educational Research, 9 Frederick St., Hawthorn 3122.

I believe this test is a more comprehensive test than the more commonly used Coopersmith inventory as described in the book The Antecedents of Self Esteem, by S. Coopersmith.

The results from both pre- and post-tests are then correlated using the Spearman rank correlation to test for significance. In our preliminary findings there is a significant ($.01 < p < .05$) increase in self-concept scores of the experimental group (the teacher-aides) as compared to the control group (Ballam Park students who are not teacher aides).

Other factors for this increase in self-concept are currently being investigated but it would appear the actual tutoring program, with a student's change of status to one that openly assumes competence is the prime reason for improvement in a student's self-concept.

Vic Wilson

BIBLIOGRAPHY

In CONNECT 2, a number of articles, pamphlets and books were listed as source material on cross-age tutoring. The following have also come to my attention and are extremely useful:

Technical School Innovation: A Case Study of the Cross Age Tutoring Program at Richmond Technical School by L. W. Mayes, ISBN 0 85816 186 9, B.Ed. Task Force Occasional Paper No.4, Ed. Tony Knight, Centre for the Study of Urban Education, La Trobe University, Bundoora 3083. Cost: \$1.50 (Posted \$2.00).

"Research on Children Tutoring Children: A Critical Review" by Linda Devin-Sheehan, Robert S. Feldman and Vernon L. Allen in Review of Educational Research, Summer 1976, Vol. 46, No. 3, Pp. 355-385.

PHOTOCOPY: COMPLETE: RETURN:

PHOTOCOPY this page; COMPLETE all the details; RETURN it to:

CONNECT,
The Newsletter of Youth Participation in Education Projects,
12 Brooke Street,
Northcote. 3070. Victoria.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE:

I enclose \$ for the following (postage included in all items):

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| <input type="radio"/> ASCOLTA US TRIP REPORT | \$1.00 |
| <input type="radio"/> THE GOLDEN SHAFT | \$7.50 |
| <input type="radio"/> CONNECT 1 | \$1.00 |
| <input type="radio"/> CONNECT 2 | \$1.50 |
| <input type="radio"/> CONNECT 3 | \$2.00 |
| <input type="radio"/> ASCOLTA Vol 7 No 1, 2 | \$1.00 each |
| <input type="radio"/> CONFERENCE ENROLMENT FORM | FREE |

NAME:

ADDRESS:

.....POSTCODE:

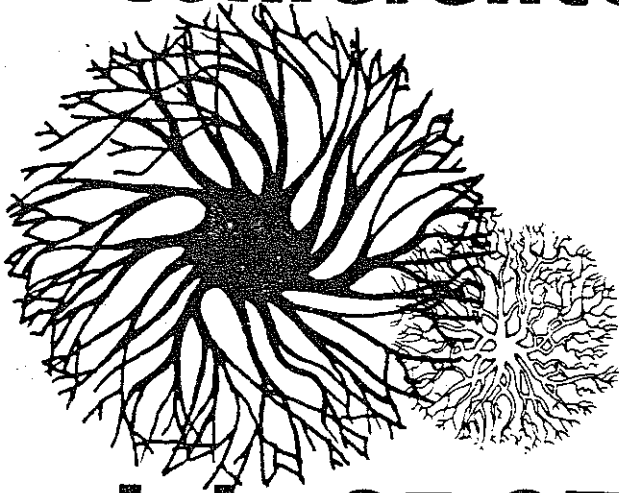
PROJECT:

- ☐ I enclose \$4 for a 1 year subscription to CONNECT.
- ☐ I enclose a donation of \$
- ☐ There's an article enclosed/following.
- ☐ List the project as "alive and well" in CONNECT.
- ☐ Send copies of CONNECT to the following people/projects:

.....

- ☐ Take me off the CONNECT mailing list.

Victorian Workers with Youth Conference



**July 25-27
1980**

Organized by the Victorian
Workers with Youth Network.

