

WELCOME to the Summer 2009 Wellbeing Australia Newsletter
<http://wellbeingaustralia.com.au>



Scoping Study on Student Wellbeing

We thank all Wellbeing Australia members who participated in our online survey for the Australian Government (DEEWR) Scoping Study on Student Wellbeing. Over 230 educators responded despite a tight timeframe which for some was during school holidays. The survey explored the feasibility of a new

National Framework in Student Wellbeing. The final report has been submitted and we hope to keep you updated on the outcomes.

First Positive Psychology in Education Conference

Keep Saturday May 9th 2009 free for the first Positive Psychology in Education conference to be held at University of Sydney. Positive Psychology in Education focuses on evidence-based research on how to foster student and teacher wellbeing and build positive school communities. More details about the conference will follow.

Masters or Postgraduate Certificate in Wellbeing in Inclusive Schooling

A Postgraduate certificate in education that can be converted to a Masters specialization in *Wellbeing in Inclusive Schooling* is being held at Australian Catholic University in Sydney in **2009**.

This explores evidence-based practices on ways to enhance both student and teacher wellbeing and develop schools as supportive, respectful and inclusive school communities. It draws on new directions in Government policy and new research in the social sciences that inform learner wellbeing and engagement in learning. The first unit *Wellbeing for Educators* (February 14/15 and 21 & March 14) is facilitated by Dr Toni Noble. The second unit *Issues in Wellbeing in Inclusive Schooling* runs in March and April with Dr Helen van Vliet. Two other units *Foundations for Social, Emotional and Academic Learning* and *Social Justice* will run in second semester. If interested please contact Kerry Oglesbury 02 9701 4304

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Using Strengths-based approaches in schools

A converging message from many areas is the importance of strengths-based approaches to promoting student wellbeing and their academic engagement. Strengths can be viewed as *individual* cognitive or character strengths or *collective* strengths of groups or the whole school community. Tom Hoerr has long been a strong advocate of multiple intelligences as a powerful framework for taking a whole school strengths-based approach. For a copy of his latest newsletter write to Tom at rhoerr@newcityschool.org

The health and wellbeing of young Australians

A new paper on youth wellbeing by Richard Eckersley, *Never better - or getting worse? The health and wellbeing of young Australians* is now available on the Australia 21 website:

<http://www.australia21.org.au/pdf/Youth%20Health%20Final%2008.pdf>

UK Foresight Project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing

This Project has been released to advise the UK Government on how to achieve the best mental wellbeing for everyone in the UK in the future.

<http://www.foresight.gov.uk/OurWork/ActiveProjects/Mental%20Capital/Welcome.asp>

Five ways to mental wellbeing: Great ideas over the Christmas holidays: The Foresight Project includes work on the wellbeing equivalent of “5 fruit and vegetables a day”. The suggestions for individual action, based on an extensive review of the evidence are:

1. Connect...

With the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

2. Be active...

Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

3. Take notice...

Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflect on your experiences to help you appreciate what matters to you.

4. Keep learning...

Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.

5. Give ...

Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, as linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.

Can you help?

Gail Zinn will be in New York on a scholarship and is seeking connections with schools and practitioners. Her email is gail.zinn@det.nsw.edu.au

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.