

**Professional Development for Values Educators – a Beijing Case Study**

Paper by

**Christopher Drake, Association for Living Values Education International  
and  
Professor Yuan Chang-huan, Beijing Institute of Education**

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**Abstract**

If education is truly to foster the acquisition of the values, attitudes and skills needed for life in our globalizing world, a sine qua non is for a revival of the view of education as a moral enterprise, a purposeful activity designed to help humanity flourish and support the overall development of the individual. Both students and teachers need to feel valued, understood, safe and respected; in making a values-based learning environment possible, educators not only require appropriate quality teacher education and on-going professional development, they also need to be valued, nurtured and cared for within the learning community. Priority must therefore be given to creating values-based learning environments: classrooms in which a culture of values such as respect, responsibility, tolerance, peace and love becomes the touchstone for behaviour and relationships, sets the overall tone for lessons and influences the pedagogy. This paper presents the UNESCO-and UNICEF-supported Living Values Education (LVE) approach and the use of its award-winning materials in professional development programmes for local Beijing teachers. LVE professional development positions values education not as another subject to be imparted to students but rather as a philosophy of education that emphasises the importance of a teaching and learning environment characterised by human values while also offering experiential, empowering and contextually relevant content. When positive values and the search for meaning and purpose are placed at the heart of learning and teaching, education itself is valued and teachers are better able to deal with the challenges they face. While much remains to be done, results from Beijing schools indicate the effectiveness of this approach and teachers' responsiveness to it.

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**Professional development for values educators – a Beijing case study**

One of the defining, and more admirable, qualities of humanity appears to be our enduring quest for a better future. Insofar as a better future represents a change from the present, education and learning are fundamental paths to pursue in such quest, as education almost inevitably involves new knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities. In the context of shifting contemporary realities, new opportunities and globalised threats, the challenge that faces educationists more acutely than ever before is to define what sort of education is most conducive to a better future and the personal attributes that can create, sustain and safeguard it.

While much can be said about what such better future might look like, for the present purposes suffice it to say that it must take account of the totality of the human experience and address the physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and social fulfilment or well-being of the individual and society, in an inclusive world characterised by peace, justice, freedom, respect and responsibility. If education is to lead humanity away from the countless wrongs, abuses and perils that blight the lives of so many people, and

towards the broad goals, but elusive achievements, of personal, economic and social development, it must therefore help every human being make the most of all his or her talents and potential. There is a clear need for taking an integrated or holistic approach to education: a perspective that recognises and addresses the totality of the human being and the need for a clear focus on the underlying values, rights and responsibilities that are the very fabric of the individual and the better future that society aspires to.

With the rapid changes in the world bringing both tremendous potential for good and grave cause for concern, one undeniable need is for us to see more clearly the link between quality of education and quality of life, both for the individual and society. While education must prepare learners for productive work, it also has a broader and higher purpose: to cater to the full development of the student as an individual, a member of society and a citizen of the world community. If this purpose is to be fulfilled, there is, to quote the Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, or Delors report: “every reason to place renewed emphasis on the moral and cultural dimensions of education, enabling each person to grasp the individuality of other people and to understand the world’s erratic progress towards a certain unity”.

***To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society.***  
Theodore Roosevelt

To achieve this requires that we embark on a collective re-discovery of what it ultimately means to be a human being, a learning process to help us re-find and connect with ourselves. We need to learn more about who we are as individuals and as a society and to learn more about how to live with each other both within our families and more immediate communities but also within the world as a whole. We must maximise our own inner resources and draw deeply on the wisdom of the ages, the best of our traditions, cultures and ways of being and doing. We must, in the words of the Preamble to the *Charter of the United Nations* “reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person.... to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom”.

Seeing the broader purpose of education and learning as life-long journeys that transcend more immediate, although important, functional processes, practical skills and task-related abilities is certainly not a new concept. Indeed it may well lay claim to deeper roots of more reflecting times, including those of Confucius in the East and Socrates in the West, but over the last few centuries in particular we have mostly followed a different direction.

Fortunately much has been done in recent years to re-paint the larger picture of education, introduce corresponding reforms and, to a lesser extent, corresponding teacher development activities. For example in 1989 the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* elaborated a set of values subsequently endorsed in nearly all countries of the world as essential for children to be able to fulfil their potential, and Article 29.1 of the Convention declares that:

States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to... the development of the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential... the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms..... the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples.... the development of respect for the natural environment.

Produced the following year, at the 1990 World Conference on Education for All, held at Jomtien, Thailand, *The World Declaration on Education for All* defines basic learning needs as comprising:

both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and

work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions and to continue learning (World Conference, 1990).

Following the United Nations *Decade for Human Rights Education*, 2005 saw the beginning of the UN *Decade of Education for Sustainable Development* which calls for a process of learning how to make decisions that consider the long-term future of the economy, ecology and equity of all communities. It asks that we develop values, behaviour and lifestyles that take account of others and tomorrow, as well as ourselves and today, and that, reflecting upon the environmental and social consequences of our actions, we make a shift to sustainable development.

