



SRE Update

ICCOREIS Forum: Volunteering

On Monday 31st August ICCOREIS is holding a forum on **recruiting and keeping volunteers**. This event is primarily designed for SRE coordinators and ministry coordinators (such as children's and youth ministers), but would be equally relevant to leaders of 'not for profit' agencies which rely heavily on volunteers for the bulk of their staffing.

The keynote speaker is Mr Michael Ryan, who is a lecturer in the School of Education at the Australian Catholic University (ACU). Michael has been working in the area of Volunteering in Community Organisations - enhancing volunteer capacity. The forum will provide an opportunity to hear the results of Michael's research in this area and reflect on its relevance for SRE providers.

The venue is Trinity Chapel, Robert Menzies College,

Macquarie University, Macquarie Park. The site is easily accessible by public transport as well as by car.

The day will start at 9:30am, with registrations from 9:00am, and finish around 3:30pm. A feature of the programme will be a selection of workshops presented by ICCOREIS members. People will share their experiences about what works and what doesn't and give practical tips. There will also be the opportunity to buy resources.



ICCOREIS will be heavily subsidising the cost of the day to keep it at an achievable level for participants who already give very generously to the work of SRE. The registration fee,

which includes morning tea and lunch, will be only \$10.

Watch out for registration forms. For more information contact the ICCOREIS Secretary.

The 3 Rs of SRE: Rawlinson Report Review

A review of the Rawlinson Report carried out by ICCOREIS during 2008 came to the conclusion that the report remains applicable to SRE in the current climate, and informative for SRE providers. The 1980 report represents a comprehensive overview of religious education and has informed policy and procedures up to the present day. These key points are taken directly from the report.

Special Religious Education is

6.57 "education in the distinctive religious tenets and beliefs of the home and family, provided by the churches and other religious groups for children of parents expressing the desire that they receive such teaching"

Objectives for Special Religious Education

6.58 SRE should provide opportunities for learners:

- a) to develop an ability to interpret religious data within the traditions of their particular faith;
- b) to gain an appreciation of specific religious interpretations of issues and problems in which committed people apply their faith to life;
- c) to translate their learning about their faith into active expression in a worshipping community;
- d) to encounter, in a peer group learning context, religious teaching given from a position of faith and commitment by a person explicitly associated with the religious community;
- e) to be aware of the availability of personal and group counselling in the area of religious need, as occasion demands.

6.61 Parents have the right to have their child attend, or not attend, any form of SRE.

6.62 If students are withdrawn from SRE they should be provided with opportunities for purposeful secular learning but of such a nature as to avoid conflict of choice.

6.65 Each religious group, at all levels of its administration, should give SRE in government schools its official support and commitment, making every effort to ensure that, as SRE takes place within school buildings and in school hours, it is conducted as a genuinely educational activity which is adequately staffed and competently taught. The authorising authority of each religious faith should therefore ensure that its teachers possess knowledge of the relevant doctrine and possess adequate levels of teaching competence.

6.66 The State should have no say in the doctrine of SRE teaching. Each religious group should be responsible for its own curriculum, in conformity of the objectives of SRE, as stated above, taking into account the pupils' needs, ages and stages of development, and the capabilities of the teaching personnel.

6.70 Flexibility and cooperation are crucial to the effective implementation of SRE.

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Mission: School Conference 2009

News from the ACT

How encouraging it was to have over 50 people attend the inaugural *Mission: School* conference held in Canberra on Saturday 28th February! A joint initiative of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) project and Scripture Union (SU) ACT, *Mission: School* aimed to inspire and train the volunteers who run either CRE programs during teaching time or SUPA clubs during lunch time, in local government primary schools.

In her excellent keynote address, guest speaker Sally Smith, an SRE consultant for NSW, framed the theme for the day by highlighting the fact that we are entering the **real world of real kids** and schools, and we seek to serve with our gift from God, **real faith**. Sally posed the question, "What do we have to offer these kids?", and with the help of encouraging words, current statistics, modern video clips and Bible verses, suggested that we are the message they need; that when our programs are tailored to serve the real needs of these real children then schools will want to call on us Christians from local churches, who are willing and able to show how real faith intersects with real life issues.

