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Foxfire to Visit Australia
July 1990

Elliot Wigginton and one or two students from the Foxfire school-based oral history project in Georgia, USA, will be in Australia in July of this year.

The group has been invited to take part in the Annual Conference of the Society for the Provision of Education in Rural Australia at Albury/Wodonga. As well as workshops at this Conference, it is hoped that 'Wig' and students will be able to offer workshops in various areas of Victoria, as well as a public workshop/seminar/discussion in Melbourne.

A detailed itinerary is still being discussed and developed, and we hope that we are able to bring you a more specific invitation in the next issue of Connect.

Cover:
Primary school students at a JSC Training Day in Preston - November 1989. See details throughout this issue of Connect.
Over the last year, Connect has carried articles about the operation of Junior School Councils in primary schools. Many of these stories reflected the work of School Community Development Officers in the northern suburbs of Melbourne.

This issue of Connect now draws these experiences together, in documenting the workshops or training days held for the primary school students who have been members of JSCs. While providing an overview of the activities in one region of Melbourne in 1988-89, these articles also, hopefully, provide a useful model for the operation of JSC support personnel in other areas.

So this report forms a resource kit from which activities can be extracted, changed and constructed to suit your own needs. We are interested to hear of other ideas you’ve tried and of your reaction to these ideas as you try them.

1990 is a new year. To some extent, that means that the training day activities will cycle back to a basic ‘share and support’ model. But we hope that the first training days of 1990 will also be directed towards documenting what has happened in the schools: why have JSCs? why are they important? what sort of training is valuable? The next issue of Connect will include some stories directly from the JSCs that have been involved in these activities.
JUNIOR SCHOOL COUNCILS

Many primary schools in Victoria have recently set up Junior School Councils. These JSCs have various structures; in some cases, only senior (grade 5 and 6) students are members; in other cases, students are elected from grades across the whole school.

These JSCs also vary considerably in their links with what happens in classrooms. Some are starting to consider issues such as reporting back and getting ideas and direction from other students, the nature of what is learnt and how learning takes place, school rules etc. Others are grappling more with the first steps of becoming established.

Why have such Councils developed? In some cases, the training days outlined below have been catalyst events for schools that had been thinking about forming JSCs - and came along to report their first meeting and gain ideas about 'where to now?'.

The JSCs are partly seen as a 'natural' flow-on from the democratic decision making reflected in the 'senior' School Councils (in Victorian Government schools), representing parents, teachers and the community; they are also partly seen as an extension of the participation of students in secondary schools in Student Representative Councils (SRCs).

More broadly, JSCs reflect an interest in developing student voices in the decision making of schools - in response to Victorian Ministry of Education commitments in this area - through formal as well as more informal classroom based approaches. The JSCs recognise that part of education is concerned with assuring students that it is important that they have views about issues that affect them, and that they will be taken seriously in holding and presenting such views, and considering and understanding the views of others. Schools also report other reasons - the development of confidence and self-esteem and skill development in democratic decision-making processes.

Some of the schools regard it as important that all students be actively involved in such decision making, and hence have adopted measures that rotate representation amongst class members rather than continue with the same representative for the year. In fact, it would seem that such rotation is more generally true in primary schools than it is in secondary schools, where the continuation of a representative role for an individual is regarded (usually) with greater importance.

This rotation, however, has implications for the nature of the training sessions, for one cannot always assume that the students attending have been the ones previously involved. New students, in fact, have different needs - principally for basic skills and for sharing information between schools about 'ways to do it', rather than 'moving on' to the next development stage. These activities fall between these two models.

SCDP NETWORKS

The School Community Development Program within the Victorian Ministry of Education has the following aims:

1. to promote and develop collaborative decision making and more effective school-community relationships;
2. to promote the development of curriculum that ensures the equality of educational outcomes;
3. to promote the active redress of disadvantage and discrimination.

The Program stresses the importance of school groups working together to reflect upon and share experiences and information. This approach has also been apparent in two areas involved in JSC training days that have contributed to this report.

Both the Reservoir-Preston-East Preston grouping and the Northcote-Clifton Hill-Carlton grouping involve several School Community Development Officers collaborating on joint activities. This enables the individual networks to offer activities more efficiently and, more importantly, provides an opportunity for support and critical reflection between members of the teams.

This report has been specifically supported by the Reservoir-Preston-East Preston grouping, and centres on activities in those networks. More details of these activities is available from the SCDOs:

* Margaret Brown, Reservoir Network, C/o Kingsbury Primary School, Maryborough Ave., Kingsbury 3083
* Mark McAuliffe, Preston Network, 76 David St., Preston 3072
to the north of Melbourne - an established working class area, with a variety of cultural backgrounds represented in the schools. There have been around 12 schools represented at these training days, with overall populations of about 100 to 350 students. Each training day has involved between 30 and 80 participants.

**JSC TRAINING DAYS**

Training days for students on Junior School Councils were first offered within the Networks in 1988 as a response to requests from the schools for support. While there had been JSCs in operation in some schools for several years (see particularly *Connect* 35, October/November 1985), teachers within these primary schools saw themselves as forging new paths, in areas for which they had little formal training. They also saw that sharing ideas between students would be valuable, both in gaining ideas and also in encouraging students to reflect on what they were doing through presenting information to others about their own schools.

Over the next two years, understanding of how to structure and implement training sessions developed. The process of planning, implementing and (most importantly) reflecting upon what happened as a small group, was equally essential to our improved understanding.

The training days have all operated as half-day sessions, usually (but not always) at the Waterdale School Support Centre. The timing varied slightly, but it was soon discovered that a session that ran longer than half a day was both too long for the students and too disruptive to the schools.

The five training sessions to date have had the following programs:

1. **August 26, 1988**
   "So we can let each other know what we are doing and so we can work on making our junior councils even better"

   **12.30** Arrive at the Regional Office
   Play a warm-up game

   **12.40** Have lunch

   **1.10** (All together) each school to take a turn in telling the rest of the group about the good things that are happening in your Junior Council at the moment or in your school at the moment

   **1.30** (In small groups) talking about how you got started so that those schools without Junior Councils can pick up some ideas

   **2.00** Break

   **2.15** (In small groups) talking about how you are going; time to work on any problems you might be having

   **2.45** Report back: each small group to tell the rest of the group what they talked about

   **3.00** Finish up with a game

2. **March 9, 1989**
   (same aim as above)

   **9.00** Registration

   **9.15** Welcome and introductions

   **9.20** Warm-up activity

   **9.30** Session 1: Small group discussion
   How does your JSC work? How did it get started? What are the good and bad things? What kinds of issues are you working on and how?

   **10.00** Session 2: Report back
   Each small group to tell the rest of the group what they talked about

   **10.15** Morning tea

   **10.45** Session 3: Student participation - Why it’s important (video)

   **11.15** Session 4: Individual school groups
   Time to work on any new ideas or problems your Junior School Council may be having. If you haven’t already got a Junior School Council, how can you get one started?

   **12.00** Barbecue lunch - provided

   **1.00** Back to school

3. **June 15, 1989**
   "How do meetings work? What are office bearers? How to promote your Junior School Council at your school. How to be a good JSC representative. Making it all happen. Discuss good ideas."