Meanwhile, we are already well into the United Nations International *Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World* (2001-2010), based on the idea of constructing "...a new vision of peace by developing a peace culture based on the universal values of respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights and equality between women and men." (Congress on Peace in the Minds of Men.)

***Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.***

Nelson Mandela

In short, education – more so than ever in today's world – must not be viewed as an end in itself or just about producing people to produce goods. Education must help tap the talents hidden like treasures in every individual and lead to a person complete in the richness of his or her personality. It must address the individual as a whole and also offer preparation for life as a whole in a complex and challenging world, including constructive and meaningful participation in and contribution to global society. In reconciling needs and aspirations not just within and amongst communities at different stages of development but also across generations in a finite world, it will also need to address head-on substantive questions of values, as signs of an emerging global ethic appear side by side with rich cultural diversity, individuals' right to their own identity and, unfortunately, intolerance, violence and insecurity.

But if it is easy to say that a better future will include, and indeed depend on, a moral revival of some form, it is far less easy to say what educational practices will best attain this aim. If we are to make the most of new technologies, to create inclusive learning societies in an information age, to achieve our development goals, there has to be a triumph of human values; while this may be clear, it leaves open the question of precisely how do we go about bringing values such as respect, responsibility, honesty and love into peoples' lives, their attitudes and behaviour – and what role education must play in this.

***The virtues are not poured into us; they are natural to us.  
Seek them and you will find them; neglect them and you will lose them.***

Mencius

On the one hand it is apparent that these values will not necessarily emerge either by themselves or as the result of legislation and, on the other hand, that they cannot – and indeed should not – be imposed from above. Instead, it is submitted, values must be seen not only as the intended outcome but also as the way towards it. The way to peace is through peace, not through war. The way to inclusiveness is through inclusiveness. The way to respect and honesty is through respect and honesty, and so on. In short, we must be the change we want to see in the world.

Thus if the outcome of an educational process is to be respectful, tolerant, peaceful, honest and responsible world citizens, then the way to achieve that is through an ethos, a culture, an environment within the school, in which respect, tolerance, love, honesty, safety are the hallmark of how the school community organizes itself. "At the core of values education lies the establishment of an agreed set of principles, deeply held convictions, that underpin all aspects of a school's life and work" (Hawkes). This underlines the importance that must be paid to the relationship between the teacher and the student – and indeed other relationships within the school community – and what characterizes those relationships. It is suggested that

values must be seen to lie not only at the heart of the educational content, the “what”, but also at the heart of the educational process, the “how”, the way in which education takes place.

***To reach real peace in the world, we will have to begin with the children.***

Gandhi

With this in mind, there would seem to be a need to take a fresh look at the practical implementation of values education in classrooms and the extent to which teachers are adequately prepared for this. Perhaps the first change of emphasis in this regard is not to see values education as another subject within the curriculum to be imparted to students so much as a philosophy of education that emphasises the importance of a teaching and learning environment that is characterised by values such as respect, responsibility, tolerance, peace and love. If children need to feel loved, valued, respected, understood and safe (Tillman & Quera Colomina, 2000) so too do adults in the classroom, and in their relationships with each other, in order that quality teaching and learning may take place.

Therefore, “more than a subject, values education has to be an attitude within the whole teaching practice, involving the entire staff of the school, parents and the surrounding community in a common shared endeavour. Thus, integrating values education gives teachers another vision of their pedagogical work. .... In order to have a real impact, values education has to be planned as a school project, integrated into every aspect of the curriculum, pedagogy and activities, involving all the teachers as a team as well as the organizational and decision-making structure of the educational institution.” (Combes)

When this ethos is taken as the starting point, the second step is then to look at the curriculum itself and to see how values questions are inherent or embedded within the different subject areas, be they science, language, arts or others. The question becomes not so much of seeing how to add a values dimension into these fields of scholarship or human endeavour as an uncovering and exploration of values inherent within them and their development and practice.

It is only at this stage that we turn to the third strand of this approach, which is to consider how discrete sessions or periods within the school day can be timetabled to address the issue of values as a subject in its own right. This may find a home within the context of a lesson dealing with religious education or under a title such as personal and social education, humanities or moral education or within a school assembly or circle time. That a school is able to dedicate time to such a task, whatever the lesson name, is to be welcomed but the point is that the first two strands of this approach stand on their own regardless of whether or not such time is made available. In other words, values education may be distinguished from values-based education; and it should be clear that values education is likely to be ineffective unless it takes place in a values-based learning environment.

For sure, trying to give values such as respect, tolerance, love and care their rightful place within child-friendly inclusive classrooms, and ensuring that they set the tone, is not a soft answer to a hard question. To a considerable degree, the issue raised is one of educator training and in-service development programmes designed to help deepen or reinforce the higher-order teaching skills and techniques that contribute to the creation and maintenance of such a values-based teaching environment. A greater awareness of their own values can help empower teachers in moving towards a school environment in which explicit values rather than explicit rules have pride of place. “The whole idea of values-based education is about teachers looking at themselves first” (Combes) or embarking on a process that begins “with self-understanding through an inner voyage whose milestones are knowledge, meditation and the practice of self-criticism”. (Delors).