The practicalities of teaching and reaching real children, of various ages and abilities, were explored throughout the day. Sally's workshop, along with the individual CRE and SU workshops, resulted in an array of posters, songs, drama and other hands-on experiences being presented. Cheryl Clendinning, GodSpace Production Coordinator, provided an overview of a Christian education teaching resource that incorporates many such ideas and experiences into an excellent Bible-based and relationship-focused



teaching package - *GodSpace*.

This day of unity was complemented with several speakers providing insight into the respective mission services that currently operate in ACT schools: Christian Religious Education (a project of the ACT Churches' Council), SUPA clubs, chaplains and camping opportunities (all Scripture Union projects). Along with a folder of goodies, discussions on leadership, team cohesion, school liaison, goals and dealing with awkward situations, provided all participants with an array of information to be assimilated into their volunteering service!

We pray that the day did bless all those in attendance as much as it blessed the organisers! We look forward to showing our support and thanks to Christian volunteers in schools by offering them another *Mission: School* conference next year. Perhaps the feedback from this year will encourage even more people to register:

"I was encouraged by being in contact with other Christian workers."

"It helped me to think about what we have to offer and why we're doing what we're doing."

It has helped me to think more about the recipients of our message."

"So many things...where do I start...different ways to teach, working together as a team, all the resources available."

"I got fresh inspiration to continue with RE teaching - with commitment and enthusiasm! What a mission field that we can impact!"

"Thanks for the seminar and God bless you!"

Karen Baron
CRE Coordinator, ACT
on behalf of the ACT Churches' Council and Scripture Union

Education Week 2009

A Love of Learning

Sunday 24th to Sunday 31st May 2009

Each year, members of the Director-General's Consultative Committee on Special Religious Education prepare an inter-denominational Christian order of service that can be used by schools and churches during Education Week. ICCOREIS has input into this through its representatives on the committee.

The theme for Education Week this year is *A love of learning*, and the service itself features the story of the Good Samaritan. This parable lends itself to being dramatised, modernised or contextualised and has been told with beautiful illustrations in many children's books. Recent events such as the bushfires in Victoria and floods in Queensland can also help to bring the question of "who is my neighbour" to life.

The order of service can be used as a school assembly, a combined SRE activity by Christian groups or as a basis for a church service to which representatives from the local public schools can be invited as special guests.

The order of service for 2009 is available on the Curriculum Support website at www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/religion/orderservice/index.htm



ICCOREIS AGM Report

The ICCOREIS AGM was held on 7th April 2009.

Election of Honorary Office Bearers

Chairman: Grant Maple's term as Chairman will end in September. A new Chairman will be elected at a special meeting prior to this date.

Deputy Chairman: Mark Hillis.

Honorary Secretary: Sue Sneddon.

Honorary Treasurer: Ann Maree Whenman.

Public Officer: Ann Maree Whenman.

Advisors: Glenn Coombs, John Emmett, Graham McDonald, Peter Robinson.

Secretary's Annual Report Representation

Although there are currently 14 member churches of ICCOREIS, some denominations are not fully represented, notably the Anglican Diocese of Sydney. This causes a degree of concern for a commission that exists as the voice of the providers of Christian religious education in our state.

The Chair of GenR8, Peter Robinson, appointed this year as an advisor, has been able to provide updates on the various aspects of SRE boards, employed SRE teachers, and school chaplains.

New Meeting Format

A greater emphasis on working in subcommittees has been afforded by the new day-long meeting format. It is anticipated that this will also be more cost effective and provide more practical outcomes as we meet in both large and small groups. Every member of the commission has nominated at least one subcommittee to belong to. Due to the longer meeting time, this will be the first year with only five meetings. Remaining meeting dates for 2009 are: 2nd June, 1st September (Triennial Heads of Churches Meeting), and 1st December.

Rawlinson Report

A prolonged discussion led by the Primary and Secondary subcommittee reinforced the relevance of this landmark report to members of the commission

who may never otherwise have been exposed to its far sighted recommendations. (See page 1 of this *SRE Update* for a report on the review.)

