"They are shielded from responsibility, and they become irresponsible; they are held in a dependent status, and they come to act as dependents; they are kept away from productive work, and they become unproductive."

James Coleman, 1972
This Issue

Student participation can emerge in various arenas. In the last two issues of Connect, stories from SRCs and JSCs illustrated one of these. Other articles (including Mary Moore’s account, in this issue, of the ‘Schools ON AIR’ program in Victoria’s Goulburn Valley) have focused on specific projects that encourage and support students in real, responsible and valued roles.

This issue of Connect continues to outline a third approach: in which that responsibility and value are inherent in the everyday life and curriculum of the school. Viv Hammat writes about ways in which students at Sherbrooke Community School took responsibility for Joel, a student with cerebral palsy, on the Great Victorian Bike Ride. Also, Donna Brandes outlines the support provided for schools in Western Australia to develop student-centred curriculum approaches, and a fascinating account is included from France about a travelling school - Enfants du Voyage.

This theme will continue in future issues of Connect, with articles planned on participation by students at the Myuna Farm (between Doveton and Dandenong, Victoria) and at the Island work education centre in Melbourne’s North Fitzroy.

Index

This issue also includes details of how to access the Connect databases: the index of back issues and the index of clearinghouse articles.

Student Participation Workshop

For Victorian readers, a free workshop for SRC and JSC support teachers will be held in Melbourne:

on Wednesday, September 7th,
from 5.00 to 7.00 pm,
at the FTUV Building,
112 Treneroy Crescent, Abbotsford.

This workshop will allow participants to meet fellow coordinators and support people, and to define needs and ideas for a continuing series of workshops. It would be good to meet you there.

To register, phone the Educational Support Centre on (03) 418 4949.

Next Issue

Publication date for Connect 89 is October; deadline for copy is the end of September 1994. The 15th anniversary issue is coming in December! Please write! Student participation ... 15 years on?

Roger Holdsworth
With Joel on the Great Victorian Bike Ride

When we began the bike project for a student at Sherbrooke Community School with Cerebral Palsy, we thought it would be a great experience for him. We believed that true integration is getting the kid out there and mixing it with everybody! We thought if we did this, he would begin to push his own barriers back. This tenet is true, and certainly Joel experienced tremendous joy on the Great Victorian Bike Ride with his school peers.

But the project also showed us, once again, the responsibility that students can show for each other, and the value of this responsibility in their own learning and development.

In 1993 the parents, teachers and students of the school raised money to buy a special bike which had been designed by Ian Sims of Greenspeed. This bike was built to enable people who were unable to use their legs, to experience bike riding with their families and friends. Ian designed a tandem bike with a hub gear and 16 Shimano gears that helped the pedalling rider to propel this amazing trike uphills and speed downhills with a passenger who went along for the ride.

We all learned about Joel’s limitations on this ride and found we had to be creative in our attempts to overcome them. Things like the fact that there were no disabled showers or toilets, meant that Joel had to be carried up the stairs of the portable shower units, undressed in a crowded room, supported in his chair under the shower, dried and dressed and carried back down to his wheelchair. There was only one male teacher on the ride and no integration aides, so the boys had to shower Joel each night themselves. Having to cope with Joel’s disabilities was a most profound experience for these boys.

At the end of a day of pedalling Joel’s specially designed recumbent trike, teachers
were tired and running out of energy. After the first night, Joel's care was assumed exclusively by the other students on the Bike Ride.

One night, I lay in bed and listened while two year eight boys struggled to put Joel to bed after taking him to the toilet. They laughed and giggled as they pushed him through the tent flap and into his sleeping bag, trying not to wake the other riders about them. The good humour and the friendly banter while they tried to solve the problem of moving a dead weight from a wheelchair into a prone position in a tent bonded the three boys in a way that could never have been achieved in the Integration program at school. The problem belonged to all of them and Joel had to help solve it as well.

Joel learnt that his disabilities affected other people as well as himself. He took for granted the work his limitations placed on his family and at school, as all teenage kids do. Well! - the integration aides were paid to do it. So he never thought about the work his disability created for others. Until the Bike Ride ... when he was confronted with physically tired kids who had extra work to do to ensure his comfort. They took him to meals, cut up his food, took him to the toilet, lifted him in and out of the trike, pedalled the bike uphills and swept downhill passing all other riders with ease. They helped dress and undress Joel, took him to the movies and swimming with them in the river. Never at any stage did they consider that Joel wouldn't be doing everything they were doing themselves on the ride. He was never forgotten nor excluded at any stage. Joel began to see that his participation in the Bike Ride depended on their willingness to do extra work, which they cheerfully did.

The specially designed Greenspeed Bike attracted a great deal of attention and certainly the kids enjoyed this when they were pedalling the trike. As the ride ground on through the hills along the Murray and across the Dividing Range into Melbourne, the novelty wore off, because pedalling the trike uphills is physically demanding. They persevered because failure to finish the Ride with Joel would have been failure for all of us. These students had worked hard to raise the money to buy this bike, as had many others who were not participating in the Ride, and they were determined to succeed for the whole school community.

The commitment these students showed on the Bike Ride demonstrates to us all, the importance of the Integration Program in schools. I think the most significant asset I left this ride with is the idea of Integration belonging to the so-called 'able' people of the school community. When we are confronted with the limitations of a body that doesn't work too well, and try to help overcome those limitations, then we become aware of just how well our own body performs. This awareness builds self-esteem and confidence in kids who don't often experience success in the more academic areas.

