

Connect

supporting student participation

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Students Showing How They Make a Difference to School and Community Issues

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Why does Connect exist?

Connect has been
published bi-monthly since 1979.

It aims to:

- document student participation approaches and initiatives;
- support reflective practices;
- develop and share resources.

Cover:

Photographs on the cover and through the
ruMaD? article (pages 3 to 8) from ruMaD?

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This Issue:

So another year in *Connect's*
on-going life draws to a close.
Thank you to all those who shared
their experiences and resources with
us - it's been a fruitful journey that has
illuminated and extended practices.



I've been particularly taken with the possibilities inherent in Student Action Team approaches at a local level, particularly where a group of schools form a cluster that shares resources and challenges. I'm currently working directly on such approaches with two clusters in Melbourne - one in the Darebin area and one in the Manningham area. These Student Action Teams are working in 2005-6 around issues of the environment and of values, respectively. We're learning a lot, both about the possibilities and the pitfalls of these Action Teams. The Darebin cluster plans to put together a detailed report - the overall approach, how it operates within the cluster, how it happens within schools, what teachers do within classes - and *Connect* will publish this early in 2006. We hope you will be interested; if you could let us know if you'd be interested to purchase copies, that would help us determine the print run.

The Student Action Teams approach has also been enthusiastically adopted in South Australia, with the 'How To' Manual originally produced for the Victorian Department of Education and Training (and still available on line on the *Sofweb* site) being adapted and reprinted for South Australian schools. I was involved in some seminars in Adelaide in 2004 and 2005 around the 'Stepping Beyond Student Councils' concept (associated with the *Student Councils and Beyond* book from *Connect* - see elsewhere in this issue), that also introduced some ideas about Student Action Teams, and there are two further and more detailed forums being planned for Adelaide and Port Augusta for next March.

If other areas of Australia are interested to organise local forums or seminars on such approaches - either on 'going beyond' the limitations of traditional and often tokenistic Student Councils, or on Student Action Team ideas and implementation - I would be very interested to be involved. This would involve some local partner willing and able to contact schools, book a location, advertise an event and take registrations. Let me know.

Connect wishes you all a safe and productive Christmas/New Year/Summer season: holidays if you're having some, reading if you're catching up, writing and documenting if you're providing yourself some time to reflect. Our commitment to sharing all those interesting and positive practice in active student participation remains undimmed, and we'll be back in 2006 encouraging you, as always, to keep writing and sharing **your** stories about **your** practice.

Roger Holdsworth

NEXT ISSUE: #157: February 2006

Deadline for material: end of January 2006

Melbourne Town Hall; Wednesday 19 October, 2005



Youth Ambassadors Conference

What is ruMAD?

ruMAD? is an innovative education model which allows young people to drive change in their schools and community. Since 2001 it has grown and provided best practice examples of student citizenship in the community. Over 250 schools and 70,000 students in Victoria have participated in the program in some way.

The program continues to spark interest with new education policy priorities in all states. It is a well-recognised program with benchmark status in education and philanthropic circles.

In the next five years, ruMAD? wants to develop this burgeoning movement of philanthropy in young people whilst providing opportunities for students to become leaders in their communities.

Success to Date

- In 2004, around 50,000 young people at 256 Victorian schools took up the challenge of changemaking in their communities.
- 116 ruMAD? Youth Ambassadors went on to spread the word to other young people about how they can make a difference.
- On MAD Day 2005, 87 Victorian schools, 24 Queensland schools and a small number of schools from New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia began the process of changemaking.
- Seven student foundations have been established.