### **Living Values Education**

The above reflects the approach taken over the past five years in Beijing by educationists using the *Living Values Education* approach. Living Values Education (LVE) is a way of conceptualising education that promotes the development of values-based learning communities and places the search for meaning and

purpose at the heart of education. LVE emphasises the worth and integrity of each person involved in the provision of education, in the home, school and community. In fostering quality education, LVE supports the overall development of the individual and a culture of positive values in each society and throughout the world, believing that education is a purposeful activity designed to help humanity flourish.

LVE brings a comprehensive approach to values education and seeks to provide guiding principles and tools for the development of the whole person, recognizing that the individual is comprised of the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual. It focuses on the teacher as a potential, and necessary, role model while also stressing the importance of being learner-centred and providing the opportunity for students to explore and develop values and associated personal and intrapersonal social and emotional skills. Professional development courses, seminars and workshops are offered to educators, encouraging them to accept, listen and guide rather than impose and moralize, and to create a values-based learning environment in which modelling values and respecting student opinions is seen as a key part of LVE educator excellence.

While its primary emphasis is a values-based pedagogy, attitudes, approaches and behaviour that support a values-based learning environment, LVE also offers a package of materials containing practical lesson content. Its teacher resource books offer a range of methods and a wide variety of experiential values activities for use by teachers, parents and caregivers to help children and young adults explore and develop widely-shared human values. The approach is experiential, participatory and flexible, allowing – and encouraging – the LVE materials to be adapted according to varying cultural, social and other circumstances. Materials are offered on twelve values: *Peace, Respect, Cooperation, Freedom, Happiness, Honesty, Humility, Love, Responsibility, Simplicity, Tolerance and Unity*. However, educators are encouraged to choose the values that they wish to work with, including, if they wish, others not listed above.

### **Principles of Values Education**

Living Values Education is based on the following core principles:

#### *On the learning and teaching environment*

1. When positive values and the search for meaning and purpose are placed at the heart of learning and teaching, education itself is valued.
2. Learning is especially enhanced when occurring within a values-based learning community, where values are imparted through quality teaching, and learners discern the consequences, for themselves, others and the world at large, of actions that are and are not based on values.
3. In making a values-based learning environment possible, educators not only require appropriate quality teacher education and ongoing professional development, they also need to be valued, nurtured and cared for within the learning community.
4. Within the values-based learning community, positive relationships develop out of the care that all involved have for each other.

#### *On the teaching of values*

5. The development of a values-based learning environment is an integral part of values education, not an optional extra.
6. Values education is not only a subject on the curriculum. Primarily it is pedagogy; an educational philosophy and practice that inspires and develops positive values in the classroom. Values-based teaching and guided reflection support the process of learning as a meaning-making process, contributing to the development of critical thinking, imagination, understanding, self-awareness, intrapersonal and interpersonal skills and consideration of others.
7. Effective values educators are aware of their own thoughts, feelings, attitudes and behaviour and sensitive to the impact these have on others.
8. A first step in values education is for teachers to develop a clear and accurate perception of their own attitudes, behaviour and emotional literacy as an aid to living their own values. They may then help themselves and encourage others to draw on the best of their own personal, cultural and social qualities, heritage and traditions.

*On the nature of persons within the world and the discourse of education*

9. Central to the Living Values Education concept of education is a view of persons as thinking, feeling, valuing whole human beings, culturally diverse and yet belonging to one world family. Education must therefore concern itself with the intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being of the individual.
10. The discourse of education, of thinking, feeling and valuing, is both analytic and poetic. Establishing a dialogue about values within the context of a values-based learning community facilitates an interpersonal, cross-cultural exchange on the importance and means of imparting values in education.

The implementation of Living Values Education is coordinated by the **Association for Living Values Education International** (ALIVE International), a non-profit-making association of values educators around the world. Drawing on a strong volunteer base, Living Values Education is supported by UNESCO and a host of other organisations, agencies, governmental bodies, foundations, community groups and individuals. It is part of the global movement for a culture of peace in the framework of the *United Nations International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World*. ALIVE International groups together national LVE bodies and is an independent organisation that does not have any particular or exclusive religious, political or national affiliation or interest.

Piloting of the initial LVE materials and approach began in March 1997 and thereafter a series of five separate books were created, reflecting comments and including contributions from educators around the world. The series was formally published in April 2001 and was awarded the 2002 Teachers' Choice Award, an award sponsored by *Learning* magazine, a national publication for teachers and educators in the USA; the series comprises:

*Living Values Activities for Children Ages 3-7;*  
*Living Values Activities for Children Ages 8-14;*  
*Living Values Activities for Young Adults;*  
*LVEP Educator Training Guide; and*  
*Living Values Parent Groups: A Facilitator Guide*

A *Framework for Action on Values Education in Early Childhood* (UNESCO 2001) was developed at an international Workshop on *Integrating Values in Early Childhood Programmes and Services* co-organized by UNESCO and LVE and held in Paris in 2000. The LVE multi-lingual website ([www.livingvalues.net](http://www.livingvalues.net)) offers many resource materials including extracts from the activities books.

