

# VicSRC Appoints Project Officer



The Victorian Student Representative Council (VicSRC) has recently appointed a **Project Officer** to support SRCs in secondary schools across the state, and to support students to organise cluster groups.

The new position, funded through generous support from the Donkey Wheel Fund and Charitable Trust and by the Reichstein Foundation, will enable the VicSRC to:

- Publicise its existence to SRCs, schools and individual secondary school students;
- Support SRCs and individual students to form local networks of SRCs where appropriate, with a particular emphasis on rural and regional areas;
- Encourage SRCs, networks, schools and individuals to become members of the VicSRC;
- Publicise the Annual VicSRC Congress and encourage and support SRCs and individual students to attend;
- Encourage and support individual student representatives to become active in the operations of the VicSRC.

The Project Officer will also represent the VicSRC on relevant bodies, in discussions and at conferences and write articles for newsletters and journals about the VicSRC.

The Project Officer is based at the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, level 2, 172 Flinders Street, Melbourne (right opposite Federation Square).

Contact: 03 9267 3799.

## Looking for students with a vision

The VicSRC is looking for secondary students who have a vision about an active statewide organisation of students.

You might want to work at a local level, helping to organise a cluster network of SRCs. Or you might want to work at a state level, helping to direct the work of the VicSRC.

If this is you, contact James Tonson, VicSRC:

03 9267 3799 or

[VicSRC@yacvic.org.au](mailto:VicSRC@yacvic.org.au)

The **Victorian Student Representative Council** (VicSRC) is an organisation of secondary school students that aims to be a representative body for Victorian secondary school students, and to strengthen SRCs by providing a network linking students and student representative bodies across Victoria.

It aims:

### To strengthen SRCs

- By improving the operation of student representative bodies within secondary schools in Victoria.
- By supporting networks between schools at a local level.
- By increasing the profile of student representative bodies in the community.

### To be a representative body for Victorian secondary school students

- By providing a network linking students and student representative bodies across Victoria.
- By providing a recognised and student based structure to speak on behalf of secondary students.

### To facilitate and co-ordinate action by secondary students at all levels

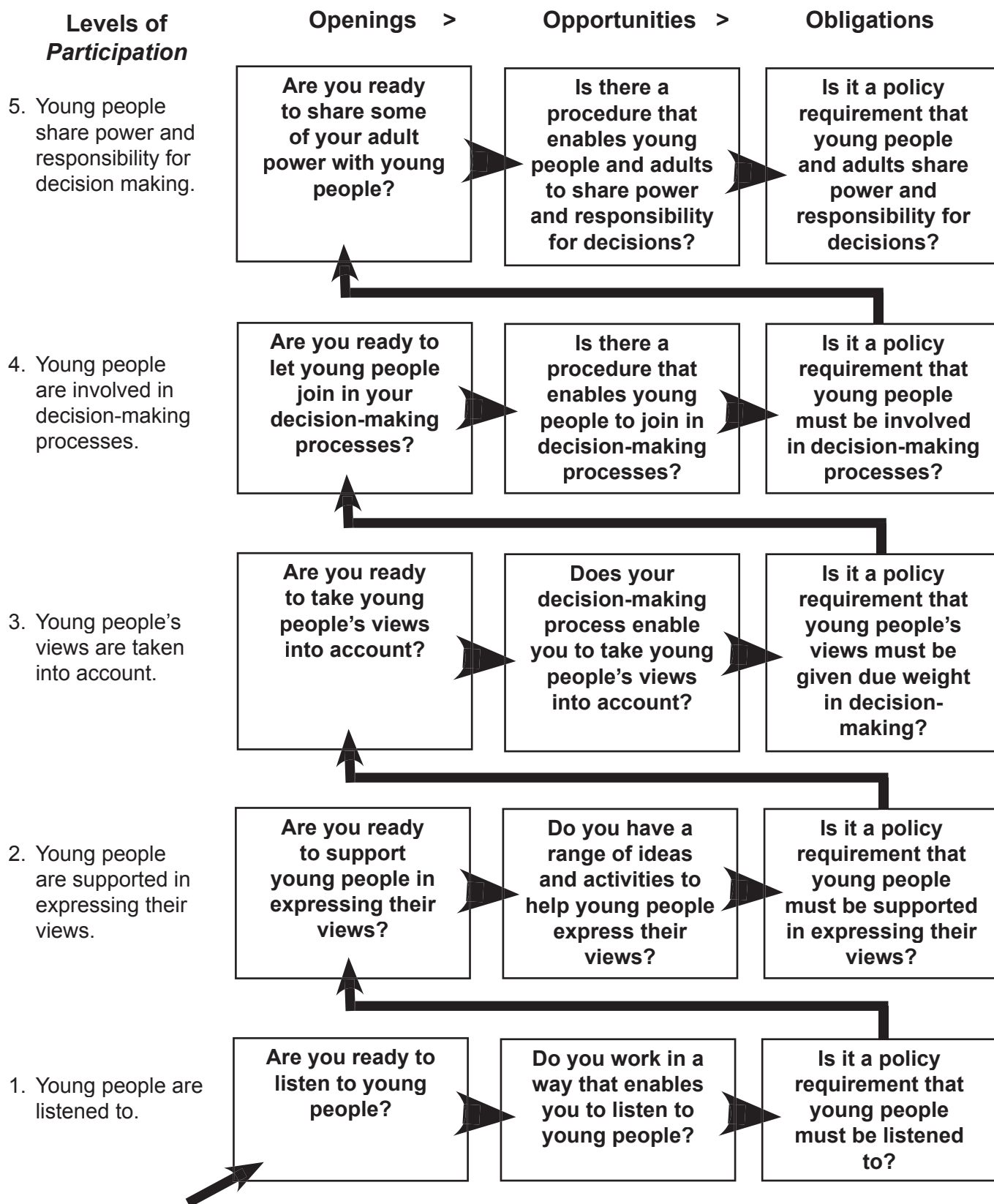
- By supporting projects, initiatives, and any related activity that secondary students could participate in, and which would be more effective on a larger scale.
- By coordinating appropriate activities at a state wide level.

