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Living Values e-News

Living Values Education Newsletter

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Issue Number Twenty Five

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To Our Readers

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Welcome to the twenty-fifth issue of Living Values e-News, the electronic newsletter of the Association for Living Values Education International.

This issue marks not only the completion of six years of newsletters but also our return after a sabbatical for the first half of the year; and like many a sabbatical it has been a busy time. Most of LVE's work takes place unassumingly in schools and other educational settings around the world by teachers with a vision of education and learning that reaches beyond the immediate requirements of the tasks at hand. And while this may often go on unrecognised and anonymously, in our interdependent world of one human family sharing the one home of our planet, we are never completely isolated; no one is an island and each of us can, and does, send out ripples that reach out to others and connect us. Living Values has always sought to recognise the importance of teachers caring for and connecting with themselves and each other and forming supporting networks and relationships, both within the school community and the wider world. Since piloting began in 1997, the LVE family has been expanding around the world and the LVE approach is now being used in 78 countries. For some time it has been becoming increasingly clear that the time is right to add a more structured and independent dimension to this family. So we are pleased to announce the establishment of the Association for Living Values Education International (ALIVE) to formalise an overall home for all LVE activities and everyone involved in it.

ALIVE International is an association of associations and will provide a

unifying structure for the many LVE associations, partners, sponsors, friends and implementing educators around the world. Its first major event was the co-organizing in July 2005 of a Conference and three-day Training course in partnership with the Mauritius Institute of Education. With the theme of “Values Education for a Global Culture – focus on Africa” the Conference and Training are part of an on-going Plan of Action to implement values education in West and Central Africa on which LVE teams are working closely with UNESCO’s African regional office in Senegal, UNESCO-BREDA. Aligning itself with current global campaigns and efforts to help the continent to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, implementation of the Plan of Action is already underway, as our story below confirms.

Each of these development goals is both challenging and yet achievable. Education finds its rightful place as one of these goals. And while education is a goal, and a right, in itself it is also surely an indispensable foundation for the achievement of all the other goals too. To be such a foundation, education must be more than just a pre-condition to and induction into work; it must also help pupils be better able to approach life as a whole, address environmental sustainability and deal with pressing social issues and complexities. Increasingly it is clear that the quality of teaching and learning is affected by often subtle but nevertheless significant factors such as the school ethos or atmosphere and the quality of relationships within the school community as a whole. In a materialistic and uncaring world, nurturing, supportive and values-based relationships such as lie at the heart of a quality learning environment do not usually develop by themselves, whether in schools or elsewhere, and specific attention must be focused to help build and sustain them. We are pleased to report that, supported and inspired by the approach and resources of LVE, educators, parents and others around the world are finding success in their efforts to do just that as you can read from the stories below.

The LVE Web site – at <http://www.livingvalues.net> – warmly welcomes hearing from educators with one or two success stories (or even not-so-successful stories!) of values activities that they've tried in their classroom. So read on... and, as ever, we hope that you'll do more than just read: please also send us your news – and go out and make some news!

With warmest wishes,

The Editor



News and Success Stories From Around the World

► **AFRICA** Implementation of Values-based Education in West and Central Africa

The Swiss Association for Living Values (SALV), the Association for Living Values Education International and UNESCO-BREDA (Regional Office for Education in Africa) have come together to bring the Living Values Education Programme (LVEP) to countries in West and Central Africa. Following the success of a number of training workshops in values education held in Senegal in 2003 and 2004, Living Values Education (LVE) teams have visited several countries and several LVEP Educator Trainings have been conducted.

Teams of two or three LVE representatives, led by Helen Sayers, the President of SALV, visited Burundi, Rwanda, Burkina Faso, Togo and Ghana in late 2004 and the first half of 2005. A number of organizations and individuals, already involved in LVE, helped to organise these exploratory visits and have offered to coordinate the administration of future trainings, in collaboration with LVE and BREDA and with the support of local UNESCO offices and National Commissions for UNESCO. Short reports follow below on the visits to Burkina Faso, Burundi, Rwanda and Togo and further details are being posted on the website.