Conference Aims:

- 1) Identify the issues facing young people in this decade and discuss them with a view to taking appropriate action.
- 2) Develop an ongoing movement, network or formal grapevine through which the identification of issues both present and future are discussed, and appropriate action is taken in developing future strategies.
- 3) Create an environment where workers with youth can gain self reinforcement, and support

Venue:

Candlebark Farm,
Dalry Road, Healesville.

How to Get there?

Travelling from Melbourne to Healesville, turn right at the Woori-Yallock Road, travel 6 km.

Dalry Road is on the left.

See the Conference sign.

The Farm is 1½ km up the hill.

The car park is next to the cattle yards.

Bring!

- * If it's wet - gumboots.
- * Musical instruments.
- * Sleeping bag or linen
(2 blankets are available per bed).
- * Any written material or information on your area of work or interest area.

COST:

The cost of the weekend will be \$30.00.

If you wish to camp it will be slightly less.

For Further Details -

Contact - Secretary Mr Noel Burns: 42 0593

or: Shirley Smith 874.2211 (b)

49.5261 (p)

Gina Fiske 311.7066

Dick Hill 350.4222

Background:

In July, 1979, a National Youth Workers Conference took place in Perth, which initiated the concept of "Workers with Youth" and agreed to pursue the development of state-wide networks of people who work with young people. It will enable youth workers, full or part-time and volunteers to support each other, act as advocates on issues that affect young people, and develop a means of continuing this communication through an informal network leverage.

PROGRAMME OUTLINE

Friday 25th July -		
2.00 Arrival & registration. Afternoon Tea.		
3.15 General Introduction and welcome (from organizing committee).		
3.30 Panel Discussion on Networks Outline on the developing structures, organizations and operations.		
6.00 Tea G.T.K.		
Saturday 26th July -		
7.30 Breakfast		
9.00 Introduction to Days Happenings. Short "wake me up" film (20 minutes)		
9.30 Keynote Speaker		
10.00 Question time.		
10.30 Morning Tea and issue grps		
11.00 Break into work group. Partake of a Working Lunch		
4.00 Where are we at?? Whole group discussion. Feedback session.		
6.00 Tea Music Session?		
Sunday 27th July -		
7.30 Breakfast		
8.45 Bush Church Service?		
9.30 Issue Groups. Work groups to formulate any recommendations for the plenary session.		
11.00 Plenary session.		
12.30 Lunch		
1.30 Formal plenary Formal descision making process. Co-ordination commitment decisions.		
3.00 Future planning of Victorian Workers with Youth Steering Committee.		
6.00 Final Closing.		

Issues

Issues of interest based on working groups will be set up during the conference. The following are suggested topics: -

Employment/Unemployment, attitudes, policy issues, community responses, Accommodation, emergency, long-term, refugees, Youth Affairs, policy, networks, Recreation, commercial venues, skate-boarding, B.M.X., Legal, relations with police, court work, legal rights of workers/young people, Schools, community education, youth participation, Families, community development, youth subcultures women in youth work, Working with management/support groups, voluntary/paid relationships, Youth participation, action teams, youth as youth workers, Implementation innovation, research strategies, Migrant youth work, Aboriginals.

Registration Form:

Surname:
 Given Names:
 Address (Bus.):
 (Priv.):
 Postcode:
 Telephone (Bus):
 (Priv):
 Occupation:
 Areas of involvement:
 Issues for discussion.
 Please nominate three areas that you would like to see a working group on:
 1.....
 2.....
 3.....
 Others

 Vegetarian Head: Yes/No
 I am enclosing a cheque/ cash/money order for \$30 as payment in full for the conference.
 Signature
 Date:

Return to Conference Sec.
 C/o 109 St Elmo Road,
 Ivanhoe 3079 Vic.

RSVP July 7th 1980.

NOTE: The Conference limit is 70 participants. There are 50 beds. If you would prefer to camp, please indicate.