### To be democratic and participatory

- By encouraging students to understand, practise and experience democracy, by being included in decision making at all levels.

# Models for Youth Participation

This model was developed by Harry Shier in 2001 as an alternative to the linear 'ladder' model in Roger Hart's work (see **Connect** 157: February 2006: pages 15-20). As well as five 'levels' of participation, it specifies three stages of commitment by organisations, and therefore focuses more (and usefully) on groups' responsibilities for supporting participation.



Shier, H. (2001) 'Pathways to participation: openings, opportunities and obligations' in *Children and Society*, Vol 15, No 2 (April 2001): 107-117

# I wanna make a difference

## But where do I start?

As the song goes... "There's more to life than this". We live in a modern, globalised, hi-tech, savvy cool world. In a 'developed' country. But just how 'developed' are we as a race when we let 2.8 billion fellow human beings suffer and *try* to survive on less than US\$2 a day?

Many young people like me, particularly of the school and uni age, grapple with this question. For many the question opens up a reality that can be overwhelming. Global poverty is an overwhelming disaster. Yet it is a disaster that does not have to be.

To young people's credit, it is their activism on both global and local poverty that proves that poverty can be fought, even if it's in the school hall through a concert to raise funds for an overseas aid project. Many of you in an SRC, or on a Social Justice team are passionate about poverty reduction but face the dilemma, like I did, where you don't have access to the information or resources that are needed to arm yourself with knowledge about how poverty can be beaten.

However there is an answer - that you, your SRC or Uni club can

utilise. World Vision Australia's youth movement, Vision Generation, in an interactive youth community that regularly partners with schools through promoting the 40 Hour Famine and encouraging schools-based fundraising and advocacy activities.

Vision Generation selects a World Vision project to support each year. This year we are supporting World Vision's work in Ecuador, where a permaculture program is being installed. Permaculture (permanent agriculture) is a sustainable farming system where farmers in Ecuador observe the damage of their local environment, namely soil erosion, and rectify it by replicating natural ecosystems. Their concentration on eco-friendly farming practices and native species allows for their local ecosystem to improve and thus yield high quality crops.

Many secondary school students enjoy running fundraisers, such as concerts, dinners and trivia nights for communities like Ecuador. But a student can also make a huge difference through raising awareness

and educating other students. It is for this reason that World Vision and VGen have developed a youth advocacy website, known as **STIR**, where you can brainstorm ideas on how your school community can think global and act local.

**STIR** was inspired by the belief that young people are in a privileged position to undo the cycle of poverty. Young people, being among the leaders of today, are becoming increasingly aware of how they can combat poverty (ie meeting politicians, running fundraisers, educating fellow youth) and thus, many of them are setting the challenge of being the generation that successfully alleviates poverty.

