Welcome back to Starlink – a new start for 2002!

My apologies for a very long gap since the previous issue early last year – for which I feel I owe readers an explanation. My father went into hospital in March for elective surgery that went horribly wrong, followed by a hospital-based infection that put him into intensive care for some weeks. He was in hospital for 6 months until he died at the end of August. Under the circumstances I had to resign from the School Focused Youth Service in Ballarat and move back to Melbourne to be on hand for him and my family. Without a job to come down to, I started by using emergency teaching as a fill-in, before taking the opportunity to start my own facilitation/consultancy business – something that had always seemed too risky a jump in the past from paid employment. Life sure has a way of throwing us into new directions at times! ☺

So … after having to take a back seat for so long, Starlink is now back for 2002, hopefully still a useful resource for you. As always, please feel free to photocopy it for others who may be interested – and the usual request for articles or items of interest for future issues please!!

May 2002 prove to be a successful and interesting year for everyone - and at the risk of sounding blatantly self-promotional, I look forward to hearing from anyone who may require an external facilitator for workshops, strategic planning, team-building or other processes! ☺

Cheers
Sue

(PS—Note change of contact details in the box on this page)

Conference: Australia And New Zealand Adolescent Health

Expanding the Vision for Youth Health and Well being

Thursday 21st March and Friday 22nd March 2002

VUT Conference Centre, 300 Flinders Street, Melbourne

Supported by: Centre for Adolescent Health, Melbourne, Centre for the Advancement of Adolescent Health, Sydney, Centre for Youth Health, Auckland

Some 90 abstracts have been received from all over Australia and New Zealand covering a number of areas.

Registration details and information on key note speakers is now available for you to download at :

http://www.copas.net.au/cah (look under "WHAT'S NEW".)

For more information contact Susan Stevens, Conference Organiser on (03) 9345 6917

> "It is better to ask some of the questions than to know all the answers." (James Thurber)

NEW CONTACT DETAILS:

Sue James
Facilitator & Consultant
18 Sycamore Street
Hoppers Crossing
VIC 3029

Phone: (03) 9974-6095
Fax: (03) 9749-1300
Mob: 0402-979-384

Gay & Lesbian Youth Suicide Data Collection Project

While gay & lesbian activists and workers with same sex attracted youth can tell us anecdotally that this group is at risk of suicide, suicidal ideation and self harming behaviours, there is limited and conflicting research and statistical data available that supports this. The project aims to establish what data is available and recommend how it might be collected in the future to establish an evidence base for future work.

Project aims:

- To document the source, scope and nature of any data that is currently collected that links youth suicide and deliberate self harming behaviours with sexuality and gender identity.
- To collect and aggregate any existing data with a view to developing a comprehensive and descriptive overview of the current situation.
- To comment of the usefulness of existing data

- To identify gaps in data collection
- To make recommendations on the information, referral and training needs of those workers at data collection points.

The project research worker is Sue Dyson, and she is keen to hear from anyone with knowledge about organisations who work with young people who may have data collection methods in place. This includes organisations in the health, welfare, recreation, counselling, juvenile justice, education, legal or any other sector and particularly those who come in contact with young people who may be confused about, or questioning their sexual orientation or who may experience or fear homophobic bullying. In addition to actual data collection, anecdotal information is also welcome.

Contact Sue on s.dyson@latrobe.edu.au, or by phone on 03 9285 5282

Media: Space Station Launches!!

By now you have probably heard of 'Irene'?! If not, Irene is a huge warehouse in Brunswick that is home to a variety of creative projects. Not least of them is Space Station! Melbourne finally has an "open-access" 'Indy' media centre, a space to use resources, meet other media activists, tap in to networks and share ideas!

Established in early November by a group of people who among other things have worked on Media Circus, Young Writers Festival, The Paper, IndyMedia, Access News / SKA TV, Voiceworks Magazine and 3CR Radio

Thus far the space is equipped with a number of net connected computers, a scanner, a printer, a half-working photocopier, a huge library of zines and other radical literature and heaps of skills to share! Space Station is also the home-base of The Paper, Trans/Actions and Melbourne IndyMedia.

Plans are underway to construct a huge library space (with city views), a meeting room (which will be available to the broader community), fix the photocopier, and run training projects, discussion nights, film screenings, reading groups etc.

We are still finding our feet, have space and resources available and welcome your involvement, ideas and curiosity so please contact us or drop in!

Thursdays are open access time from 3pm 7pm at 5 Pitt Street, Brunswick. If you wish to come by at another time just give us a call on 9343 6593 or email spacekids@myspinach.org

Streetwize Communications

Streetwize Communications has re-launched its website. Check it out at **http://www.streetwize.com.au**

The new website includes:
 a complete resource catalogue and order form
information on what's new at Streetwize
a mailing list and register form to receive the monthly e-newsletter, Get Streetwize!