BURKINA FASO People of Integrity Live their Values

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Five educators in Burkina Faso, inspired by the enthusiasm of SALV member Marie-Josée Ducharme during an earlier visit to the country in 2004, had already created a local organising committee. For the occasion of the LVE team's exploratory visit in December 2004-January 2005, the local committee arranged several meetings both in Ouagadougou and in the second city of Ouahigouya. The LVE delegation met Mme Mariam Lamizana, Minister of Social Action and National Solidarity. A champion of women's rights in Burkina Faso, she highlighted the importance of empowering women and girls. Mme Awa Gueye, secretary of the National Association for Living Values in Senegal described how Living Values had been successfully implemented in Senegal. She emphasized that LVE seeks not to impose but to propose a method of putting values into daily practice, and that in Senegal the Programme has been adapted to highlight the main national values of "teranga" (hospitality), solidarity and dignity, and that work is continuing to translate materials into the local language, Wolof. Mr. Bernard Yonli, Secretary General, National Commission for UNESCO, explained that Burkina Faso means "home of men of integrity". He concluded by saying that if the country is to live up to its name, people need to "live their values" and that values don't need to be reinvented, as they exist naturally within every person; they just need to be reawakened.



BURUNDI Sustaining Positive Cultural Values

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National LVE Coordinator, Mélance Kiruru, has brought together an organising committee of local young people dedicated to sustaining positive cultural values in Burundi society and reported to us on his activities following the exploratory visit there in December 2004. Values such as “Ubuntu” (humane-ness, generosity, sharing), Ibanga (fidelity, keeping one’s promises) and “Ubupfasoni” (honesty, having a noble heart, discretion, dignity) are still strongly adhered to, especially in rural areas, he said. To achieve the status of “Ubushingantahe” (a highly respected sage, wise man or woman, complete with all virtues, worthy to be a ruler) is the lifetime aspiration of many in Burundi, including youth. During the introductory seminar held organised by Mélance, Bernard Barandereka, former Minister for Energy, proposed that LVEP could contribute to the promotion of peace, solidarity and reconciliation in the Great Lakes region by inviting participants from neighbouring countries to each LVE training workshop. To complement this outreach, Mélance believes that radio would be an effective way of sharing ideas on values with the local population and could be an invaluable tool for transmitting values from one generation to the next through traditional story-telling, a custom that seems to be rapidly dying out.



CANADA Connections and Enthusiasm Abound!

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The LVE team in Canada team has been continuing its affiliation with British Colombia’s Institute for Ethical Leadership which is working towards LVEP being implemented throughout a whole school, in which the effectiveness of the Programme can be evaluated. Meanwhile Canadian LVE trainers have far-reaching connections and are actively promoting Living Values abroad. They have been teaching aspects of LVEP, in particular the conflict resolution model, to students in Uganda, Rwanda and southern Sudan as part of a Peace-Making Initiative. One of the trainers, Marg Huber, wrote: “We were in Rwanda at the orphanage last week with four of our African team and it was a very amazing experience. The Living Values Education work continues to add in a substantial way to the peace-making training and I am so deeply grateful to be part of it all.”

Back in Canada, LVEP trainings have been well-received as can be seen from the following comments by training participants:

“I tried my first LVEP lesson on peace with my grade six students and it was absolutely awesome.”

“A Halifax immigrant centre hosted an LVEP session with parents, transforming their ‘Preventing Family Violence Project’ into a ‘Creating

Peace in the Family Project' as participants discovered many deep, similar values regardless of their country of origin; very heartening to witness."

"...the shining faces of enthusiastic teachers was the greatest evidence of success."

"A YWCA after-school programme experiences the benefits of the imagination exercises after a long day at school."

"I have been using the lessons on peace with my highly hostile/aggressive group and have noticed amazing results. Just using the language of respect and peace has helped create a calmer environment. Other teachers are commenting on the differences in these kids on the playground, bathrooms and halls."

"I must tell you that I am implementing parts of LVEP in my programme and it is working!"

"Thank you for inspiring me and giving me hope."

"What a wonderful way to spend a Friday; at the end of the week teachers are usually exhausted, drained and looking forward to the weekend, but I'm leaving this workshop feeling energized and excited about beginning this programme with my students on Monday morning."



