



KED

Newsletter Issue 2_20

March 9, 2020

No Guilty Pleasure

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Six years ago, we were busy planning for the first KED Buddies exchange between sixth graders in Sweden and England. Since then, KED Buddies has developed into an exotic garden with plenty of projects for students and teachers, all with their own purpose of adventuring into another part of the KED world.

The other week, I accompanied 11 students from Swedish Upper Secondary KED schools during their Global Buddies project in Bangalore.

What a thrill. The students were positive, curious and prepared for the sweat and fatigue of long traveling.

The group cured headaches with smiles and devoured everything new to them at Kunskapsskolan Bangalore and its surroundings.

Thanks to KED's presence in India, the buddies from Sweden could comfortably go around a distant destination and complete advanced research for

a compulsory part of their degree. We have come a long way as a Network. KED Buddies projects are not any random strolls among exotic flowers. These strolls have clear learning goals linked to core class work, which makes the pleasure of them genuine and guiltless.



Best Teamwork through the Best Network

Frans Rönqvist

Social Science Teacher, Kunskapsgymnasiet Malmö

Seventeen students and teachers expelled a collective sigh of relief as we gathered outside Bengaluru Airport a few hours past midnight. We mounted the bus which would take us for an amazing experience around Bangalore. Our India adventure had begun!

We are the participants of this year's KED Global Buddies project, where upper secondary students from KED schools in Sweden perform field studies in India for their graduation theses, visiting local schools, temples, markets and many other places of interest.

Eleven students were to conduct interviews with students, teachers and other locals in Bangalore. This demanded a lot of good planning and administrative skill. I admit that I was afraid some of the students would not get the material they needed to complete their research. My students had previously had difficulty getting teachers in Sweden to participate in their studies.

But my fears were unfounded; thanks to very friendly and super organized staff at Kunskapsskolan Bengaluru (KKB) our students conducted more than fifty interviews and reported back about the interesting discussions they had on topics like gender equality, segregation and colorism.

While the students did their research, the accompanying teachers from Sweden were paired up with our Indian colleagues so that we all got a teacher buddy. This was one of my absolute highlights of the week. To get to know such an intelligent, passionate and funny person like Sreshta and spend time with her and her students is a memory I will cherish.

I think all of us would agree that a week goes by all too quickly, and all too soon we found ourselves back in Bengaluru airport. In that week we had created quite a strong bond.



In part, because of the amazing experiences we shared; the bustling KR market downtown, meeting the children at the Sukrupa school, the Indian meals we shared. But above all, because we had so much fun in each other's company. The big dinners we had every evening, filled with amazing food and a lot of laughs. The many long bus rides around town, (almost) always in high spirits. And the special atmosphere surrounding a group that genuinely enjoy each other's company but who will spread by the wind once separated at the end of the trip and, therefore, give a little extra of themselves. A truly amazing experience. Rumors say there will be a reunion.



What I Discovered in India

Nawal Mahmoud

Final Year Student, Kunskapsgymnasiet Malmö

Going to Bangalore was a chance for me to closely observe and study the lifestyle and mindset of a different culture. Talking to teachers and local youth opened my eyes to hidden socio-economic segregation in Bangalore, which was not what I expected to find compared to my hometown Malmö in Sweden.

My main research question is what it means to young people in Bangalore versus Malmö to live in a segregated neighborhood, i.e. that rich and poor people live in different areas/communities. The study is based on a comparison of the answers I get from Swedish and Indian youth. I also investigate how young people's decisions are shaped by their family and neighborhood.

I discovered that the caste system is still present in Bangalore. It is part of Hinduism and it differentiates people from birth. People are living in poverty next to those with a wealthy life.

The teachers at Kunskapsskolan Bangalore spoke mostly about the positive aspects of life in India, and their experience of the caste system disappearing. This was somewhat contradicted by young people working at another school, who described the ways the caste system affects their daily lives.



One man, around 20 years old, said that people in India end up in poverty because they are born into that caste, or because they are migrants from another state or country.

He described his neighborhood as a mix of middle-class families and people living on the streets. The richest people live in separate communities, often surrounded by physical barriers.

I asked young middle-class Indians about their future and if it is possible for them to become rich. I wanted to understand how their family and environment influenced them and analyzed my findings by applying the behavioristic perspective and Pierre Bourdieu's sociology theory. The answers varied but the respondents were typically guided by what their families and social identity groups expected from them. Following the mainstream ideas from families and groups was a similar characteristic of Indian and Swedish youth. However, I would describe the Swedish youth as more optimistic and hopeful, whereas young people in India have more modest expectations of life.