Intentions of the Youth Ambassadors Conference

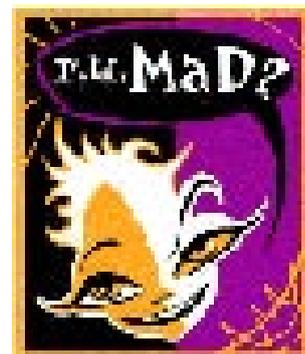


- For the Youth Ambassadors to share their ideas and recognise their successes with fellow Youth Ambassadors
- To create Youth Ambassador networks between students and schools giving greater strength to MAD projects
- To build empowering links and partnerships between schools
- To continue to develop leadership and presentation skills of students
- To inspire students into continue taking action that makes a difference
- To give students the chance to have a voice and to build a world **they** love

Reports from the 2005 Conference

The following speeches and reports are selected from the **2005 ruMAD? Youth Ambassadors Conference**. Strong themes of action around environmental and social justice issues emerged in these reports and some brief examples are provided to illustrate each of these. However, there were many other initiatives taken by students in primary and secondary schools, as they responded to their knowledge of community needs and designed approaches to 'make a difference' within their communities, and a few examples are selected to indicate this range.

But these are just some of the initiatives taken within this program, and all these reports are available from the ruMAD? Program (see contact at the end of this report).



Theme for Action: The Environment

Kinglake Kids Konnect:

Middle Kinglake Primary School

Kinglake is set in a rural area and one of its attractions is the National Park. This year we have worked with people from the National Park, Greening Australia and Bollygum Park to help connect local young people to our local environment.

Before we tell you about this year's projects we'd like to quickly tell you about how we first got started. **Kinglake Kids Konnect** came about three years ago because we were concerned about resources available to local young people; in fact we felt we were not getting our fair share of the portable skate ramp time. We wrote letters and saw a fairer timetable for the ramp put in place.

Since then we have gathered data on local young people and been involved in many activities that aim to:

- Connect young people to local activities and our environment;
- Improve local resources and our environment;
- Promote activities for young people; and
- Encourage local young people to get involved and make a difference.

Through working in our community with local groups, writing letters, gathering information, inviting people to join in and reporting projects to the community, we have seen first-hand that we **can** make a difference.

In 2005 our ruMAD projects have focused on connecting our local young people to our local environment. This year, as Youth Ambassadors, we invited six schools in our area to make a difference with us.

Our three main projects this year are:

Building Phascogale nesting boxes

What's a Phascogale? we hear you ask.

Phascogales or Tuans are carnivorous marsupials. They eat insects, small animals and birds. An interesting fact we learnt was that the male Phascogales spend so much energy on competing for a mate that they die at the end of their first breeding season. Funnily enough, some of the boys in our grade said they would never want to be a Phascogale.

Phascogales need hollows to nest in. Kinglake has bush that is not very old and tree hollows only appear in older trees. This means that Phascogales need a little help. The nesting boxes give them a place to stay and raise their young.

We marked out and sawed the wood. A parent routed the edges, and then we screwed the pieces together. Inside the boxes we have written our own messages to the Phascogales. Once they have been put in place up trees, we will work with rangers during the monitoring program, which involves taking DNA samples of the Phascogales.

A Lyrebird Census

Kinglake has lots of wildlife. Every year the National Park conducts a Lyrebird survey, and this year some of us participated in the census. We invited other schools to join in. The National Park offered to put on a breakfast, but the only catch was a 6 am start! About 40 of us headed off in small groups to different points in the park. We had to be in position before sunrise when the male birds start calling.

The night before we had been trained to recognise a Lyrebird call and how to use a compass and record the direction of each call. Some of us were worried about identifying the call correctly but once they started we knew they were Lyrebirds instantly. It was amazing to hear the calls; when one would finish another would start. We recorded the time and direction of each call.

Later that day two rangers came to school with a laptop, with a special program to enter the data on. The data was entered and it gave us a map of the park. Our data showed that there was a new Lyrebird living in the area of the park we were working in.

We are hoping to make this an annual event. Since then a small group of students went to Healesville Sanctuary to interview Kevin Mason, an expert on lyrebirds. There are plans to make a community book on lyrebirds. It is great to hear that some students have heard the birds at home now that they know what to listen for.

Tree Planting at Bollygum Park

Bollygum Park is a new park in Kinglake. The Bollygum Park committee have worked very hard to get funding and land for the park. We have looked at the master plan and surveyed the park as it is now. We realised that some locals didn't know where the new park was.

