

STARLINK

Issue 54

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A Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all Starlink readers!

I apologise for the long gap since the last issue of Starlink! Unfortunately several other demands both personally and with work have significantly delayed completion of this edition.

I hope you find the items here useful—and you can look forward to a return to far more regular issues of Starlink for 2005!

Cheers
Sue



Starlink is proudly sponsored by



Asking the Right Questions A School Change Toolkit <http://www.mcrel.org/toolkit/>

On this site you will find a complete training and resource package to assist schools interested in implementing positive change. An excellent resource, this site is not one that can be covered in a single visit – it is definitely one to add to your bookmarks!

The site provides information about systems theory and describes an effective way to view school systems - by looking at them as consisting of three domains. Using this perspective can help you simplify the complexity of school systems, adopt multiple ways of viewing them, and better understand the interconnectivity of their various parts.

In short, this site is intended to help you step away from the action in order to see the big picture of what's happening in your school system. We refer to this as taking a "balcony view." To help you take this "balcony view," this site encourages you to use needs assessment and evaluation processes to engage in reflective inquiry. It also provides guidance about which issues you might choose to focus on first when initiating a new systemic reform effort. This guidance is offered in view of the school factors that have been shown to have the biggest impact on student outcomes.

Citizen Science Toolbox

<http://www.coastal.crc.org.au/toolbox/index.asp>

A very useful resource, this Australian site is full of practical strategies and tools for engaging stakeholders in decision-making.

The Citizen Science Toolbox is a free resource of principles and strategies to enhance meaningful stakeholder involvement in decision-making. Stakeholders include not only communities, but also scientists and decision-makers. Meaningful involvement of all stakeholders occurs through a commitment to social learning - learning on the part of communities, other stakeholders and institutions.

One of the key elements of using the Toolbox is that strategies need to be tailored to fit unique issues and stakeholders. In many cases, a combination of different tools is required to effectively involve all stakeholders in decision-making.

Included in the Toolbox:

- Over 60 community involvement tools, from public meetings to consensus conferences
- Case studies of the uses of various tools and the reflections of stakeholders who participated

Think funny. Look for the flip side of situations, and make outrageous thoughts fun.

Adopt a playful attitude. Stay open to silly or nonconformist thoughts and behaviours.

Be first to laugh. Try to be the first to find humour in stressful situations.

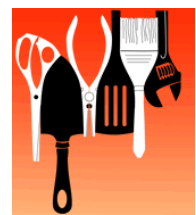
Laugh with, not at. Promote healthy, constructive humour.

Laugh at yourself. Take work seriously. But not too seriously.

(From Southwest Airlines by way of Dennis Perkins, author of *Leading at the Edge*)

- An annotated bibliography of over 500 citizen science references
- Theoretical discussions of citizen science issues

While the Toolbox has a focus on coastal and catchment environments, the principles and tools can be used in many other areas for a wide range of issues.



Hear By Right

<http://www.nya.org.uk/hearbyright/home.asp?cid=180&cats=215>

This UK based site provides information about the Hear By Right program and resources:

Hear by Right is a tried and tested standards framework for organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people.

The Hear By Right pack is available for purchase at a cost of 10 UK pounds. However most of the material in the pack can also be downloaded free from their website.

This website has been designed for anyone already using Hear By Right, thinking about using Hear By Right, or thinking about children and young people's active involvement in general.

On this website you can:

- Find out more about Hear By Right
- Download Hear By Right briefings and templates
- Visit the Hear By Right in Action section to view completed 'mapping and planning' templates, and completed 'impact of organisational change' templates - contributed by a diverse range of existing Hear By Right users.

- View Case Studies of the ways in which different organisations have made use of Hear By Right
- Find out how to share your own learning from using Hear By Right, or working to integrate the active involvement of children and young people into an organisation.
- Gain inspiration and ideas for ensuring that young people are genuinely, effectively and actively involved in all decisions that affect them.



Wodonga Primary School Internet

<http://www.wodonga-ps.vic.edu.au/index.html>

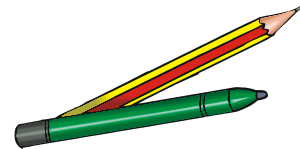
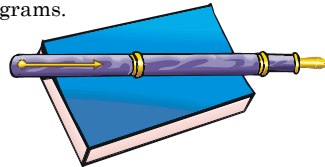
In addition to providing information about the school, Wodonga Primary School's website is a great resource for others!

