

risc news

reading international solidarity centre

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a half termly bulletin for secondary teachers, focusing on topical global issues

Gender stereotyping – so what will you do when you leave school?

Ideas about gender roles are imposed on young people through marketing, advertising, TV soaps and teenage magazines. Although we may think that 21st century teenagers can see beyond the pink and fluffy for girls and the macho camouflage for boys, evidence suggests this isn't so. Last year, a survey of teenage girls revealed that 63% would rather be a topless model than a doctor or a nurse. A quarter thought lap dancing was a good profession, but only 3% aspired to be teachers. The glamour model Jordan was a role model for more 15 to 19 year-olds than the Harry Potter author.

www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/newspapers/sunday_times/scotland/article705562.ece

In this country and across the world, roles in society are often prescribed, narrowing children's aspirations and expectations while reinforcing their views on sexuality. In meeting the aims of *Every Child Matters* we must challenge gender stereotyping in all its guises, so children feel confident in the choices they make to 'achieve economic well-being' and lead an adult life free from discrimination.

To create positive attitudes about gender we should ask ourselves:

- How are girls/boys/women/men portrayed in the resources we use? See the *Resources* box overleaf for suggestions for resources to challenge gender stereotypes
- How do we use positive role models, of men and women, to challenge gender stereotypes?
- Are we proactive in raising and discussing issues relating to gender, rather than just responding when they arise?
- How does the school ethos reflect equal opportunities? Are policies put into practice by all staff, teaching and non-teaching? Is training available to ensure this happens?

March 8th

March 8th is International Women's Day – the global day connecting women around the world and inspiring them to achieve their full potential. Why not use it as an opportunity to celebrate the contribution made by women – politically, socially, economically and environmentally – across the globe? www.internationalwomensday.com

International Women's Day (or any day) Quiz

- 1 Who is the leader of the National League for democracy in Burma and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991? *Aung San Suu Kyi*
- 2 Which scientist discovered radioactive metals? *Marie Curie*
- 3 Wangari Maathai, Professor of Ecology and Kenyan Environment Minister, was the first female African to win what? *Nobel Peace Prize in 2004*
- 4 In January 2006 which well known pop talent show judge published an autobiography that became the fastest selling book since British records began? *Sharon Osborne*
- 5 Who broke the world record for sailing solo around the world? *Ellen Macarthur*



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Did you know? Globally...

- Two-thirds of all children denied access to school around the world are girls
- Women earn only ten per cent of the world's income, yet work two-thirds of the world's working hours
- Domestic violence is the single biggest cause of injury and death to women worldwide
- Women hold only 14 per cent of the world's parliamentary seats, but make up half the world's population

www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam_in_action/issues/gender.html

Did you know? In the UK...

- Under 20% of MPs are women
- One in four women will be a victim of domestic violence in their lifetime
- Women working full-time earn, on average, 17% less an hour than men working full-time. For women working part-time the gap is 36% an hour.

www.amnesty.org.uk and www.fawcettsociety.org.uk

Resources

No Nonsense Guide to Women's Rights Niki Van Der Gaag

A guide to women's rights all across the world, the history of the treatment of women, and how steps have been made to correct injustice and inequality.

No Nonsense Guide to Sexual Diversity Vanessa Baird

A guide to many aspects of sexuality, it unearths hidden histories and looks at contributions from men and women to medicine and science. It includes an overview of the global laws that affect LGBT people.

Women's Rights Geraldine Terry

One of a new series of books from Oxfam, this examines women's rights around the globe, with some fascinating and worrying statistics, locally and globally.

Not the Only One: Gay and Lesbian Fiction for Teenagers Jane Summer

Short stories providing hope and inspiration to gay and lesbian teenagers as they take the first steps towards accepting their sexuality. For others, it challenges stereotypes about gay and lesbian teens, and their lives.

Flying High: Amazing Women and Their Success Stories Anita Roy

A look at the lives of some incredible women from India, and their contributions to science and technology.

Women of Hope: African Americans who Made a Difference Joyce Hansen

A brief but very useful look at some important African America women, who have made huge contributions to our modern world, especially in literature.

Kalpana Chawla A Life the first Indian Women to Travel to Space

An in depth look at the life of Kalpana Chawla, the Indian astronaut who worked for NASA and became the first Indian woman to travel into space.

Practicing Gender Analysis in Education Leach

Silenced Sexualities in Schools and Universities Debbie Epstein

Events

A full calendar of events and themes for developing a global dimension can be found at www.risc.org.uk/education/e-news_cal.html

2008 is the United Nations International Year of:

- **Planet Earth** focuses on the positive aspects of the relationship between human beings and the earth, creating a sustainable future for humans and their planet www.esfs.org
- **Sanitation** raises awareness of sanitation in achieving the Millennium Development Goals www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/sanitation/iys.htm
- **Languages** promotes unity in diversity and global understanding www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ga10592.doc.htm
- **The Potato** increases awareness of the importance of the potato and promotes potato-based farming systems www.pota-to2008.org

2008 is also....

- Year 4 of the **United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development** (2005-2014)
- Year 4 of the **International Decade for Action: Water for Life** (2005-2015)
- Year 6 of the **United Nations Literacy Decade** (2003-2012)
- Year 8 of the **International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World** (2001-2010)
- Year 8 of the **Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries**, particularly in Africa (2001-2010)
- Year 9 of the **Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism** (2001-2010)

RISC has a very wide selection of teaching resources for all ages and curriculum areas as well as a selection of artefacts for loan, please email us your name and address for further information.