We received money from Greening Australia to buy trees to plant on the block of land. We have invited five other schools to come along and plant trees and do other activities, and we are expecting 120 students on the day. We want people to learn more about the park and get many local youth involved and making a difference to their local environment.

This year we have particularly enjoyed doing woodwork when building the boxes and visiting Bollygum Park. This year we have made a difference by

- Monitoring our local environment and wildlife. This data is being used by local organisations such as the National Park;
- Improving our local environment, for example tree planting;
- Informing community groups about activities; and
- Inviting other local schools to join in and be MAD too.

Our vision for the future is to have youth who are active and involved in their community and to continue to improve our local environment and make Kinglake a better place for the coming youth.

**Erin Phillips, Bryce Fisher,
Joshua Sommers and Zac White**

An Environmentally Friendly School: Kurnai College

We began our journey on the path to becoming an environmentally friendly school back in March 2005 on our ruMAD? Day. Our group made banners and posters which were displayed around the school, and this heightened people's awareness of our goals in wanting to make a difference by reducing the amount of rubbish in our school.

The main objective was to begin thinking about an 'Action Plan' and we realised that we would need to make many investigations and speak to experts in the community to help guide us. Members from our group spoke at assemblies, visited another waste-wise school and invited an environmental scientist from Monash University and also the recycling officer from the Latrobe Shire to speak with us.

Our group approached Bunnings in Morwell to see if they would kindly donate bins for paper recycling for our school's classrooms and they did. We made an application to be part of the 2006 Victorian Sustainable Schools Pilot Project; our school has been given \$3000 and this will be an exciting challenge in the not too distant future when we relocate to our new school. Our first task will be to audit our gas, electricity and water consumption over the past year and that will give us a starting point to work out ways in which our school can reduce energy consumption. It is estimated that an average size school emits about 500 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year and an average family emits about 17-18 tonnes per year.

Our group hopes to work with the wider community and investigate environmentally friendly ways of becoming a sustainable school. Some ideas could be designing water-wise school gardens by planting native and indigenous plants, also building a solar power generated area within the school and educate people about turning lights off when they are not needed.

In 2006, phase two of our action plan is to trial the use of recycling bins in our school environment. We feel that this will be our toughest challenge. We realise that it is difficult to change students' and teachers' habits about disposing of waste.

Our group raised \$300 which will be used to hire more bins for our new campus. We have found that it costs the school money to recycle. We spent many hours calling people and businesses to see if they could collect their recycling paper at no cost. We eventually found one company that would take our paper as long as we could deliver it to them. We believe that, in order for schools to successfully be environmentally friendly, more recycling companies need to give their support.

We believe that 'we are MAD' - that is, we are making a difference in our school and in the local community.

Mark Grant and Laura Thorburn

Lake Colac: a Healthy Future Colac South West Primary School, Colac

Our Big Possibility is for a world where all life is treated with respect, dignity and consideration: a world where there is global understanding and compassion and a united front working towards a healthy sustainable planet.

Our area of concern is the health and long-term sustainability of Lake Colac. Lake Colac is in desperate need of attention as pollution and neglect have caused serious and ongoing problems for the native flora and fauna that inhabit it. At the moment visitors and locals are limited in the way they use this beautiful resource as it is in such poor health.

We can contribute by informing our local community, (that being our school and the broader community of Colac and district) of the worrying and ongoing issues concerning our lake.

What we are doing: We have spoken with representatives of governing bodies of Lake Colac as to what the issues are and what is currently being done. What we can do is further inform the community and assist with restorative programs that are currently in place or about to commence.

Effective Recycling Eltham East Primary, Eltham

Our Big Possibility is for a world where we live in harmony with each other and understand the inter-dependence we share with animals. We would like all people to care for their environment and make good choices that make our world a better place.

