

# Youth Studies Australia

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## Talking about my generation

- Michael Pusey, the author of *Economic Rationalism*, argues that while there is economic division between the generations, there is also cultural unity which means that relationships between the generations may in fact be better than they've been for at least 30 years.
- Even when young people leave home, these relationships are strong. They may relish an independent status, but our second paper indicates that financial dependence on parents ensures that relationships persist.
- We then look at whether the policy of excluding inhalants from drug education in schools is still valid, given recent research in this area.
- Still in schools, we move on to consider the potential of the Pride & Prejudice program to counter homophobia in secondary schools in Australia.
- In the country, we read about research into the meaning of wellbeing for rural youth and for youth workers.
- We conclude with a paper that argues for the use of minimum education standards by those working with newly arrived refugee youth.

### The changing relationship between the generations ... It could even be good news?

By Michael Pusey

Pusey argues that the central aim of economic reform has been to 're-assign power, resources and income from households to corporations – and to download risk onto individuals and families. In so doing, it is creating radical new inequalities that have dropped the floor from under the 20-year-olds'. Despite this, Pusey suggests that relations between the generations may be better than they have been for 30 years.

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... these trends are likely to entrench class envy and bitterness on a scale that could easily outweigh all our attempts to mitigate intergenerational inequalities through private transfers.

## **Independence, individualism and connection among share householders**

by Kristin Natalier

This study looked at how young people interpret independence in their day-to-day lives. The data show that share householding, rather than being a second-best option, is valued because it allows young people to construct a lifestyle and identity that are symbolically separate from their parents, even while they are financially supported by their family.

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## **Should inhalants be included in Australian school-based drug education?**

by Sarah MacLean

The Australian evidence-base about drug education makes it difficult to predict the outcomes of providing young people with education about any form of drug use, not just inhalants. Nonetheless, a strong case may be made (particularly in disadvantaged communities) for policy change on this issue.

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## **Breaking a spell of silence: The Tasmanian evaluation of the 2006 Pride & Prejudice program**

By Doug Bridge

An evaluation of the Pride & Prejudice program, which ran in three Tasmanian schools in 2006, suggests that students who completed the program had more positive attitudes towards gay men and lesbians. However, there may still be a reluctance on behalf of schools to openly discuss homosexuality. The topic appears to be controversial and cordoned off from ordinary classroom experience.

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## **What does wellbeing mean? Perspectives of wellbeing among young people and youth workers in rural Victoria**

By Lisa Bourke & Paula Geldens

Both the young people and the youth workers in this study agreed that wellbeing was a multidimensional concept; however, the young people were more likely to consider wellbeing to be influenced by individual factors while the youth workers were more likely to emphasise the importance of structural factors. These differences may mean that each group works toward different but not necessarily contradictory goals. In fact, the goals may compliment each other.

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## **Minimum standards for quality education for refugee youth**

by Jackie Kirk & Elizabeth Cassity

Minimum standards for education for refugee youth have been developed, which the authors argue should be used not only by educators in crisis situations, but also by those involved in the education of refugee young people in their country of settlement. The use of the standards would not only provide a protective framework for positive educational development, but also ensure continuity in educational experiences for young refugees.

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I mean, there are sometimes hiccups and you have to say 'No, you can't say that to me any more', but once you've got that independence it can't be taken away.

Providing drug education in schools is a complex issue. Some forms of drug education have been linked with increased rather than decreased rates of subsequent drug use.

Male students' attitudes to gay men were significantly less homophobic after the program, but male students' attitudes to lesbian women were unchanged.

... the young people were more focused on themselves, their goals, their relationships and the present. The youth workers placed more emphasis on social environments, opportunities and young people's responses to these contexts.

... the schooling system is not working well for new African students ... in general, students are struggling with new institutional settings and unrealistic expectations.