

"Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect."
(Mark Twain)

STARLINK

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My apologies for the delay with this issue – but better late than never!

A wide range of internet-based resources is included this time, although there are a few non-internet reliant items as well. Thanks to the readers who sent them in!

PLEASE keep those items coming! Send in a good idea, resource, program, quote, experience, story – anything you have found useful, interesting, inspiring or amusing. As usual the enclosed proforma can be faxed to me – or you can email items to soup@dingoblue.net.au

A flood of items from readers will guarantee another issue of Starlink before the end of term – and your help with this is invaluable!

Cheers
Sue James
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Starlink is proudly sponsored by



Achieving Together Conference

This conference is to be held in Ballarat on November 23 and 24, 2000 and follows on where Achieving Together 1998 left off. Guest speakers and workshop presenters will cover a range of issues and best practice examples related to the conference themes. For further information please see the flyer enclosed with this issue of Starlink. An opportunity not to be missed!

Teen Risk-Taking, A Statistical Portrait

By LD Lindberg, S Boggess, L Porter, & S Williams
<http://www.urban.org/family/TeenRiskTaking.html>

This article from the US makes for interesting reading and comparison with similar issues in Australia. From the introduction:

The most serious threats to the health and safety of adolescents and young adults are preventable. They result from such risk-taking behaviors as fighting, substance abuse, suicide, and sexual activity rather than from illnesses. These behaviors have harmful, even deadly, consequences.

Changes in teen participation in specific risk behaviors have been well documented. What is less well known, and of growing concern, is how overall teen risk-taking has changed. In addition, information is lacking

When I think about how our century may be remembered, I believe it will be for the gap between rhetoric and reality - for calling children "our future" and "most precious resource," but caring for them more in slogans than in actions.

Philip Coltoff

about the nuances in the behavior of adolescents who engage in more than one of these risks at a time. Teens who participate in multiple risks increase the chance of damaging their health.

This booklet provides a statistical portrait of teen participation in 10 of the most prevalent risk behaviors. It focuses on the overall participation in each behavior and in multiple risk-taking. The booklet presents the overall incidence and patterns of teen involvement in the following risk behaviors:

- Regular alcohol use
- Regular binge drinking
- Regular tobacco use
- Marijuana use
- Other illegal drug use
- Fighting
- Weapon carrying
- Suicidal thoughts
- Suicide attempts
- Risky sexual activity

Typo Station

Typo Station is an independent non-profit organisation operating a two-year life skills and vocational training program for 'youth at risk' and is also the name the bush property where the program operates - located in the foothills of the Alpine National Park, one hour south-east of Wangaratta, in N.E Victoria. Enclosed with this issue of Starlink is an outline of the work of Typo Station as well as contact details. For further information, don't hesitate to contact Matt or Kate – they will be more than happy to talk to you further about what Typo Station can offer!



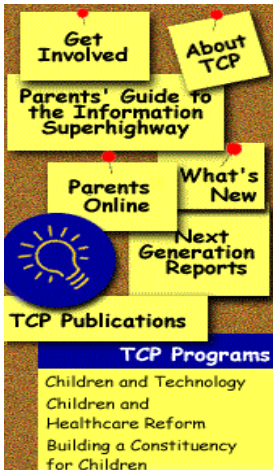
The complex picture that emerges alleviates some traditional concerns, while raising new ones. Teens' overall involvement in risk-taking has declined during the past decade (except among Hispanics), with fewer teens engaging in multiple risk behaviors. But multiple-risk teens remain an important group, responsible for most adolescent risk-taking. However, almost all risk-takers also engage in positive behaviors; they participate in desirable family, school, and community activities. These positive connections offer untapped opportunities to help teens lead healthier lives.



The Children's Partnership

<http://www.childrenspartnership.org>

"We don't necessarily discriminate. We simply exclude certain types of people."
(Colonel Gerald Wellman)



The Children's Partnership is a national non-profit, non-partisan organization whose mission is to inform leaders and the public about the needs of America's 70 million children, and to engage them in ways that benefit children.

The Partnership undertakes research and policy analysis, publishes reports and multimedia materials, and forges new alliances among parents, policymakers and the private sector to achieve tangible gains for children.

The Partnership focuses particular attention on identifying new trends and emerging issues that will affect large numbers of America's children and on providing early analysis and strategies for action. In this way, it functions as a research and development (R&D) arm for the children's movement.

The Children's Partnership's work is supported by private foundations, corporations, the entertainment community, interested individuals and others with whom it partners on projects.

Current Programs:

- Children and Technology: A multi-year project exploring and demonstrating how the Internet and related technologies can best serve children.
- Children and Health Care Reform: A multi-year project to monitor changes in health policy and identify openings to improve health insurance coverage of and services for children.
- Building a Constituency for Children: A multi-year research, convening, and publishing program whose mission is to broaden the constituency for children and help design effective long- and short-term strategies to advance and sustain a children's social agenda.

Shifting Paradigms: Easier Said Than Done

By Sybil Wolin, Ph.D. & Steven Wolin, M.D.

<http://www.projectresilience.com/framespublications.htm>

This is one of several excellent articles available on the Project Resilience Web Site, which also contains a wealth of information about core concepts of resilience. Sybil and Steven Wolin are internationally recognised researchers teachers and practitioners in their field. The Project Resilience site is worth visiting – and bookmarking!