CRETE Connections and Enthusiasm Abound!

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Sue Emery carried out a three-hour workshop for 20 parents in Irakleio on the island of Crete. She reported: "This group has been having monthly workshops with local trainer, Maria Deligianni, for the last eight months, and so they are a very mature group that was ready to go deeper into the values. They are waiting for Living Values Activities for Children Ages 3-7 to be finalised in their language so they can develop a few more activities and skills to be used in their families."



ECUADOR Successful Seminar on "Living Values: An Education for Life"

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In January 2005 a Seminar entitled "Living Values: An Education for Life" was held in Guayaquil. Attracting over 300 people from nine provinces, attendees came from the Ministry of Social Services (Department of Culture), universities, national schools, kindergartens,

foundations and other educational institutions and municipalities. Cooperatively organised with the help of several organisations and the support of UNICEF, speakers at the event included Pilar Quera Colomina, Deputy-President of ALIVE International, from Barcelona, Spain, Iolanda Vives, Marta Jiménez from Spain, Sara Casaverde from Peru and Susana Bhürer from Argentina. Participants deepened their understanding of values, explored the importance of values in life and found ways and strategies to bring them to pupils in the classroom. Responding enthusiastically to the day, they established a Tracking Committee that will be in charge of the organization and execution of a plan to promote and spread values in Ecuador.



▶ **FRANCE** Values and Positive Change in Reunion Island

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Representatives of five educational bodies or associations on the French island of Reunion attended a LVEP Educator Training in September 2004 at the Hotel des Aigrettes in Saint Gilles. Led by facilitators Monique Liger and Cécile Lecomte and co-facilitators Thierry Gauvin and Monique Raudrant, participants demonstrated a great interest in the LVE methods, which they found to be complementary to their own tools. Participants' comments included the following:

- "A pleasure to share activities and life experiences."
- "Observing the facilitators and the teamwork.... and seeing how we operated in an inclusive and enriching manner, opens up new ways for group-work at school, while respecting the role and speciality of each and every one in a group, listening to everyone and taking everyone's input into account."
- "A desire to apply these methods with my students in order to improve "being" and well-being. One week after this seminar, an informal meeting allowed a sharing of experiences that everyone lived during the week while applying Living Values in their classroom. Beautiful success stories were shared. Children of the class reputed to be the worst in the College just loved peace lessons and asked for more. Some other children benefited from a reflection and sharing on responsibility that led them to an increased awareness of their own responsibility as students, which they immediately proved by doing exactly what they were asked to do by the Administration team. Two different groups have been created with the aim to create some new tools for Living Values, e.g. values cards or research into the theoretical background of values."



▶ **JAMAICA** Fashionable Values steal the show at Ministry training

Schools island-wide hosted Parent Day programmes in November 2004 and promoted the feeling of community cooperation, building confidence in schools as a safe place where positive character building, cognitive skills and individual and family values develop. The Prime Minister, Ministry of Education and Governor General's office sent messages for the day. Teachers and students entertained parents with songs, dance and dramas demonstrating ways to help make every child feel valued and inspired greater care, compassion and understanding in parents. Special speakers were invited to share personal empowerment principles and stories and parenting "tips" were offered. Parents engaged in prayer and reflection to visualise what values they wanted their children to have and what sort of relationships they wanted with their children. School bulletin boards were decked out with art work based on the theme of family values. One such contribution was the following poem by a student at Anchovy Primary School:

Poem to Our Parents

If we were asked: "Who cares for me, from now until
eternity?"
No folk, or friend, or anyone, but only my parents.
A gift of life they gave to me and tend to it most lovingly.
A roof over our heads, warm clothing on our bed
Speak of their love for me, in time of sickness or in health.
They shower on me hard earned wealth,
And close to me they'll always be, providing comfort and
security.
When I do a mistake make, corrective action they do take,
To make me pure and good and true, so I would be a
good parent too.
My prayers will always be for thee, brothers, sisters,
mummy and daddy,
For life, for love, for security, can be given by my parents.