Who the #!@* is Streetwize?
Through its unique networks among industry professionals, social groups, communities and individuals, Streetwize strives to communicate information on health, education, the law employment and race/gender discrimination in an entertaining, accessible and relevant format. Since its inception in 1984, more than six million comics and educational resources have been distributed throughout Australia and around the world.

> "I am trying to do two things: dare to be a radical and not a fool, which is a matter of no small difficulty."
> (James A. Garfield
> U. S. President)

Building Blocks For Youth

http://www.buildingblocksforyouth. org/

Building Blocks for Youth is an alliance of children's advocates, researchers, law enforcement professionals and community organizers that seeks to protect minority youth in the justice system and promote rational and effective justice policies

Some very useful information on this site - for example take a look at the Facts Sheets (which also counter some key myths about juvenile crime) and the Resources pages.

Friendship Buffers Children Against Depression

A recent study suggests that children are buffered against depression and loneliness by having a single close friend. The researchers state that, while group acceptance provides a sense of nurturing and self-worth, it is friendship that directly affects children's feelings of loneliness. See the Health Scout web site at **http://www.healthscout.com** and do a search for the word "friendship". The rest of the site is worth a browse too! Information on a wide variety of health and well-being issues.

Anti-Bullying Network (Scotland)

http://www.antibullying.net/

The Scottish Executive has established the Network so that teachers, parents and young people can share ideas about how bullying should be tackled. It is freely open to all. Key elements of the network are:

- A telephone information line is provided
- Conferences in various parts of Scotland provide an overview of anti-bullying strategies, highlight good practice in schools and enable teachers, young people and parents to share their experiences.
- Newsletters are distributed to schools Information packs for teachers, parents and young people are provided on request
- The web site was set up in December 1999
- Support is offered to schools and local authorities that are organising their own training activities
- A database of anti-bullying initiatives and materials is being developed.

Children have the right to be educated in an atmosphere which is free from fear. The anxiety experienced by bullied children can make it impossible for them to learn effectively. The Anti-Bullying Network is part of the Positive School Ethos Programme which is based at Moray house Institute of Education. This includes the Scottish Schools Ethos Network and the Promoting Positive Discipline Initiative. The programme as a whole seeks to bring together a range of developments which contribute to a positive learning environment, enhancing achievement.

The anti-bullying strategies being developed in schools are teaching children important lessons about things such as empathy, assertiveness, rights and responsibilities. They are also encouraging openness, honesty, self-esteem and a respect for others.

Schools, and the communities of which they are a part, are working together to improve the ways in which they care for young people, encourage better behaviour and foster good relationships. Action against bullying is part of this work.

Email: abn@mhie.ac.uk
Address:
Anti-Bullying Network
Moray House Institute of Education
University of Edinburgh
Holyrood Road
Edinburgh EH8 8AQ, UK

DEET – Standards & Accountability Website

http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/standards/

This site covers a range of issues on standards and accountability for the Victorian Department of Education, Employment & Training. It outlines all the main components of the accountability framework, and provides a wealth of useful information and resources. These include tools such as surveys and "clipons" which are available to help schools assess their benchmark data and progress in such areas as discipline and behavour, staff management and social indicators for student and staff well-being.

Welfare and Well-Being Directory for Schools

http://www.highlands.vic.edu.au/welfare/index.htm

The Highlands Region of the Victorian Department of Education has produced this excellent collection of information, tools and resources for schools to develop and enhance their approach to student welfare, including the *Welfare and Wellbeing Directory for Schools.*

Check out the various links throughout this site to find a wealth of useful information.

This directory provides information to schools to enable them to contact and use student services and community agencies in a relevant, coherent and consistent manner.

The directory aims to achieve this by describing the pathways schools should use when developing:

1. A program or service to support a student at risk.

2. A curriculum program that builds prevention and resiliency factors for students.

3. Program Material and Contributions

These aspects have been set out as a five level process through which schools can proceed to achieve the level of support and expertise they require.

The Management Assistance Program for Nonprofits

http://www.mapnp.org/

This US site offers a large range of resources related to management of non-profit organisations. Well worth the visit, as a number of these resources are also very relevant to the Australian context. See,for example,the section on Organizational Alliances at http://www.mapnp.org/library/org_ally/org_ally.htm where articles cover various topics related to alliances, partnerships, collaborations, mergers and/or acquisitions.

> "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."
>
> (Albert Einstein)

School Focused Youth Service – Evaluation

http://hnb.dhs.vic.gov.au/commcare/yafsinte.nsf/frameset/Community+Care?OpenDocument

The full evaluation documents for the Victorian School Focused Youth Service Program are available from the web page of the Community Care Division of the Department of Human Services.

Follow the hot links through the *Site Map*, then to *Youth Support Services/Reports & Publications*

There are four documents to download in PDF format:
- Final Report
- Summary
- Literature Review
- Towards Best Practice Case Studies.

