STARLINK

When it Comes to High Schools, Does Size Matter?
http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/34/31/3431.pdf

This issue of *The Progress of Education Reform 1999-2001* provides a brief review of major research findings on the costs and benefits of small schools, their impact on student achievement, and policies that either hinder or facilitate their development. It contains highlights of several reports and studies of small schools

Kids and Community
http://www.planning.org/kidsandcommunity/

A US based website for exploring communities. Information for children about community planning, with several good activities suggested to help them learn about and connect with their local community.

Classroom Clipart
http://classroomclipart.com/

This site houses over 23,000 images, clipart, illustrations and photographs. Unlimited downloads free to all K-12 students; reasonable rates for one year subscriptions for others or for schools. For example: Personal membership - $29.95 USD; School / Library with 5 user names & passwords - $99.00 USD.

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Continuing Education Resource for Schools: http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling

This excellent resource is only one of the many available from the UCLA School Mental Health Project Center for Mental Health in Schools. To find it, go to the home page and click on *Materials Developed by the Center* then *Continuing Education Modules.*

While you're there, you may like to check out the other great resources also available. Although developed within the US, most of the material is also highly applicable for Australia.

This is a set of continuing education modules specifically designed to help schools design regular classrooms to provide all students with an equal opportunity to succeed at school. Particular attention is given to how to engage and re-engage students who are not performing well. An accompanying set of readings and resource tools is also available.

The material in this continuing education document is designed as an evolving set of modules and units. The material can be read and taught in a straight forward sequence, or one or more parts can be combined into a personalized course. This design allows learners to approach the material as they would use an Internet website (i.e., exploring specific topics of immediate interest and then going over the rest in any order that feels comfortable). The first module is meant to provide a big picture framework for understanding barriers to learning and how school reforms need to expand in order to effectively address such barriers. This is essential if all youngsters are to have an equal opportunity to success at school. Each of the units in the second module focus on classroom practices. Finally, the third module explores the roles teachers need to play in ensuring their school develops a comprehensive approach to addressing barriers to learning. (244pp; Hard copy $19.00 USD, Free download 1.83MB)

I have come to believe that a great teacher is a great artist . . . [Teaching may] even be the greatest of the arts since the medium is the human mind and spirit. (John Steinbeck)

Also available is a set of readings and the beginning of a tool kit intended to accompany the continuing education module . (173pp; Hard copy $10.50 USD, Free download 1.05MB)

For more information contact **Perry Nelson** (Center Coordinator) or **Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor** (Center Co-Directors) UCLA, School Mental Health Project/Center for Mental Health in Schools Box 951563 Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563 Email: **smhp@ucla.edu** Website: **http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu**

The Purple Starfish

The Purple Starfish in Kaniva, Victoria, is using a number of initiatives to promote the local community, youth and local economy. One of the things they are hoping to create is a transportable model that other communities can use. Their site is well worth visiting!

http://www.purplestarfish.com.au

One day, a young boy walked along the beach and saw thousands of purple starfish that had been washed up on the shore. They were dying in the heat of the midday sun. He started picking them up one by one and throwing them back into the sea. An old man came along and, watching the boy, asked him why he was bothering. He said, "What difference can you make when there are so many of them?" The young boy, as he picked up the next one and returned it to the sea, replied, "Well, I made a difference to that one!"

The old man is like the organisations and individuals who tell us the problems are too big and that tiny country towns are not sustainable. However, at the Starfish we believe that collectively we can make a difference in our community through social entrepreneurship.

The Bub Hub

If you work with babies and toddlers or need to find resources to pass on to parents, this site is well worth visiting. There are many web pages of information, including directories of local services and important information on parenting and baby care.

Sample topics include:

- Pregnancy & birth: maternity wear shops, local hospitals, childbirth services, pregnancy massage
- Setting up nursery: checklists, local nursery stores, gifts
- Baby care: feeding info, sleeping & settling, bathing, baby massage, local clothing shops
- Health & safety: child health clinics, safety hints & tips
- Parenting resources: local & national resources, child care, help & support lines

- Development: toy shops, toy hire, local swim schools
- Going out/having fun: child car seats, playparks, cinemas, restaurants

In some ways, a vast 'value-added' Yellow Pages Directory, with a great deal of helpful information as well as links to commercial providers, including those with mail or online ordering.

State specific sites are:

VIC: **http://www.vic.bubhub.com.au**

NSW: **http://www.nsw.bubhub.com.au**

QLD: **http://www.qld.bubhub.com.au**

SA: **http://www.sa.bubhub.com.au**

WA: **http://www.wa.bubhub.com.au**

Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania and Northern Territory sites are under construction. It is anticipated they will be ready for official launch in December 2003.

Child Trends

http://www.childtrends.org/ HomePg.asp

This US-based site is *dedicated to improving the lives of children by conducting research and providing science-based information to improve the decisions, programs, and policies that affect children.*

Although research data is based on American findings, there are nevertheless several interesting reports and articles where themes are also relevant for Australia.