By R Ramsawak

LVE representatives participated as organisers and special speakers at a large "One Love" event held in Kingston at the Ranny Williams Entertainment Centre to honour what would have been the 60th birthday of the popular Jamaican musician Bob Marley. All schools were invited to attend and students to carry value flags while well-known musicians such as Abijah, Ernie Smith and Mackie Conscious added to the entertainment provided by students. Designed to promote positive values and attitudes, the event's main theme was "Healing Jamaica with One Love".



At the end of November 2004, the Ministry of Education invited Wajeeha al-Habib, Living Values Co-ordinator for Kuwait, and Peter Williams, to address 400 representatives of all the State Schools in Kuwait on the topic of Attractive Schools. While one speaker addressed the physical attractiveness of schools in terms of aesthetics and facilities, the LVE presentation complemented this with a focus on 'The Inner Attractiveness of Creating a Values-based Atmosphere' and described this as the foundation upon which to base all learning. Wajeeha and Peter have implemented this approach as Founder and Principal of the Kuwait American School and have shown how love, respect, understanding and safety are brought into the everyday reality of school life. During the warmly-received session, delegates were invited to help co-create a values-based approach to learning with the support of the Living Values team. The Chairman captured the mood of the moment with his concluding remarks that we need both kinds of attractiveness.

Peter Williams reported that in January 2005, the Ministry of Education stated that a new curriculum for 2005 would address, amongst other themes, the spiritual, intellectual, social, psychological and physical 'comprehensive development' of learning. Additional subjects include human rights, good citizenship, hospitality, family and consumer affairs with the aim: "To prepare students for professional and social life by introducing and instilling values.....and an awareness to counter the spread of consumer-mode society". The LVE team is ready and willing, Peter said, to contribute what it can to these bold and important plans.

He concluded his report with the news that Kuwait University students have been taking part in a six session personal empowerment programme designed to recognize and uplift their personal values and hope for the future. Materials from LVEP helped facilitate a vision for a better world and future global harmony. The students' insights helped to foster a collective goal of acceptance and courage with regard to what is happening around them and an understanding of the importance of relaxation, reflection and personal satisfaction in their endeavours. The sessions have also been giving participants a sense of hope and personal identity.



ROMANIA LVEP at every school level in Techirghiol

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After two years of implementation of LVEP in Romania, teachers, inspectors and directors from seven of the 41 counties in Romania have now been trained; there are many new requests for training. As a new step in organizing an educational programme in pilot schools, the little city of Techirghiol has been chosen to be the first place to implement LVEP at every school level: in its kindergarten and primary

schools as well as in the secondary school. To facilitate this happening, 31 kindergarten, primary and secondary school teachers, as well as the Director of the Kindergarten and the Director of the Secondary School, attended a five-day training in LVEP methodology in August 2004. Veronica Frincu, the Director, welcomed the LVE team of Monique Liger, LVE Coordinator for France, Dr Elisabeta Negreanu, LVE Coordinator for Romania, professor assistant Adina Ignat, primary school teacher Maria Tanase, and translator Mr Alexandru Matei.

Participants undertook activities on peace, respect, cooperation, love, responsibility and unity. They were reminded of the new role of a teacher and learned more about techniques of communication, such as active listening and conflict resolution, as well as a model for explicit and precise appreciation. They created an action plan to be applied during the coming school-year in the whole community of schools and to the curricula. Most of the participants also attended the one-day session for parents because they recognized the necessity to cooperate with families in order to apply LVEP in a way that can benefit the child. Participants were very active, participatory and open to this method. They enjoyed the training very much and concluded by expressing their feelings and thoughts, including as follows:

- “A great challenge! Interesting! Curious! Attractive! A real gain!”
- “It was very interesting! There were new things which we will use for enrichment of the soul.”
- “I was impressed by the very close trainer-trainee interaction.”
- “This session allowed us to develop better interpersonal relationships among teachers from our school.
- “It was an interesting activity which changed my mood and inspired me for future activity.”
- “The training was very effective for all! The trainers were very professional. The most important benefit is that all teachers participated so that we can now develop a value-based atmosphere in our kindergarten and in our team.”
- “The training energized me; I think that it is important to develop it on a wider area.”
- “Initially I was sceptical, but after that I become more attracted; I was impressed by the methods and approach; I felt enriched by knowledge and methodology.”
- “I have been in Techirghiol since 1990 and this training is the most beautiful thing which has happened since then. I saw another side of my colleagues; do not forget that together we are a power.”
- “It was very useful for spirit and mind. Thank you!”
- “Calmness, play, joy, peace.”
- “A very pleasant, constructive and beneficial atmosphere.”
- “It was an opportunity to make my own values alive.”
- “Lots of information; knowledge and cooperation; positive atmosphere.”
- “It offered a way for improving relationships between colleagues, for energizing and bringing new ideas for the new school year.”