In the three main teacher resource books, *Living Values Activities for Children Ages 3-7*, *Living Values Activities for Children Ages 8-14* and *Living Values Activities for Young Adults*, (Tillman and Hsu; Tillman) reflective and imagining activities encourage students to access their own creativity and inner gifts. Communication activities teach students to implement peaceful social skills. Artistic activities, songs and dance inspire students to express themselves while experiencing the value of focus. Game-like activities are thought-provoking and fun; the discussion time that follows those activities helps students explore effects of different attitudes and behaviour. Other activities stimulate awareness of personal and social responsibility and, for older students, awareness of social justice. The development of self-respect and tolerance continues throughout the exercises, which aim to help children and young adults learn to perceive, understand and act in ways that promote peace, justice and harmonious coexistence and respect diversity. Educators are encouraged to draw upon their own cultural heritage while expressing values in everyday activities and exploring values questions in the curriculum.

The *LVEP Educator Training Guide* (Tillman and Quera Colomina) contains the content of sessions within LVEP Educator Training Workshops. Sessions include values awareness, creating a values-based atmosphere and skills for creating such an atmosphere.

The LVE approach is currently being implemented and producing positive results in about 80 countries – including many in the Asia-Pacific region – and first began to appear in China in late 1999

during introductory discussions with the UNESCO office in Beijing and then with various institutions including the Beijing Institute of Education. It was agreed to hold a five-day seminar on Living Values Education during August 2001 and that the Institute would invite selected school teachers and Institute lecturers and researchers to attend. This would be the preliminary step to LVE being adopted and used in a selection of local schools in Beijing. The following pages describe the process involved, the different ways in which schools approached the same aim and some of the outcomes and insights gained.

## **Living Values Education in Beijing**

There have been three main phases of LVE in Beijing: Initial Research; Professional Development/Teacher Training and Support; and Implementation in Schools. These are described below, together with a fourth aspect: Outcome and Achievements.

### **I. Initial Research**

Following the discussions in 1999 with LVE representatives, the Beijing Institute of Education carried out a survey of 1,040 primary school pupils and 200 middle school students in Beijing regarding their thoughts about and attitudes towards values education. The research was carried out through questionnaires, talks and discussion in 2000 and showed that it was very important and necessary for students to receive Living Values Education and to make values education the key issue in their school life.

### **II. Professional Development/Teacher Training and Support**

Fundamental to LVE is its professional development seminars and courses. A number of such events were accordingly organised in Beijing. The first of these was in 2001 when an LVE team of five came from the UK, Malaysia and Hong Kong. Co-hosted by the Beijing Institute of Education (BIE), the five-day Seminar and Train-The-Trainer took place from 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> August 2001 and was attended by over thirty teachers from twenty local kindergarten, primary and middle schools in Beijing, together with about thirty lecturers and other staff from the BIE. The event was conducted in English and translated into Mandarin. While this took additional time, it did not appear to be a significant barrier, as was confirmed by oral and written evaluations. The nature of the event helped, as it emphasised participation and interaction in a values-based environment and gave participants the chance to try out new teaching methods and activities while other participants played the role of students. Teacher comments included: “The short training session equips me with new educational concepts and enables me to change my teaching focus from knowledge to the overall development of students. In my future work, I’ll respect students’ cognitive differences, change my role from instructor to students’ friend and facilitator and try to create a relaxing and happy classroom atmosphere to promote students’ learning.” “The training made me understand my own values better.” “My concept of education changed a lot: from teacher-based to student-based; from teaching to inspiring; from teacher-student relationships to friendly relationships; from command, corporal punishment and scolding to a lively, happy classroom full of laughter.”

Building on the achievements of the previous year, a three-day seminar was held at the Beijing Institute of Education from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> August 2002 and comprised both graduates from the previous year’s seminar and some new teachers. Experiences were shared and some of the workshop sessions for new participants were conducted in Mandarin (on the themes of cooperation and responsibility) by teachers from the previous year who had been implementing LVE in their schools.

This was followed by a further three-day seminar at the China National Children’s Centre for local teachers from various Beijing and Hebei schools, including kindergartens and vocational high schools. Most of the participants were senior teachers or school directors who designed some teaching projects and core courses, or taught students directly. Ms Chen Ying, Programme Officer for the China National Children’s Centre, summarised the outcome for teachers: “With fresh perspectives and concepts about Living Values Education obtained in the seminar and workshop they went back to their work and lives, re-considering their everyday work, creating many new activities and developing more training and educational methods, and, most importantly, sharing their basic values with their students, colleagues and friends from other circles.”

A total of over 200 teacher trainers, researchers and teachers from kindergartens, primary schools, middle schools and the Beijing Institute of Education took part in these seminars in 2001 and 2002. A number of them were then able to incorporate aspects of LVE in courses and workshops conducted for teachers in the Children's Palace, Xi Cheng district, Men Tou Gou district, Ping Gu district and Tianjin Normal University. In 2004, 2005 and 2006, LVE also featured in the BIE's in-service continuing education training programme for primary and middle school teachers and principals.

