

NEWSLETTER 45 - Autumn 2018

WORLD VALUES DAY 2018

[World Values Day](#) was celebrated for the third time with this year's campaign culminating on 18 October – and what a celebration reaching over 40 million people across the globe. Such was the response, twitter activity took place in 98 countries and in the UK during the day [#WorldValuesDay](#) trended as the most popular hashtag!

The theme was about 'putting our values into action in our communities'. Reported activities showed just how shared values provide a superglue for families, schools, communities, businesses, countries and indeed humanity, especially when the going gets tough. Long may all the positive influences last! As a [partner of World Values Day](#), our profile and the work of the **Human Values Foundation** was given considerable exposure.



Our Values Stories Competition

Following our highly successful and much enjoyed competitions in 2016 and 2017, once again in the run-up to World Values Day we invited schools and others involved with children to send in short values-themed stories written by those aged from 7 to 11. This is a comment from the mother of a child in the USA: "*As parents we have always been looking out for ways to promote human values in our kids. This competition is a great way to promote values along with encouraging kids' creativity and writing skills.*"

Our Trustee, [Ann Greenwood](#), and her magnificent team of 'winnowing judges' have been busily reading all the wonderfully imaginative and thoughtful entries submitted from the UK and around the world. We also received some very perceptive pictures from children aged between 4 and 11, especially from schools in India. Now the abundance of stories has been short listed, our distinguished panel of judges: [Sir Al Aynsley-Green](#), [Dr Jill Berry](#) and [Sonia Gill](#) have the difficult task of picking the winner and runner up and those whose work is highly recommended. All the prize winners will receive book tokens for their schools. Just as in previous years, we plan to publish the best stories along with some of the delightful pictures sent in. The resulting booklet will be available free of charge from our website early in 2019.

THE STATE OF CHILDREN'S WELLBEING

What does every parent want for their children? Many would say, "to be happy".

It is said that our children's wellbeing is the strongest predictor of their future happiness.

Authoritative research shows that **VALUES EDUCATION promotes social, emotional, moral and spiritual growth – elements found to be as important for young people's happiness, wellbeing and life chances as they are for their academic and other achievements.**

The 2018 Good Childhood report

"Children's wellbeing is crucial, not just for their own lives, but for society as a whole." This is why, for the past 7 years [The Children's Society](#) has published an annual, comprehensively researched report about how children in the UK feel about their lives. *"We know that it is critical to listen to what children say about their lives – what makes them happy and what we can improve for them and for future generations."*

Each year the Children's Society surveys 65,000 children in the UK to gauge how our children are doing mentally and physically. Following a steady rise in children's wellbeing from 1995 to 2010, progress has dramatically reversed with children's wellbeing now as low as it was 20 years ago. Worryingly, their most recent report notes that 'alarming numbers of children are self-harming'.

The British Betrayal of Childhood by Sir Al Aynsley-Green

Sir Al Aynsley-Green's book 'A British Betrayal of Childhood' (challenging uncomfortable truths and bringing about change) was published in September 2018. With a wealth of experience gained over 40 years working with governments and organisations worldwide on children, childhood and children's services, Sir Al is passionate about galvanising initiatives to build local communities, shift national attitudes and confront barriers between sectors so that current outcomes for the UK's children in terms of health, education, social care, youth justice and poverty can be raised from being among the worst in the developed world.

As he says, *"We need healthy, educated, creative and resilient, happy children now developing life skills to be successful workers and parents of the future."*

Character development and values

For some time concern has been growing about whether the emerging generation of citizens' education is sufficiently fit for purpose especially bearing in mind the state of the health and wellbeing of so many young people, degradation of the environment, the world they are inheriting, the pace at which various aspects of daily life are evolving and the qualities needed for the new world of work.

In 2017 the Dame Kelly Holmes Trust held a series of round table discussions with a large cross section of people from politics, education and the youth sector in the UK to address the significance of character development, viewed as an important yet often overlooked part of education today.

Along with the attendees, countless stakeholders involved in how children are growing up consider that young people need to be better equipped with tools and skills that enable them to live positive lives and that assisting them in developing strong character traits supports improved academic attainment, employment prospects, workplace productivity and individuals' contributions to society.