Our area of concern, shared by our council, is to reduce landfill by adopting a responsible recycling program. At Eltham East Primary School we have established a good practise of recycling paper, plastic, compost and are, as a consequence, reducing the amount of landfill rubbish. We are interested in taking greater responsibility for recycling at our homes.

We can contribute by continuing to manage the recycling practise at our school and by adopting good practise at home.

What we are doing is we are keen to improve our school and community attitude toward green waste. At Eltham East Primary School we have developed good recycling practise that all grades of the school actively contribute to on a daily basis. Our Middle Years students co-ordinate the recycling practise for responsible disposal of paper, plastic, compost and landfill rubbish. We have included our community link with Edendale Farm to establish worm farms in our classrooms. Children care for and can then make a difference by taking them home and establishing an effective composting practise in their own backyards.

H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Lots of Plastic) Eltham Primary School, Eltham

Our Big Possibility is for a world where everyone is equal and free to make their own choices and have their own opinions, a world where people are united and connected in friendship.

Our area of concern is pollution, particularly the use of plastic supermarket bags and the harm they cause in the environment

We can contribute encouraging the Eltham P.S. community to only use green reusable supermarket bags when they go shopping, thus reducing the number of plastic bags being used and produced. Helping to educate students and the community about why plastic bags are a waste problem that harms the environment and encouraging people to use alternative, reusable bags.

What we did: We researched information about plastic bag usage on the Internet. We sent information home to parents via the Newsletter about the project. We sent a survey home to the EPS community to find out how many households use the reusable supermarket green bags. We will have a plastic bag "amnesty" day where families send in their plastic supermarket bags to school. Each grade will join their plastic bags and link with the other grades to measure the plastic bag "chain" to highlight how many bags are out there

We are investigating a badge-making machine to make badges to promote the project. We have also almost completed an animated short film about how animals can be affected by plastic bags entering their habitat.

Harmony Day: Recycling Plastic Exmouth DHS, Exmouth (WA)

Our Big Possibility is for a world where everyone is doing his or her bit to make a difference.

Our area of concern is that there is no recycling of plastic in our town so we have started an enterprise at school with a BP grant to recycle plastic bottles and raising enough money to buy a plastic shredder.

We can contribute by all recycling our plastic bottles and raising enough money to buy a plastic shredder.

What we did: We had a ruMAD?/Harmony day and got a bottle of water donated for every child in school. We encouraged everyone to recycle that bottle in some way. From there we applied for a BP grant and won for our recycling enterprise called "there's a message in a bottle". We then applied to the council for bins to recycle our bottles into. Each week the enterprise students count the bottles from the primary and secondary area of the school, cut some up to be transported to Perth and keep some to make things out of. So far we have made paint stations, chalk boards, doorstops and moneyboxes. We will sell these soon to make some money to go back into our enterprise and towards buying a shredding machine for school. Students took a vote and the secondary leadership team is now called Team MAD. We are also on the look out for students being MAD at school. We present special certificates to them at assemblies when we catch them.

K.A.W.S - Kids as Water Savers Heany Park Primary School, Rowville

Our Big Possibility is for a World where people respect each other and the world's environment and everyone has clean water, healthy food and a peaceful life.

Our area of concern is clean water and water conservation.

We can contribute by investigating ways to save water in our community and informing others. Finding practical ways to save water at school and in the community.

What we have done;

- Spoken at school assembly;
- Put water saving tips in the school newsletter;
- Made posters for the school bathrooms to remind others to turn off the taps;
- Investigated the price of taps which turn off themselves; and
- Next year we will be doing a program for "adopt" a plot of garden. We would like to save water from the bubble taps to put on them.



Re-cycling

Katandra West Primary School, Katandra West

Our Big Possibility is for a world where there is less waste.

Our area of concern is the lack of recycling of paper and the overuse of plastic shopping bags.

We can contribute by increasing students' awareness of the needs and educate students about how to recycle at home and school.

What we are doing: Year 6 students were made "teachers for the day" and planned activities for all classes in the school. We showed children how to sort their rubbish and how to recycle it. Each classroom in the school had paper collection for re-cycling. We also have a food scrap bin and this is sent home to feed chickens etc. All children made a pillow or door snake with plastic shopping bags and all children received workbooks and certificates.



