

EDITORIAL

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Unaware that “perinatal deaths outnumbered adult deaths from breast cancer and represented twice the number of deaths from road trauma” (Baker, 2018, para. 13), this assertion of the Royal College of Gynaecologists and Obstetricians grabbed my attention. Publicity around road death and breast cancer prevention seems to be amongst both the most well known, and affirmed, within the community. Why is the Australian stillbirth rate of about 2200 a year, 30% higher than in other developed countries (para. 2), virtually unknown and unaddressed. The Australia College of Nurses identifies this as a “neglected epidemic” (para. 1).

The stillbirth of daughter Caroline (1999), empowered Kristina Keneally to seek the current Senate enquiry. Yet only 21 submissions have been received and submissions close in a few days (29th June, 2018).

Why the apathy? How can these “small” deaths lose their collective significance? Where is the outcry? Is the sorrow too enduring to be spoken of? Is the pain of recall, too harsh? Is the problem too encompassing to consider any potential solutions? Our nation seeks a research response.

Baker shares the experience of mothers claiming: to have not received a warning of the possibility of still birth, an absent or vague prognosis in addressing scan observations, carrying their child close to term with total unpreparedness for planning an infant funeral.

Another “neglected epidemic” can be homilectically envisaged. If the Christian community is considered the ‘mother’, it’s children the ‘baby’, and adulthood the birthing, with children emerging into adulthood ‘spiritually dead’, then another inadequately addressed tragedy confronts us.

The tragic loss of youth from Christian belief is a concern that periodically engages parents, churches and spiritual leadership. Hill (2016) summatively addresses recent research accepting a ‘three legged stool’ model of engagement—parents, church and youth work, “working together to create a climate and culture of welcome, of priority and of sharing faith” (para. 24).

This issue of TEACH seeks to support your ‘youth work’, accepting these priorities of faith sharing.

Can classrooms be more welcoming and accommodating so involving children in learning effectively? Read about: aspiring to improve—“Grow”, Hillard teachers’ review of optimal methods for teaching reading and spelling, and the use of graphic organisers in visual learning. Consider

whether best art education is participation in artistic behaviours, or creating excellent product. How do we react to student values affected by ‘digitalised society’? What interactions create an accepting and supportive climate for students with traumatic brain injury? Why are teachers rejecting leadership as a career option, or leaving the profession?

Two recent studies can inform a shift from attending professional development, to experiencing satisfying professional learning. The initiatives offered: about ‘reflection’ by Briscoe (2017) to teachers, and ‘valuing trust’ to administrators by Savolainen and Lopez-Fresno (2013) may well offer starting points. May your learning with students encompass life’s completeness.

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