Examples of recent material:

- The First Time: Characteristics of Teens' First Sexual Relationships
- How Children Are Doing: The Mismatch Between Public Perception and Statistical Reality
- Spring 2003 Issue of The Child Indicator (a newsletter about developments within the child and youth indicators field)
- Left Unsupervised: A Look at the Most Vulnerable Children
- The Uses and Misuses of Social Indicators

> It is useless for sheep to pass resolutions in favour of vegetarianism while wolves remain of a different opinion

Better Schools Australia

http://www.users.bigpond.com/ivan.webb/quality/schools

Developed and maintained by Ivan Webb (Launceston, Tasmania) this site is an excellent resource about school improvement. Although it is targeted for schools, many of the ideas are very broadly applicable for anyone working to improve an organisation or community!

Use the index page to browse the site or work your way through the Action Plan menu at the top of the page. Well worth visiting and adding to your bookmarks!

The site contains a wealth of information and *outlines a comprehensive strategy including* :

- A Systems approach
- A focus on quality
- Working together
- Working ON the system
- Working WITH people
- Great governance
- Continuous, sustainable improvement
- Making things easier first

What We Know About Successful School Leadership

http://www.cepa.gse.rutgers.edu

This report has been written by K. Leithwood & C. Riehl of the Laboratory for Student Success, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA (2003) It is available in both abbreviated and full formats, and makes for thought-provoking reading!

Take the link from the home page to *Leadership Research*.

The report discusses research-based conclusions about successful school leadership:

- *Leadership has significant effects on student learning, second only to the quality of curriculum and teachers' instruction*
- *Currently administrators and teacher leaders provide most of the leadership in schools, but other potential sources of leadership exist*

- *A core set of leadership practices form the 'basics' of effective leadership and are valuable in almost all educational contexts: setting directions, developing people and developing the organisation.*

… Effective leaders help the school to become a professional learning community to support the performance of all key workers, including teachers and students.

Citizenship Guides (US)

http://www.crf-usa.org/cetta/lessons.htm

Two complete training guides in citizenship for young people, available in PDF format for download. These manuals were developed for the AmeriCorps in the US, whose members serve with local and national organizations to meet community needs while earning education awards to help finance college or training.

Both guides, while developed for an American audience contain a great deal of information useful or adaptable elsewhere, along with many practical group or classroom activities.

A Guide to Effective Citizenship Through AmeriCorps

This handbook is divided into ten two-hour modules based on four elements essential to active citizenship: knowledge, skills, attitudes, and action. Each module has two sessions: a content session provides activities to help members delve into the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of effective citizenship; an action session that guides members through a service project in their community.

A Facilitator's Guide for By The People

The lessons within this guide draw on projects and programs implemented by Ameri-Corps members. Classroom activities will introduce citizenship skills and concepts that AmeriCorps members can apply to their own projects in the field. Follow-up sessions will provide opportunity for reflection and evaluation as members report on how they applied citizenship concepts and skills they learned in the classroom.

Smart Communities

http://www.smartcommunities.org

A Smart Community is a community that has made a conscious effort to use information technology to transform life and work within its region in significant and fundamental, rather than incremental, ways.

The World Foundation for Smart Communities is a nonprofit educational organization founded to promote the concept and facilitate the implementation of "smart communities" -- communities using information technology as a catalyst for transforming life and work to meet the challenge of the new millennium.

Apart from several interesting articles in the library, two very comprehensive guides are available by clicking on links from the home page: The Smart Communities Guidebook and The Smart Communities Implementation Guidebook.

> **Even in this era of growing cynicism and shriveling resources, local groups in many parts of the country are determined to mobilize political will around achieving the tangible outcomes that the public values. Individuals and organizations are forming coalitions and acting together because they have found that fragmented, piecemeal, narrowly categorical approaches do not achieve their goals.**
> **(Lisbeth Schorr)**

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

http://www.ascd.org/

Founded in 1943, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) is an international, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that represents 160,000 educators from more than 135 countries and 66 affiliates. Our members span the entire profession of educators: superintendents, supervisors, principals, teachers, professors of education, and school board members.

As our name reflects, ASCD was initially envisioned to represent curriculum and supervision issues. Over the years, our focus has changed. We now address all aspects of effective teaching and learning, such as professional development, educational leadership and capacity building.

ASCD offers broad, multiple perspectives, across all education professions, in reporting key policies and practices. Because we represent all educators, we are able to focus solely on professional practice within the context of "Is it good for the children?" rather than what is reflective of a specific educator role. In short, ASCD reflects the conscience and content of education.
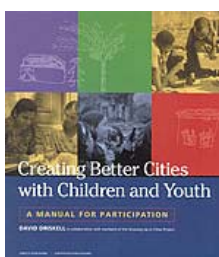
On this site you'll find a wide range of articles and resources on a number of educational topics. Also worthwhile is the section on professional development – take 15-20 minutes to complete an online survey to help identify the strengths and needs of school's professional development program.