W.C.I.L. (Water Conservation in Lysterfield) Lysterfield Primary School, Lysterfield

Our Big Possibility is for a world where people respect each other, the environment, and themselves.

Our area of concern is water conservation and the attitudes of people in our community to wasting water.

We can contribute by educating our school community about appropriate plants for our climate and local environment, and also how to save water in general.

What we are doing is raising the community's awareness of native plants and passing on water saving tip. We are raising money to purchase another rainwater tank and Australian native plants for the school. We have, and will continue to, publish information weekly about native plants suitable for our local environment, and water saving tips in our school newsletter. We will also create a web page for the school website and contact local newspapers to inform them about our project.

No more plastic bags

Montrose Primary School, Montrose

Our Big Possibility is for a world where there are no more plastic shopping bags and people use calico or environmentally friendly bags.

Our area of concern is the fact that so many plastic bags are still used for shopping, and so many of them are not biodegradable.

What we have done is all the children in the school have made and decorated calico bags for their families and also for display in the local library and the local shops. Some of these bags will be given away to local shoppers and we want shopkeepers to ask them not to use environmentally unfriendly bags.

Saving Water

Rowville Secondary College, Rowville

Our Big Possibility is for a world where people and the environment support one another.

Our area of interest is the school environment. A lot of water is wasted when it rains. We are looking at putting it in water tanks. We are also looking at other areas of the school that use a lot of water. E.g. the food technology department we need new plugs for sinks and in the art department they can looking at ways to clean tools more effectively. We can also assess the science area.

We can contribute by looking after each other, looking after the environment and continuing to improve the world that we live in.

What we have done is organised a water audit of the school. We are putting water tanks in our school. We have spoken to the school community to get some feedback from them. We have also spoken to some of the school community about our problems and how to fix them, therefore educating them and making them aware of the problems.

Theme for Action: Justice and Democracy

Marian College

Our school's MAD day gave various students the opportunity to voice their thoughts, opinions and angers. There were also many stalls held. By doing this, our aim was to raise awareness on such issues as animal cruelty, the effect of stereotyping, racism, human rights and environmental issues.

Poverty

Our Justice and Democracy group decided that our theme for the year would be poverty. One of our main aims would be to raise awareness about this relentless global issue so an 'educating others' subcommittee was formed. Before we started planning our course of action, we thought about what our goals were, and what we wanted to achieve. Of course we wanted to raise awareness, but we also wanted our audience to appreciate what they have, because many people have far less. It would be very important to encourage our audience to do what they can to help the people living in poverty and to help them realise that every little bit counts.

The people involved in the 'educating others' committee decided to aim their campaign at children between Grades 5 and 6 because we felt that that is the age when they should start becoming aware of international issues and try to do something about it.

Our next hurdle to overcome was how to present our campaign. It needed to be something interesting and engaging: a play. So, in a few weeks, Marian College students are going to St Paul's Primary School in West Sunshine and presenting a play about poverty, what can be done about it and most importantly, that every little bit counts.

Asylum Seekers

This year, the Marian College Justice and Democracy Forum's horizons have expanded in our attempt to reach out to those in the community who are faced with injustice on a daily basis. One such group that receives much criticism and attention, particularly through the media, are the asylum seekers.

Members of our group raised the issue that, while many people campaign for the release of those behind barbed wire fences, the focus of assistance seldom shifts to those granted temporary or permanent residency. It was this that drove us to find a way of helping those freed from detention, and bring them a sense of justice they deserve.

We were introduced to the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre in West Melbourne. The ASRC is Australia's largest asylum seeker aid, health and advocacy organisation, assisting those in search of safety and security to survive in Australia. Since its opening in 2001, the Centre has helped over 3000 asylum seekers. This has been achieved through community support and donations, which are solely relied on for the Centre to keep its doors open and provide for those in immense need.