Following this nurturing of character initiative, in July 2018 a white paper was published: [The Opportunities and Challenges offered by Character Education](#). The first recommendation is that the Department for Education takes the lead in establishing a clear definition for character development and that it should then be applied across Government and communicated effectively to education, business, community and youth-sector organisations. It is proposed that **character development** is defined as: *when people align their actions with their considered values*.

EXCITING PROGRESS WITH OUR NEW PROGRAMME – “THE BIG THINK”

In September 2017 we appointed an experienced primary school teacher, Sarah Pengelly, as our Curriculum Developer with the vitally important task of completely refreshing June Auton's (our Founder's) original, pioneering EDUCATION IN HUMAN VALUES programme for children aged from 4 to 11. Sarah has taken the 44 “EHV” lesson plans and with great skill, initiative and determination has almost completed our new, empowering, multi-media, personal development programme designed to improve the wellbeing and therefore the attainment levels of all primary school children.



Taking into account the full spectrum of changes to achieve effective teaching and learning, including technological advances and the paradigm shift that is beginning to take place towards our long-advocated, more holistic, whole-school approach to education that fosters whole-child development, *The Big Think* provides a structured, experiential-learning course using familiar teaching techniques such as discussion, debate, storytelling and singing enhanced by quiet reflection and journaling. The programme reinforces each school's core values and is ideal for integrating schools' obligatory Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) provision along with their British Values work, and their Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, Citizenship and Relationships Education schemes of work.

The contemporary learning modules cater for today's far more visual generation and are delivered digitally in whole-school assemblies and in the classroom with 44 age-appropriate lesson plans for KS1 (children aged 5 to 7) and 44 lesson plans for KS2 (children aged 7 to 11). Every session nurtures personal qualities as well as growth mindsets and encourages each child to build up a personal reservoir of well-considered values that make sense to him or her.

Often teachers can feel frustrated trying to find a healthy balance between driving academic results and sensitively tending to children's physical, mental, emotional and social needs. *The Big Think* is a comprehensive, cross-curricular programme designed to support both teachers and children in addressing such challenges and promotes life-long wellbeing for all.

The feedback from children, teachers and parents while Sarah was piloting *The Big Think* was extremely positive and encouraging and so we are now looking forward very much to launching this much-needed programme.

Do watch the short film we made during the piloting: [The Big Think in action](#). You can download a sample lesson kit on Tolerance from the pilot webpage (the-big-think.org).

The reactions via Twitter have been equally enthusiastic: [@the_bigthink](https://twitter.com/the_bigthink).



This project has been our most ambitious undertaking so far and a major expense. During the development we made available on the HVF website, a little [appeal booklet](#) and would very much appreciate whatever support you can give us as we embark on a new website for *The Big Think*, giving teachers online access to the resource, and further develop suitable values education training materials so that entire school communities can confidently participate in our increasingly values-led world.

This is a comment from a teacher in Canada who taught the sample lesson in her school, “*I absolutely need to get more Big Think lessons because the multi-media format pulls these kids in!*”

HOW CAN EDUCATION BECOME BETTER FIT FOR PURPOSE?

Throughout the world questions are being asked about how to make education more relevant, enabling all young citizens to flourish and develop skills that will enable them to lead happy, meaningful lives now and as the future unfolds. Typical of sentiments being expressed are those associated with ‘The Ultimate Wellbeing in Education’ conference in October in the University of Buckingham. Its hosts explained, “*The aim of positive education is about preparing young people for the tests of life, not just a life of tests.*”

Each term we write a values-themed article for InnovateMySchool prompting ideas on how to advance the quality and effectiveness of education systems, especially for children in primary and secondary schools. Recognising that one system can’t fit all when it comes to education, our latest piece is about [how each child has a unique profile](#) comprising his or her DNA and personally chosen values. When promoting this article, InnovateMySchool suggested that youngsters would benefit enormously from being taught more to their individual profiles.

Points to ponder - as the Dalai Lama says, “*We must promote basic human values, the inner values that lie at the heart of who we are as humans. We must teach people, especially our youth, the source of happiness and satisfaction. We must teach them that the ultimate source of happiness is within ourselves. Not machines. Not technology. Not money. Not power.*”

A FOND FAREWELL TO HELEN COLBECK

Many of our supporters will be familiar with Helen Colbeck because of contact with her when we sent out our newsletters twice a year. Helen became a trustee in November 2004 and will be retiring this November at our AGM. We are enormously grateful for her generosity and all that she has done for the Human Values Foundation during the past 14 years and we have much appreciated her humour and wisdom during Trustees' meetings. Helen often attended education exhibitions in support of our Founder, June Auton, who so successfully managed our stands. We will miss Helen very much and would like to convey our heartfelt thanks for her superb years of service. Our trustee Kashmira Deboo is kindly taking over the management of our newsletters.