While the main emphasis was on values-based pedagogy, there was also a strong interest in curriculum materials and the LVE Activities books. So while preparation for the first seminar was underway, work also started on translating LVE Activities books into Chinese and, in order to help localise the materials, developing new activities contributed by local teachers to supplement those written by teachers in other parts of the world. Some 20-30 activities were contributed and approved for inclusion in a first edition of the LVE Activities Books for 3-7 year olds and 8-14 year-olds published by the Beijing Institute of Education in time for the August 2001 seminar. Simultaneously, work was going on to translate key pages of the Living Values Education website into Chinese for ongoing support and development.

### III. Implementation in Schools – the what and how

At the end of the August seminar, many teachers had expressed the desire to make use of the LVE approach in their schools and, a few months later, on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2001, a visit was paid to Wu Lu Tong Primary School where implementation of the LVE Approach had already begun, as was witnessed during an inspiring class visit. The following day a workshop was held at the BIE with teachers from the August seminar at which BIE teachers reported that they themselves were using aspects of LVE along with some 13 schools. Some teachers were not able to attend the workshop and it was not clear whether or not they were implementing LVE. Out of the confirmed thirteen who were, some were doing so as a separate class subject while others incorporated aspects of it into their own subject areas. Two other options were also used: conducting LVE activities during “class meetings” and/or as an extra-curricular activity.

#### 1) Separate subject or “integrate” into all subjects?

It seemed that most of the schools thought it best to ensure that a values-based approach infused all lessons and that specific values content could be found in, or blended with, different school subjects such as Chinese, English, Art, Physical Education, Politics, Moral Education and Life and Moral Education and Society. For example, Mr Zhang Jiang, a teacher from Da Yu No 2 Primary School in Men Tou Gou district successfully combined the contents of Chinese language lessons with values education by drawing on how the three values of responsibility, simplicity and dedication were integrated into stories he used in the lesson. Another example of this approach was explained by Ms Zou Hong from Wu Lu Tong Primary School in Xi Cheng district. She made use of her art lesson to organize the students into different groups to make flags, with each student being assigned a different job, which helped them learn to cooperate with each other in order to make flags well and quickly, so learning both about art and the ingredients of cooperation.

On 29<sup>th</sup> March 2002, the Unit of Education for International Understanding of the Beijing Institute of Education organized five Living Values demonstration classes in Mentougou District and Xi Cheng District, Beijing, which were also attended by a representative of LVE from Hong Kong. Two of the schools showed how learning about values could take place within a lesson on another subject. Thus Mr. Zhang Jiang, from Mentougou, Da Yu No. 1 Primary School, took a Chinese language lesson and while studying the story “The Road covered with snow in the Deep Mountain and Wind” he helped students understand and appreciate the meaning of the values of simplicity and responsibility by asking them to express feelings and consider and compare events in the story with life-situations. He was followed by Ms. Yu Dongmei of Xi Cheng District, Bei Hai Primary School who conducted a physical education class which included a game “Competition and Cooperation” during which she helped students realize that competition also needs cooperation by drawing on their life experiences and engaging them in games such as tug of war and walking in teams wearing ski-like large wooden shoes. Students also gained knowledge of techniques and skills involved in cooperation. Another school, Long Zha Shu Primary School in Chao Yang District, believed that there should be separate timetable space for values education and allocated time for teacher-development. After a further phase of research, teachers then compiled a student textbook based on LVE.

## 2) Class meetings

Several primary and middle schools made use of their regular class meetings to carry out LVE activities. Three such cases were observed during the demonstration classes of 29<sup>th</sup> March 2002. The first was that of Mentougou, Da Yu No. 2 Primary School whose teacher An Ying successfully used a “Monkey and Deer” story to teach the importance of cooperation and help her students understand the meaning, basic techniques and skills of cooperation. Then Teacher Shi Li Li of Mentougou, Xinfang No. 1 Primary School conducted a class meeting on the theme of love. Singing the song “Contribution of Love” helped to create a loving atmosphere in which students were better able to understand and experience love. The teacher had asked students how to show love to others and how they felt when they showed love to others. A deeper appreciation of the love of their families was gained by reading letters that their parents wrote to them. Finally, Ms. Cao Yu of Xi Cheng District’s Xi Si Bei Sitao Primary school conducted a class meeting about happiness in which she helped students learn what happiness is and included time on playing music, telling stories, expressing feelings and exchanging ideas. At another school, the Experimental School in Shi Jing Shan, Miss Liu Min used the class meeting and meeting for Young Pioneers to tell certain stories, listen to songs and play games that helped students experience and understand various values.

## 3) Extra-curricular activities

Many primary and middle schools reported that they make use of extra-curricular time for values education. For example, Ms Yu Dongmei and fellow teachers from Beihai Primary School integrated LVE into different outdoor activities and contests to enable students to experience the importance of responsibility, unity, cooperation and other values.