   **9.00** Registration

   **9.25** Welcome and introductions

   **9.30** Warm-up activities

   **9.50** Workshop:
   How to be a Good Representative

   **10.30** Morning Tea
10.45 Workshops:
1. Making It All Happen:
   How to implement decisions made by the JSC
2. How To Make Meetings Work
   Rules, constitution, office bearers
11.15 Role Plays: What's the process?
   - it's all about communication
11.30 Show and Tell:
   eight groups do eight little plays
12.00 Lunch
12.30 Workshop: Selling Your JSC:
   making a poster for your school
1.00 Wind-up activity
1.15 Evaluation
1.30 Back to school

4. September 5, 1989
"More about Meetings; How to Conduct Surveys"
9.00 Video/Registrations
9.30 Warm-up Activities
9.40 Play: "Meeting Procedures"
9.50 Mixed Groups: Brainstorm of good and bad meeting procedures
10.10 Replay and Play; Summary
10.35 Morning tea break
10.50 Surveys: how to design a survey
11.00 Survey design activity
   - design, copy and conduct
11.45 Compile survey results.
   Consider: What types of surveys could be carried out at your school? How does this apply to the curriculum? What should happen to the survey results? What do you do with the information?
12.05 Summary
12.10 Lunch
12.30 Back to school

5. November 15, 1989
"Student democracy: Being a good representative"
(Held at Preston Council Chambers)
8.45 Registration
9.00 Introductory game
9.05 Buzz/discussion groups
9.15 Students introduce panel members
   Panel members speak: "Being a good representative"
9.45 Question time
9.55 Thanks to our visitors
10.00 Morning tea
10.15 Game: Identify the Representatives
10.30 Tour of the Council Chambers
   Questions
11.00 Activity: "The Parliamentary Pack"
12.00 Lunch and back to school

These programs were constructed at meetings of the School Community Development Officers and other consultants following a process of gathering information from previous days, from teachers and from students. This involved:
* reviewing previous suggestions from training days. The evaluation sheet comments from students and teachers were used to assist reflection on the success or otherwise of activities, on the structure and pacing of the days, and on requests for the next stage of training required. Thus, for example, following the screening of the video 'Seen and Heard', many comments requested more information on surveys - when were they appropriate? how do you do a survey? etc.
* discussing possible programs with teachers and students in schools. The SCDOs regularly visited schools in their networks, discussed the previous training days and gathered ideas and reactions relevant to the next one.
* meetings were called for JSC support teachers in the networks to discuss proposals for the next training day. Generally these were not well attended, partly due to being held after school as a 'extra' duty, and partly due to teachers feeling they were adequately consulted and informed informally.
* several planning meetings of SCDOs and consultants were held before each training day. These moved from reviewing the previous day and setting outlines for the next session, to more detailed planning of programs.
* specific tasks were allocated between and following meetings, both in relation to program construction and to implementation of decisions leading up to the training day. For example, it was important to think through the program and list such matters as name tags, provision of drinks etc, then share these tasks among the organisers.
PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

In planning the training programs, the following principles have emerged. These are enlarged upon in the details of the activities given below:

* the program should involve students as actively as possible - even straight information presentation should be as practical and as active as possible;
* students should all be treated as competent and valued people and the program activities should build upon this sense of competence for all students;
* the program activities should encourage students to make presentations to the group as a whole;
* activities should stress cooperation rather than competition and should not allow discrimination on the basis of gender, background etc.

ADVERTISING

The training days were then advertised to all schools in the Networks through mailings and deliveries to JSCs, support teachers and Principals. This advertising usually consisted of an advance flyer ("watch out for more details", together with place and date) and then a more specific leaflet containing the program, lunch details and an invitation to "send along three or four students with your Junior Council Teacher. If you don't have a Junior Council, send some people along anyway to share ideas".

These written invitations were then followed up with telephone calls and personal contact to determine likely numbers (for catering and organisational purposes).

PROGRAM BOOKLET

The program material for each training day was put together in a booklet. This usually contained a face page reflecting the advertising leaflet for the day, the program outline (as above), discussion guidelines, worksheets, information/notes, space for taking notes, evaluation sheet etc.

Students appreciated being able to take something concrete away from the day.
PROGRAM DETAILS

The remainder of this report includes full details of aspects of the programs. The elements have been extracted and grouped under the following areas:

* Games
* Discussion groups: Talking to Tell
* Main Themes
* Evaluation

GAMES

'Warm-up' games are played for a number of reasons - but it is important that there are reasons, and that the particular games are chosen with aims in mind that complement the whole day. In some cases, the actual content of the game can relate directly to the training session (e.g., the AB Pairs game below gets students to argue around situations related to Junior School Councils). In other cases, the games have underlying reasons to do with developing cooperation etc.

We have found that there are some general principles underlying these games:
* they must be fun - and encourage students to relax;
* there must be some point to the game - not just activity for its own sake;
* the game must seek to make everyone welcome and not belittle anyone;
* they need to involve the adults present as well as the students;
* they can be 'daggy', encouraging informality and friendliness.

 Often these training days bring together large numbers of students who have not met each other before. At the start, students stay within 'safe' school-based groups, sitting quite separately around the room. This separation can easily continue into discussion groups, with students unwilling to speak in front of strangers. The over-riding aim of the introductory games is to put students at ease.

There is a clear difference between training days that start with a game and those that don't. The games serve to introduce participants, break barriers between school groups, energise students and encourage discussion. (These games are not only applicable to primary school students - they are necessary and work equally with secondary school students or adults.)

We can identify particular groups of games with similar aims. However these categories can overlap - a particular game might fulfil several of the requirements of these groups or be used in different ways on different occasions. For ease, we have grouped games according to what we regard as their principal aim:

G: 'getting to know you' games; to introduce students to each other and to the whole group;
B: 'breaking down barriers' games: to encourage students to break barriers between groups, against talking in front of strangers etc;
E: 'energising' games: to build the energy of the whole group, especially after a fairly passive session;
C: 'cooperation' games: to build active cooperation between members of the groups.

The following games are by no means a full list of what is possible. They are a few games we have found useful - and we have usually found them somewhere else and adapted them to meet our circumstances. They will need to be further adapted to meet both your needs and the personalities of organisers - they depend very much on the style and energy of those leading the day.

For lists and descriptions of other games, see also the manual published by Life Be In It in Victoria, and The Hitchhiker's Guide to Student Government by Charles Kingston and Les Vozzo (West Wyalong, 1982), which has a large section on games for student groups. (Available from Charles Kingston, 1 Gladstone Street, Bathurst NSW 2795 for $8.50.)

Getting To Know You Games

Pairs Introduce Each Other

A very simple introduction exercise. Ask students to find someone they don't know. When everyone is paired off, they have 5 minutes to find out information about the other person (sometimes you need to say "find out 4 important things") to introduce the other person. Use a "one minute to go" warning. Then ask students around the circle to introduce their partner.
Throwing Ball and Calling Name

A variation of the above aimed at learning names. After everyone has been introduced (or has introduced themselves) someone throws a ball across the circle, naming the person to whom the ball is thrown. This person catches then throws to someone else, calling their name.