For Joel, of course, there is the liberation from an environment that is described by his home and school and little else. Further, he is now beginning to look around at what else he can do, like sky-diving. Most important of all, though, he has learnt that he has to try and solve the problems his disabilities cause in his life. He has begun to ask himself: how can I gain more independence? He has begun to search for ways to develop his physical potential and realise that he can push the limits back and achieve more for himself.

Officials and other riders often congratulated us on the disciplined riding of the Sherbrooke Community School kids. These kids' efforts demonstrated to the 3,000 or so other riders that they were prepared to work extra hard to include Joel in the Ride. People who talked to Joel and the kids around the camp and in the meal queues, showed they were impressed by their comments to the students. By bringing people like Joel to events like the Great Victorian Bike Ride, we are destroying people's expectations about what disabled people can and can't do. It is important we all help disabled people challenge these expectations if we want to successfully change societal attitudes to disabilities.
SCHOOLS 'ON AIR'

Radio production is exciting and full of challenges. Producing a show that goes live to air means that anything can happen: the knowledge that anything could go wrong - or right - at any time helps to pump the adrenalin.

1994 is certainly the year for radio in the Goulburn Valley.

Some Background

In 1991, primary school radio access began in a classroom at Nathalia Primary School. That grew and became a whole school radio club in 1992. This won an encouragement prize from the Goulburn North-East Curriculum Innovations Awards.

In 1993, an official time-slot for primary schools was provided on 3ONE FM, Goulburn Valley's community radio station.

Country Education Project (CEP) became supporters of the program by funding a Marantz recorder for quality interviews with community members. Many schools in the Shepparton District participated.

This year, schools across the region are participating. The 'Schools ON AIR' program is aimed directly at primary schools. Secondary school students also get the opportunity to broadcast each evening from 4.00 to 5.00 pm. Both school programs are coordinated by Mary Moore, Curriculum Consultant in the Kyabram District of the Goulburn North-East Region.

Program Launch

1994 started off with a successful launch in March. Students introduced guests, presented sessions and welcomed the guest speaker, Pieta O'Shaughnessy, Regional Manager for ABC Radio. Her involvement with community radio inspired us all.

Students from the local schools presented symposiums on how radio was part of their school curriculum.

The Schools ON AIR kit was then launched. The kit includes a manual and a video and is ideal for anyone planning to broadcast their own radio show.

The evening concluded with a panel made up of students, parents and members of the local radio community.
Radio in the Classroom

So far this year, secondary students started on the airwaves in February. Primary students started their weekly broadcasts in June. Students will be broadcasting all through the year.

Students are involved in the total production of their radio shows:

- researching and understanding the role of radio;
- selecting presenters;
- allocating tasks such as writing, gathering, editing and researching;
- selecting material for presentation;
- practising voice skills;
- conducting community interviews;
- choosing music;
- reviewing program content; and
- going to air!

Radio can be incorporated into the classroom in a variety of ways. In some cases, the whole school is involved! In larger schools, the entire upper school can be involved in the many 'behind the airwaves' tasks.

Radio is a perfect opportunity for students to increase literacy skills, develop a greater understanding of media, learn more about radio production. For teachers, radio provides problem-solving challenges, strategies for cooperative learning, and an exciting area to study across the curriculum. For the school community, radio provides opportunities to become involved in the classroom on a different level, to promote local history and tell stories relating to the local community.

Radio is a wonderful medium! It is personal and immediate, exhibiting great variety and flexibility. It offers a wide range of formats, each with their own conventions or rules. There is no doubt that radio plays a role of some importance in the lives of most Australians. Tune in now!

---

'On Air' - Producing a radio show is a kit, including a video and manual, especially written for primary schools. It has been developed and written by Mary Moore, curriculum consultant. It is available for $25 plus postage. If you would like more information about students producing their own radio programs, contact Mary Moore at:

PO Box 5, Nathalia 3638

phone: (058) 662 820; fax: (058) 662 749.
STUDENTS CALL UPON THE BOARD OF STUDIES FOR RECOGNITION

The New South Wales State Student Representative Council has just held its 1994 State Conference. We hope to bring you a report in a future issue of Connect. Meanwhile, Charles Kingston, from Bathurst in the Western Region, looks back and reports on the 1993 Conference.

At their annual State Student Representative Council Conference in August 1993, more than 120 student leaders from all ten regions of NSW called upon the NSW Board of Studies to grant accreditation for student leadership and to enable students to become involved in consultation over syllabus and policy documents.

The students also called on the NSW State SRC to establish a merit system to acknowledge achievements in student leadership and participation. These were two of the eight separate recommendations (see next page) to emerge from the Forum on the third day of the four day conference.

The NSW SRC is the body of twenty students - two from each region - which will pursue these recommendations.

For several months before the Conference, a Working Party with student and adult representatives from five regions met to put together the program for the Conference.

'Dealing with Differences' was a central theme of the 1993 Conference. Keynote speakers, student-run workshops and flexishop presenters (some of whom were students, and others invited experts in their fields) dealt with racism, anti-discrimination, sexual harassment, disabilities, drugs, multiculturalism, and violence. The emphasis was on finding ways to combat negative attitudes. This was reflected in several workshops on conflict resolution techniques, as well as presentations highlighting positive programs from various regions to raise community awareness and provide peer support for students who are deemed 'different'.

Students from the North West Region, many of whom are of Aboriginal origin, gave several workshops on their heritage and their perspective on racist issues. One workshop enabled non-Aboriginal students to engage in singing and painting and group activities designed to assist them to understand the different ways in which Aboriginal people communicate. They painted a mural with Aboriginal designs and sang songs in an Aboriginal language. The results were colourful, tuneful and, most importantly, uplifting.

