

Welcome to the first newsletter for *Wellbeing Australia*. This organization was previously known as *Emotional Literacy Australia*.

Although emotional literacy is still a central focus we have changed to '**Wellbeing**' as this encompasses the breadth of what we hope to address and achieve as a network of individuals committed to the emotional and social well being of individuals, schools and the future of Australian society.

Please share with us what is happening in your area. What work are you doing and how does this fit in with wellbeing in your school or organization? We will post information, articles and resources to develop social and emotional literacy up on the website <http://www.wellbeingaustralia.com.au>

. There are several new items on the website which you may find useful: These include:

- A review of the book "Empathic Intelligence"
- a checklist for emotional literacy and wellbeing in your school which will help identify what is working well and areas for development.
- tips for mood management
- A paper on repairing and rebuilding teacher-student relationships
- a guide to setting up a mentoring program

Here is a brief overview of the value of mentoring by Alison Soutter who has set up several such programs in New South Wales.

Mentoring

Mentoring is an effective school intervention to help children and young people build up their social and emotional abilities. Adults make the most effective mentors because children and young people today are starved of adult attention in comparison with previous generations. At the same time there are many more retired people in the community who would like to help children and young people. These people can make good mentors since they open up the semi-closed community of the school. In such a community it can happen that some children are disregarded or even disliked. Mentors coming in to the school can change the prevailing view. Children are astonished that an adult would give up their time to come to school to help them. This can change their attitude to themselves and to schooling. If the program is well structured they can learn skills such as planning, goal setting, winning and losing in a weekly one-to-one session with their mentor. Such programs need to last for a year but 30 minutes per week is sufficient. The secret of a good program is that no-one gets bored

and that the mentor is completely reliable. The results of a good structured mentoring program are extraordinary. Students improve in both attendance and behaviour. The change in their attitudes means that they continue to improve long after the program finishes.

Book Reviews : We are looking for someone to review "*Children of the Lucky Country? How Australia has turned its back on children and why children matter*" by Australian of the Year Fiona Stanley and colleagues. If you have read this – or other books you believe colleagues would like to hear about please let us know what you think. It is currently on offer at Big W!

Conferences

Fiona Stanley was one of the speakers at the ARACY conference in Adelaide on March 3rd. This was entitled "Creating Environments that Support Children and Families" Information can be downloaded from http://www.aracy.org.au/nonarcnetwork_events

Southside Education is a new model for education in Queensland. It aims to re-engage young people in a small school community and in the wider community. Students learn about democratic processes by practising citizenship skills at school and at community level. Students share in collaborative decision making in the school, are encouraged to participate in community/youth forums and to become involved in community projects.

Southside Education will be showcasing at the Learning Choices Expo in May (24th / 25th) along with 20 other exemplary programs. Be quick as places are limited and filling fast.

For more information visit: http://www.dsf.org.au/learningchoices/expo_2006.php

Please let us know of any conferences you have attended or are upcoming that are relevant to wellbeing so that we can distribute information on the website. The more notice the better.

Letting people know about Wellbeing Australia

Please feel free to distribute this newsletter to your own networks and other interested colleagues. Any feedback would also be helpful.

You are receiving this because you have expressed an interest in this organization. Please let us know if you would like to be removed from our mailing list at any time.