Pairing: Find Your Partner

The aim of this game is to discover the hidden name on your back and then to pair up with your partner.
Prepare stickers, each with a single name that is half of a pair eg 'hot' and 'cold', 'Adam' and 'Eve' etc. Make sure that the names are ones that the students of this age group are likely to know. Move round the group and put a single sticker on each person's back (where they can't see it). Make sure that there are exactly the same number of stickers as people present - half a pair looking for a non-existent partner is frustrating!
Students then ask questions of other people in order to discover 'who' they are. The questions must be able to be answered by 'yes' or 'no', eg general questions such as "am I a person?" or specific questions such as "is my name 'cold'?" When students discover who they are, they find their partner and sit down together - this time can also be used to find out some information about their partner.
A variation with older students is to use three-digit numbers - students have to ask questions to discover their number.

Grid

A grid of squares is drawn up (of any size - we used 4 by 4 to give 16 squares) and a question or instruction is put in each square: "who is the tallest person present?"; "who can speak another language?"; "who has a sister called Anna?" Tailor the questions to the age group and to the locality - in Preston, "who can speak another language?" is not a good question because it's too easy.
Students are given 10 minutes to fill in as many squares as possible. The answers are then used to introduce students to the group.

Find Some-one Who

This is a variation on the 'grid' game. The sheet contains a number of instructions: "find someone who has been chairperson of a JSC" etc. Names are filled in and then used to introduce people to the group. We used a variation of this when a group of primary school students from JSCs met a group of secondary school students from SRCs. We had two different coloured sheets, one asking primary students to "find a secondary student who ..." and the other asking secondary students to "find a primary student who ..."

Star-signs

This game gets groups talking about common characteristics.
Start by posing a 'research' question: "I've always thought that there was something in star-signs. People who have the same sign are similar. I'd like to test this out with you." Ask students to get themselves into star-sign groups (mass milling around! - this may need some assistance) and then sit down in small groups. Ask them to discover what they have in common and to be prepared to report this back to the whole group. After about 10 minutes (monitor groups for a feeling about how much time is needed) each group reports on what they have in common.

These groups can then continue as workshop groups for the training day - maybe some adjustment is needed to even up the group sizes.
This works well with a reasonably large group (around 70-100 students). However, do students from all backgrounds use the same star-signs? With a smaller group (20 to 60 students) you can use the seasons in which students were born. Football teams etc are also a possibility.

Breaking Down Barriers Games

AB Pairs: Small role plays
Students are asked to find someone they haven't met before and introduce themselves. (This is sometimes assisted by getting the whole group to walk around silently in different directions until a 'stop' command is given - then find some-
one near them.) Each pair is then to decide who is A and who is B.

The pairs are then assigned roles eg "A is a student on a JSC who has been asked to attend an evening meeting; B is that student's parent who doesn't support the JSC". The pairs are told that they had better talk about this conflict. (Pick a variety of 'conflicts' relevant to the group - some ideas below.) The pairs have about 3 minutes to discuss the issue (monitor the pairs to assess when to stop - usually give a '1 minute more' warning) before they're stopped.

Ask students to remember who they were with, what the argument was about and where they had reached - in situation 1. Then get students to change pairs (again meeting a new person), choose A and B, assign a different situation and roles, and again give 3 minutes to argue the views. This can be repeated a third and fourth time if the program permits - it is ideal to have four situations.

The whole group is then reminded of the four situations: "In number 1 ..." and told that when the number of a situation is called out, they are to find their partner in that situation and resume the argument where it left off. Then call out the numbers at random, with increasing rapidity. This results in rapidly increasing chaos! Choose a time to call a stop to the whole exercise.

Some A:B ideas:
A is a student who wants health foods in the canteen;
B is a student whose parent works for a soft-drink manufacturer, who offers a deal to the JSC for a dispenser in the canteen.
A is a teacher who supports assessment by marks out of 100;
B is a teacher who supports written or descriptive assessment.
A is a student who wants time off from class to attend a JSC or SRC meeting;
B is the classroom teacher.
A is a student member of the JSC/SRC;
B is a student who says that the JSC/SRC is a waste of time.

Wind-Ups

This is a quick exercise that can follow other games. It can build group spirit and break down barriers between students from different schools.

Students start in a large circle holding hands. The circle is broken at one point and one student at the end moves into the centre (still holding hands) with instructions to stand still and not rotate. The other end of the line then walks forward in a circle around the whole group, pulling the line behind. The group winds round the stationary person. This can either be done in a small circle (around 10 people) or as a massive wind-up of the whole group.

A variation is to end the wind-up by having the centre person bob down and draw the line out of the spiral through participants' legs.

Energiser Games

Trains

Students line up in several 'teams' with a single student out front, some distance from and facing the line. This student is the 'engine'; the others are 'carriages'. The engine has to run to the head of the line, pick up the first carriage (hands on waist) and together they run round the line of carriages, round the original engine position, back to the line, pick up the second carriage and so on until the whole train is formed. If the train 'breaks', carriages cannot move by themselves and must stop - the front of the train must then go round the course and pick up the stranded part before proceeding to get more carriages. The game finishes when all trains are complete and back to the engine's starting point.

Oranges/Apples/Pears - musical chairs

All participants (including the organiser) are allocated names of fruit in rotation: 'orange', 'apple', 'pear', 'banana' etc. Everyone except the organiser starts sitting on a chair. Remove any spare chairs. The organiser calls out a fruit and everyone in that category has to change chairs - the organiser sits down in a vacant space. The person without a chair calls out another fruit, and so on - keep it moving fast. The game can be ended whenever you like.

Barn-Yard Animals

All participants are labelled randomly as barnyard animals (cow, sheep, dog, cat, pig, snake etc - choose the number of animals to leave about 8-10 people in a group). You can run through the noises that the animals make, getting people used to making the sounds. Then mix up participants by getting them to walk around for a while. Everyone shuts their eyes (warning about 'no cheating .. no peeking') and the groups are asked to find their members by making the noise of that animal. When they have found someone, they are to link arms and continue to look for the rest of the group.

The animal groups can continue as discussion groups for the rest of the day.
Co-operation Games

Chain-Making

Each group (of about 6-10) is given a pre-prepared bag of materials - computer paper, coloured squares, string, scissors, stapler etc (each bag should be roughly equivalent). They are told that their task is to make a chain that stretches across the room. (Other criteria can be added eg a definition that a 'chain' must be made of loops of paper.) They are told that they can get the materials out of the bag, look at them and talk about how they will make the chain, for 3 minutes, but not start yet. At the end of this time, tell them they can start and they have 10 minutes but ... "Oh, I forgot another rule: no talking from now on. Go!" After 10 minutes (with a 3 minute warning) groups display their chains.

It might be useful to have a discussion afterwards about how the groups worked. Did they find silence difficult? How did they complete the task? Did someone become the 'boss'? Emphasise that the process of completing the chain is more important than the product.

Knots

A group of 8-12 form a circle, standing shoulder to shoulder facing inwards. Hands are stretched in to the centre of the circle. Each hand grasps another across the circle - one hand to one hand. Without letting go, the group then attempts to disentangle itself and reform a circle (or sometimes two circles). Again, the group can talk about the process involved.

Reference is made in many of the above descriptions to using the games as a way of breaking up the large group into smaller discussion or work groups. Many of the programs involve mixed (ie inter-school) groups, either sharing information or discussing topics. These games are useful starters for these small groups, as they establish information about and trust between group members. Care needs to be taken in a break-up to ensure adequate mixing of schools, gender balance, size evenness etc. It is remarkable how often any sort of 'random' numbering around a large group (1,2,3,4,1,2,3,...) still results in small groups of divergent size and characteristics.