Since the start of Term 3, members of JDF have volunteered fortnightly in the Centre's food bank, and helped asylum seekers cook their traditional meals in the kitchen. We believe that, through these actions, we are making a significant difference not only to the lives of the asylum seekers, but also to a society where in recent times, prejudice and discrimination are becoming more prevalent. By building a relationship with those we once deemed strangers, a sense of understanding and impartiality is being gained. We believe that that in itself is justice in action.

The Miracle School

In the Justice and Democracy Forum, we have been divided into five sub-committees so that we can all focus on one particular project. I am part of the school links committee and I am here to present our project, the Miracle School.

Chaminade Secondary school is in Karonga, Malawi, Africa. It is also known as the Miracle School because the students that attend this school are AIDS orphans. Our project is to make a CD-Rom to raise awareness about this school with other educational departments eg high schools or universities.

The CD-Rom will contain all facts, statistics, pictures and a speaker who has had first hand experience in Africa. The aim of the CD-Rom is to let others be aware of situations around the world and help make a difference. While making the CD, we will also be fundraising to buy computers for Chaminade Secondary school. Hopefully you will be seeing our finished product soon.

Natasha Mizzi, Priscilla Weaver, Annie Le,
Tina Le and Natasha Korbut

Preventing Teen Suicide

Braybrook College, Braybrook

Our Big Possibility is for a world where teenagers realise alternatives exist to suicide, and that someone does care.

Our area of concern is preventing teen suicide, informing young people of their support networks and raising awareness.

We can contribute by raising awareness, letting students know someone cares, let them know that nothing is SO bad that you can't tell someone, and create greater support networks at school.

What we are doing is writing a script for a video, taking photos and researching.

Depression – Removing the Stigma

Montrose Primary School, Montrose

Our Big Possibility is for a world where people understand Depression and how to deal with it better, so that people are not stigmatised.

Our area of concern is the lack of understanding of the reasons for depression and how to more effectively deal with it.

We can contribute making a video for Beyond Blue that sends a positive educational message about depression.

What we have done is made a video and it has won an award as the best primary school video about promoting better understanding of depression.

Theme for Action: School Relationships & Leadership

Tree of Leadership

Albert Park College, Albert Park

Our Big Possibility is for a world where older students work with and support younger students. Teams of students engage with their community to improve our environment.

Our area of interest is our school environment and that year 7s feel part of our school.

We can contribute by organising with a local artist to bring the Year 7 students into the studio to plan and make a mural for our school wall. We wanted to work with Year 7 students in the community as part of our peer leader role.

What we did was during our leadership class we worked with Year 7 students to help them get used to being in secondary school. We wanted to get them involved in a community project with the school so that they would feel more a part of the place. We worked with a ceramic artist at Gasworks Park and developed a project with the Year 7s to make a mural that symbolised growth and leadership. It is decorating one of our school walls.

Hidden Secrets

Braybrook College, Braybrook

Our Big Possibility is for a world where there is no bullying or intimidation of students by other students.

We can contribute by increasing awareness of resources for assistance to victims. We can also highlight the pain to witnesses, trying to get culprits to see things from the victim's eyes.

What we are doing is producing posters. We also want teachers who seek to fight insecurity and a lack of self-confidence and self-belief. We will create a role-play to present before our own school and local primary schools.



Drugs

Braybrook Primary School, Braybrook

Our Big Possibility is for a world that all people know it's safe to live in.

Our area of concern is drug use in our community.

We can contribute by making people aware of what drugs can do to them, the effects and the risks. We can let people know that there are other things to do instead of taking drugs.

What we are doing is started taking lessons in the upper school and we have organised two parent sessions. We have also been creating a Kahootz animated film that shows you what you could be doing instead of taking drugs. We have planned to send the film to our cluster schools.



Raising Awareness of Students' Voice

Caroline Springs College, Caroline Springs

Our Big Possibility is for a world where students know there are avenues where they can have their voices, ideas and concerns raised and heard by the school community.

Our area of interest is developing avenues for students to use so that their voices can be heard and they can see the results.

