

Building developmental assets and investing in educational resources

Members of this college have various interests that converge on ways to build developmental assets and to invest educational resources. Developmental acquisition of competencies and life skills can be linked to access to resources. On a checklist of 40 development assets organised into eight categories (i.e., social support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of personal time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity), almost two-thirds of 100,000 American adolescents possessed 20 or fewer (Benson, Mannes, Pittman, & Ferber 2004). Resource limitations reduce capacity to build assets, and this “economic” framing not only reflects the spirit of the times but also suggests new strategic guidelines for bringing individuals and subgroups of adolescents in from the margins of Australasian society. In this issue, there are several views of the social and cognitive life of young adolescents that will be a rich source of practitioner insight and intervention. This work can be linked to international literature on resilience.

This 2003-2004 bridging issue brings to a belated close my extended term as editor. A brief review of my 15-year connection with this publication is satisfying. I guest-edited a special issue in 1990 when I was national chairperson. It was based on an APS conference symposium about “what’s developmental about education” (i.e., Vol. 8, Issue 1). Murdoch University’s David Leach passed on the editorship of the *Bulletin of the Board of Educational and Developmental Psychologists* to me in May 1992 (Vol. 9, Issue 1), with a special issue on neuropsychological issues in schools based on contributions to an APS symposium.

The opportunity to upgrade to journal status came in 1998, after which time it became the journal of the College of Educational and Developmental Psychologists, the Australian Educational and Developmental Psychologist (AEDP). Executive discussions about the title of the journal have paralleled the ongoing discussion about the nature of the college membership and its direction. Although an unwieldy mouthful, the phrasing has continued.

The journal has achieved a respectable standing as a refereed publication that has enriched the community of college-relevant practice and research. The miscellaneous and special issues revealed the richness and reach of Australasian evidence-based practice available for schools and for life-course development from infancy to later years. The many special issues included attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, developmental motor coordination disorder, child anxiety, current therapies, school psychology, and several on adolescence. Miscellaneous issues included covered topics from develop-

mental research programs—from prematurity to gerontology and from language acquisition to motor skills—and practitioner topics embedded in education.

The period of transition between editors, embodied in this issue, has extended over 2 years. Although subscribers and authors have been remarkably tolerant, this issue enables the journal to move forward again. The search for a new editor became urgent in recent years, and Tim Hannan at University of Western Sydney has taken up this task. The next generation of editors will have to discover more efficient ways to meet the human resources demands of a college journal. They will also have to wrestle with the more advanced technological possibilities of publication. There has been some on-line access to the journal through the RMIT indexing and full text database, Australian Public Affairs Full Text (Informit). Global dissemination, however, needs to tap into international abstracting systems, requiring a regular schedule of two issues each year. Tim Hannan and his editorial team will make decisions about a new schedule of publication, together with budgetary review.

This miscellaneous issue is Victorian-based, with several researchers associated with the postgraduate college-accredited program in the Department of Learning and Educational Development at the University of Melbourne. It also includes two studies of temperament in Victorian adolescents. Letcher and colleagues investigated 13- and 14-year-olds participating in the productive Australian Temperament Study at <http://www.aifs.gov.au/atp/pubs.html>. Faulkner engaged in an international Jungian study of temperament with Oakland and colleagues. Together, these studies provide a current and local perspective on how human response styles develop through the school years. Two linked studies of adolescent resources by Frydenberg and colleagues continue and expand the program of research on developmental coping.

Aspects of cognition and learning are the focus of other papers. Marriott and Care examine the role of crystallised intelligence (i.e., acculturated knowledge) in adolescent achievement, arguing that verbal, numerical, and figural knowledge predicts final school result. Munro and Pringle each examine how auditory processing demands contribute to language difficulties. Munro examines phonological aspects of reading, Pringle examines listening, and both consider implications for classroom practice.

Several exciting manuscripts have already been submitted for 2005, ensuring that the journal will continue to be a valuable resource for our professional community and for the Australasian community as a whole.

Fiona Bryer,
Editor

Reference

- Benson, P. L., Mannes, M., Pittman, K., & Ferber, T. (2004). Youth development, developmental assets, and public policy. In R. M. Lerner & Laurence Steinberg (Eds.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology* (2nd ed., Chapter 25, pp. 781-814). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.