It is possible to pre-organise these groups, either by knowing names of participants before the day and allocating them to groups or by allocating them at registration. We found it useful to place colour dots on name tags and then get students from each school to complete name tags in order, so that a distribution of that school was made across groups. It is then possible to talk about 'green group in the right-hand corner' and also to play many of these games using colour as labels.

TALKING TO TELL

High on the priorities for these training days was the sharing of information between students from the various schools, with the intent that:

* ideas would travel from school to school - effective learning from each other;
* students would be encouraged to reflect on their own experiences by telling others about them.

Thus an underlying principle of the discussion sessions was that the discussions should be useful and should be seen to be useful by students. It is important that discussion groups keep notes of the points raised and appoint someone to report back to the whole group. Similarly, information raised in the 'report-back' sessions was also recorded (usually but not always a consultant did this). In some cases, the discussion was directed towards a specific outcome eg "list three important problems you have faced" that will then form the basis for a future workshop. An emphasis was also placed on outcomes of these discussions that could be taken back to schools to encourage discussion with and participation of other students.

Some devices developed to facilitate such directed discussion were:
Report to the Whole Group

Each small group was provided with a topic to define discussion and asked to take notes and report back on this topic. This could be a common topic between all groups or could differ from group to group. It was useful to produce discussion questions and to print these in the booklet, with spaces for written responses. Even when someone was appointed recorder (e.g., on butcher’s paper), it was useful to ask all students to record some points individually.

Here are some notes for workshops and discussion groups on some of the training days:

1. How does your JSC work? E.g., do you have a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer? Do you run the meetings or does the teacher? Are meetings at lunchtime or during class time? Are all grade levels represented? Are there equal numbers of boys and girls? Do you report to School Council?

2. How did your JSC get started? How were your elections held?

3. List some good things about having a JSC. Can you list any problems related to a JSC?

4. What kinds of issues can JSCs tackle?

New ideas for your JSC:
Make a list of important projects you might tackle.
Which ones will you tackle first?
Do you need any money? Where will it come from?
If you don’t have a JSC, how can you get one started?

Write a Report

In this activity, carried out towards the end of one school year, two schools were paired up. This could be a primary-primary or a primary-secondary pairing. There were 2–4 students from each school in a group. The students from each school in the group were given the task of writing a ‘report’ on the other school. Towards this, they had to find out information about what the JSC/SRC had achieved throughout the year, and about the operation of the JSC/SRC. The two schools then split apart to write recommendations for the other school for the next year. A ‘report form’ was provided:

WHAT IS A GOOD REPRESENTATIVE? WHAT IS A BAD REPRESENTATIVE?

SRC / JSC REPORT

PREPARED BY

OF

ACHIEVEMENTS:
(What has the SRC/JSC achieved in 1989?)

(What did the SRC/JSC try to do & not achieve? Why?)

OPERATION:
(How well has the SRC/JSC operated in 1989?)
A.G. How well have meetings gone, etc.?

STRENGTHS

THINGS TO BE IMPROVED

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 1990!
The schools were also asked to indicate on a target:

**How central is your SRC/JSC?**

"how close you think your SRC/JSC is to the centre of the action at your school".

The reports and recommendations were then presented to the other school as part of the report back session.

**Present a Role Play**

This activity was used to focus sharing of information and ideas about how to solve problems faced by (or that could be faced by) JSCs. The groups were again inter-school teams of around 6 students. They were given the following cards outlining situations and asked to discuss what should happen. They were told they had 15 minutes to:

* work out their responses to the situation;
* plan a 3-minute role play showing what happened;
* work out roles.

1. Scene: Junior School Council Meeting.

Issue: Peter, one of the senior school representatives, suggests that the JSC organise a fund-raising disco for the senior students only.

Belinda, a grade 2 representative, asks: "Why can't it be for the whole school?"

Peter says: "Shut up! We don't want the little kids hanging around."

Instructions: Older students in your group play the younger students. The younger students play the senior students.

How does the group solve this argument?

2. Scene: Principal's Office.

Issue: Most kids think Maths is boring! The JSC has discussed the maths program at Times Table Primary School and it sounds like fun.

Mr Al Gebra (the maths teacher) thinks our request is silly.

How do we talk to the Principal about changing our Maths program?


Issue: Three girls, Tina, Tracey and Tanya never come to the JSC meetings. Rocco raises this issue saying, "It's not fair..." etc etc.

What should the JSC do to encourage participation and attendance?

4. Scene: In the school yard: lunchtime.

Issue: Janos and his family have just arrived from Greece. As a new student at the school, he wants to know what JSC stands for.

Some kids are telling him it's a waste of time. Tammy the Terror explains that "JSC stands for Jerks, Sucks and Creeps!"

Two JSC representatives are standing nearby. What do they do?

5. Scene: School Council Meeting.

Issue: Two School Council meetings ago, the adults agreed to the JSC's request to provide a sand-pit for the junior school.

So far... nothing! School Council meets again tonight.

What should the JSC representative(s) say? And how?


Issue: The prep grade representative says the class wants an elephant to play with in the school yard!

Oh boy!! What'll we do?

How does the meeting continue?
7. Scene: Junior School Council Meeting.

Issue: The school's computer freaks have struck a problem!
At lunch time, a small group of boys are busy using the computers. A few girls want a turn, but they're all being used. "This happens all the time," they say.
They bring this issue to the JSC meeting.

What does the JSC do about it?

8. Scene: Home, at the tea table.

Issue: I've just been elected JSC representative for our class! I think it's really important because it gives us kids a say.
I know I'll have to go to meetings and be prepared to do things around the school.

But Dad says student participation is rubbish! "Kids should just concentrate on their work!"

How do I tell my parents that the JSC is an important part of the school?

(quoted from Connect 57, June 1989)

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Using $1000

Groups were told that the SRC/JSC had been given $1000 by an outside group. They were provided with an authentic looking letter:

**Attention: all members of JSCs/SRCs.**
The ... Club of ... has recently completed an audit of all its financial commitments and has discovered an abundance of money in a particular account set aside for youth initiatives.

Consequently, upon discussion at the ... meeting on the 30th October, a recommendation was passed unanimously that all JSCs and SRCs within a 10 kilometre radius of ... be given $1000 each to use in their schools.
The manner in which the money is used must be decided in a democratic way, and students' imagination, creativity and ingenuity should be demonstrated. ... expects a full report from each school which gives an account of the processes and decisions made.

Congratulations on being one of the selected schools and we look forward to receiving your report in the near future.

---

Poster Making

Under the title of "Selling Your JSC", school-based groups were asked to create a useful item to take back to school, while reflecting on the importance and achievements of their JSC. The activity notes in the program booklet said:

**SELLING OUR JUNIOR COUNCIL**
(no, not for money)

We need to tell people what we do:
* so that they support us
* so that they help
* so that they bring their ideas to us
* so that they know we exist

Making posters for noticeboards is a good way.

1. Think about what your Junior Council has done;
2. What is the most important idea you want to tell other students?
3. What are some simple words that describe your Council?
4. Use these ideas and words to make a poster. You will take this poster back to school and put it on a board. Make some more posters back at school.