Such examples highlighted the second major theme of 1993's Conference - communication. The Western Region organised two separate teleconferences which allowed students in Broken Hill and in four separate centres in the North West Region to talk with each other about various issues. Students had the chance to attend workshops on using the media, effective communication through print, and promoting the school. They also considered communication strategies to combat racism, conflict and violence within schools.

One of the large group sessions was a panel on Violence. Representatives of the Department of School Education, the Police and students discussed various types of violent behaviour in the schools and talked positively about programs designed to promote positive understanding and create
a climate of cooperation within schools, so that violence is avoided.

The Department's kit, Resources for Teaching Against Violence, was discussed by Christine Jones, now the State Coordinator for SRCs (centred in the Metropolitan North Region). Students Sam Asad of Mt Druitt High and Heidi Abraham of Granville South High gave powerful talks on the benefits of the Peer Mediation program and the Anti-Racism Conference held at their respective high schools.

Other workshops at the Conference were initiated, organised and run entirely by the student leaders. They looked at issues and projects such as:

- strategies and projects that work for school SRCs;
- production of a kit for the promotion of student leadership in primary and junior secondary years;
- regional recommendations to improve networking and deal as a region with specific areas of need.

The Conference was judged by all those present to be one of the best organised and most successful in years. It included several organised social activities to bring the participants together, such as a night of skits highlighting aspects of each region.

Most importantly, it provided the setting and the time for students and advisers to meet without interruptions, to communicate about their differences, and to discover what we all discover if given the opportunity: that underneath our differences, we are all very similar and are all capable of achieving great things.

Charles Kingston
Bathurst High School

Recommendations of the NSW SRC State Conference
Thursday, August 12, 1993

1. It is recommended that there be a SRC State Conference in 1994 at Vision Valley Arcadia.

2. It is recommended that the Assistant Director-General of the region chairing a NSW SRC meeting be invited, as a matter of course, to that meeting.

3. It is recommended that the NSW SRC write a submission to the Director-General of School Education requesting funding for the continuation of the Council.

4. It is recommended that the NSW SRC liaise with the Board of Studies with a view to:
   i) gaining accreditation for student leadership on recognised Board documents;
   ii) student involvement/consultation in syllabus and policy development.

5. It is recommended that the NSW SRC consider supplementing set meetings with teleconference communication.

6. It is recommended that the NSW SRC establish a merit system to acknowledge achievements in student leadership and participation.

7. It is recommended that the NSW SRC publish an annual report which is to be presented at State Conference and forwarded to the Minister, the Director-General and the Assistant Directors-General (Region).

8. It is recommended that the Constitution of the NSW SRC be changed so that each region has two permanent representatives.
Lismore is a city situated on the Far North Coast of NSW. The Lismore High School Student Representative Council was formed in 1986. Our SRC has 22 elected student representatives, voted on solely by their year members, as follows:

- **Years 7 - 9:** 1 Girl and 1 Boy for each year
- **Years 10 & 11:** 3 Girls and 3 Boys for each year
- **Year 12:** 2 School Captains and 2 School Vice-Captains

The executive comes from year 11 and consists of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. A member of the teaching staff acts as SRC Coordinator. Elections for the representatives on the SRC are held in November, except for Year 7, which takes place in February along with the election of the SRC executive.

To facilitate the holding of SRC meetings, the SRC forms a discrete Roll and DEAR Group, with the Teacher Coordinator acting as a Roll teacher. This avoids the problems associated with holding meetings during lunch time. Our SRC meetings are conducted by the President, with the minutes of the meeting being taken by the Secretary. The SRC President and Secretary meet with the Principal each Thursday during recess to discuss any issues and plans for upcoming events.

At the beginning of each school year, the SRC produces a yearly program of known and proposed SRC activities. Whilst this can be altered as the year progresses, it certainly acts as a very good guide and plan. Our SRC's main source of income is from funds raised from non-uniform days, with students being charged 50 cents to wear casual clothes, and from School Socials. With the money we raise, we try to achieve as much as possible to help the students of Lismore High School. A lot of our funds go towards the cost of individuals going away representing the school in sporting activities, dance, study camps and SRC camps, in improving school facilities for students, and to charities etc. In recent years, the LHS SRC has provided a large shelter area at the school's bus bay, and playground seating and tables. Our SRC makes a special effort each year to raise funds for Stewart House in Sydney whose existence very much depends upon financial support from the public schools of NSW. Stewart House is a charity that provides a seaside holiday in Sydney for disadvantaged school students, especially those from country areas. Each year our SRC makes a substantial monetary donation to Stewart House. Other charities supported by our SRC, either financially or with student workers, include the Heart Appeal, Red Nose Day, Salvation Army, Red Cross and Legacy.

The student body is aware of who their year representatives are and are encouraged to have matters and ideas raised for discussion by the SRC. The SRC is also invited to have an input to the school's Management Plan and other significant school programs. Two year 11 members of the SRC (a girl and a boy) are members of the LHS School Council.

Our SRC at Lismore High functions well and enables students to have a say in matters that impact on them as students.

*Andrea Sneesby - Year 11*

*SRC Secretary - 1994*
Student Talk, Teacher Talk!

What would happen if students and teachers in secondary schools could tell each other how they feel about school?

This is the question guiding PhD research about to be conducted by Steve Wilson, Lecturer in Education at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean.

Steve's research interests include student participation in secondary schools. This study, tentatively titled A Case Study Inquiry into Student Participation in a Secondary School, involves working with teachers and students in a single high school setting. The focus of the study is to investigate whether constructive processes of dialogue are able to be built between teachers and students and, if this is possible, whether improved forms of student participation will result from the process.