YouthGas

http://www.youthgas.com/

This is an excellent site for young people, offering information on a wide range of issues.

From the site:

Q: What is YouthGAS?

A: Networking, resources, information, opportunities, events, contacts and collaboration for young people, youth groups and the youth sector in Australia. Starting out as a hobby, it is taking on a much greater role in absence of a similar service at a national, state and local level in Australia.

Using its fresh and unique insight into the Australian youth sector, YouthGAS is a website that provides information to and for youth groups, youth service organisations and young people around Australia and for the first time, brings a huge cross section of youth sector together. It is continually updated, checked and kept current.

One of the biggest issues with young people is getting information to them and their communities and YouthGAS tries to make this a little better off, by providing a wealth of information, so that young people and the youth sector can be more aware of what opportunities exist.

YouthGAS has one of the best collection of youth-related links on the internet, the only collection in the country of youth participation events covering every state and territory, a huge collection of youth-sector specific resources, an email group, discussion forum and the only collection of contacts for local youth advisory groups covering the nation.

YouthGAS has received nation-wide positive feedback from many youth organisations, groups and government departments / non-government bodies and will be continuing to grow, both as a vital information source and for networking opportunities for the entire Australian youth sector.

Youth in Decision-Making

Youth in Decision-Making: A Study on the Impacts of Youth on Adults and Organizations has been released by Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, a Division of National 4-H Council and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The study is an in-depth examination of data collected from 19 youth and 29 adults from 15 organizations across the country. A key finding is that involving young people in organizational and community decision-making has powerful and positive effects on adults and organizations. Download the report from the "Downloadable Resources" section of the *At the Table* web site: **http://www.atthetable.org** And while you're there, check out the rest of the site too! A huge range of resources for promoting youth governance. (*At the Table* is a project of the *Innovation Center*, and it's worth following the links to the Innovation Center home site as well.)

Getting Results: Developing Safe and Healthy Kids

http://www.californiahealthykids.org

This site publishes a range of information, which includes two action guides, one on alcohol, drug and violence prevention; one on tobacco use and prevention education. There is also some information about an update on youth development as a prevention strategy: Although only the first section of the complete guide is currently available online, visit the site and bookmark it to get later sections as they are posted.

The shrewd guess, the fertile hypothesis, the courageous leap to a tentative conclusion — these are the most valuable coin of the thinker at work. But in most schools guessing is heavily penalized and is associated somehow with laziness.

Jerome S. Bruner (b. 1915) U.S. psychologist, author, educational reformer, in *The Process of Education*

The Partnership Handbook

http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/common/partners/partner.shtml
The Partnership Handbook and accompanying Facilitators Guide are excellent resources, downloadable from the this site:

"Strong, viable partnerships don't just happen. They need to be understood, properly developed and well maintained. Skills, knowledge and experience are required when we bring people together to form useful and productive partnerships. Many of us do not feel confident in each and every aspect of partnering or, if we do, we may not be able to share our knowledge effectively with others. The Partnership Handbook has been developed by the Labour Market Learning and Development Unit at Human Resources Development Canada to help people learn more about what community-based partnerships are and to offer suggestions about how to be effective in them. It provides tools and tips to enhance partnerships, and outlines what is needed to move forward together."

A Facilitator's Guide is also available which can be used to facilitate discussion among people interested in forming partnerships or among members of existing partnerships who want to see where they are at and where they might be going. The Guide contains a series of exercises plus a role play.

The key elements of the Partnership Handbook will be useful not only for community partnerships but for any collaborative venture in which you may be involved. It can be used as desired, one section at a time or as a complete training handbook going from cover to cover. Used on your own or with your partnership group, it can serve as a point of reference or as a training tool.

The two documents are available for download in Word 6 format which will make it possible for facilitators to go into the Facilitator's Guide and revise handouts, or into the Handbook itself to develop additional handouts tailored to the specific needs of their participants."

For a hard copy of one or both of these documents, e-mail:
ruth.mckay@hrdc-drhc.gc.ca

Mid South Delta Initiative – Toolbox

http://www.msdi.org/tools/toolbox.html

This is the entry page for a dynamic "toolbox" of useful development resources for individuals and organizations that are engaged in community building work.

These resources are organized into the following sections:
- Fundraising
- Community Capacity Building
- Collaboration
- Data/Mapping Resources
- Leadership Resources

The toolbox is part of the The Mid South Delta Initiative (MSDI), which *represents a partnership between Delta communities in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF). The*

initiative focuses on 55 contiguous counties and parishes along the Mississippi River. This long-term community and leadership development initiative incorporates:

- *Capacity building and project grants and technical assistance.*
- *Support for expanding regional leadership and economic policy initiatives, and*
- *Technical assistance and support networks for groups and organizations that work intensely with community based programs in the region.*

The Foundation and its partners are creating a "learning community" to share ideas, information, best practices, and tools about building the capacity of people and communities to increase economic opportunities.