Take the links from the home page to Search Engines and Websites. Here you will find very comprehensive collections of child safe search engines and terrific information and educational sites for children.

The Library link not only provides information about the school's library collection and

use, but also includes classroom activities to help children learn the Dewey catalogue system and other research skills.

Wodonga Primary School must be congratulated on their interesting and really useful website! Contact the school to learn more about their programs.



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Alcohol Info

<http://www.alcoholinfo.nsw.gov.au/>

This website contains a wide range of resources and other information about changing the culture of alcohol use

Alcoholinfo is the official NSW Government website on alcohol issues. It outlines Government policies on alcohol including the responsible supply and consumption of alcohol, alcohol advertising and the role of parents, families, industry and the broader community in reducing alcohol abuse.

It also contains the NSW Government's response to last year's summit on alcohol abuse, Changing the Culture of Alcohol Abuse in New South Wales.

**The world is moving so fast
these days that the man who
says it can't be done is
generally interrupted by
someone doing it.
(Elbert Hubbard)**

Schools Achieving Success

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/achievementsuccess/index.shtml>

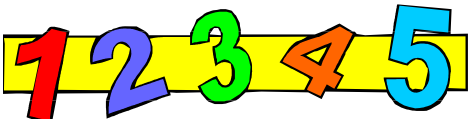
This UK report, published by the Department for Education and Skills, makes for interesting reading.

The main DES website is at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/index.shtml> and Starlink readers may also like to take a look at the DES Curriculum Online page at <http://www.curriculumonline.gov.uk/Default.htm>

Trends and issues related to education are indeed global! ☺

ASCD - For the Success of All Learners

<http://www.ascd.org/>



A wealth of resources can be found on this site. For example, see the list of links in the "Education Issues" in the top menu, including: brain and learning; constructivism; mentoring; school culture & climate. In each case there is a brief explanation of the topic, with further links to articles, information and products available through ASCD on that topic.

Founded in 1943, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that represents 160,000 educators from more than 135 countries and more

than 60 affiliates. Our members span the entire profession of educators—superintendents, supervisors, principals, teachers, professors of education, and school board members.

We 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.



**If your actions inspire others
to dream more, learn more,
do more and become more,
you are a leader.
(John Quincy Adams)**

NSW Commission for Children and Young People

<http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/>

This website provides information about the role and work of the NSW Commission for Children and Young People, as well as providing links to useful tools, strategies and other resources. These resources include:

Exchange – a quarterly newsletter published online.

<http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/exchange/>

There is also a link to archived issues at the bottom of the page.

Being Child Safe and Child Friendly

<http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/childfriendly/>

Most children and young people enjoy participating in the activities and services provided by community organisations. The staff, volunteers and students on work experience with these organisations make a valuable contribution to kids' lives. In this section you will find sensible advice, information and resources that will help your organisation, program or group to promote child-safe and child-friendly policies and practices.

There are a number of resources for download here, including a handy checklist for creating a child-safe and child-friendly environment.



nsw commission for
children & young people

Advocacy Training—Speak Up Speak Out

<http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/ourwork/Advocacy.html>

Speak Up, Speak Out! training program empowers and skills up young people to be advocates. It provides participants with the opportunity to explore the knowledge, skills and strategies to advocate effectively for themselves and their issues.

The course draws upon findings from research and good practice. The program contains 3 modules:

- What is Advocacy?
- Meeting and Influencing People
- Media and Government

Speak Up, Speak Out! is competency based and an accredited short course under NSW VETAB guidelines. The program package consists of facilitators, guide, participant's workbook and a full set of overheads.

The Commission is eager to roll the program out to professional training organisations and agencies who work with and for children and young people. Organisations interested in being licensed to deliver the program should contact the Senior Training Officer at the Commission kids@kids.nsw.gov.au



Getting Along

Among many other resources on their website, Iowa State University has four excellent little publications designed to help parents with young children. These are available in PDF format:

Getting Along: Taming the TV
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1650.pdf>

Getting Along: Sibling Fights
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1651.pdf>

Getting Along: Brothers and Sisters
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1652.pdf>

Getting Along: When I'm Angry
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1653.pdf>

If you have trouble linking directly to the above, you can find them listed at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/pubs/fa.htm>

You may also like to check out the very long list of other publications on that page – or the other long list of publications in relation to Child Development at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/pubs/ch.htm>



ADHD Backlash In Virginia

A series of articles in the Sacramento Bee in 2002 discussed growing concerns with how children are diagnosed as ADHD and prescribed medication. Research by Gretchen LeFever, a professor at Eastern Virginia Medical School, is cited as suggesting significant overdiagnosis and related concerns.