The initial phase of the study centres on discovering the nature of student and teacher feelings and perceptions about their school and its climate and practices. The second phase examines how students and teachers can share and discuss these perceptions. Further phases investigate participant reactions to the research, and whether processes of open communication result in enhanced student participation initiatives.

The study is grounded in literature which suggests a considerable minority of students in secondary schools have negative attitudes towards school (Goodlad, 1984; Middleton et al, 1986). Other literature suggests that student participation is an important factor in increasing student commitment to schooling (Holdsworth, 1986; Glasser, 1990).

Unfortunately, attempts to foster student participation through strategies such as Student Representative Councils (SRCs) are generally seen to be ineffective (Taylor, 1987; Pearl, 1988). SRCs usually involve small groups of students who often find it difficult to represent the views of their fellow students. They either do not know how, or do not have the resources (time, skills, democratic structures) to try. Members of SRCs can therefore find themselves isolated from their peers, who are often apathetic towards, or hold negative views of their SRCs.

The conceptual framework for the study draws on literature from critical theory (Carr and Kemmis, 1986; Nias, 1987; Young, 1990), which suggests that the sharing of meanings between participants in social settings (for example, schools) is an essential ingredient in empowering individuals and improving social life. Critical theory emphasises the importance of groups engaging in processes of communication which allow them to critique (critically discuss) their situations. It suggests that these processes of communication, effectively constructed, are likely to result in enhanced understandings between members of groups. This results in greater possibilities of group cohesion, consensus and collaborative action.

Applied to schools, critical theory could have the potential to empower individuals (both teachers and students), and lead to negotiated changes in school practices which serve the interests of all participants. It is these possibilities, and their potential impact on student participation, which this study is designed to explore.

The study begins in June 1994 and it is anticipated that 18 months will be spent gathering data from the school setting. It employs qualitative data collection techniques centring on the use of teacher and student interviews and participant observation.

Steve is hopeful the research will prove beneficial to the case study school by assisting in the establishment of improved school practices and sound working relationships between students and teachers. He also hopes the study will add to our general understanding of how schools can improve student participation and motivation.

References
Holdsworth, R (Ed) (1986) Student participation and the participation and equity program. PEP discussion paper no. 2. Canberra: Commonwealth Schools Commission
Taylor, L V Nayano (1987) "It's like being in brackets": Students' perceptions of school committees in The Bulletin of the National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies 6 (2)

from: Nepean Educational Researcher
Faculty of Education
UWS Nepean, No 4, June 1994
An original experience of living education: the itinerant school.

TRAVELLING CHILDREN
("Enfants du Voyage")

In small groups, accompanied by an adult, children explore the world, visit interesting places in many countries, marvel at the diversity of man and of the environment. They experience different cultures, and meet and make friends with people from other lands. They use various means of transportation, but most of the time they travel in a leisurely fashion: on bicycles, in dugout canoes, with donkey caravans, on foot or on horseback in harmony with nature. These children have many exciting adventures.

They are the "Travelling Children".

A DISCOVERY SCHOOL ... DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS

This is not a school in the usual sense of the word; neither is it a school that offers any form of remedial education. Being part of our tour will give children fresh insights into their studies by giving them a new taste for learning and a real sense of responsibility. We offer the children an opportunity to live life to the full during one of their childhood years in free, healthy and exciting environments. All this in a context which widens their perception of the world and develops their self-reliance and initiative. We use the term "school" because what is learned is useful, interesting and worthwhile. So often conventional schools do not teach children to cope with the problems of everyday life. On our tours, children have to prepare the itinerary, manage their budgets, organise supplies, do the cooking and the washing, set up camp, and take care of equipment or animals.

Some lessons will correspond with those in the school curriculum but, on the road, these will be experienced in real-life situations and not theoretically imposed in a classroom. The learning experience, therefore, is more dramatic and memorable. We gather information on roof-building, volcanic activity or ancient Egyptian civilisation because we find ourselves at a carpenter's, close to an active volcano or the pyramids at Giza. Foreign languages are learned because we are "involved in them" and we need them to communicate with the people we meet and have to deal with. Within a few weeks, our young travellers will be able to do their shopping in markets, conduct basic conversations, join in the games of the local children and answer the natives' curious questions. The "chapters" of geography and history constantly confront us in a concrete form. There is so much to discover and learn.
Yet there are no compulsory classes for the “Travelling Children”. This is a school ... but without the school obligations, without walls or timetables, without formal teachers. All are enriched by their own experiences and by those of their companions. Besides the collective writing of the news report, voluntary intellectual activity is, of course, encouraged: children read avidly, gather information, keep their own diaries to record their adventures, carefully prepare the information they will bring back and present to those at home.

On returning to school, most of the children will skip a year and find themselves in the upper stream. They may find that they have missed a few abstract concepts from the normal school curriculum, but, by undertaking and completing their expedition, they have been compensated by developing qualities, as yet untapped in other students, enabling them quickly to make up any ground loss. These qualities of willpower, efficiency and self-confidence are important assets for their future and the formation of their personalities.

A BLOSSOMING EXPERIENCE

Travelling obliges the children to take the realities of life into account. During the tour, they have to be independent of their families, make new friends, leave old habits (TV, comic strips...) behind and learn to be adaptable. Our travellers continuously face unforeseen situations. Adventure is stimulating rather than worrying, provided one has a taste for exploration.

The children return home bursting with health and vigour, having been exposed to an exciting, physical, outdoor way of life.

We generally visit countries where nature plays a more significant role than it does in Europe. We observe it in its diversity, and learn to respect it and to live in harmony with it. Travelling allows us to compare and to appreciate the relationship between different societies and their environments and to report on them.