Special Project Funding

Approval was given to a project to provide an overview of SRE teacher training which was subsequently undertaken and completed by Mary Smith. The commission is grateful for Mary's thorough approach and the fresh insights the research has given into training and accreditation across the state. Mary's data has highlighted many other potential areas to investigate and raised the profile of training across the denominations. Mary is continuing to report on developments.

The proposed research project to gather statistics on the provision of SRE across the state was rejected by SERAP, the DET ethics committee, on the grounds that: a) ICCOREIS is not representative of the providers of SRE, and b) the results would not be of interest to the DET. The commission is currently engaged in discussions to obtain support from the other SRE providers in order to resubmit the proposal.

Website

The use of our website continues to increase according to the statistics provided by our Technical and Administrative Officer, Robyn Heeley. It is an indication that our society is web savvy and this remains the most effective way to communicate.

The pamphlet *Introducing ICCOREIS* has recently been updated and is available on the Publications page of the website.

Director General's Consultative Committee

Recent changes in personnel have meant that to some extent the corporate memory of how and why decisions were made has been lost, and it will require quite a lot of revisiting to clarify matters. The matter of the SRE Liaison Officers continues to be raised, but their names are only available to school principals.

A Child's Prayer

This is an extract from a recent talk given by a 23 year old at a regional church gathering.

I haven't always been a practicing Christian. I always believed in God, but during my teenage and university years I defiantly turned from Christ. I look back now at what my original contact with God was, and it was in my Year 4 primary school class.

The Scripture teacher had asked us to sit on the floor in groups of four, hold hands and shut our eyes. She told us that if we prayed for God to come to us then He would. I wished and prayed hard to see God. All of a sudden I felt this wave come from behind me as if someone was standing there and then right in front of me. I now believe that was my first encounter with the Holy Spirit, but if it hadn't been for that Scripture

teacher I would never have had that first profound experience of God which later led me to Christ.

Now that I have grown up I see what a challenging job it is to be an SRE teacher, but the value of it is so important.

Rebecca Cammell



Resources

ICCOREIS SRE Teacher Training Kits - Now on DVD

Kit 1

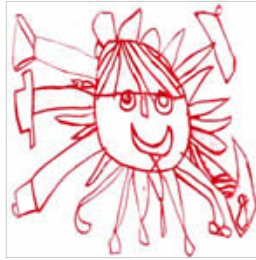
Everyone Counts, Everyone Belongs:
Educating Students with Special Needs
Presenter: Beverley Milson

Kit 2

Implications of Learning Difficulties for
Classroom Learning
Presenter: Dr Paul Whiting

Kit 3

Effective Classroom Management: What Works, What
Doesn't and Who Can Help
Presenter: Ilona Bruveris



Kit 4

Cultural Differences; Teaching a Multicultural Class
Presenter: Ken Cruickshank

Kit 5

Special Needs of Aboriginal Students
Presenters: Leonie Ardler and other specialists

These kits, previously available on video, are now available on DVD.

If you would like to order one or more of the kits, please complete the form below and return it with your payment to the ICCOREIS Secretary.

ICCOREIS SRE Teacher Training Kits Order Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime phone: _____

Post your form and payment to:
ICCOREIS Secretary
Mrs Sue Sneddon
PO Box 817
Newcastle NSW 2300

Order Details

Kit No.	Quantity	@ \$25 each
1	_____	
2	_____	
3	_____	
4	_____	
5	_____	
Total		\$ _____

Please make cheques payable to ICCOREIS (NSW) Inc.

GenR8 Website

GenR8's mission is to impact young people in NSW state schools through the gospel of Jesus Christ, through the provision of Special Religious Education (SRE) and chaplaincy for every possible student in every state school. The GenR8 website, www.genr8ministries.org, contains many useful resources for SRE teachers, school chaplains and SRE employment boards, in three main sections:

- Scripture Teachers: curriculum ideas; professional development; how to become a teacher.
- School Chaplains: program ideas; professional development; how to become a chaplain.
- Scripture Boards: board training; how to start a board.

In each section there is also a forum for sharing ideas and a members' area.

For further information contact GenR8 on info@genr8.org.au or 02 8268 3328.



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Enquiries

Please direct all general enquiries to the Secretary, and website enquiries to the Technical & Administrative Officer.