## IV. Outcome and Achievements

Values education, and the phasing in of a values-based approach to the whole educational enterprise, is clearly a long-term endeavour and one the results of which may not be immediately evident or easily assessable. The above was carried out without any plan for formal assessment and grew in an organic fashion, partly reflecting individual educator and school interest and the availability of time, personnel and resources. Following substantial initial involvement from visiting LVE personnel, much of the subsequent work was undertaken by lecturers and other staff members of the Beijing Institute of Education. Many of them have maintained a close contact with participating schools and teachers and they noted the following among the achievements of their work.

### 1) Professional development of teachers

More than 600 principals, key teachers and other educators from over 60 kindergartens, primary schools, middle schools and adult schools have been involved in LVE and become experimental bases for values education. Some of them have attended LVE professional development courses in the UK and many have themselves passed on to others some of the skills and approaches learned, both within Beijing and other cities, such as Shanghai, Tianjin and Kunming.

### 2) New teaching methods adopted in schools

Participants in LVE professional development courses in Beijing were typically exposed to new ideas, thinking, skills and teaching methods which contrasted with the traditional “duck-feeding” method. Some found it took time but generally they were appreciative of learning, for example, ways to guide students to visualise, experience, think and reflect about values and different situations involving values, and conduct values-related activities. Teachers found the experience meaningful and thus were by themselves inspired to put the new approaches and methods to good use in their classroom and schools, liking a pedagogy in which students are active participants rather than the passive memorisers associated with some traditional teaching styles.

A number of teachers commented that they came to realise that each student is unique and that by discovering each individual’s strong points they can help foster his or her overall development. Understanding this, teachers made efforts to mould their teaching style away from cramming and overly-didactic approaches towards more experiential and activity-based approaches. For example, at Beijing Bei

Si Tiao primary school, a teacher would ask pupils to recall previous times of happiness and then what they could do to maintain this happiness; many came up with answers that involved doing something for the happiness of others, and they were then asked to express this in drawing and drama as well as in writing. Parents commented favourably on the positive changes they observed in their children.

Some teachers spoke of their awareness of the fact that textbook content alone is insufficient to convey, for example, the real meaning of happiness; it must be experienced and only then can it really be internalised. This in turn led to the conclusion that values are an intangible part of our human heritage and cannot just be instilled by teachers at their command. Experience and touching the heart is essential. Teachers found that drawing, music, dramatic performances, story-telling, keeping a diary, designing class emblems, songs, class meetings and the like help students experience and reflect on values. Once values have been felt, they can become part of students' way of thinking, and once thought about and reflected on they can become part of the natural and spontaneous behaviour, with old ways easily being neglected. Realising this, teachers were quick to seek to adopt this approach in their daily practice at school.

Overall, the following seemed to researchers at the Beijing Institute of Education to be an essential part of the good values education practice that teachers sought for:

- i) creating a values-based classroom atmosphere, providing each student with a safe environment in which to voice opinions, feel part of the group and contribute to it and to engage in activities and responsibilities at a level comfortable to them;
- ii) creating a classroom climate in which students could understand, respect and love each other and generate a sense of unity and the feeling of being safe, relaxed, respected and cared for; and
- iii) creating a harmonious classroom environment such that students' felt more confident in themselves, were patient and tolerant towards others and able to resolve conflicts in non-violent and fair way.

### 3) Creation of values education teaching resources in Chinese

Following the production of two LVE Activities books in Chinese for the August 2001 seminar, Beijing Normal University Press then published all five LVE books in Chinese. In addition, some schools such as Long Zha Shu Primary School and the Primary School attached to People's University, compiled their own values education materials based on LVE. A substantial report on the August 2001 seminar was also produced in both English and Chinese while key sections of the LVE website were also posted in Chinese. The two seminar-workshops of August 2002 were filmed and a bi-lingual DVD was made of them called "Living Values: the Beijing Experience" and also posted on the LVE website. Additional Chinese materials include the *Framework for Action on Values Education in Early Childhood*.

### 4) Personal development of students and their awareness of values

More than 10,000 students in Beijing have been taught by teachers using the LVE approach. While this needs to be researched further, BIE researchers found that students were active and willing to take part in LVE and that their awareness of values such as understanding, respect, responsibility, honest, humility, tolerance and cooperation has been much strengthened. Further, they learned to deal with conflicts among themselves and to show love to others, to be more confident and have self-respect while also fighting less and being better able to cooperate with each other.

### 5) International cooperation, exchange and understanding have been strengthened.

The first beneficiaries of work in values education are often the teachers themselves and during the course of the above series of events and steps there were a number of opportunities for international cooperation and exchange amongst individuals and their respective organisations. A number of educationists have visited Beijing for LVE activities, from the UK, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Vietnam while at least 13 Beijing teachers and lecturers involved in LVE have been to Japan, Thailand, the UK and Hong Kong to attend international LVE conferences and other events and share their experiences of values education in China. Good relationships have been formed and there have been extensive exchanges on many educational issues, while seeds have also been planted for further cooperation and the pooling of ideas and methodologies.