When travelling abroad, the children spontaneously meet and make friends with many people, especially children. These human contacts are one of the most interesting aspects of a trip. We have to try to communicate with all these people in their own languages, to appreciate their hospitality, to respect their customs and to reciprocate their friendship.

As part of the group, children from diverse backgrounds have to conform to the group code of behaviour, and thus become active team members, accepting a share of the responsibilities.

Unlike the ordinary school, ours is not a competitive climate and disciplinary problems are unknown. We cultivate “the being” as opposed to “the appearance”, but maintain respect for others. Group solidarity and friendship are essential when living in a community for several months, so a group will start travelling only once its members have managed to establish a good relationship.

Enfants du Voyage
France
IN PRACTICE

- “Travelling Children” welcome girls and boys between 10 and 14 provided they are sociable, truly motivated by the prospect of travel and not adverse to hard work. Selection is not influenced by wealth or by social background.

- The itinerant school is beneficial to all children, whether they have adapted well to formal schooling or not, or whether they have been affected by family problems.

- Tour groups will undergo a short training period together of a few days’ walk in France during the summer vacation.

- A tour with the travelling school lasts a school year from September to June. A group consists of an adult and 3 to 5 children. The itinerary, means of transportation and activities are jointly decided.

- The financial maintenance of a travelling child is provided by the family’s monthly payment to the secretary of the association. This payment is more or less equivalent to the cost of maintaining the child at home.

- Regular accounts of the group’s travels, jointly written, are sent monthly to families and subscribers. These are translated into the language of each young traveller.

- “Travelling Children” is a non-profit-making and pupils’ parents-run association whose annual meeting takes place before the start of the new school year. Members’ subscriptions are fixed at £6 per year. At least one of the parents of a travelling child must be a member.

- The itinerant school has an international vocation in that it aims to encourage cultural exchange and training in different languages. Children from all countries are consequently warmly welcomed in our groups.

- Thanks to their itinerant school, the “Travelling Children” since 1983 have been conducting an innovative learning experience, different from, but complementary to formal education. This experience provides the child with a balanced outlook, a critical mind and a wider knowledge of life. In order to receive more information, if you wish to register a child, or if you just feel interested in our activities, please write to

**ENFANTS DU VOYAGE**  
7, rue de Thannenkirch  
67600 SÉLESTAT - FRANCE  
Tel: 88.82.78.40

COVER QUOTE

“In the family, the young remain, while the activities from which they could learn have moved out; in the workplace, the activities from which they could learn remain, but the young themselves have been excluded ... The student role of young persons has become enlarged to the point where that role constitutes the major portion of their youth. But the student role is not a role of taking action and experiencing consequences ... It is a relatively passive role, always in preparation for action, but never acting...

“The consequence of the expansion of the student role, and the action-poverty it implies for the young, has been an increased restiveness among the young. They are shielded from responsibility, and they become irresponsible; they are held in a dependent status, and they come to act as dependents; they are kept away from productive work, and they become unproductive.”

James Coleman  
*How Do the Young Become Adults?*  
Centre for Social Organisation of Schools  
John Hopkins University, Baltimore  
Report No. 130, May 1972, pages 5-8
A Junior School Council Network

A network of Junior School Councils has existed in the Preston/Reservoir area (in Melbourne’s northern suburbs) for several years. It began with support from the School Community Development Program, but has continued beyond the end of that program, with some funding through the Disadvantaged Schools Program.

This article aims to outline the activities that constitute that network and to discuss what aspects may be able to be continued without funding support.

There is some ‘mystique’ about networks - what does this one involve? The Network involves a core of eight primary schools, with a further four joining in various activities.

The network is characterised by the following activities:

- Regular meetings of JSC support teachers from the schools. These are held at least twice a term, after school, at one of the participating schools. Teachers compare approaches, discuss difficulties and, most directly, plan joint action.
- A JSC newsletter is produced by one of the schools. As part of their curriculum, students collect copy from other schools, edit it, type it into school computers, choose and position graphics, run off copies and fax or mail it to the participating schools. This appears approximately 4 or 5 times a year.
- Students visit each others’ schools. The newsletter provides a reason to visit other JSCs, to collect information and to share ideas. This happens occasionally.
- An external consultant works with the network on an ad hoc basis. This includes participation in network meetings, some organising work between meetings, visits to each of the participating JSCs to run half-day training sessions, and program organisation for any joint activities.
- The JSCs come together for JSC forums. These were frequent but have been restricted by limited availability of teacher release. Now, at least one of these is held each year. Students share information about the operation, successes and failures of their JSC, and run workshops for other students about their activities.

Some of these activities require funding and will be severely curtailed when this ends. Others, however, have been incorporated within school and classroom programs, or require minimal resourcing. The chart below gives some idea of what might be possible.

All of these networking activities depend upon teacher time and energy commitment. This, in turn, depends upon teachers seeing value in the activities for the teaching and learning that occurs in their schools - both in classrooms and in JSCs. The continuation of the Preston/Reservoir JSC Network provides an indication that such mutual support is seen as valuable by these teachers.