In a variation of this, groups were given a pile of glossy magazines, scissors and paste, and asked to cut headlines and pictures from the magazines that described their JSC and use these to make a poster.
MAIN THEMES

In addressing the main themes of the training days, we were again careful to make the information provision and subsequent exercises as active as possible. While information had to be provided 'straight' in some circumstances (see the detailed notes included in some of the activities below), we were careful to follow them up quickly with active applications.

Good and Bad Representatives

Students were initially asked to consider what a good and a bad representative was like. The inter-school groups were then given sets of cards on which some descriptions of student representative behaviour were written:

Carlos takes notes in discussions.
Fadi always asks what the class wants before he goes to JSC.
Francesca never has a copy of the minutes of the last meeting.
Greg is a bossy chairperson.
Richard takes time to explain things carefully if people don't understand.
Sam listens carefully.
If Barbara doesn't agree with an idea she always lets you know.
Dharshini is very patient and listens carefully to what the prep. children have to say.
Meagan asks lots of silly questions.
Bruce only speaks when he's asked to.
Toula is all talk, no ACTION.
Georgina always lets you know what she thinks.
Walter makes sure he only goes to every second JSC meeting, so that he won't get bored.
Omar encourages other kids to discuss their ideas.
When Harley is chairperson, he always sticks to the agenda and doesn't allow anything else to be discussed.
Bobby likes to show off.
Paris writes a JSC report for the newsletter.
Amanda makes jokes during meetings.
Cameron likes to discuss ideas with John while the meeting is going on.

The group had to discuss each card and decide whether it described a good or a bad representative. The groups were also to write a further series of statements describing a good or a bad representative.

When the whole group re-convened, large figures marked as 'good representative' and 'bad representative' had been posted at either end of the room. Going round the groups in turn, students were encouraged to pin a card on either figure and, where it wasn't obvious, to explain why they had said they were 'good' or 'bad'. In some cases, students said they couldn't classify the description as one or the other - they understood why a representative behaved like that, or saw good and bad aspects of the one statement, or felt that 'it depended' - and so set up a third 'neither good nor bad' category.

During a break, students pinned up all other cards (the ones we didn't have time to read out) in the appropriate place, and this remained as a display for the rest of the training day. Several schools wrote down the lists under 'good' and 'bad' headings.

Meeting Procedures

Video

An early activity was to show the video 'Seen and Heard'. Even though made with and set in a secondary school, students easily understood the procedures illustrated and followed up the screening with an active discussion on how to bring about change within a school.

Discussion

We started the session on meeting procedures with a straight discussion of information. Students were in school-based groups with their teacher. All participants had discussion notes in their booklet on topics of 'Meetings That Work' and 'Making It Happen'.

etc
Group Leader’s Notes

This session is an introduction to how meetings are run and how action is planned.

It would be useful to start by asking members of your group about how their JSC meetings run at the moment. Who chairs? Who takes notes? What do you need to take notes? (to be able to write?) Perhaps there will be some stories about what can go wrong in a badly run meeting.

Do their meetings have rules? What are some examples?

The information sheet could be introduced here and read through, stopping at points to make sure everyone understands or to see if people can tell stories about the points.

Practice: try making up an agenda for one JSC meeting.

Practice: have a quick debate - someone makes up a motion - you could chair.

In the second half, introduce the 'Making It Happen' sheet by pointing out that it is important to do more than talk about things - doing is essential.

Get suggestions for some made-up topic to talk about: perhaps it’s something that is facing a JSC. Suppose you have made a decision - now you have to act on it. What do you do?

Introduce the action planner on the sheet. Try filling it in together for the chosen example. What are the steps that would have to happen to make the action decided on, happen?

What do we need? Identify the three different types of resources.

If time: introduce the idea of lobbying for support - the last two lines hint at this: you could expand on it.

Time: 15 minutes for each sheet - 1/2 hour in all!

Meetings That Work

A meeting is when you get together to share information and to decide and plan things.

A meeting needs rules so that everyone understands what is happening and so that people work together. You can make these rules up. Make them suit what you want, like:

* only one person can speak at a time;
* you have to ask the chairperson for permission to speak;
* everyone listens when a person talks;
* when a decision is made, it’s a decision of the whole group, even if you didn’t agree with it or vote for it.

An agenda is a list of what you want to talk about at the meeting. It has headings like:

* attendance (who is there)
* apologies (who said they couldn’t be there)
* minutes of the last meeting (so you all know what was decided last time)
* correspondence (letters received)
* reports (from any group or from representatives)

* general business (anything else people want to talk about - but then write the ideas down)
* next meeting (when? where?)

There are particular jobs to do in meetings:

* chairperson:
  makes sure the meeting keeps going; introduces the agenda items, one at a time; makes sure everyone has a chance to speak; calls for votes and decides on the result.

* secretary:
  writes down what happens (the minutes); reminds members about the next meeting; writes letters for the Council.

* treasurer:
  keeps a record of the Council’s money; tells the Council if they can afford to do something.

* everyone:
  turns up on time; asks the Chairperson for permission to speak; keeps to the agenda and
Making It Happen!

Your Junior School Council can have lots of great ideas, but they don't mean much unless you work out how you will make them happen!

PLAN

An action planner is a useful piece of paper - it's a way of writing down the main steps to get something done. Here is one example:

Name of our plan:

What we want to happen:
The steps are:
1. 
2. 
3.
and so on ...

Who will do these steps:
When they will be done:
What we will need:
Who will help us:
How we will know what happened:

RESOURCES

What do we need to make something happen? What do we have already?
These are our resources:
* physical resources (things)
* financial resources (money)
* human resources (people)

WORK OUT WHO CAN SUPPORT YOU. VISIT THEM, CONVINCE THEM OF WHAT YOU WANT TO DO AND ASK FOR THEIR HELP.

This information was discussed for about half an hour (between two activity sessions) and was followed up at the next training day by a more active approach - for which these notes were made available again.

Play

For the training day following the above, a role play was developed by the School Community Development Officers and consultants for a follow-up session on meeting procedures.

The play was intended to provide material for discussion of good and bad meeting procedures. The play was acted out initially by consultants, pretty much as written here (but with some enthusiastic improvisation). Students then broke into small groups to write lists of the good and bad things they had seen happening. These were reported back and accumulated on a board.

The play was then repeated, but with students calling out 'STOP' when bad practices were seen and suggesting changes in behaviour. This was hard to do, so students were gradually called in to replace or advise characters and change their role. The 'Conclusion' was written as a possible outline for an alternative end to the session.
This was then followed by a discussion
in small groups about meeting procedures
and rules, and then by a discussion of
action plans.

Students ranged from grade 3 to grade 6.
In one session, it was their first
training day, in another, it was their
third.

There’s nothing absolutely fixed about
the approach – we’re still trying out
training ideas, reflecting on them and
learning how to run such sessions.

MUCKING ABOUT AT THE MEETING

Characters:

Interruptioner, Bossy, Bumbler, Secretary,
Chairperson, Good JSC Rep., Latecomer,
Guest Speaker.

The audience has a set of minutes from
the last meeting and an agenda for this
meeting:

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of last meeting.
4. Business arising
5. Correspondence
6. General Business
   (a) Competitive Sport: Guest
   (b) School Camps
   (c) Other business
7. Next meeting

Everyone’s talking and mucking about.

GOOD REP: Look, the bell’s gonna go
in a minute. Shouldn’t we start? We’re 20
minutes late. And we should start.

CHAIR: Today’s main topics are
‘Competitive Sport’ and
‘School Camps’.