YESS: Youth Empowerment Sustainability Summit

David Penberg

Head of School, Woodstock Day School

Pause for a moment. Imagine what could happen when you assemble 120 young people full of ideals and commitment, from diverse places nationally and internationally, who collectively decide to take the future into their own hands defining together what it means to act as stewards of the natural world. The Youth Empowerment Sustainability Summit, YESS, at the Ashokan Center in upstate New York, was the setting for this dynamic and powerful teach-in.

Drawing 22 schools from the Hudson Valley, New York City, and our KED Network partners from Sweden and England (Kunskapsskolan Trelleborg, Brannel School, Passmores Academy and Thorpe St Andrew), the summit was a fountain of diversity and cultural richness. 120 participants came from a combination of formal and informal education settings, public and independent schools, and from community-based programs.

Under the co-sponsorship of Woodstock Day School, The Ashokan Center and Young Voices for the Planet, students worked together to create a learning community among students, teachers, and the environmental and scientific and community members focused on developing a deeper understanding of ecological principles and human behavior.

The three-day summit for students from middle school through college was designed to teach and model solutions-based thinking and civic engagement skills.

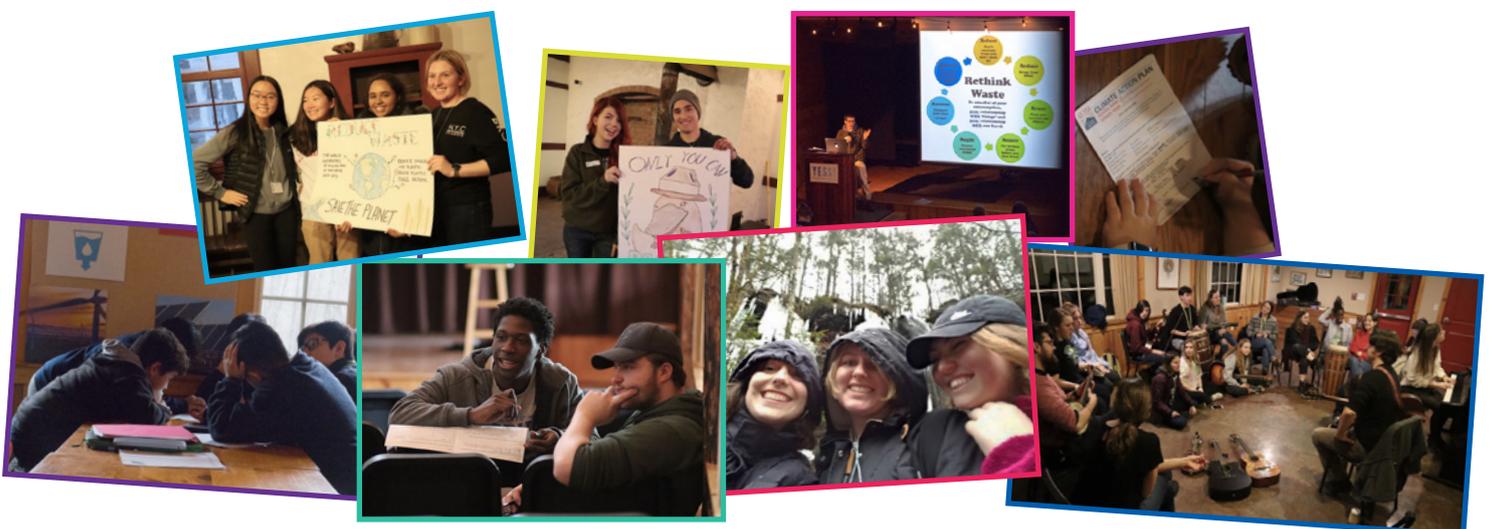
The goal was to convene, engage, connect and empower young people from around the world for action on climate change.

And so, for three days and nights in February, networking, educating, playing, connecting, informing, and collaborating abounded along with dance, music, artmaking and outdoor

hikes. The inclusivity and range of young people was inspiring. Kids from Brooklyn, New York and students from Trelleborg, Sweden; strangers at the outset who found a common language and cause. This too is what all students experienced: a global coming together of committed eco citizens.

Over the course of the Summit, students interacted and learned from renowned scientists, climate experts and advocates in hands-on workshops, seminars and info sessions culminating in the development of a YESS! Action Plan that each team will be implementing in their home school and community.

As for our KED buddies in Sweden and England, the synergy was palpable. Not only did students leave with action plans, they left for home to develop their own climate summits. There will be a follow-up to YESS in Lund, Sweden, in April in which students from Woodstock Day School will also participate.



Skills and Memories for Life

Anna-Carin Street

Teacher of Swedish and English, Kunskapsskolan Borås



company the students on the trips. Students interested in participating hand in applications; then ten are selected from each school. The twenty students are matched in pairs and stay with one another whilst in Borås and Eindhoven.

We see this exchange as a great opportunity for our students to learn important skills, such as adapting to another culture, being a good guest and host and of course working on language skills, as they communicate with each other in English. For many students this is their first experience of being abroad without parents.