Roger Holdsworth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Requires</th>
<th>Continuation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher meetings</td>
<td>Enable teachers to share information, resources and engage in collaborative planning</td>
<td>Some mailing - minutes Teacher time after school</td>
<td>Can continue with teacher commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSC Newsletter</td>
<td>Shares information between students, increases motivation, enhances classroom skills in language, computers, organisation etc</td>
<td>Mailing / fax Classroom work Computer skills of teacher/s Classroom flexibility</td>
<td>Can continue as part of an individual school classroom program, with commitment of classroom teacher/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student visits</td>
<td>Enable students to share information and skills</td>
<td>Transport by teacher/s and parents; program flexibility</td>
<td>Can continue as part of school programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy support</td>
<td>Provides an extra, external and flexible resource; enables organisation of events</td>
<td>Funding for consultancy time</td>
<td>Likely to cease at end of this year, or be funded by some individual schools from grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSC Forums</td>
<td>Increase motivation of students; sharing and development of information and skills; looked forward to by students as part of JSC role</td>
<td>Teacher time release (funds) Travel Organising time Some funding for materials</td>
<td>Likely to be severely limited; perhaps some smaller forums of a few schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The second RASCL (Regional Association for Student-Centred Learning) Conference was held in March and was extremely successful. About 140 people attended the two day event.

Our keynote speaker was John Edwards, Professor of Education at James Cook University in Townsville, and his very humorous and juicy analysis of current issues in education was received with extended applause and enthusiasm. He later ran a workshop which attracted many participants and gave them new hope and ideas.

Paul Ginnis, who is co-author with me of A Guide to Student Centred Learning and The Student Centred School, was also with us from the UK, and spoke on managing change in schools. Sharon Robinson, his partner, presented two most unusual and exciting workshops on Drama in Education. Both Paul and Sharon will be with us for next year’s conference, May 12th and 13th, 1995, and are available for work around the country at that time.

There was a very wide range of other excellent workshops, much social activity and a wonderful dinner at the Esplanade, followed by a Roaring Twenties party with games and dancing, which Paul and Sharon led.

But the main point is that there was evidence of great progress in the ground-swell and development of Student-Centred Learning through Western Australia. There is now so much credibility around the fact that teaching methods have to change in the technological future, and that we must now make sure that students develop autonomy, responsibility, enterprise and information accessing skills rather than huge amounts of traditional information. Student-Centred Learning is going mainstream now, so that RASCL’s mission statement of “student-centred learning mainstream by the year 2000” is both achievable and already happening.

We, the professional development team at Fremantle Education Centre, are inundated with requests for training on student-centred learning, and I have been invited to speak at the Secondary Principals’ Conference (second keynote speaker after Norman Moore, Minister for Education in WA). I have been given the perfect topic: “How can we, as principals, help our teachers to change?”

Students at the Centre

A quiet revolution in teaching is steadily building momentum as WA teachers search for new ways to work with their students for greater satisfaction and create closer relationships. There is a growing trend towards student-centred learning, an approach to teaching which gives students greater responsibility for their own learning. The focus is on an equal partnership in learning between teacher and student, resulting in students enjoying higher self esteem while achieving academic excellence.

Student-centred learning is already well established at a handful of WA schools, while others are using it to varying degrees. A professional development team of four based at the Fremantle Education Centre is currently working with schools around the state which intend to become more student-centred in their classroom teaching and in their whole school approach. Director Dr Donna Brandes believes the student-centred approach is the teaching methodology of the future.

“Education cannot go into the year 2000 the way it is; it simply will not work,” Donna said. “The wheels of change grind slowly, but all the signs of change are there if you look for them. Student-centred learning is not a fad; it’s going to be mainstream by the turn of the century and people dragging their heels are going to be left behind.”

Donna said that the first requirement was a change in teachers’ attitudes, ideas and methods. Once this came about, it was reflected in the way they related to their students, so that teaching became more of a collaborative effort.

“Students have a much bigger say in what they are doing,” she said. “Student-centred learning is truly democratic and participatory. Teaching is more successful if students are participating. They feel a sense of ownership and their self-esteem is enhanced when they see they are capable of taking responsibility for their own learning.”

Donna is committed to student-centred learning as the means of turning our students who are responsible, independent and highly creative, with the capacity to realise their highest potential.

Adapted from the WA Education Circular, August 1994.

For more information on Student-Centred Learning, contact the Fremantle Education Centre on (09) 335 5444
We've been steadily working to complete two comprehensive Connect indexes (or should that be indices?). The first is of all back issues of Connect from #46 (August 1987 - when we printed an index of issues #1 to #45) to the present, containing all the articles that have been printed. The second is of the listed (photocopy) articles available from us.

We are still working to fully complete the first index - right from issue #1 to the present.

Each of these is held on a database which can be searched, ordered and reported upon in various ways. Here are the details:

**Index to Back Issues**

The data on back issues includes the following fields:

- **title** (the actual title of the article)
- **author** (contributor's name)
- **subject** (the major grouping for the article - see below)
- **keywords** (other possible descriptors)
- **geography** (the area of relevance eg state)
- **issue** (issue of Connect)
- **date** (date of Connect issue)
- **page** (in that issue of Connect)
- **length** (number of pages - which provides an idea of whether it's a major or minor article)

The 'subject' field provides the possibility for the major sorting of the articles. This provides a single word which describes the main subject of the article. Of necessity, the headings may be seen as broad, and whether an article is listed under one rather than another is often subjective. However, the 'keywords' field provides an alternative approach, where the same headings (plus other possibilities) are all listed - one article might appear under several keywords, each of which describes some attribute of the article.

There are currently 39 main headings used as shown in the chart below, for 479 articles included since issue 46 (inclusive). The figure in brackets indicates the number of listings under this heading as of Connect 87.

It is also possible to search using these headings as keywords; for example, while Future yields only one entry as a main heading, there are four entries using Future as a keyword.

The database can also be searched by any field or by any combination of fields. For example, you can ask for a listing of articles with the keyword of Future, from Queensland, since issue 50.

Various reports can be constructed - the standard ones are shown at the top of the next page, but any variation - and any order (eg alphabetic or chronological) - can be specified. Just ask!