When I was in secondary school I was faced with the dilemma of not knowing where to go for the "facts" and wanting to brainstorm, exchange ideas, and learn from other students. VGen and its advocacy tool, **STIR**, are great forums to do this, as proven by their accessibility and emphasis on "Make Poverty History."

To **Stir** your world through this website and Vision Generation please visit [www.stir.org.au](http://www.stir.org.au)

Vision Generation's next main event is its National Youth Summit on 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> September. See the *Events* page for further details.

**Chris Varney**, Vice-Chairman  
Vision Generation Victoria

## 2006 Vision Generation National Youth Summit

### Take It Personally!

22nd-24th September, 2006

How will **you** fight global poverty and injustice?

What can **you** do to create a just world for future generations?

Applications are now open to Victorian secondary school students to attend Vision Generation's National Youth Summit. So if you are, or know of, a student who wants to find out more about how they can become their own solution to poverty - **this summit is for them!**

Vision Generation (VGen) is the national youth movement of World Vision Australia, aiming to inspire, educate and empower young people in the fight against global poverty and injustice. It is essentially an interactive youth community that encourages young people to take up the mantle of global activism.



The Youth Summit will convene in September (22nd-24th) and will bring together 80 of Australia's most passionate young global activists for three days of workshops and practical advocacy actions.

National Youth Summit delegates will explore the theme "Take It Personally". Poverty and young people's efforts in fighting poverty are things to be taken personally. This emphasis will encourage young people to realise the cycle of global poverty and respond out of personal and community resolve through their leadership of self and leadership in a global village. The Youth Summit will leave delegates with renewed motivation plus advocacy and leadership skills.

If you're interested in attending or would like further information please contact **Chris Varney**, Summit Convenor: phone: 0432 405 384; e-mail: [youthsummit@vgen.org](mailto:youthsummit@vgen.org)

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# News and Reviews

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## Looking for New SYNners

SYN (Student Youth Network) is an independent youth media organisation based in Melbourne. We are the holder of one of the largest community radio licenses in Victoria and can be heard throughout Melbourne and Geelong on 90.7 FM. We are also responsible for producing 10 hours of weekly youth television for community television C31 and a bi-monthly zine called Pecado.

SYN is looking for interested under 18s to get involved in making radio! Through a program called *The Awkward Stage* you can learn how to make exciting and professional radio, while getting trained by an experienced SYNner. The training course runs over 10 weeks. After that, you would be set up to run your own radio program at SYN.

For more information and to get involved, email Adrian McMahan, SYN Education and Training Manager at: [training@syn.org.au](mailto:training@syn.org.au)

§ § §

SYN is also looking for funky, reliable and dedicated volunteers to manage a range of areas within SYN. The roles that we need to fill are:

*Technical Manager ... IT Manager ... Fundraising Manager  
Assistant Radio Manager ... Assistant Music Manager  
Promotions Manager ... Assistant IT Manager  
Assistant Technical Manager ... Assistant Talks Manager  
Assistant TV Manager ... Assistant Events Manager*

Experience or expertise is considered desirable, but not essential. You will need to be a good communicator and need to understand the ethos of SYN and independent media.

SYN provides a friendly environment where volunteers can create their own projects and initiatives. SYN is pretty much managed completely by volunteers, and we are looking for the next generation of volunteers to come in and shake-up SYN!

SYN also provides direct pathways into the media and entertainment industries. This is your chance to be an integral part of one of Australia's most dynamic community media organisations.

For more information or position descriptions, please feel free to get in contact with Bryce Ives, our funky and suave General Manager. His email address is: [manager@syn.org.au](mailto:manager@syn.org.au)



## Australian Student Short Film Festival: the "BUD Awards"

“Bud” is the nickname we have given to our filmmaking logo. He or she represents budding filmmakers.

### The 2006 Festival

The “International Bud Awards” will be presented at the RMIT Capitol Theatre in Melbourne on December 1st, 2006. Check out our website and register an expression of interest at:

[www.ausstudentfilm.org.au](http://www.ausstudentfilm.org.au)

The evening will be streamed on the Internet.

Entries close on 14 October this year and there are provisions for longer films, multiple age groups and music video through a competition being run with RuMaD (Education Foundation).

### “We are on the telly”

Thornbury High School has recently won a national ‘Antenna’ award for its show CLASS TV (see page 6 of this issue of *Connect*). It was judged as the best Youth Program on Channel 31.

Class TV, on Thursday at 6.30am has featured excerpts from the Australian Student Short Film Festival awards night of October 14, 2005. Some films were not able to be aired on TV because of lighting issues and not being able to translate easily to digital television viewing. Thornbury High School will be able to provide some tips for making television-ready films in the future.