The week in Borås involves various activities. We visit the local textile museum, the zoo and go to our neighbor town Gothenburg for an ice hockey game. One night we all make pizzas together at school.

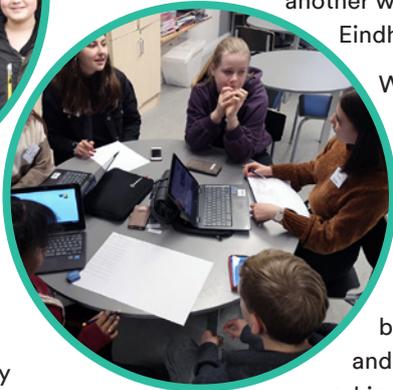
Previous years we have been blessed with enough snow to give the Dutch students a cross-country skiing experience, but due to the lack of snow this year, we do other typical Swedish outdoor activities: quiz-walk in the forest, pentathlon and barbeque by a lake.

For the Dutch students to get to know how we work at a Swedish KED school, we fit ordinary school hours into the program. A family day is also on the agenda and some evenings the students plan activities on their own, without our supervision. Furthermore, the students start working on a project which they will present when we visit Eindhoven in May. The project involves looking up facts about similarities and differences between our two countries. They are assigned different topics and work together in their pairs, a Swedish student with a Dutch student.

Late Friday evening, ten excited and very nervous eighth graders from Kunskapsskolan (KS) Borås are at the train station awaiting ten Dutch students, equally excited and nervous. Until now they have only met on social media and over a short group Skype meeting, but now they will meet "irl". Parents and some siblings are there too, to welcome their Dutch guests. The train arrives on time, the Dutch students and their Swedish hosts happily find each other, and the long-awaited exchange week is finally up and running.

For the third year in a row KS Borås arranges a student exchange with Frits Philips lyceum-mavo, a secondary school in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. The idea of a student exchange was born in 2017 when Frits Philips got in touch with KS Borås through a Swedish contact. Staff visits to both schools were arranged and we decided to proceed with the project.

Together with two teachers from Frits Philips, our school coordinator Helena and I organize the exchange. We ac-



Before we know it, everyone is once again at the train station, this time early Friday morning a week later. The train is approaching, there are hugs and tears, many reluctant goodbyes and a last call out: "See you in 15 weeks!"

In May the roles will be reversed when our ten eighth graders from Borås visit their friends in Eindhoven. Can't wait.

This Happens When You Put the Student at the Center

Koos Woltjes

Communications Manager, Kunskapsskolan Nederland

The student as focal point; there is virtually no school website in the Netherlands where this is not emphasized, each school with its own story. So, Dr Nassau College in Norg in Drenthe – the third Kunskapsskolan Partner School in the Netherlands – does not claim exclusive rights to this approach. But it proves it to be true, every single day, through personalized education organized around the student, structured and arranged along the lines of the KED Program and the KED Quality model.

But what exactly does it mean to put the student at the center?



Dr Nassau College school leader Richard Gerding says it is best to ask students themselves. So, he walks out of his office and three students, currently in school, are invited to tell what they think: Bianca,

Melle and Jochem. And according to them, it is correct to say that they are the center of the school. Within Dr Nassau College in Norg, the students are the focal point:



“I sometimes tend to set the bar a little high, but my weekly personal coaching session makes me accomplish realistic planning. My coach helps me with subjects that I am less good at, for example mathematics,” says Melle.

Bianca points out that the way she works and the atmosphere at school have made her less shy. She is pleased that she can take courses at her own level:

“In addition, I enjoy working on the iPad and I like the fact that I can do a lot at school and therefore don’t have a lot of homework. Because I like sports.”

Jochem notes – noddingly supported by his fellow students – that the teachers at Dr Nassau College are genuinely willing to help:

“They really make time for you.”

“And they do special practice tests even during the weekend if necessary,” adds Bianca.

All three are having a good time at school. They appreciate that the KED Program used by their school makes them develop the skill to take responsibility for their own learning:

“I used to have difficulty getting my homework done. Here I have the freedom to create my own path in consultation with my coach. It works well,” says Jochem.

Melle explains that he regularly had to drop his volleyball training in the past, because he had too much homework at his previous school.

“Here I can arrange it so that I no longer have to miss any training. Now I can say ‘this afternoon I am too busy, so I am working on my learning goals at a different time.’”

Like all KED schools, every day at Dr Nassau College starts and ends with a base group session. This is a regular time for reflection, for students to think if there are things they can improve.

“And if I indicate something, then I know that something is being done about it,” says Jochem.

The student as focal point; for Dr Nassau College this is not a story. It is a reality that is created with pleasure and dedication every day.



KED Students Excel as Social Entrepreneurs

Cecilia Ingvarsdotter

Digital Communications Manager, