



Jeans for genes fundraiser

Jeans for Genes Day is on Friday 7th August this year. For the past 15 years, schools have been an invaluable part of the day's successful fundraising.

The Children's Medical Research Institute (CMRI) investigates the development of the human cell to discover how things can go wrong. It is complex and costly work. But the CMRI's discoveries will pave the way for treatments, preventions and perhaps even cures to relieve suffering and give all children a healthier life.

In 2008, schools across Australia raised approximately \$600,000.

To find out how your school can get involved go to www.jeansforgenes.org.au or if you wish to sell merchandise in your community contact volunteer coordinator Lynda Dave at ldave@jeansforgenes.org.au.

Teachers bullied – survey

A national online survey of school teachers has shown that almost all of the participants have been the target of some form of bullying in the workplace.

More than 800 school staff members participated in the study, which found that 99.6 per cent had experienced one or more of the 44 kinds of bullying listed in the survey. The Executive Summary of the research team's report, published on 4th May, says the results "highlight the indisputable fact that bullying of staff does occur in Australian schools".

"When bullying affects the mental and physical health of those being bullied, as results show, then it is time for some action to be taken to eliminate staff bullying," the report says.

"The survey's findings are highly disturbing, as zero tolerance to any form of bullying is the expected norm in Australian schools," said the University of New England's Dr Dan Riley, who led the team that conducted the research. Dr Riley said the results showed that bullying was "Very much related to a power imbalance", with the target of bullying usually being lower in the staff hierarchy than the perpetrator.

The Executive Summary of the research report is available at www.schoolbullies.org.au. The full report will be available at info@schoolbullies.ausz.info



Childhood Heroes, John McCarthy, Collingwood Football Club, Mika Vukona, South Dragon Basketball Club and Renae Hallinan, Vixens Netball Club, with students from McKinnon Primary School.

Primary school heroes

Primary schools have been invited to be heroes by participating in the Australian Childhood Foundation's Childhood Hero Dress-Up Day on Friday 19th June 2009.

Children who dress up as their hero – be it a sporting identity, family member, community member such as a policeman and fireman, or super hero – will help raise money for their school and support children devastated by the impact of abuse, neglect and family violence.

All students who dress up will be asked to donate \$2 to their school. Half of the funds raised will be kept by the school, with the other half donated to the Australian Childhood Foundation.

The school that raises the most money will win a Fujifilm FinePix S100FS digital SLR camera, valued at \$999.00.

The Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) is a not-for-profit organisation that delivers a range of services to help put a stop to child abuse. The Foundation's CEO, Dr Joe Tucci said the schools programme was a critical component of its Childhood Hero June appeal.

"Each year we are strongly supported by Australian schools," explains Dr Tucci. "Schools are a critical avenue of getting information to teachers, parents, children and their local communities. Childhood Hero Dress-Up Day gives us all an opportunity to celebrate the fun, innocence and importance of childhood, while at the same time raise much needed funds for schools and the Foundation."

Schools are also encouraged to incorporate the theme of Childhood Hero into the curriculum including Show and Tell, Art and Writing and Expression.

All money donated to the Australian Childhood Foundation from Childhood Hero Dress-Up Day will go towards providing specialist counselling services to help children recover from abuse.

For schools interested in participating in Childhood Hero Dress-Up Day, an information and registration site has been established at www.childhood.org.au/schools-program

Indigenous education gap

Gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous participation in education are narrowing slowly but not translating into post-school outcomes. Two new reports on Indigenous youth by Dusseldorp Skills Forum, in partnership with Reconciliation Australia have been released.

Challenging the idea of entrenched disadvantage for Indigenous young people, How young people are faring and *Keeping Up* show that there are improvements in participation in school and Year 12 completion for 15–19 year olds. These improvements, however, are

not translating into fulltime employment or participation in higher education.

Chris Wrightson from Dusseldorp Skills Forum said that there were positive results shown in the reports.

"School participation is where the most significant improvements have occurred. However, it hasn't yet translated into improvements in post-school outcomes. This is where more attention needs to be focused."

To find out more, visit www.dsf.org.au/indigenousreports

Media personalities and sports stars are supporting RSPCA primary and secondary schools education programs



RSPCA'S Lauren Preston, I, Loti Tuqiri and Maopa Latu (Women's Rugby Rep)

2009 is turning out to be a very busy and exciting year for the RSPCA. Our Primary School Programs are flourishing and helping to prevent animal cruelty. We teach children and youths about the importance of respecting all living things, including people and the environment.

Secondary Schools Program

We now offer Secondary Schools a similar humane education program, focusing on animal cruelty case studies, the balance of power between people and animals, and we take animal welfare to a global level and discuss issues affecting animals all over the world. These workshops aim to promote responsible and active citizenship, whilst fostering the healthy development of empathy, compassion and kindness.

Merrick, Rosso and Lote back programs

We are very lucky to have the support from a wide range of celebrities and role models in our community. Merrick & Rosso very recently



Merrick & Rosso and friends

donated all of the proceeds from the sales of their 2009 calendar to our education department, while Rugby Union's star player, Lote Tuqiri has also created a web page for the RSPCA on his new website – www.lotetuqiri.com.au. We have fantastic support and love to get everyone involved!

Together we can prevent cruelty to animals and as a team reduce violence in the community!



For more information contact
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Plan seeks sponsors for children in developing countries

A brochure asking teachers to sponsor a child in Latin America, Africa, The Indian sub-continent or other parts of Asia has been distributed with this issue of Education Today by Plan, a not for profit organisation working in over 45 countries around the globe.

Child sponsorship is a link between the sponsor, a sponsored child and their family. It is one of the most transparent means of funding vital community development projects. Plan's starting point is always the communities in which it works. Community members, including children, determine for themselves

their path to becoming self-sustaining.

A monthly tax-deductible contribution of \$A43.00 per month can help a community to help themselves by: improving basic healthcare and hygiene practices: providing better equipped schools and teacher training; and increasing sustainability of family income.

Plan is a very worthwhile cause and Education Today urges Australian teachers to help children that would otherwise have very little by way of a start in life by becoming a Plan Sponsor.

Complete the form in the brochure or call 13 PLAN (13 7526) or visit www.plan.org.au

Politics a turn off for Gen Y

Australian youth are showing extreme apathy towards their right to vote, with 20 per cent not enrolled to vote, and close to half saying they wouldn't vote if it wasn't compulsory, a new University of Sydney research shows.

However the research found that if children attend a private school, study politics or civics, and engage with their school community, they're more likely to vote come election time.

A new report by Sydney University's Assoc Prof Murray Print, chief investigator with the Youth Electoral Study (YES), has found that students who experience politics positively at school are more politically aware and more likely to register and cast a vote. The report also criticised the way in which political and civics subjects are taught, the lack of a national curriculum, and the absence of any political studies course in NSW.

This fifth report from the YES project, based at the University of Sydney, has just been delivered

to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). It comes after the AEC Commissioner Ed Killesteyn raised concerns about low levels of people enrolling to vote.

"It is clear that having taken a government subject, and being interested in it, are important for students' commitment to voting when they turn 18," Assoc Prof Print said.

"The figures show that the more interesting the study is to the student, the more likely the student is to vote."

The study also looked at where young people gain their knowledge of Australian politics. Over the past two decades, the number relying on the media for information has declined, with students favouring advice from parents and teachers.

In spite of this, the study found newspapers' reputations remain strong, declaring them, "the most effective source of political knowledge."