INTERRUPTER: Angela Dimitriopoulos
nearly got killed on the
school crossing last night.
My grade wants to talk
about the school crossing.

GOOD REP: I think we should put
that under General Busi-
ness. Let’s stick to the
Agenda.

BUMBLER: Agenda? Agenda? I
haven’t got a copy of the
Minutes or the Agenda!

BOSSY: My Aunt’s got a holiday
farm at Shepparton where
we can go for our school
camp.

GOOD REP: But my grade (and the
other grade 2/3) all
said they wanted a
school camp down by the
beach.

MINUTES
Jr. School Council
Tuesday 9th Aug

Attendance: Lino, Margaret, Roger, Elise, Mark, Les

Apologies: Andrew (on the other side?)

Minutes of the last meeting: Accepted as an accurate record.

Business arising: Lino to see Principal about buying a piano.

Correspondence:

(a) Letter from Another CCA flies into a
    fund raising effort (see Andrew)

(b) Letter to the Mayor thanking her for
    providing JSC’s budget.

General Business:

(1) Disc. - Lino’s report
(2) Looks on Track Steven

Agreed; “That Elise speak to the principal
about buying a piano in her free time.”

(3) Competitive Sport

Agreed; “That boys require a guest speaker
to discuss the advantages and
disadvantages of competitive sport
at our next JSC meeting.”

Next Meeting: Tuesday 5th September!

AGENDA
Jr. School Council
Tuesday 9th Sept.

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of last meeting
4. Business Arising
5. Correspondence
6. General Business
   (a) Competitive Sport: Guest Speaker
   (b) School Camps
   (c) Other business
7. Next Meeting

Tuesday 10th October
BOSSY: The grade 2/3!! What would they know!? They probably just want to go swimming all the time!

BUMBLER: (to guest) What does your class think?

GUEST: I'm not a teacher. I've been invited here to talk about competitive sport.

BUMBLER: Oh, that's good. If we had better swimmers we could probably win the swimming sports.

SECRETARY: Should I write that in the minutes?

BOSSY: Haven't you been writing all this down? We've decided all school camps should be at my Aunt's farm. Write that down!

LATECOMER enters with noisy apologies, but makes no other contribution to the rest of the meeting.

CHAIR: Order! Order! Today we're also talking about 'Competitive Sport'.

GOOD REP: Didn't we say something about that at the last meeting? It should be in the minutes.

CHAIR: That's right. We've got the minutes of the last meeting ... here ... somewhere ... Has everyone got a copy?

BUMBLER: Coffee? ... Coffee? No thanks. Could I have an orange juice? And a piece of chocolate cake?

GOOD REP: Here it is! The minutes of the last meeting have recorded a motion which says: 'That the Junior School Council invite a guest speaker to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Competitive Sport'.

INTERRUPTER: That car nearly knocked Angela right off her feet! Great big red Commodore it was! But she's alright. She's at school today.

SECRETARY: Should I put that in the minutes?

GOOD REP: Isn't that why we have minutes? ... To keep a record of what's going on at the meeting?

BOSSY: Well, have you written down that all future school camps will be held at my Aunt's horse-riding farm in Shepparton? Go on ... write that down!

CHAIR: Did we really decide that? Who put the motion?

BOSSY: Oh, alright then! I move that we go to my Aunt's farm for our school camps. Alright? OK? ... Carried.

The meeting has descended into complete chaos at this point, with everyone talking together, about completely different subjects.

BUMBLER: So are we going to hold the school sports at your Aunt's farm?

INTERRUPTER: My father drives a red Commodore, but he wasn't anywhere near that school crossing. He works in the city!

SECRETARY: Should I write that in the minutes?

BUMBLER: Were we going to have a coffee or orange juice or something?

BOSSY: Horse-riding is absolutely the best sport!

GOOD REP: I can't stand it any more! Meetings are a complete waste of time! (storms out of room)

THE GOOD MEETING

At the end of this first run through, the students are divided into small groups and asked to brainstorm around 'Good Meeting Procedures Versus Bad Meeting Procedures' - they have to decide why the play represents poor meeting practice and where they will interrupt the replay.

The previous meeting is then replayed, much as it is written. However, the audience is encouraged to interrupt and make suggestions about how things should be proceeding. Ideally, students will step into the meeting, become part of it and alter the direction being taken.
CONCLUSION

In order that the play can be drawn to a conclusion, someone should be aware of a possible scenario:

CHAIR: If the Committee agrees, I'd like to suggest that we change the order of the Agenda. First of all, let's deal with the question of school camps. Bossy, do you have a motion you'd like to put to the meeting?

BOSSY: I move that all school camps be held at my Aunt's farm. Let's vote!

CHAIR: Don't you want to discuss it?

GOOD REP: It would be cheaper at the beach.

INTERRUPTER: It's too far to drive to Shepparton.

BOSSY: Come on. Let's vote!

CHAIR: Great confusion: the vote is lost.

CHAIR: The vote is lost. I suggest we really need more information and we should discuss this again next week. For that:

1. Bossy, will you provide us with details of how much it costs at your Aunt's farm?
2. Good Rep, will you find out about one or two beach camps?
3. Any other suggestions?

Now, let's move to the next item on the Agenda: 'Competitive Sport', and welcome our guest speaker.

(from Connect 59)

Surveys

The session on 'how to conduct surveys' grew out of an earlier training day in which the video 'Seen and Heard' was shown. Students and teachers indicated an interest to learn how to survey students (and others) on school issues. The following was a first attempt to meet that request - of all these activities, this one probably still needs most modification.

Students worked in school-based groups with their support teacher, on the expectation that much of this material would need to be followed up back at school. Each group was given some general notes in their booklet on 'Finding Out Information' (see below) and the teacher read through these notes with the group. (It was expected that some of the material on 'Ways to Show Results' would only be dealt with at school.)

The groups were each given a different topic and asked to choose an approach to finding out information about views of this topic:

* What food should be sold at the canteen?
  Perhaps make a list of possible food.

* It is proposed that a football club be invited to the school to offer a football clinic. Should this happen? Only one club should be invited. If so, which one?

* There can only be one school camp this year. Which grade level should be allowed to go?

* Someone has proposed that a recycling depot be set up at the school. What items should be recycled - paper, glass, plastic, metals?

* The school is thinking about teaching a language - but which one? Greek, Italian, Japanese, French and Spanish have all been suggested.

Each group then discussed how they would find out information - what question/s they would ask, the form of the question etc. Students were to work in pairs and then accumulate individual results at the end to look at their group's results. They had 15 minutes to design and write up a simple survey form; 10 minutes was allowed for copying these forms; 20 minutes to undertake the survey. The people to be asked included the other students, teachers and consultants. We had also arranged that other consultants and personnel in the Support Centre would be available to be surveyed if appropriate. The groups then reassembled to combine and present results - 20 minutes.

The particular value of the exercise was in exposing (for students as well as ourselves) other considerations involved in carrying out surveys. How do you ensure that a person isn't asked several times by different students in the one group? What happens if the questions aren't exactly the same? What do we mean by 'leading questions'? Topics like these emerged naturally from discussing the exercise. The whole topic needed more time than we were able to give it.
Finding Out Information

We need to find out information to help us make better decisions and to help us convince others about what should happen.

What do students think should happen? How about parents, teachers etc? How many support this ... or that?