In Virginia, reports of the findings led to hearings and community forums and a bill by the legislature prohibiting school personnel from recommending psychotropic medications for students.

See the series of stories in the Sacramento Bee at:

<http://www.sacbee.com/content/news/story/3313232p-4344561c.html>

<http://www.sacbee.com/content/news/story/3313233p-4344565c.html>

<http://www.sacbee.com/content/news/story/3313235p-4344558c.html>

<http://www.sacbee.com/content/news/story/3313237p-4344555c.html>

<http://www.sacbee.com/content/news/projects/medication/story/3328394p-4356008c.html>

Australian Institute of Criminology

<http://www.aic.gov.au/>

The Australian Institute of Criminology is the national focus for the study of crime and criminal justice in Australia and for the dissemination of criminal justice information. The Institute draws on information supplied to it by a wide variety of sources and its policy advice is objective and independent.

Starlink readers may be interested in several of the resources and publications to be found on this site. Check out their list of recently released publications, for example. These include:

- Childhood Victimization as Indicators of Adult Victimization
- Understanding Male Domestic Partner Abusers
- Crimestoppers Victoria, An Evaluation



National Drug Research Institute

<http://www.curtin.edu.au/curtin/centre/ncrpd/>

Visit this site for a range of research papers, reports and findings in the field of drug use prevention and harm minimisation.

Mission: To conduct and disseminate high quality research that contributes to the primary prevention of harmful drug use and the reduction of drug related harm.

The Institute was founded in 1986 as one of two Centres of Excellence in drug research by the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse, now known as the National Drug Strategy.

Core funding is provided by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, through the National Drug Strategy, with additional research funding coming from a range of national and international sources. Originally known as the National Centre for Research into Prevention of Drug Abuse (NCRPDA), the new name was chosen to reflect the awarding of Research Institute status by Curtin University of Technology in September 1999, in recognition of the organisation's growing reputation and size.

NDRI currently employs 30 research staff, making it one of the largest centres of drug research expertise in Australia. Recognising that problems associated with drug use are complex in their origins, a multi-disciplinary approach to research is pursued. This is reflected in the experience of the Institute's staff, who are drawn from a range of disciplines including psychology, epidemiology, public health, sociology and anthropology.

The Institute has been designated a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for research into the Prevention and Control of Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

Research activities are grouped into four broad categories:

- Alcohol Policy
- Community and School Interventions
- Illicit Drug Use
- Substance Use Among Indigenous Australians

SEDL Letter Online

<http://www.sedl.org/pubs/sedletter/>

SEDL Letter is an interesting publication, available online in HTML or PDF formats. It is produced by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) in the United States. Check out the current issue: *Changing High Schools, Changing Our Future*. Or visit the archive area for past issues.

For example, in an article in the May 2002 issue: *The Real Causes Of Higher Achievement*, Mike Schmoker examines strategies for bringing higher achievement within reach for most schools. The article begins:

Too many educators suffer from the assumption that student achievement is largely a function of factors over which we have little or no control. The logic of this assumption is compelling: well-situated schools perform

well; poor and minority schools don't — and can't.

It is time to dump this assumption. It should be replaced by a new one: Achievement is primarily a function of two things: (1) What we teach and (2) how we teach.

There is great hope in this for students and educators alike. If true, then we can't dodge the fact that from the district level to the classroom, opportunities abound for us to achieve better results — confidently, inexorably — with our students. How strong is the evidence for this assumption?

To read more, go to <http://www.sedl.org/pubs/sedletter/v14n02/1.html>



National Child Care Information Center

<http://www.nccic.org>

The National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC), a project of the Child Care Bureau, is a national resource that links information and people to complement, enhance, and promote the child care delivery system, working to ensure that all children and families have access to high-quality comprehensive services.

You will find a wide range of resources here – information, tools, tips and reports – related to childcare. The site is well worth adding to your bookmarks for a return visit, or perhaps a number of visits!

Use keywords to search their online library for specific topics. Or use the Quick Search function to find prepared lists of articles on frequently requested topics. An example of the latter is Early Childhood Partnerships, with a total of 101 results!

On the NCCIC site, you may also like to check out the materials for the Good Start, Grow Smart initiative.



Who you are speaks so loudly I can't hear what you're saying.