## Teachers' comments and assessment

In October 2001, about ten weeks after the first seminar, a number of teachers reported positively on their experience of implementing LVE. For example, one Experimental Primary School teacher noted that her students became more confident, understood themselves better and came to realise their own values and strengths, while she herself also became more peaceful. Another Primary School teacher commented that relationships among her students became more harmonious and loving while she gained a better understanding of the students. Comments such as this are consistent with the experience in other countries where the most frequent themes noted in teacher reports on LVE are positive changes in teacher-student relationships and in student-student relationships, both inside and outside the classroom, an increase in respect, caring, cooperation, motivation and the ability to solve peer conflicts on the part of the students.

In an address during the March 2002 visit to his school, Zhang Min-yuan, Headmaster of the Xicheng Bei Hai Primary School, recounted the events leading up to the visit: "Last summer, the teacher responsible for moral education at our school attended the training on Living Values Education organized by the Beijing Institute of Education. What he learned was passed on to all teachers of our school and based on that, we organized several seminars and discussions to look into the subject matter in detail, bearing in mind our country's concrete plan for the development of education. Teacher Li Jing of the Beijing Institute of Education shared with us the background of the topic and we concluded that Living Values Education is in line with China's move to collaborate with the world in developing contemporary talents to meet the need for high quality people with an international outlook.

"We felt that the twelve values covered in LVE are core values shared by humanity and that the LVE teaching method fully reflects trust and respect for each and every child. The role of teachers needs to be changed according to this teaching method to allow for more participation on the part of the children. We also felt that values can only be instilled in our behaviour and attitude through repeated experiences and reflections. As the LVE approach encourages educators to bear in mind their own national culture and educational development, we strongly felt that we need to build on the twelve values, LVE's model of education and our own traditional culture in order to work hand in hand with others for a better world."

The Beijing Institute of Education reported to officials on the visit, commenting: "From the first phase of this project, it can be seen that LVE is not only understood by some teachers, but is now being learnt and practised by more and more teachers. Second, there is a close integration between LVE and traditional curricula. Teachers are able to carry out LVE through traditional classes such as language class, mathematics class and virtue class."

Following the August 2002 three-day course at the China National Children's Centre an evaluation and feedback form was given to participants and most of them subsequently returned the forms, extracts from which are below.

In response to the first question "Have you applied Living Values in your practical work, and how did you do so?":

A teacher from Yongdingmen Railway Bureau Kindergarten said:

"Yes, most of the values have been applied in my work through games, singing, dancing, imagining, mini plays, etc. And the young children develop their own values step by step through sharing experiences, thinking, cooperating and studying social communication skills in their everyday lives. Furthermore, as a teacher I know the impact that modelling behaviour has in a child's life. So my colleagues and I always do what we want the children to understand and to follow, giving much love, attention and patience to the children in every interaction with them. And we found this practice worked very well."

A teacher from Yangqiao vocational high school reported:

"Yes, all the LVE values are valuable in my teaching career, and among them I found love and respect were the most important ones. Many students came into vocational middle school due to their comparatively lower scores (not being qualified to be enrolled in the ordinary high schools). So they are apt to feelings of inferiority and bearing a psychological burden as soon as they enter high school. Having received the LVE

training I realized that the most important thing for them is the establishment of a loving and respectful environment. So I designed an “ice-breaking” activity for the first class: “Let’s start with love”. I got familiar with the students’ names and imagined their faces, their characters and their parents’ expectation of them in advance, and cleaned the whole classroom on the day before the students’ registration. On the front blackboard I wrote “Welcome, sweet children!” in coloured chalk and painted some little hearts, and on the back blackboard I wrote two phrases, shaped into a large heart: “Dear children, here is our home.” The first thing I asked each student to do when he/she stepped into the class was to write his/her name in the large heart, and I did so too. During this activity I gazed encouragingly at each of the students and tried my best to remember him/her. When the large heart was filled with all our names, I felt a loving and supportive atmosphere, respect for each other and hope and enthusiasm for life. That feeling was so wonderful! And the students’ development demonstrated the positive effect of LVE in their school lives.”

In response to the second question: Which activities in the LVE Activities books have you used in your work and what have been the effects?

A teacher from Chongwen Children’s Palace, Beijing wrote:

“Children in my working place vary from pre-school to teenagers, and most of them are good at artistic expression. So I have many chances to apply LVE activities in their studies. Reflection and working with literature are two frequently-used activities. The students reflect by themselves to the background of sweet melodies and the teacher’s guidance and then express their thoughts and feelings in a variety of styles. This activity provides them with plenty of space for their personal pondering as well as a good chance to practise their language ability. Furthermore, I encouraged my students to adapt some familiar literary works into mini-plays which they perform together, which has proved to be an effective method of stimulating their imagination, self-expression, self-confidence and, certainly, their willingness and ability to cooperate.”

A teacher from Yongdingmen Railway Bureau Kindergarten subsequently commented:

“Once, a child in middle class was ill. Nearly all the other children in the class brought their favourite food from their home for this child, which touched many parents and teachers. After we implemented Living Values Education in our kindergarten, our children have many changes in their lives and games. They start to know how to respect, consider, collaborate with others and treat people honestly.”

In response to the third question: How do you think the LVE Activities books should be improved? For instance, what new activities could be added?