There are many ways of finding out this information. The best way depends on:

* what you want to know
* how you have to convince others
* how much time you have
* how many people you have to find out information from.

If there's a fairly small number of people, the best way to find anything out is just to talk with them and write down what they say.

With more people, where you have only a little time, there are several different types of 'surveys' - see below. You can use these to find out information from everyone.

With lots of people, where you don't even have enough time to give each person a survey, you can choose some of the people (a sample). But be careful you don't just choose your friends. The easiest way is to make a list of everyone possible (perhaps the school roll) and then pick every tenth person on the list and ask them.

But be careful! It is easy to make the survey come out to show anything you want, by picking the wrong question, by picking just one group to answer questions, by having the questions suggest an answer etc.

Some Ways To Do Surveys

Some rules first:

1. Think carefully about what you really want to find out.
2. The question should be simple - only one idea in a question.
3. The question should be direct and clear; use language everyone understands.
4. Make sure the survey is easy to fill in - clearly set out.
5. Keep the survey short - not too many questions.
6. Test the questions out on some people before you start - does everyone understand all the questions? Do they mean what you want them to mean? Can you use the answers you get?

7. Before you start, think about how you will show the results afterwards.

Some Types of Surveys (there are lots more!):

A. Open-Ended Questions

The person gives an answer to a question in their own words.

Example: "What did you like best about the meeting?"

+: easy to write questions; people can say what they really think.
-: Takes more time to answer; some people have difficulty writing or deciding what they want; hard to add up.

B. Sentence Completion

The person completes a sentence that you give them.

Example: "In this JSC meeting, I was pleased by ......."

+: and -: same as for A.

C. Checklist

The person is asked to tick things agreed with.

Example: "In the meeting, I have

[ ] taken the minutes
[ ] chaired a meeting
[ ] moved a motion
etc"

+: easy to answer; easy to add
-: people have to choose from just the things you put down in the list.

D. Ranking

The person is asked to put some things in order from first to last.

Example: "Choose which sport you want to play - from 1 to 4:

[ ] basketball
[ ] running
[ ] cricket
[ ] archery etc"

+: and -: same as for C.
E. Likert Scale or Agree–Disagree
This can help you to show how much people agree or disagree with a statement. There are several different ways to do it:

2-choices: true–false; right–wrong; yes–no; agree–disagree etc.

3-choices: true–uncertain–false; yes–uncertain–no; often–sometimes–never etc.


Example: "The Principal is a nice person:
SA [ ] A [ ] U [ ] D [ ] SD [ ]
+ and –: similar to C.

Ways to Show Results
1. You can write down what people said, putting similar statements together or using headings (types A and B).

2. You can make a chart showing how many people chose each answer (types C, D and E):
   (a) straight numbers of people:
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) a score eg 5 for strongly agree; 4 for agree; 3 for uncertain etc.

students: 138
parents: 118
teachers: 57

Then each total should be divided by how many people were in each group:
students: 138/39 = 3.5
parents: 118/31 = 3.8
teachers: 57/23 = 2.5

This shows where each group is on the line.

(c) as a percentage:

SA A U D SD
students 38% 21% 8% 23% 10%
parents 26% 39% 29% 3% 3%
teachers 9% 9% 39% 9% 35%

3. You can draw a graph or picture to show how many chose each answer (types C, D and E):
   (a) a bar graph:

   (b) a pie chart:

Panel Introduction
In the final training day for 1989, several "representatives" from different areas were to form a panel: a representative from a Federal MP's office; a State MP; the local Mayor; a parent representative on a primary school School Council; a student representative from an SRC at a nearby secondary school (who was also a representative on the regional student network). Rather than merely name these representatives and have them speak, smaller inter-school groups of students ('buzz groups') met with each representative first and asked them questions about their roles. We had provided starter questions from which the buzz groups soon diverged:

1. What is your job now?
2. How did you get the job? (Were you elected or appointed?)
3. Do you work full-time or part-time?
4. Are you paid to do the job?
5. Is it hard?
6. Why is your job important?
7. Did you always want to do the job?
8. Did you have Junior School Council when you went to school?

Each group was also asked to choose someone to introduce the guest speaker to the whole group.
After 10 minutes, the guests formed the panel and were individually introduced by a student from their buzz group, who told the whole group what sorts of things the representative did. The guest then spoke briefly about 'being a good representative'. After all guests had been introduced and had spoken, there was a brief general question time.

(A further account of this exercise is found in the description of this training day by students from Gowerville Primary School in Connect 60, December 1989.)

'Who's the Representative?' Game

This activity was a follow-on from the above. The group sat in a semi-circle around a large board to which were pinned photographs of representatives of Federal, State and Local Government as well as international figures. In the centre of the group were two piles of labels, face down. A student was chosen to pick a label from the first pile - names of the representatives. The student then had to pin the label under the appropriate photo. If the student couldn't identify the representative or someone else in the group felt that the label had been incorrectly placed, they could challenge and put it else-where.

The student then chose the next student to choose a label and so on - towards the end, some earlier challenges became resolved as the remaining photos became fewer.

If time, the second pile of labels contains role statements for the representatives to be similarly matched with photographs and names.

The students were then all given a sheet containing photocopies of the photographs and the names and roles of the representatives - these were to be taken back to school to be matched up as a revision exercise.
EVALUATION

Each training day concluded with an opportunity for students and teachers to provide a formal evaluation of the day and of their future needs. These evaluation sheets were included in the day's booklet, and were either completed individually or in school-based groups (with a single response being handed in). Some examples of evaluation questions were:

A. * I found today ...
   * Today could have been improved if ...

B. 1. What things have you liked about today's program?
   2. What things could have been better?
   3. What things did you find hard to understand?
   4. What action will you take when you get back to school to 'make it all happen'?

C. Students:
   1. How many of these programs have you attended this year?
   2. Can you describe how they have developed? What's the link?
   3. What have you enjoyed most?
   4. Any suggestions for next year?

Teachers:
   1. Have these training days been helpful to you? How?
   2. Have you faced issues we have not dealt with?
   3. Will you be the teacher representative next year?
   4. What should we tackle in 1990?

Responses

Without providing a detailed evaluation at this point, the following are some fairly typical responses from these sheets:

Students:
Liked: "looking at other people's problems" - "I liked doing the play etc" - "getting to know other JSC members".
Suggestions for improvement: "less talking and more things to do that are fun, like today: it was really fun. Thank you."
Proposed action: "Go to my classroom and work my lungs out" - "Go and see the senior school council and keep persisting".
The links: "the link is talking about decision making and Junior School Council and COOPERATION!"

School group:
Liked: "Opinions from other schools - to see what other schools have done; the activities were fun; the people who ran it were nice and friendly; meeting other people; cooperative learning."
Improvements: "We think it would have been better if you could have been with at least one person you knew in all the groups."

Teachers:
How helpful: "The children became more aware of their roles and gained extra interest which enabled me to keep the JSC enthusiastic." - "They've brought up issues that I've been able to think about and share with the children at the sessions and then use back at school." - "By giving status and recognition to JSC representatives; by providing ideas and strategies for JSC to use as representatives; by providing a forum for interaction between schools." - "In-services have been very informative and enjoyable both to children and teachers. It has made the children more aware of how to go about organising activities (functions) and the smooth running of the JSC throughout the year." - "Reinforced, expanded and elaborated what I've attempted to do; sharing ideas with other schools has helped our JSC immensely."