DONATIONS

It is no exaggeration to say that we have only been able to develop our new programme *The Big Think* thanks to all our amazingly generous supporters. We are enormously appreciative of your financial assistance.

A number of donors wish to remain anonymous so may we take this opportunity to express our gratitude to each of you for your wonderfully kind monetary support. We are also most grateful to the trustees of the Barleycorn Trust and the following individuals and loyal and new subscribing Members and Friends for your kindness that enables us to remain a 'beacon of light' in the education sector as we work to enhance children's personal development and prospects: Roger Arthur, Vijay Bhagani, Alyson Carter, Joy Carter, John Cox, Aileen Davies, Sheila Evered, Bryan Harrison, Iain Lee, Tim Lipscomb, Anamika Maharaj, Mike Roberts, Anthony and Nicole O'Flaherty, Audrey Nightingale-Young, Penelope Sapiro, Tonia Silk, Geoffrey and Ann Steinberg, and Polly Stone.

We are signed up to a platform called [Work For Good](#) which enables new businesses to donate to us. The Work for Good team assists small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) so that they can donate to charities like the Human Values Foundation. (Our referral code for new contributors is R2QEE83Y.) They make it easy for SMEs to give through their sales of goods and services. Via this scheme we have been receiving donations from an altruistic company [Pitch121](#) and we would like to thank all those associated with it for making a very special difference to what we can achieve while also itself being a successful business. Pitch121's payments have gone towards the development of a series of 15 'Silent Sitting' tracks for *The Big Think*. The resulting short pieces of calming music with gentle instructions help children to feel peaceful and create images in their minds that enhance their abilities to concentrate and learn well. As one of many very appreciative children said, "*You should recommend Silent Sitting to all schools*".

Another piece of exciting news was a telephone call in August from the manager of [The Entertainer Toy Shop](#) in Horsham. Through the [electronic charity box, Pennies](#), The Entertainer customers can round up their purchases when paying by card, if they so wish. The wonderfully generous donation we have received thanks to the Horsham store means that we can donate *The Big Think* programme to five primary schools in the town eager to use it and thereby enable the 1,000 or so children in their schools to benefit from learning to choose and use positive values to enhance all aspects of their day-to-day lives. Experience tells us that there will also be uplifting, knock-on effects for the children's families, schools and the wider community.

As expected, our funds have been significantly depleted by our exciting project to develop *The Big Think* so please do encourage your friends, family members, colleagues and others to visit our website and support us financially so that we can make further transformative differences to the quality of teaching and mentoring for young people.

AND FINALLY ...

Many consider that the need for values education, character development and the nurturing of social and emotional skills as an integral part of young people's learning has never been more essential. Authoritative global research shows that quality, systematic values education:

- is essential to effective schooling
- positively impacts all the important educational measures
- is a worldwide, contemporary phenomenon
- fits well with updated brain and pedagogical research, and
- is a means to holistic student and teacher wellbeing

so THANK YOU as ever for your exceptional contributions, encouragement, voluntary work and practical support that enables us to make systemic differences to children's education and positively impact the wellbeing and achievements of an ever growing number of young citizens. Through the dedicated hard work and determination of their teachers and others using our programmes, hundreds of lives are being progressively enriched. Your kindness is helping to meet the needs of schoolchildren so that they feel happier about themselves, empowered with an understanding of values that really does make differences to their lives, aspirations and wellbeing and the lives of those around them.

If you have any comments, suggestions or ideas about gaining sponsorship for our various projects or would like to have some e-materials about our values-themed programmes to share with your friends, family members, potential subscribing Friends of our charity and others, please contact:

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Alternatively do ring 01403 259711 or e-mail: yes2values@hvf.org.uk.

The website is: www.humanvaluesfoundation.com.

The Human Values Foundation team wishes all our readers very happy and peaceful winter months.

Patrons: Sir Michael Morpurgo, OBE, FRSL, FKC, DL;

Prof Kamran Mofid, PhD; Dr Kevin Auton, PhD

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