Back copies of Connect, containing the articles you require, can then be ordered - forms are on the back cover of each issue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative (20)</th>
<th>Arts (6)</th>
<th>Community (8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference (48)</td>
<td>Connect (10)</td>
<td>Credit (3) also Governance/SRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum (4)</td>
<td>Environment (18)</td>
<td>Foxfire (33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding (6)</td>
<td>Future (1)</td>
<td>Gender (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General (22) or Theory</td>
<td>Global (9)</td>
<td>Governance (25) SRC/JSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History (3)</td>
<td>JSC (31)</td>
<td>Literacy (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local (6) inc. Local Government</td>
<td>Mathematics (1)</td>
<td>Negotiation (9) Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network (34)</td>
<td>Oral History (2)</td>
<td>Peace (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Education (6)</td>
<td>Policy (5)</td>
<td>Publishing (46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio (21)</td>
<td>Research (9) by students</td>
<td>Resource (34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review (38) see also Resource</td>
<td>Rights (5)</td>
<td>SRC (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology (2)</td>
<td>Tutoring (29)</td>
<td>TAFE (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video (14)</td>
<td>Work (24)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Connect articles listed and sorted by keyword: “Future”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>subject</th>
<th>title</th>
<th>issue</th>
<th>date</th>
<th>page</th>
<th>length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Network</td>
<td>The Youth Futures Council</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>June 1992</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>Beyond 2001: Letters to Change the World</td>
<td>46/47</td>
<td>Aug/Oct 1987</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>Secondary Students Look Into the Future</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Feb 1993</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>Student Voices</td>
<td>85-86</td>
<td>Feb-Apr 1994</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Samples of reports available of articles from back issues of Connect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>issue</th>
<th>The Youth Futures Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>author</td>
<td>Michael Neilsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>page</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>length</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>issue</th>
<th>Beyond 2001: Letters to Change the World</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>author</td>
<td>Martin Peake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>page</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>length</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>issue</th>
<th>Secondary Students Look Into the Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>author</td>
<td>Charles Kingston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>page</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>length</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>issue</th>
<th>Student Voices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>author</td>
<td>VIV WHITE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>page</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>length</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Photocopy) Articles Index

Since issue 9 of Connect, we have been listing articles that are directly or indirectly relevant to student participation. These are available from us for research purposes, at the cost of copying plus postage (approximately 10 cents per page).

Again, these articles (407 as of issue 87) can be grouped, searched and listed in different ways. Reports can be generated on these articles and these can both select and order the information in various ways.

The database holds the following information on each article:

code a three-digit number

- use this for ordering

- the name of the article

- author or source publication

- the major subject heading (see below)

- other possible descriptors

- the geographic area of relevance

- length of the article

- cost for a copy of the article

- issue of Connect in which article was originally listed

- date listed in Connect

To Access These Indices

Each index is available from Connect for a fixed cost of $3 - order on the back page. In the absence of more specific information, you will get a report of the whole database in the broad format shown above - sorted by subject (or major descriptor) in alphabetical order. This, however, may not be what you want, and risks wasting an awful amount of paper.

So, think about what you need, and write a note specifying which index, what information and how you want it sorted. If in doubt, a quick phone call to Connect should help.
NEWS AND REVIEWS

The Handbook of Alternative Education

This US Handbook, available in September 1994, will be the first comprehensive directory of educational alternatives.

In an introductory statement, the editors point out that over 60% of US alternative schools now in existence were founded since the year 1980. The phenomenal recent growth of this ‘movement’ prompted the editors to research the educational community for the purpose of compiling a directory of as many of these schools as they could find.

The outcome of nearly four years of planning, research, and extensive networking is this Handbook, with listings of over 7,300 ‘unconventional’ schools and programs, many with detailed descriptive notes. The directory lists both public and private schools. The major portion of the Handbook is the Directory section of over 300 double-column pages.

The Handbook also contains material on the origins, philosophy, and practices of all major educational alternatives to conventional schooling. There is a section offering ‘Vignettes’ of seven typical schools, a bibliography, resources for alternatives, and a 30-page comprehensive alphabetical index of all the schools listed.

The Handbook is edited by Jerry Mintz and published by Solomon Press/Macmillans. Contact:

98-12 66th Avenue, Suite 2
Rego Park, NY 11374 USA
Ph: (718) 830-9112

The Freethinkers’ Guide to the Educational Universe

A Selection of Quotations on Education compiled by Roland Meighan
Price: £12.50 ISBN 0-9518022-4-0

When the first selection of quotations on education by Roland Meighan was published in 1991 under the title of Unfashionably Unfascist? it sold out within months and was widely acclaimed as a source book for discussions and also for illustrative material for lectures, lessons and seminars. Students also found the contents useful in the preparation of their essays on educational and related themes. Some people purchased multiple copies to give as presents to friends at Christmas.

In response to the comments and suggestions that were forthcoming from owners of the first compilation, which now appears to have the status of a collector’s item, the new selection is produced in hardback for use as a library or classroom reference book, or as a coffee-table source book. Most of the quotations from the first book have been retained and augmented with additional ones so that the selection is twice the size of the original.

The quotations are produced in type large enough to allow direct transfer to overhead projector transparencies or into lecture or seminar handouts.

Educational Heretics Press
113 Arundel Drive, Bramcote Hills
Nottingham NG9 3FQ

Foxfire: New Director

Foxfire’s new president/executive director, Bobby Ann Starnes, started at Foxfire in April of this year. The May/June Foxfire News profiles her:

“The foundation of my commitment to the local program is my mountain heritage. I was born at the mouth of Holly Bush in Pippa Passes, Kentucky. My father was a coal miner... I began teaching in 1968 in a small school in rural Ohio. Later, I taught in the largely urban Appalachian school district where I had attended as a child. Although I loved teaching these kids, I left the public-school classroom in 1977, feeling isolated and defeated...