Creating Better Cities with Children and Youth: A Manual for Participation

http://www.earthscan.co.uk/asp/bookdetails.asp?key=3702

This manual is written by David Driskell and published by Earthscan, a UK based publishing house specialising in books on environment and sustainable development. It can be purchased online from this site, or from the US at Amazon.com.

A practical manual on how to conceptualize, structure and facilitate the participation of young people in the community development process. It is an important tool for urban planners, municipal officials, community development staff, non-governmental organizations, educators, youth-serving agencies, youth advocates, and others who are involved in the community development process. It offers inspiration to all who believe in the value of community education and empowerment as a fundamental building block of a vibrant and resilient civil society, and who feel concern for young people and the quality of their lives.

National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice

http://www.uiowa.edu/~nrcfcp/

This website has a wide range of resources available to read online or download. They are not easy to spot from the home page however! You need to use the navigation "wheel" with six spokes on the right hand side of the page. Click on Publications and Library to access several articles, reports and manuals.

The National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice provides technical assistance, staff training, research and evaluation, and library research on family-based programs and issues to public and private human services agencies in states, counties, and communities across the United States. The Center has worked in child welfare, mental health, juvenile justice, community action, county extension, Head Start, and job training programs.

Perhaps of particular interest to Starlink readers are the following articles and reports.

> **Teachers can help to lighten a depressed student's load by creating a comfortable class-room where the student knows he/she is cared for and where the student doesn't have a time limit to suddenly cheer up.**
>
> **(Alexandra Madison)**

Community-Centered Practice to Strengthen Families and Neighborhoods: The Patch Approach

Patch-based community social work is an approach to practice in the human services developed in Britain in the last twenty years. Patch is now showing itself in Iowa and Pennsylvania to have the potential to make an important contribution to reorienting services to children and families in the United States. The term "patch" refers to a limited geographical area which is served by a locally-based team of human service workers. It is also used to refer to the approach.

Strengthening Families and Neighborhoods: A Community-Centered Approach.
Final Report on the Iowa Patch Project.

Achieving Permanency for Teens: Lessons Learned From a Demonstration Project
Achieving permanency for older children has long been a challenge for child welfare practitioners. For children who grow up in the child welfare system, experiencing repeated placements and relationship disruptions, the likelihood of establishing permanent family relationships decreases. Yet by all indications, children who remain in unstable placements have a higher likelihood of moving on to unstable adulthood, at risk for continued long-term social and emotional problems.

Iowa's Permanency for Teens Project (PTP) was a three-year demonstration project funded by the Administration for Children, Youth and Families (90-CO-0737). The project was a collaborative effort between the Iowa Department of Human Services and Four Oaks, Inc., a private non-profit agency serving children and families throughout the state. Iowa Permanency for Teens was designed specifically to facilitate permanent placements and/or other permanent connections for thirty Iowa teenagers who were legally free for adoption through termination of parental rights. An independent evaluation of Permanency for Teens was conducted by the National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice, The University of Iowa School of Social Work.

Schools Online

http://www.schoolsonline.org/index.htm

Several interesting resources on this site, including:

- **Web Mentoring Website** – a self-paced online course for teachers to learn about the Internet and the World Wide Web, from basic usage to how to integrate it as a tool into classroom activities. Throughout the course, links to other useful websites are provided.
- **Web Mentoring Booklet** – downloadable as a PDF file. A guide to getting started with the internet, including how to set up and connect a computer.
- **Connectivity Guide** – an easy to understand introduction to internet connectivity solutions

Schools Online is a public benefit organization whose mission is to help students gain access and use the communication and information resources of the Internet for learning and cross-cultural dialogue. We accomplish this by providing appropriate technol-ogy and Internet access, developing locally-driven and sustainable Internet Learning Centers, facilitating teacher professional development, cultivating online cross-cultural projects, and sharing our knowledge and experience. Since 1996, over 5,700 under-served schools in the US and over 400 schools in 35 other countries have received equipment and support necessary to get online.

Schools Online assesses the state of connectivity in each local environment and works with each country's telecom providers and local businesses to provide affordable lease-lines, ISDN and wireless technologies, where possible. Students work together on collaborative projects over the Internet to solve problems affecting their every day lives. Teachers are trained to take steps beyond their traditional experiences in education to identify, use and share their most effective practices to maximize Internet use.

The Forum For Youth Investment

http://www.forumforyouthinvestment.org/index.htm

Go to the Site Index here for a long list of interesting publications to read online or download. For example:

- Finding Common Agendas: How Young People are Being Engaged in Community Change Efforts
- Can We Promote Youth Development? Clearing the Stumbling Blocks to Progress in Forging a Public Agenda for Youth Involvement and Investment
- Community Development and Youth Development: The Potential for Convergence
- Finding Common Ground: Toward A Common Vision, Analysis, and Accountability for Youth