YouthMoves

A news-sheet for people interested in Youth Issues in Australia Iss. 4 Sept-Nov 00

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welcome!

Welcome to the fourth issue of "Youth*Moves*". As a Psychologist and Speaker specialising in youth issues I often search for youth related news and information. I thought others may have the same need, and hence I created this newsletter to give brief 'snatches' of youth news, info and resources relevant to busy people relating with young people. I hope this newsletter is of interest and help to you. If you have any feedback or questions, or if I can assist your work with young people in any way, please [illegible]

Update shot

National Youth Roundtable 2001: a great opportunity for young people to learn about community issues and parliamentary process. Applications open until 13th October. For info go to www.thesource.gov.au/

International conference on Young People and the Media, held in Sydney from 26-29th November. For info. go to http://www.sydneyforum.com

Foundation for Young Australians - grants of up to $15000 available for high achieving young people and youth related organisations. Apply now http://www.youngaustralians.org

For latest on-line Australian research on youth issues, subscribe to Youth Field Xpress, a regular free email newsletter. Send an email to Youth.Monitor@educ.utas.edu.au

To help young people with jobs research try this site: www.jobguide.detay.gov.au

Alternatively, visit the Career Reference Centre at 55 Currie Street, Adelaide.

Young people and Trauma

The Spin Dragon ride accident at the Adelaide Show last month was a traumatic experience for many young people. What is trauma? Essentially, trauma occurs when people experience (or witness) unexpected events which threaten physical or psychological safety. Traumatic experiences include car accidents, house fires, physical / sexual assault and hold-ups.

What will be happening now for those who were on the Spin Dragon ride? Typically victims of trauma experience feelings of shock, flashbacks, hyper-arousal, difficulty sleeping, feeling anxious, depressed, angry or even guilty about not being killed or hurt. Often they have an urge to talk repeatedly about the accident, or sometimes to suppress it entirely.

Thankfully, for most people, the effects of trauma fade after several weeks, but for a few the effects do not dim and problems increase. This is the time to seek professional help.

In the meantime, all of us can help young people who have experienced trauma. Here are some ideas:

- Simply "be with" young people, or make sure someone is close by at least for a few days immediately afterwards.
- Reassure young people that they are safe.
- Encourage (but don't force) them to talk about the trauma and their feelings about it.
- Emphasise that their feelings are normal and to be expected, that they are not going "crazy".
- Re-establish some routine in a young person's life.
- Give opportunity for the person to take control in some way, eg raising money for appropriate charities, writing letters of complaint, learning about ways to be safe.
- Seek professional help if the young person appears to be suicidal, heavily using drugs or alcohol to [illegible] memories, or if other trauma symptoms do not dissipate after a few weeks.

The advice your child rejected is now being given to your grandchild.

Idea!

When helping young people in crisis, strike up a letter-writing relationship with them first. This makes it easier than taking face to face.

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