Ideas for 1990: "Running of meetings; roles of JSC" - "Fund-raising - how do we go about it without relying on the teachers?" - "Collaborative decision making; mutual benefits - win/win decision making; an awareness of local school issues" - "an introduction of new JSC members, roles and responsibilities, aims/purpose of JSC; guidelines in tackling issues, good and bad meetings; how to get issues and ideas accepted by the Principal, School Council and other bodies within the school and community." - "Types of issues which JSC could tackle; we sometimes are 'very dry' on ideas; because we will have new reps, much will have to be repeated; JSC is a constant educational process - cyclical, not just on-going."

Next Issue

The training days for JSC members continue in 1990. The first challenge for the primary school students and their teachers who take part will be to prepare statements about the operation of their JSCs: why have Councils? what do they aim to do? how do they operate? what have they achieved? The answers to these questions will form part 2 of this report - in the next issue of Connect.
A RECYCLING VIDEO
WITH A DIFFERENCE

Need help in spreading the ozone message to your school and community? Want to learn how to run a campaign to get your ideas for improving the local environment across to others?

You need to see the 27 minute documentary:

IT`S NOT ALL RUBBISH!

This documentary was produced by Ivan Gaal, TV Ed Productions, Victorian Ministry of Education, and Dallas Kinnear of the Australian Conservation Foundation, with the cooperation and support of the recycling industry.

The program shows you how to organise an action campaign in your school and/or community to improve your local environment. The video illustrates this process by following a group of high school students who decide to do something about the waste problem in their school. They realise that, to be effective, they have to organise themselves. Following business planning processes, they develop a campaign to:

1. investigate the school's waste problem and possible solutions;
2. 'sell' the idea of recycling to their school community;
3. set up, launch and run a recycling project in their school.

The video is a blueprint for you if you want to take democratic action to change your environment for the better. Teacher support materials suggest steps to take in planning any local action campaign. Ways of encouraging people to become allies with you in seeking solutions to the problem rather than opposing change are suggested.

The video is available, with teacher support materials "Steps in Planning an Action Campaign" for $20 from the Education Shop (see address below).

SEEN AND HEARD

Seen and Heard is a 17-minute video produced in 1985 by the Victorian Participation and Equity Program. It shows how a group of secondary school students go about achieving changes within their school. The video was written in collaboration with a group of Melbourne students who play the lead roles in the drama.

Seen and Heard is a valuable resource for beginning discussion about the process of change, meeting procedures, information collection and so on.

The video is available for $10 from the Education Shop.

WRITING FOR REAL

A group of year 10 English students from Mt Clear Technical High School (Ballarat) regularly work with local residents at the Queen Elizabeth Geriatric Centre. The students produce a monthly newsletter for the residents of the Centre. They work in small groups on site for a short period each week to collect and collate the information prior to producing and distributing the newsletter. The Residents Times would not exist without the students' efforts.

This video, produced by Ivan Gaal, is about the way in which a group of students work with a local organisation to develop their understanding of a work place, how they explore the relationships between people in that work place and how school-based learning is applied to a practical setting. It is useful for years 9-12 English, Australian Studies or Community Involvement, and is available for sale for $10 from the Education Shop.

The Education Shop
Education Ministry
1st floor, 525 Collins Street
Melbourne 3000
Ph: (03) 628.2124
NEW S.C.I.P. COORDINATOR

Deborah Nelson has taken over from Heather Bane as coordinator of the Victorian School Community Involvement Program. Welcome to Deborah. She can be contacted at the Australian Red Cross Society - Victorian Division, 171 City Rd., South Melbourne 3205. Ph: (03) 616.9999.

AERO-GRAMME

Jerry Mintz has begun publishing a small newsletter Aero-Gramme from the Alternative Education Resource Organisation. The newsletter carries information on a variety of alternative education initiatives in the USA and elsewhere.

Aero-Gramme relies on whatever financial contribution you can afford, but more on your interest and input. Contact Jerry at 417 Roslyn Road, Roslyn Heights, NY 11577 USA.

Friends of Connect:

By subscribing at a higher level, the following have helped keep Connect going. We gratefully acknowledge receipt of the following financial contributions since the last issue of Connect:

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Victorian Association of Youth in Communities Fitzroy, Vic
Diane McCreall Shepparton, Vic
Leanne Butson Keilor, Vic

REQUESTS

I am writing to ask for information on teaching possibilities in Australia.

My interest in different cultures led me to study anthropology and biology as an undergraduate at Colorado College, spending a semester of this time studying in Eastern Africa. Upon completion of my Bachelor of Arts in June of 1988, I took a summer internship position at an environmental centre in Aspen, Colorado. Feeling the need to strengthen and broaden my teaching skills, I moved up to Seattle, Washington in the fall. I spent the year in the Northwest teaching and getting certified as a Montessori Teacher. Presently, I am back in Colorado, finishing up my Masters degree in Elementary Education at Colorado College.

From the myriad of teaching environments I have worked and studied in, I have found that 'hands on', experiential education is extremely important for the mental and physical development of a child. Alternative education that is child centred/oriented will be more relevant as their life progresses. Children need to be encouraged to think and figure things out for themselves. Through supportive, stimulating, thoughtfully selected experiences children learn to share feelings, gain respect for their own and each other's individual interests and realise that education has meaningful application in their everyday lives.

My desire to teach and live in Australia is great. I would appreciate any information about teaching in alternative Australian schools.

Anne Elizabeth Petersen
712 N Wahsatch
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903 USA

My wife and I, along with our two daughters, will be on sabbatical from July 1990 to June 1991 and intend to include Australia in our travels. The purpose of our sabbatical is to visit alternative schools in several countries, and possibly spend a term or semester at one of them.

I am enclosing a brochure on the Arthur Morgan School (where Ron teaches - available from CONNECT: RH) and would appreciate names and addresses of some schools in Australia where it would be appropriate for us to arrange a visit.

Ron Wetteroth
Arthur Morgan School
1901 Hannah Branch Rd., Burnsville
North Carolina 28714 USA
Local & 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) 489.9052:

AUSTRALIAN STUDENT PUBLICATIONS:
- Otway Light - Old Times (Lavers Hill, V) - 10th Anniversary collection, 1989.

OVERSEAS STUDENT PUBLICATIONS:
- Noun (Burlington, Vermont, USA) Vol 12 No 1, Summer 1989.

OTHER SOURCES:
- Aero-Gramme (Alternative Education Resource Organisation, NY, USA) Nov '89.
- Options (Youth Bureau, Canberra, ACT) November/December 1989; January 1990
- Northern Territory Parent (NTCOGSO, NT) Vol 9 No 2 December 1989.
- NIE Update (ANPA, USA) Vol 16 No 1 January 1990.

Articles:
The articles listed in this column are of general background value or otherwise not appropriate for reproducing in the columns of Connect. However, they are available on photocopy for research purposes. The length and cost (copying and postage) are listed. Please order by code number. (A fuller listing is available in Connect 46/47 - to October 1987.)

Code Description/Pages/Cost
336 Child Poverty and Education, paper by R W Connell and V White. (13 pp; $1.30)
337 Annual Report 1989, Youth Research Centre (Vic). (5 pp; 60c)
Materials Order Form

Connect has some material available for sale. Use this form to order:

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