The Struggle to Be Strong: True Stories by Teens About Overcoming Tough Times

A. Desetta & S. Wolin, Eds. (2000)

This book describes seven "resiliencies" to help give teens what they need to assess a situation and take appropriate action. There is also a Leaders' Guide containing information about how to foster resilience in teens.

Both publications may be purchased from the website <http://www.freepirit.com>



The Nuts And Bolts Of Vocational Education And Training (Vet) A Resource For Teachers

<http://www.decs.act.gov.au/publicat/litnumVET/default.htm>

This publication from the Australian Capital Territory, Department of Education and Community Services (DECS) explains the importance of literacy and numeracy skills to Vocational Education and Training (VET). It also contains strategies for improving these skills in pre-VET and VET students.



The American Youth Policy Forum Web Site

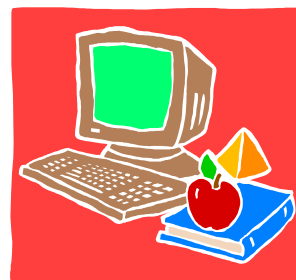
<http://www.aypf.org>

There is a range of information on this site and several publications for download. For example: Less Hype, More Help: Reducing Juvenile Crime, What Works- And What Doesn't by R. Mendel, American Youth Policy Forum (2000). This examines the facts and myths surrounding juvenile crime, including the most effective and ineffective ways of dealing with it.

Successful Learning Website

<http://www.successfullearning.com.au/index.html>

Successful Learning is the title given to a series of Victorian Government initiatives that offer support and encouragement for young people who are at risk of not completing their schooling, or who are not engaged in education. The Successful Learning Website is one of these initiatives and is a partnership between the Victorian Department of Education, Employment and Training, and Victoria University. There are a number of new resources and articles recently added to this site, and it is well worth a visit!



Launceston Student Workshop

<http://www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/lsw/index.htm>

Launceston Student Workshop has for many years operated a vocational education programme for students at risk of not completing or gaining benefit from their traditional compulsory education experience. This programme has taken the form of a commercial enterprise in the manufacture of light steel & timber furniture. The A.S.T.F. has provided an injection of funding through the Priority Projects Grades 9 / 10 program to research potential new local markets and job opportunities within the region. The purpose of this research is to effect sustainable program changes which reflect these vocational opportunities and in doing so develop a 'blue-print' for this change which may be a useful

tool for other organisations in a similar geographic or developmental position.

Progress so far:

- Available information from previous research, ABS statistics and local knowledge has indicated increased opportunities in the service industries of retail, hospitality and tourism.
- Partnerships between schools, secondary colleges and local industry have strengthened, and this in turn has facilitated a potentially smoother transition from Certificate 1 to Certificate 2 courses and ultimately to employment.

Change is inevitable,
except from a vending machine.
(Anon)

Any advice, input or feedback would be genuinely welcome.

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Tools of Change: Proven Methods for Promoting Health and Environmental Citizenship

<http://www.toolsofchange.com>



This Web site, founded on the principles of community-based social marketing, offers specific tools, case studies, and a planning guide for helping people take actions and adopt habits that promote health and/or are more environmentally friendly. This Web site is designed to help people include in their programs the best practices of many other programs - practices that have already been successful in changing people's behaviour.

There is a "New User" section that outlines the purpose of the site and offers some tips for using it most effectively.

The Planning Guide section suggests approaches or maps pathways charted by the Case Studies. *"Each reader will have unique "travel preferences" and will face different circumstances. Consider the instructions as guidelines - well tested and dependable, but not inflexible."*

The Planning Guide incorporates sections on:

- ♣ Setting Objectives
- ♣ Developing Partners

- ♣ Getting Informed
- ♣ Targeting the Audience
- ♣ Choosing Tools of Change
- ♣ Financing the Program
- ♣ Measuring Achievements

Another Section provides details of the Tools Of Change (see list in box below) recommended as a result of experience gained through the programs described in the Case Studies section. *"Most of these Case Studies illustrate approaches that have worked. However, examples of potential pitfalls are also included to provide you with a realistic map of the terrain ahead."*

Prevention Strategies That Work

<http://www.air.org/cecp/preventionstrategies/>

This electronic guide describes prevention practices that K-8 public school administrators in the US have found to be effective in accelerating school performance, increasing readiness for learning, and reducing problem behaviours. Creating a safe school environment requires, among other things, preventive measures for children's behavioural and emotional problems. This guide derives from six different research partnerships between public schools and universities across the United States. Each team focused on students with (and at risk of developing) emotional and behavioural disorders. Examples of prevention strategies from each of these projects are included throughout the document. Contact information for each project can be accessed through links on the web site and at the end of the online document



Nuts and Bolts	Multifaceted Approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♣ Building Motivation Over Time ♣ Feedback ♣ Financial Incentives and Disincentives ♣ Norm Appeals ♣ Obtaining a Commitment ♣ Overcoming Specific Barriers ♣ Prompts ♣ Vivid, Personalized Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♣ Home Visits ♣ Mass Media ♣ Neighbourhood Coaches and Block Leaders ♣ Peer Support Groups ♣ School Programs that Involve the Family ♣ Word-of-mouth ♣ Work Programs that Influence the Home