We can contribute keeping the issue alive.

What we are doing is setting up different committees and student leaders to facilitate this process. Students have had meetings with staff, spoken at assemblies, created flyers to promote information, worked with staff to develop a formal structure to ensure longevity of the program and processes.

Boredom Busters Expo

Colac West Primary, Colac

Our Big Possibility is for a world where people have different options to achieve personal success and live in a happy and clean environment.

Our area of concern is boredom

We can contribute by informing people of local activities they can be involved in.

What we are going to do is hold a boredom busters expo at our school. It will help introduce people to activities that are available in our community.



No Bull

Montmorency South Primary, Montmorency

Our Big Possibility is for a world where everybody feels safe and can be themselves.

Our area of interest is bullying, put downs and feeling unsafe at school.

We can contribute by making our community more aware of bullying, what it is and how we can make people feel good about themselves and prevent bullying.

What we have done completed a bullying survey with all year levels at our school and are looking at the results to see areas of concern for kids at our school. We want to make people aware of what bullying is, how they can deal with it and how we can try to prevent it.

Improving awareness of road safety

Park Ridge Primary School

Our Big Possibility is for a world where all countries are friends and people trust, respect and care for each other.

Our area of interest is road safety around the school. In particular, we are worried about speeding cars and students not using the school crossing.

We can contribute by investigating and implementing ways to get our "Road Safety" message across to the local community.

What we are doing is:

- Putting information in the school newsletter. This information has included statistics, advertisements and tips to encourage safe road use.
- Performed skits at Assembly to encourage students to use the crossing.
- Created a road safety radio advertisement to be played on our Year 6 Radio Show on 97.1FM
- Surveyed the school community and the lollipop people to investigate how these people felt about road safety around our school. We then wrote a letter to the council outlining our concerns.
- Created a "Stay Safe" brochure outlining the problems associated with unsafe road use as well as some tips to encourage people to drive safely. We distributed this brochure to every family in the school.

SOS – Sweep Out Syringes

Sunshine East Primary School, Sunshine

Our Big Possibility is for a world where everyone is happy and freedom is a thing for everyone and we love one another.

Our area of interest is cleaning up the street, as we are very concerned about syringes in the local area.

We can contribute by making all in the community aware of the dangers involved in syringe use. We can also provide an opportunity for correct syringe disposal by providing syringe boxes in areas where they are needed.

What we have done is contacted the Brimbank and Maribyrnong Council and have asked for their help. They seem very interested. They have made recommendations. Students have designed a poster to be put up in the local area. Students have also organised a walk involving two or three other schools, where they will be collecting more evidence of inappropriate syringe disposal.

ruMAD? CHECKLIST: WHAT MAKES A PROJECT MAD?

The following checklist outlines the elements of a MAD project that would make the most difference to everyone involved! Check the checklist and make sure your project is REALLY MAD!

- Starts with your or your group's own values and concerns;
- Enables you to imagine and create the world you wish to live in;
- Puts you in personal contact with the needs of others;
- Builds on what the community already has - its assets or strengths (time, talent, treasure);
- Tackles the cause of a problem not the symptoms;
- Is sustainable;
- Raises your awareness and involvement in the community;
- Allows you to take responsibility;
- You can monitor the effects;
- Allows you to express views, think critically, and solve real problems; and
- Is an inspiration to others.



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Student Council Case Study: Frankston HS, Victoria

Frankston High School's SLC (Student Leadership Council)

In 1997, a Maths/VCE PE teacher at our school (Ms Harper) took on the position of student leadership co-ordinator. Originally called the SRC, Ms Harper changed the name of the organisation to the SLC.

The Student Leadership Council is very popular for most students at Frankston High. At our school we have 100 students who are willing to be in the SLC, but we can only allow 52 people to be in the SLC for one year. To cut the number of people down to 52, we have to put everyone through an interview process. This way the teacher who runs the SLC (Ms Harper) gets to know which person is best suited for the SLC. The interview consists of the year level co-ordinator, SLC teacher and two students already elected onto the SLC.