RWANDA Exploratory Seminar draws Support of Minister of Education

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An exploratory visit to Rwanda was made in December 2004 by an international LVE team as part of the plan to bring values education to Central and West Africa (see story above on AFRICA). An introductory workshop was held and attended very good participation including by the Minister of Education who suggested that an ambitious vision was needed and called for the commitment of all sectors of society to implement values education in the country. The seminar included a discussion session on values in Rwanda and one participant stated that the 1994 genocide was the result of a "genocide of values". It was noted that Rwanda had come a long way in the process of reconciliation and restoring stability, but in order to prevent a repeat of history, values needed to be reintegrated into the fabric of society. For this, values education was essential from an early age. Mrs Wangui Kangethe, LVE Coordinator for Kenya, spoke of the achievements of LVE in Kenya since 1998. She gave the example of two warring tribes in northern Kenya: children had learnt about conflict resolution through doing Living Values activities and had inspired their parents to bring about greater tolerance and unity in their villages.



SOUTH AFRICA LVEP and Caring replace Corporal Punishment in Rural Schools

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More than 100 rural schools in the state of Natal have been making use of LVEP for character education and as a disciplinary measure since corporal punishment was abolished, Lalitha informed e-News in 2004. A high rate of unemployment in rural areas and poverty means that some children come to school with no provisions or with torn uniforms. Since following LVEP, learners have adopted the values of sharing and caring. They make shining star cards for the sick and orphaned. Some have formed groups caring for HIV/AIDS orphans. In many schools, youth clubs have been formed to pursue crafts involving ceramics, beadwork and artwork and they combine these with practising entrepreneurial skills to help make ends meet and provide for others.



TOGO Peace-loving People Strive to Preserve Values

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From 2nd to 4th January 2005 a meeting of people concerned about

education was held at the National Commission for UNESCO in Lome, with the cooperation of Mr Koffi Diabo, former Secretary General of UNDP in Togo. The group immediately took it upon themselves to create a coordinating committee, agreeing that the people of Togo are peace-loving and deeply spiritual, and that these qualities should be preserved at all costs. They also agreed that education of the girl child should be a high priority in the country as if all girls attended school at least at primary level, and if values were integrated into all areas of the school curriculum, then the future for girls would be much brighter. Mr Rene Alemawo, National Coordinator for LVE in Togo, stressed the importance of educators as role models for children. Currently living in Senegal as a sculptor, he works voluntarily with street children, helping them to learn a trade and teaching them values at the same time using the LVE activities and methodology. He said that values cannot be taught in a formal way with such children: one needs to create a trusting, dynamic, happy environment where they can develop their self-esteem, creativity and a sense of purpose in life.



▶ **VIETNAM LVE Continues to Flourish in Hanoi and Ho Chin Minh City**

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LVE has been used at Hanoi's Dien Tien Hoang High School since 2001. The school's 1,200 students participate in weekly LVEP classes. LVEP is not only useful for the students; teachers at the school have said that LVEP helps them in their own lives and has much improved communication between teachers and students. One teacher shared: "I now have much more understanding and tolerance both in my relationships with the staff and students here at school and also at home with my family."

Meanwhile, at the other end of the country, after participating in a four-day LVEP training at Nhi Xuan Centre in Ho Chi Minh in 2004, one peer educator commented: "Through the course, I've gained some very useful experiences and greater understanding of values to apply in my life. I am going to try to share what I learnt." Another said: "This programme is really useful to me for its knowledge as well as the positive effect it has on my thoughts. I feel more confident in life and it helps me to reduce my stress. Finally, I want to express my deep thanks to the educators and people who created a good learning environment for the course."



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