The more things change …

'For a majority, negative imagery of the future ranged from perceptions of intensifying pressure and competition in schools in the twenty-first century to worsening trends in physical violence and war, joblessness and poverty, destructive technology and environmental degradation.'

Just another survey of Australian secondary school students perhaps? Yes, but this one was conducted 16 years ago. What does this say about societal 'progress'? What does it say about the effect on young people of such continued stress?

• THE FAILURE OF MODERN WESTERN CULTURE.
To illustrate the consistency of problems facing young people, we reprint a seminal paper from 1995 that demonstrates that we are still failing to address major societal issues that impact on young people.

• ONLINE NETWORKS: THE GOOD AND THE BAD.
We are bombarded with media stories that emphasise the dangers of online networks, but what if the benefits for young people outweigh the problems associated with them?

• HELPING WITH ONE HAND, TAKING WITH THE OTHER.
Governmental concern with the plight of homeless young people is evident in new programs designed to assist them to stay at school, but schooling costs are undermining such strategies.

• DIFFICULTIES HELPING "DIFFICULT" YOUNG MEN.
New research suggests that the fit between the needs of marginalised men and those of the organisations trying to assist them should be improved by increasing the flexibility of services.

• RAVE ON.
To the outsider, a rave might be a rave, but to young people who were there at the beginning of the phenomenon, the differences between current raves and "real" raves is not only in the increased availability of drugs, but also in other significant subcultural differences.

Values and visions
Youth and the failure of modern Western culture

by Richard Eckersley

In 1995, Richard Eckersley noted that young people 'as a generation … display cynicism, wariness, impatience and social passivity or disengagement that betray their concerns and apprehensions about life'. It seems that we've done little in the intervening 13 years to allay their fears.

Modern Western culture is the antithesis of what we need for an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable world.

Online network use in schools
Social and educational opportunities

by Tanya Notley

Online networks have been accused of supporting paedophilia and the spread of pornography and violent materials, and most governments have banned popular online networking sites in public schools; however, this reaction may impede the development of important internet skills for some young people who lack adequate internet access.

… no national strategy currently exists to ensure that young people are receiving an appropriate education in how to avoid and deal with internet risks *while* enjoying the benefits also provided.

The real cost of linking homeless young people to employment, education and training

by Robyn Broadbent

This paper commends the Government of Victoria for introducing a program designed to provide homeless young people with some of the support that other young people take for granted. However, Robyn Broadbent argues that the success of the program is thwarted by government policy which allows much of the financial support to be spent on paying school fees.

This situation has, in effect, enabled private (for profit) education providers to prey on vulnerable groups in the community who want to reconnect to new employment pathways.

Meeting the needs of marginalised young men
An analysis of service provision

by Mindy Sotiri

Research conducted in Sydney reveals that youth services are often structured to deal with clients who are not particularly "difficult", which makes it very hard for youth workers to assist marginalised young men who require more flexible and spontaneous services.

The challenges involved in achieving more accessible services for marginalised young men are perhaps too frequently overwhelming for services working with young people.

"This is not a rave!"
Changes in the commercialised Melbourne rave/dance party scene

by Christine Siokou & David Moore

When the rave subculture began in Australia in the mid-1990s, it was associated with drug consumption; however, this research indicates that drug use at current raves has been normalised, there is a greater variety of drugs and prices have decreased.

Concurrent use of alcohol and party drugs is also common, a change no doubt facilitated by the location of raves in licensed venues and marketing of alcohol as a psychoactive drug …