At the start of the new school year, the SLC goes on a camp for three days, usually

to Phillip Island. At the camp we get to know everyone on the SLC and we learn lots of leadership skills. We also plan out what activities we'll run throughout the year and what charities the money we raise will go to. On the second night of the camp, the School Principal (Ms Heale), comes to visit us. At that time we suggest to Ms Heale what could be improved around the school. During the course of the camp, the Year Level Leaders are elected and everyone else is allocated a position in the SLC. There are many positions to choose from, such as fundraising, publicity officer, publicity liaison, Junior School Correspondence, Middle School Correspondence, photographer, Junior Administrator, magazine, Junior School radio station, disco coordinator and many more.

Our Year Level leaders for Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 do the following:

- Oversee the running of SLC lunchtime meetings;
- Delegate responsibilities to certain SLC members;
- Liaise with the Principal;
- Liaise with the co-ordinator;
- Attend leadership meetings;
- Speak at assemblies;
- Organise awards/certificates when required; and
- Attend one School Council meeting for the year if required.

Once the SLC camp is over, Ms Harper will inform everyone in the SLC of the meeting times. The Senior School meetings are held on a different day to the Junior School. The Senior School meetings are on Monday lunchtimes and the Junior School meetings are held on Wednesday lunchtimes. Each week we have two people from each side of the school go to the other meeting so that we can keep in touch and tell others about the ideas suggested by the other campus. Most of the times we get the leaders to run the meeting. We also get people to talk to everyone if they have represented the SLC in any way.

At the SLC we elect five students to attend a Cluster Meeting. Our cluster consists of five schools: Westernport Secondary College, Karingal Park Secondary College, Mt Erin Secondary College, Mt Eliza Secondary College and us. At a Cluster Meeting we share ideas that each of the schools has come up with and think of some projects that the schools can all participate in. At the first cluster meeting of the year the schools came up with two main projects that we are going to focus on: a blood donation competition and a Peninsula Idol.

At Frankston High we have four casual dress days during the school year. When we were at the camp we organised what the theme would be and who the money would be raised for. There has been a variety of themes over the past, such as PJ Day, Decade Day, Savers Day, Board Shorts Day, Crazy Hair Day, Crazy Hat Day, Jeans 4 Genes Day, Tropicana Day, Footy Day and many more. On these days, some SLC members collect and count the school's gold coin donations. We try to make these days as fun as possible by having

prizes and lunchtime activities. In the past we have had professional AFL players come in and join the activities. At the end of the day the SLC usually raises around \$1,200.

During the year the SLC does a lot of fundraising and campaigns. The SLC has been campaigning for 'Healthy Food' now for a couple of years. We have run Juice Days and recently a Baked Potato Day. On the Juice Day, most SLC members get to school early and prepare the fresh fruit for it to get juiced at lunchtime. We are planning on a Milkshake Day at the end of this year. At the end of 2000, the SLC raised a massive \$6,179.50. Now in 2005, the SLC raised \$11,584!

The SLC has done a lot of local community work in the past. Here are several projects that the SLC have done or are doing for the Frankston Community:

- A team of students made the beach wheelchair buggies which are now at Mt Martha and Frankston Lifesaving Clubs; they designed, fundraised and had a company build them for them. Anyone can use them, so that people with disabilities can have access to the beach; they also go in the water and on deep sand and rocks!
- Recently a team was involved with giving Frankston Station a facelift, and built a Japanese-like garden at the entrance.
- Currently a team is working on building some fitness equipment and installing it at Beauty Park in Frankston for use by the local community and local primary schools.
- Students have been involved with doing maintenance work at local 'elderly citizen homes' and helping do the gardening.
- Community breakfast: running juice days and can drives so that money can be donated to the Frankston Church group who provide breakfast for the homeless.

At the end of the school year, all SLC members have walked away with so much experience and skills that they have learnt along the way. We are all very grateful for the wonderful opportunity that has been given to us.

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