Another teacher from Yongdingmen Railway Bureau Kindergarten said:

“During the training process I found much of the vocabulary in LVE would be hard for the children to understand, for instance, the word “peace”. I remember the first time I asked the children “What’s peace?”, only one child in the class put up his hand and said: “It’s nanny!” But when I changed “peace” into “safety”, I received many answers. From this incident I realized that “peace”, “respect”, “share”, etc., are frequent words in adult conversation but for children they’re too large. How about translating them into simple and plain words, close to the young children’s everyday life, according to their ages, so as to help them understand all the values easily? Maybe my class could serve as an example.”

An officer from the Department of Children, Hebei branch of All China Women’s Federation, wrote:

“When I came back to my work I introduced the Living Values Education model to my leaders, colleagues and relevant media workers and some teachers from various school; they were attracted by this new idea greatly. Some primary school directors asked to be trained in LVE, furthermore, they wanted their schools to be chosen for Living Values Education training. According to them, the present school courses lack new ideas and methods, and LVE training could provide teachers with such knowledge. Although such ideas have not yet been realized till now, due to our prior plans and occupied working situation, the methods and ideas learnt from the training workshop have influenced our work and lives profoundly.

First, staff of our office studied the Living Values Education manual together. After further discussion and digesting the ideas, we adopted them in one of our provincial programmes entitled “Moral Cultivation of Young Citizens”. Moreover, Living Values has been introduced to the whole country through a major child magazine of our province called “Pupil Reading”. An editor of this magazine, Ms. Wang, learnt about Living Values Education in our office and read the LVE Educators’ Manual. Inspired by these educational ideas and methods, she designed a series of cartoon stories, each based on one of LVE’s values, and published one on the title page of each issue of her magazine; and invited many professional cartoon

producers to co-produce the stories. Two such stories, "Peace Cake" and "Self-respect Flower" were published in issue 1 and 2 of 2003. Compared with the original title page, which was plain traditional educational reading, the new pages were much more attractive. Some young readers re-painted the cartoons on their blackboard newspaper, some compiled the cartoons into new plays and performed them in their class. All the reactions encouraged us to popularise Living Values Education. And Ms. Wang has offered to volunteer for such popularisation. We're to choose a class as our pilot model, and some backbone teachers will receive the Living Values Education training and become new trainers."

### **"Giving Value to Values Education"**

Clear evidence of the effectiveness of these professional development courses was apparent in October 2003 in Hong Kong at a Regional Symposium entitled "Giving Value to Values Education" jointly organised by the local LVE team and the Hong Kong Institute of Education, which attracted 300 participants. A delegation of eighteen school teachers and staff from Beijing led by the former President of Beijing Institute of Education and the Deputy Director of the China National Children's Centre successfully conducted presentations and workshops for Hong Kong teachers that demonstrated their experiences of using the Living Values Education approach in Beijing.

### ***The ultimate aim of education is preparation for life.***

Pestalozzi

While education is being called on to be not only life-long but also society-wide in its scope, much of what is desired to be achieved can be simply summarised as learning to be better people, to have more respect and be more responsible, as individuals, families, communities and societies and global citizens. This applies in the particular context of China as much as it does in other very different contexts to be found around the world since values and responsibilities lie at the heart of the human person and the best of human civilization and are critical to the well-being of the individual and societies. A values-based perspective must be at the heart of educational thinking and the mainstream of educational practice for lasting all-round human and social development so that, with a clear sense of self-identity and purpose, we can progress and grow as whole human beings and as members of one global human family.

With regard to the above work, and the use of the Living Values Education approach in Beijing schools, much remains to be done. Among the issues to be addressed are these: How can LVE best be given its rightful place in the teaching of subjects? How can dialogue and cooperation between researchers and practitioners, and amongst practitioners, be secured? How can research into LVE be deepened? How can an assessment system that is in line with the situation in Beijing and China be developed, and developed quickly? How can teachers continue to be provided with suitable support and materials? Areas of further focus thus include more professional development for teachers, providing a sounder philosophical or theoretical foundation for values education and its role in overall personal development, greater school-based piloting, experimentation and research, further sharing of ideas and best practices with other values educators and developing and putting into use an evaluation model. This would facilitate the longer-term aim of setting up quality and modern values education curriculum standards and systems and pedagogy that are in line with China's traditions, culture and overall situation. Gradually, there can emerge from this a unique Chinese model of Living Values Education that, while based on the international LVE approach, has its own contextually-relevant and appropriate educational content, teaching model, methods and materials.

While further assessment, evaluation and research studies clearly need to be carried out, the direction is clear and the steps taken and achievements to date suggest that the effort is worthwhile and meaningful and should be continued in the context of the ongoing reform and enhancing of curriculum and pedagogy. The outcomes so far indicate that Living Values Education professional development courses and materials have been successful in helping make values education and values-based education a practical reality in a variety of local classrooms in Beijing and making a contribution towards a harmonious society and the overall development agenda.

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### **For further information:**

Chris Drake: [chris@livingvalues.net](mailto:chris@livingvalues.net)

Yuan Chang-huan: [yuanchanghuan@263.net](mailto:yuanchanghuan@263.net)