Human Values Foundation
Life-enriching values for everyone

VALUES-THEMED ARTICLE: Summer 2016

Rising to the Challenges of 3 Revolutions and 17 Global Goals

Take stock for a moment and consider three revolutions that are taking place and how today's young children and adolescents are beginning to respond to the "17 Sustainable Development Goals" agreed by world leaders of 193 countries in September 2015. The ambitious Action Plan to find lasting solutions for the 17 Global Goals started on 1 January 2016 and will continue to 2030 – *during the critically formative years of today's schoolchildren.* **What kind of world do they want in 2030 as young adults?**

The Digital Revolution

First let's consider the DIGITAL REVOLUTION. The characteristics of digital systems have been evolving for several decades so that we are now at a stage when digital interaction technologies are fundamentally changing the ways in which humans interact with each other, both in our physical, day-to-day lives and in the digital world, where connections are instantaneous, global and penetrating remote places thought, not long ago, almost impossible to reach and impact.

New ways of thinking by the international community are required to maximise the potential of this exciting and empowering revolution - without harming individuals' health and wellbeing on account of the pressure some feel to be on call 24/7, every day of the year. Schools are now beginning to teach children from as young as five not only computer science and information technology but real-life "digital literacy".

The Values Revolution

Next let's review the ramifications from the VALUES REVOLUTION. "Values" is a buzz word that is cropping up everywhere and is on mainstream agenda because consciously chosen values are unleashing the true capabilities of so many people and re-shaping many aspects of our lives as well as our families, schools, businesses and other public and private organisations around us. For some years now Values Education has been considered essential to effective schooling and "values literacy" is positively impacting all important education measures and the wellbeing of both students and their teachers.

As more and more individuals and organisations become values-driven, the effects are changing the landscape for workplaces and how modern, successful public and private entities, including schools, are run. Increasingly people are keen to live their values, make a difference and improve the world through their lifestyles and their personal and collective choices. They want to positively impact the world. This is far from a skin-deep trend. It is a profound societal shift that is taking place universally and involving all age groups.

The Development Revolution

The scope of the internet and an increasingly globally connected world is stirring people from all walks of life to raise the bar and expect more social and environmental change and more collaborative work to tackle the deep-seated and wide-ranging global issues facing humanity.

See the 3-minute video: The Story We Are Shaping and the 6-minute animated video: The World's Largest Lesson and The Future Starts Now.

Forward-thinking individuals and progressive organisations are leveraging values to co-create and develop solutions. Awareness of the Values Revolution is particularly noticeable in millennials (i.e. those born between 1981 and 1996). Polls have shown that vast swathes of millennials consider it their duty to make a positive difference through their lifestyle and career choices and a significant number are worried about the state of the world and feel personally responsible to improve it. For example, see the initiatives resulting from One Young World.

Computer Science and Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) are considered essential levers to transform the DIGITAL REVOLUTION into a DEVELOPMENT REVOLUTION and move the 17 Sustainable Development Goals from VISION to ACTION. These goals provide an abundance of highly engaging topics and quality material for teachers of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. See the 7-minute video: ICTs for a Sustainable World.

Our choices matter – and are based on our values.

It is imperative that people in influential positions in all contexts and sectors, be they in families, schools, entertainment, businesses, public services, governments or any other organisation, recognise they are role models and "*walk their talk*". Children and young people are more inclined to copy what people do rather than what they say.

To achieve authenticity and credibility, it is essential that leaders are clear about their own values, take into account the personal values of their staff and that the values, mission, governance and impact of their entities are aligned. Greater transparency will be required and increasingly we will all be held to account for our virtuous pledges and promises as global citizens, not only to do well but also to do good and ensure the conditions are right to enable and let others truly flourish likewise, now and for generations to come. The good news is that these expectations not only benefit all of us as individuals but they are also good for the whole human family and everything living on our planet.

We have to do things differently. "*The secret of change is to focus all your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.*" Socrates