### Any questions?

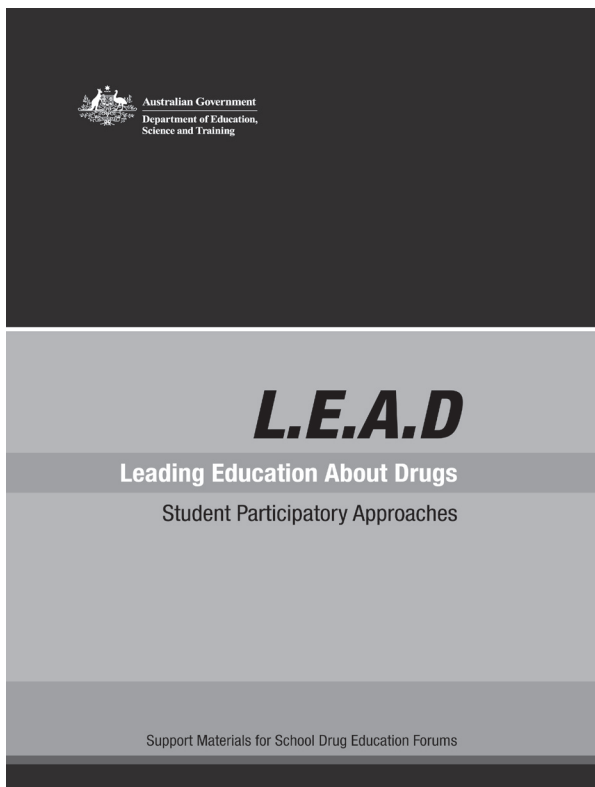
Our website (above) has a contacts page where you can ask questions about the Festival and the RuMAD music video competition.

# L.E.A.D.

## Leading Education About Drugs

### *Student Participatory Approaches*

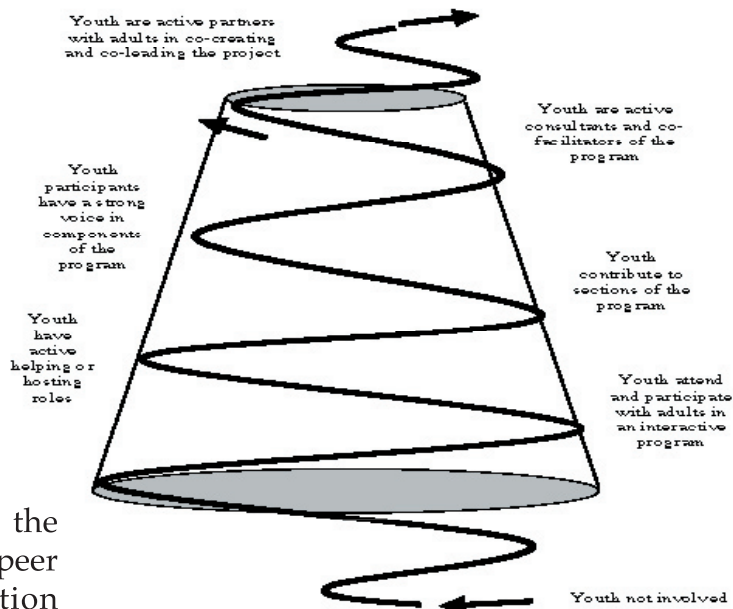
There has been increased attention to the active role that students can play in peer drug education within a health promotion framework. This valuable resource provides support materials for school drug education forums organised and conducted by students.



The materials have been developed by Helen Cahill, Bernadette Murphy and Cheryl Kane from the Australian Youth Research Centre (University of Melbourne) for the Australian Government's Department of Education, Science and Training and have recently been widely distributed to schools throughout Australia. They assist schools to support students to research issues around drug use and to conduct forums for peers, for younger students or for multi-age groups, or public forums for parents, agencies and community members.

Student participatory approaches to the development and implementation of health and wellbeing

### Participatory Approaches



education programs are strongly endorsed within this resource. Active participation - young people as active partners and positive resources rather than simply recipients of the education experience - enhances learning and positive development, and brings young people's skills, expertise, knowledge and perspectives to the development and implementation of programs.

L.E.A.D. includes a section on the guiding principles underlying this approach, a framework for preparing students to lead activities, and information about choosing an agenda. There is then a 'smorgasbord of activities': scenarios, worksheets and activities that can be adopted or adapted to suit the needs of specific schools, students and situations. The resource concludes with sections around the practicalities of organising a forum, conducting an evaluation and providing feedback.

