

WELCOME to Summer 2008 newsletter for [Wellbeing Australia](#).

Since the last newsletter we have had a change of government in Australia. The advisory board of WBA took the opportunity to contact the new Minister for Education about the need for a focus on social and emotional learning and wellbeing in schools. This is Julia Gillard's written reply received on 23rd Jan.

Thank you for your email of 5th December 2007 on behalf of Wellbeing Australia regarding student social and emotional development. Your concern for the welfare of young people and your offer of assistance are appreciated. It is vitally important that young people are equipped with the skills and attitudes that enable them to lead happy and productive lives. Students' experiences in school can have a significant impact on the development of their self esteem, self perception and health behaviours and have the capacity to effect their present and future health and wellbeing.

I am committed to working closely with state and territory government and non - government authorities and other key stakeholders to address the range of issues that affect the wellbeing of school students. Should there be an opportunity for members of your network to be involved, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations will contact you.

I commend your commitment and dedication to improving the lives of young people."

Ideas about how we might follow this up are welcome.

Should any individual or organization like to add their weight to the argument for a stronger focus on social and emotional learning within the context of inclusive and caring school communities Julia Gillard's email is dpm@dpm.gov.au

We had over 80 individuals sign up to Wellbeing Australia in November/ December alone. One group in Canberra has initiated ELF - an emotional literacy forum. Find out more about this on the wellbeingaustralia website.

The NSW Commission for Children and Young People paper "[Ask the Children](#)" is a fascinating overview of 126 children and young people's understandings of wellbeing. (April 07) This link gets you to the publications page, scroll down until you get to Kids Wellbeing and you can download the PDF.

Conferences

The First Australian Positive Psychology and Wellbeing conference is on April 5/6 in Sydney. Details [here](#). There is also an Early Years conference in Armidale on 18th and 19th March with great speakers. Email armfss@optusnet.com.au. You can now download some excellent papers from the [NCAB conference](#).

Resources



A welcome new resource for Primary Schools is [Whole Child](#), published by Rigby. This combines poster packs, stories by authors such as Libby Gleeson, interactive white board materials and teacher resource books based in Circle Time. There are five strands Emotions, Getting Along, Family and Community, Health and Wellbeing and Citizenship and Human Rights across three primary age groups.

[Education Connect](#) is produced by the Hunter Institute of Mental Health in collaboration with the University of Newcastle and is linked to the Response Ability teacher education initiative. It provides occasional papers about social and emotional wellbeing in education and is a very worthwhile read. The latest issue includes articles on Emotional Intelligence in Teachers, Technology and Wellbeing, Promoting Wellbeing in Primary Schools and New Teacher Education Resources. You can download ten separate issues [here](#).

Other Information

[Circle Time training](#) is in Sydney on Mon. March 3rd, Melbourne on Fri March 14th and hopefully Adelaide late April. Click on the link to request info/booking form.

Our best wishes go to two Advisory Board members, Dr. Tim Corcoran who has relocated to Sheffield University in the UK and Adam Blakester who is now in Armidale. We need a WBA rep in Queensland to keep us in touch with what is happening there. Please [contact](#) us if you think you could do this.

Letting people know about Wellbeing Australia

Please feel free to distribute this newsletter to your own networks and other interested colleagues. Feedback and contributions are always welcome. If you change your email address or want to come off this list let us know. Thanks.