(Ralph Waldo Emerson)

Special Interest Groups

For your information, a list of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) associated with the American Educational Research Association (AERA) is available online.

Each of these SIGs has its own website, providing a set of invaluable resources. The AERA home page is: <http://www.aera.net/> and the SIGs sites list can be found at: <http://www.aera.net/sigs/sigsites.htm>

Recommended!

As well, you may be particularly interested in the *Communication of Research* SIG site.

This includes links to some of the best educational e-journals that are peer-reviewed, full text, and accessible without cost. The site can be located at:

<http://aera-cr.ed.asu.edu/links.html>

Worth visiting!

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Joy is the feeling of grinning
on the inside. (Dr M Colgrove)

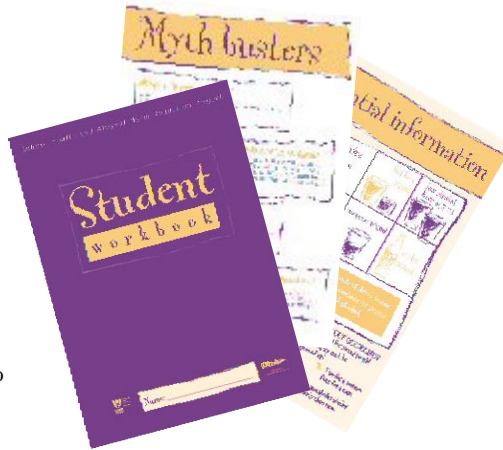
School Health and Alcohol Harm Reduction Project

<http://www.ndri.curtin.edu.au/shahrp/>

The School Health and Alcohol Harm Reduction Project (SHAHRP) and SHAHRP 2000 are research studies conducted over a seven year period with aims to reduce alcohol related harm among secondary school students.

The studies are being conducted by the National Drug Research Institute and are funded by Healthway, the Western Australian Health Promotion Foundation.

The studies reflect the Australian National Drug Strategy by adopting a harm minimisation approach, in this case, by providing three phases of alcohol harm reduction lessons during secondary school and aiming to reduce the level of alcohol related harms in students who drink alcohol, and to reduce the harms experienced by those students who do not drink alcohol but interact with others who do drink.



The SHAHRP study focuses on the development and implementation of a classroom-based alcohol education program. It combines an evidence-based harm minimisation intervention with longitudinal measures of alcohol-related harm to assess change in the study students alcohol-related experiences.

The critical evidence-based features of the SHAHRP intervention were drawn from a range of health and drug education program and research literature, and in particular, published evaluation studies and research that demonstrated some potential for behaviour change in the target population.

Curriculum materials include a teachers' workbook and two student workbooks.

These can be downloaded at no charge from this website, and hard copies are available for purchase.

Shooting for the Sun

<http://www.emcf.org/programs/student/shootingforthesun.htm>

Shooting for the Sun: The Message of Middle School Reform is a collection of Hayes Mizell's speeches and essays on improving student success in the middle grades. It is available online and is free to download.

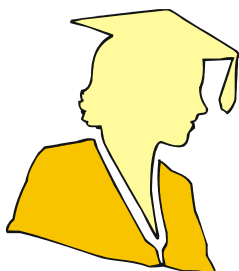
Mizell is director of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation's Program for Student Achievement in the United States. In *Shooting for the Sun*, he discusses the challenges that teachers and principals face in their work to improve student achievement in grades six, seven and eight and also offers suggestions on how schools can more effectively educate our nation's youth.

A fifth lesson is that school reform has no place for ill-conceived, superficial, half-hearted, a dash-here-and-a-dollop-there staff development, descriptions that still apply to most of what passes for staff development in this nation. We now know that what improves classroom practice and school leadership is tailored, intensive, sustained staff development that includes follow up support, practice, feedback, and evaluation. There simply is no excuse for taking the time of teachers and principals to participate in anything else.
(Hayes Mizell)

Resource Center for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention

<http://www.etr.org/recapp/>

ReCAPP provides practical tools and information to effectively reduce sexual risk-taking behaviors. Teachers and Health Educators will find up-to-date, evaluated programming materials to help with their work with teens. We want to serve as a bridge between front line educators and the researchers who are analyzing how educational and youth development programs can best make an impact on the rate of teen pregnancy. We want to help make your efforts to reduce teen pregnancy as effective as possible.



A true teacher is not the one with the most knowledge, but one who causes the most others to have knowledge. A true leader is not the one with the most followers, but one who creates the most leaders.
(Neal Donald Walsch, Author)