In planning to use such approaches, the resource acknowledges that "some schools will have greater experience in positioning students in peer facilitation or leadership roles. When planning a participatory project, schools should consider the spectrum of peer leadership and participation that is possible and choose a level that is realistic given the school's history, circumstances and current practices..."

It goes on to note that: "When leadership opportunities are only provided for a select few, a hidden message can be sent to students that only the elite can be trusted to or are capable of contributing to others. When participation is broad and inclusive, a very different message is sent. Hence it is important to look for ways to involve as many as possible in leadership opportunities. Teachers and students can work together to decide how best to allocate the different tasks and roles associated with the initiative..."

"This resource is designed to equip teachers to involve students in a variety of roles that provide students with an active voice and role in educating themselves and others. Those schools with a strong commitment to participatory pedagogies and to the involvement of students as leaders will see this work as a logical extension of their current activity."

## New Funding Opportunity at The Foundation for Young Australians

**Launch Pad Grants 2006**  
**Expressions of Interest Now Invited**

**L**aunch Pad Grants is a new funding round being offered by The Foundation for Young Australians.

These are two-stage grants to support community development initiatives designed and delivered locally by young people based on a partnership model. Young people will work with a local community organisation to identify and prioritise local youth needs and develop an innovative and responsive initiative.

The aim of Launch Pad Grants is for young people and organisations to work together to develop and implement a creative idea that results in meaningful change with young people aged 12 to 25 years.

Applications for Launch Pad Grants are now open. Applications close **12th September 2006**. More information, guidelines and expression of interest forms are available at:

[www.youngaustralians.org](http://www.youngaustralians.org)

or by calling 03 9670 5436.

## 'Student Councils & Beyond'

and

## 'Student Action Teams'

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## Doing It Differently: Improving Young People's Engagement with School

**T**hree agencies (Anglicare Victoria, the Brotherhood of St Laurence and the Centre for Adolescent Health) are collaborating in the development of the *Doing It Differently* project that focuses on improving the engagement of young people with school in the Middle Years.

Here there is an outline of the background to the project and discussion about a replicable model for schools and communities to work together. The project aims to produce a 'suite of practical tools' for use by other communities.

The initial paper explores the range of evidence and experience that has informed the project's starting point, summarising the importance of the Middle Years, of engagement and transition, and of the role of schools. It emphasises the importance of 'genuine opportunities for participation' by students, and challenges schools "to move beyond special projects and make such efforts everyday expectations and activities".

It includes a quote from a paper from 1999 (that we'd actually forgotten about): "For students, really 'having a voice' is much more

than being consulted in a research project (where others will analyse their responses and present findings) or even really being involved in the governance of a community (where some students will get to speak 'on their behalf'). It is much more concerned with having a valued and recognised role within that community - where what we think and say is measured against what we do, how we are appreciated and what difference we make." (Holdsworth, R. 1999. *Authentic Student Participation in Action: Some observations on contagious deafness, selective hearing and acquired laryngitis syndrome* at AARE, Melbourne: [www.aare.edu.au/99pap/ho199638.htm](http://www.aare.edu.au/99pap/ho199638.htm)

The report is available from the organisations at: [www.bsl.org.au](http://www.bsl.org.au) or [www.anglicarevic.org.au](http://www.anglicarevic.org.au) or [www.rch.org.au/cah](http://www.rch.org.au/cah)

# Clearinghouse

## Local and Overseas Publications Received



*Connect* receives many publications directly or indirectly relevant to youth and student participation. We can't lend or sell these, but if you want to look at or use them, contact us on:

(03) 9489 9052 or (03) 8344 9637

### Australian:

**2005 Overview: What is Concerning Children and Young People in Australia?** (Kids Help Line/BoysTown, Milton, Qld) 2006

**Change the World for Ten Bucks** (Pilotlight) Hardie Grant Publishing, 2005

**Doing It Differently: Improving Young People's Engagement with School** (Helen Butler *et al*, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Anglicare and Centre for Adolescent Health, Melbourne, Vic) 2005

**Foundation House: School Resources** (Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture, Brunswick, Vic) pamphlet

**Indicators of Community Strength: a framework and evidence** (Victorian Department for Victorian Communities, Melbourne, Vic) June 2006

**LEAD: Leading Education About Drugs: Student Participatory Approaches** (Helen Cahill, Bernadette Murphy and Cheryl Kane, Australian Youth Research Centre) Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training, May 2006

