ruMAD?

are you making a difference?
ruMAD? enables young people to lead change in their community and become active citizens!

Josh Levy
ruMAD? National Facilitator
Education Foundation

Education Foundation Australia: making a difference since 1989

Education Foundation Australia is unique in its focus on philanthropic support for public education. It is the only independent, non-profit organisation in Australia that strengthens public education by investing private monies (philanthropic and corporate) into primary and secondary schools. Our focus is educational excellence and equality of opportunity.
Outline:

• ruMAD? Video
• A brief history
• The 4 Levels of MADness
• The framework

• Key features of ruMAD?
  - Ladder of involvement
  - Change not Charity

• Case Study

• Workshop Experience: “Values, Passions & Vision”

• What next?
A brief history: A pedagogical context

- **Education Foundation**
- Ellen Koshland

- **ruMAD?**
- David Zyngier (Monash Uni) - *Education/Research*
- Claire Brunner (Donkey Wheel Foundation) - *Philanthropy*
The 4 levels of MADness

1. ruMAD? Projects
   - ongoing social-change projects

2. MAD Day
   - one day of action

3. Youth Ambassadors
   - Youth Ambassadors Conference

4. Student Foundations
   - stand-alone grant giving entities
3 Phases of the Framework:

- Understanding
- Action
- Celebration

Flowchart of Workshops for ruMAD? Projects
[Note: small blue boxes represent outcomes from the workshops]
Overview & Key Features

- Student-led & directed
- Inquiry-based
- Values focused
- Participatory & democratic
- Promotes community engagement
- Authentic learning & real life issues
- Promotes Social Change *not charity*
- *Is about making a difference!
Social Change Vs Charity

If you GIVE ME A FISH
you have fed me for a day

If you TEACH ME TO FISH
then you have fed me
until the river is contaminated
or the shoreline seized for
development

If you PARTNER ME TO ORGANISE
then whatever the challenge
I can join together with my peers
and we will fashion
our OWN solution

We need this in
disasters

But what about
tomorrow?

⇒ Give a person a fish $ they can eat for a day
⇒ Teach a person to fish $ they can eat for a lifetime
⇒ Partner the people to gain control of the water $ they can create a sustainable food supply for everyone.

Maybe you can teach
me new sustainable
methods of how to
fish

If I can't already fish
already there are
probably no fish
nearby

If we understood how to
stop the developers we'd
still have our land to
support ourselves

If we can get into
government we can restrict
the activities of the mine
that is killing our fish

Tell me and I'll forget
Show me and I'll remember
Involve me and I'll understand

Social Change Vs Charity

Education Foundation
Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation

- Rung 8: Young people & adults share decision-making
- Rung 7: Young people lead & initiate action
- Rung 6: Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people
- Rung 5: Young people consulted and informed
- Rung 4: Young people assigned and informed
- Rung 3: Young people tokenized*
- Rung 2: Young people are decoration*
- Rung 1: Young people are manipulated*

Note: Hart explains that the last three rungs are non-participation


The 7 or 8 Debate:

Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation shows Youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults as the top form of youth participation, followed immediately by Youth-initiated and directed. This is somewhat controversial an issue for many people working with and around young people. Essentially, the debate is which of these levels of participation is actually the most meaningful?

Many believe that shared decision making is most beneficial to both young people and adults. Others believe that young people are most empowered when they are making decisions without the influence of adults. Most often, this doesn't exclude adults but reduces their role to that of support.

Both arguments have merit; ultimately, it is up the each group to determine which form of decision-making best fits with the groups' needs.

* Starts with the students’ values, concerns and passions and empowers students to take responsibility
* Enables students to imagine and create the world they wish to live in
* Gains understanding of the needs of others by connecting with communities / experts
* Builds on the community’s assets or strengths (time, talent, treasure)
* Tackles causes not symptoms
* Is sustainable
* Empowers communities and students beyond the life of the project / funding
* Measures, evaluates and celebrates its outcomes
* Inspires others
Case Study

Project Title: “Jessie’s Creek”
School: Whitfield District Primary School, VIC

Whitfield is an agricultural township in the King River valley 170 km northeast of Melbourne. The primary school has around 20 students from Prep to Grade 6.

Jessie’s Creek runs through the town and behind the school. Over the years there had been a lot of dumping of green waste (weeds, grass clippings, etc) as well as miscellaneous rubbish. The adults in the town decided to have a meeting to clean up the creek but after three hours no decision could be reached. The students at the Primary School took on a ruMAD? project to carry out a biodiversity study of the creek and to clean it up.

After carrying out the biodiversity study, and only one afternoon of attempting to clean up the creek, the students decided that there must be a better approach to making a difference. They looked at how they could influence other people and organisations to come on board and partner them in making a difference to Jessie’s Creek.

The students wrote to the Wilderness Society, Greening Australia, and the Rural City of Wangaratta and shared their findings. They developed a survey for the local community, produced a brochure to publicise their ideas, and prepared presentations so they could speak to groups like Landcare, the North East Catchment Management Authority, and the Principals of the Goulburn North East Region.

From their presentations and letters the students attracted funding of $26,000 from the Commonwealth Environmental Fund from Australian Geographic and rejuvenated the entire creek. Adults were stunned by what the students caused. The students and the town now ensure that the creek is kept clean.

“You have to believe in what you are doing and make a fuss to get things moving. People were surprised that kids could do this stuff”

Grade 6 girls, Whitfield District Primary
Case Study: “Jessie's Creek”

(a) Before

(b) After
Workshop: “Values, Passions & Vision”

“My big possibility is for a world where…”

- there is less poverty & human heartache
- young people feel empowered to articulate concerns and feel supported & safe to do so
- cultural differences are celebrated
- every person values the environment and uses less water

- What’s yours?

“Great minds have purposes; others have wishes”
Washington Irving
New Website

www.rumad.org.au

- Online Interactive Portal
- Upload video/pics
- Upload Project Content
- Comment & Blog
- Build community connectedness
- Website for Social Justice
- Teacher/Student Resources
More Information?

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• PD Sessions for Teachers & Professionals
• Direct Facilitation of workshops in the classroom/ w students
• Marriage of both [for best results]
• Support through website and ‘on the ground’
• Network with clusters/communities
• Cluster/Community Celebration [MAD Day]