“After public school, my path took many twists and turns. First, I started my own school, where I continued to refine the techniques I had begun to develop in public school. I learned about consensus building and the administration of non-profit agencies. Over the next nine years, I began helping other teachers implement child-centred approaches.

“Between 1986 and 1990, I earned a masters degree and a doctorate at Harvard’s Graduate School of Education. While at Harvard, I had some unique opportunities to work with Boston teachers on a variety of projects including teacher research, developing reflective practice and implementing hands-on learning environments. I also served on the editorial board of the Harvard Educational Review, as a qualitative researcher in program assessment, and as a teaching fellow. In 1988, I became executive director of an inner-city agency, Job Options, that provided job training, teen parent programs and daycare for women trying to get off welfare... Then, three years ago, I became a teacher of teachers at a small college in Rhode Island...

“Finally, three weeks ago, I came to Foxfire...”
Local and Overseas Publications Received

Connect receives many publications directly or indirectly relevant to youth and student participation. We can't lend or sell these, but if you want to look at or use them, contact us on (03) 489 9052 or (03) 344 8585:

AUSTRALIAN STUDENT PUBLICATIONS:
JSC District Magazine (Preston/Reservoir JSC Network, Vic) Term 2, June 1994

OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

Australian:
On Air (Shepparton, Vic) Manual and Video
Network News (Surry Hills, NSW) June 1994
Options (Youth Bureau, ACT) June, July/August 1994
Curriculum Perspectives (ACSA, Belconnen, ACT) Vol 14 No 2, June 1994
Media 3 (Rusden Media, Clayton, Vic) No 40, July 1994

Overseas:
Education Now (Nottingham, UK) No 4, Summer 1994
Options in Learning (Alliance for Parental Involvement in Education, New York, USA) Vol 4 No 4
Foxfire News (Foxfire Fund, Georgia, USA) May/June 1994
Lib Ed (Bristol, UK) No 25, Summer 1994
The Freethinkers’ Guide to the Educational Universe (Educational Heretics Press, UK) 1994

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 full computerised list of articles is now available; this can be accessed and organised by topic, key-words etc.)

Code Description/Pages/Cost
408 “Giving Credit Where It Is Due”, D Parker, from Pivot 13 (3), 1986 3 pp; $0.50
409 “Cottage Lane: A Student Government Program that Works”, JoAnn Shaheen, from Social Education, May 1980 4 pp; $0.60
410 “It’s Like Being in Brackets: Students’ Experiences of School Committees”, L. V. Nayano Taylor, from The Bulletin of the National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies, Vol 6 No 2, May ’87 5 pp; $0.70
412 “Participatory Decision Making: Why Doesn’t It Seem To Work?”, Carolyn J Wood, from The Educational Forum, Vol 49, No 1, Fall 1984 10 pp; $1.00
413 “Implementing Strategies for a School Effectiveness Program”, Willis J Furtwengler, from Phi Delta Kappan, December 1985 4 pp; $0.60

IS YOUR CONNECT SUBSCRIPTION UP TO DATE?
The number on your Connect label tells you the issue with which your subscription expires. Please renew promptly - renewal notices cost us time and money!

ACSA Conference
The 1995 national conference of the Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA) will be held in Melbourne between July 11th and 14th, 1995. The Conference theme is Reconstructing Curriculum: Choosing the Future. Watch for further information in Connect and elsewhere, particularly on plans for student participation in the conference.

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:
SUPPORTING SUBSCRIBER ($50 pa):
Allen Jones Mt Clear, Vic

SUSTAINING SUBSCRIBER ($100):
David Schapper Altona Meadows, Vic
Copy or use this form to subscribe to Connect and to order materials from Connect:

To: CONNECT, 12 Brooke Street, Northcote 3070 Victoria Australia

From: Name: ........................................................................................................................................
Address: ............................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................Postcode: ................................

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

I/we enclose a new/renewal subscription to CONNECT: $......................
(circle amount)

1 year 2 years
- an individual or personal subscription $20 $40
- a primary/secondary school student subscription $5 $10
- an organisational (school, library etc) subscription $30 $60
- a student organisation (SRC, JSC etc) subscription $10 $20
- a supporting/sustaining subscription $50 $100
- a lifetime subscription: ... forever: ... $1000

I/we also enclose a further donation to the work of CONNECT of $......................

MATERIALS:

- Back issues of CONNECT ($4 single; $6 double issue). Circle issue/s required: $......................
  1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13/14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22/23, 24, 25, 26, 27/28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37/38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46/47, 48, 49, 50, 51/52, 53, 54/55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65/66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77/78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85/86, 87, 88
- Cross-referenced index to contents of Connect back issues ($3) $......................
- Students and Work - 1985 Connect reprint booklet #5 ($5) $......................
- Democratic Decision Making in Schools - Victorian PEP (1987) ($3) $......................
- Sometimes a Shining Moment (Wigginton) ($25) $......................
- Foxfire 9 (Doubleday Anchor) ($25) $......................
- Foxfire: 25 Years (Doubleday) ($25) $......................
- A Foxfire Christmas (Doubleday hardcover) ($25) $......................
- Shining Moments - Foxfire video (1 hour) (loan for 1 week: $5) $......................
- SRC Pamphlets Set (6 pamphlets; Youth Affairs Council of Victoria) ($5) $......................
- Photocopies of the following articles: ..............................................................$......................
- Cross-referenced Index to photocopies of articles ($3) $......................

(all prices include postage and packaging) TOTAL ENCLOSED: $......................