**Preventing Drug Related Harm: A guide for the student welfare coordinator** (Helen Cahill *et al*, Australian Youth Research Centre) Victorian Department of Education and Training/Premier's Drug Prevention Council; 2006

**Research Developments** (ACER, Camberwell, Vic) No 15; Winter 2006

**Teacher Learning Network (TLN) Journal** (TLN, Abbotsford, Vic) Vol 13 No 2; Winter 2006

**YAPRap** (Youth Action and Policy Association, Surry Hills, NSW) Vol 16 Nos 6-8; July-August, 2006

**Youth Studies Australia** (Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies, Hobart, Tas) Vol 25 No 2, June 2006

### International:

**Education Revolution** (AERO, New York, USA) Issue 45 (Vol 18 No 2), Summer 2006

**Personalised Education Now** (Nottingham, UK) Issue 4, Spring/Summer 2006

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## Documents

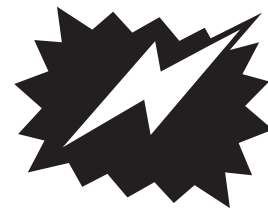


The documents listed in this column may be of general background interest. A photocopy is available for research purposes. The length and cost (to cover copying and postage) is listed. Please order by code number.

A full, computerised index of these documents is now available from *Connect* for \$3; this can be accessed and printed by topic, key-word etc or simply sequentially.

### Code Description/Pages/Cost

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 590 | <b>A Pilot Study to Evaluate the Impact of the Student Participation Aspects of the Citizenship Order on Standards of Education in Secondary Schools</b> (Report to the DfEE; Derry Hannam; April 2001) (37 pp; \$3.70)                  |
| 591 | <b>Student Action Teams: PowerPoint slides of an introduction and workshop</b> (Roger Holdsworth; April 2006) (20 pp; \$2.00)  |
| 592 | <b>Authentic Student Participation in Action: Some Observations on Contagious Institutional Deafness, Selective Hearing and Acquired Laryngitis Syndrome</b> (Roger Holdsworth; AARE Symposium, Melbourne; December 1999) (6 pp; \$1.00) |



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**Connect** has a website:  
<http://www.geocities.com/rogermhold/Connect>

*Slowly growing with information about subscribing, some back issue contents and summaries of Student Councils and Beyond and Student Action Teams.*

**Check in occasionally!**

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**Back issues of Connect** (\$4 single; \$6 double issue). Circle issue/s required: \$ .....

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**1985:** 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36; **1986:** 37/38, 39, 40, 41, 42; **1987:** 43, 44, 45, 46/47, 48; **1988:** 49, 50, 51/52, 53, 54/55; **1989:** 56, 57, 58, 59, 60;  
**1990:** 61, 62, 63, 64, 65/66; **1991:** 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72; **1992:** 73, 74, 75, 76, 77/78; **1993:** 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84; **1994:** 85/86, 87, 88, 89, 90;  
**1995:** 91, 92, 93, 94, 95/96; **1996:** 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102; **1997:** 103, 104, 105, 106/107, 108/109; **1998:** 110, 111, 112, 113, 114;  
**1999:** 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120; **2000:** 121, 122, 123, 124/5, 126; **2001:** 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132; **2002:** 133/4, 135/6, 137, 138;  
**2003:** 139, 140, 141, 142, 143/4; **2004:** 145/6, 147, 148, 149, 150; **2005:** 151, 152, 153, 154/155, 156; **2006:** 157, 158, 159, 160

• **Cross-referenced index to contents** of *Connect* back issues (\$3) \$ .....

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### Miscellaneous Resources:

- **2005!** **Student Councils & Beyond** (\$30; \$25 for *Connect* subscribers) \$ .....
- **NEW!** **Student Action Teams** (\$30; \$25 for *Connect* subscribers) \$ .....
- **Democracy Starts Here! Junior School Councils at Work** (1996)  
Case studies of Primary School SRCs (\$7 or \$12 for two copies) \$ .....
- **Students and Work** - 1985 *Connect* reprint booklet #5 (\$5) \$ .....
- **Youth Radio Cram Guide** - 1985 (\$1 - or FREE with any other order) \$ .....

### Foxfire Resources:

- **Sometimes a Shining Moment** (Wigginton) (\$25) \$ .....
- **Foxfire: 25 Years** (Doubleday) (\$25) \$ .....

### Documents:

- **Photocopies** of the following documents: ..... \$ .....
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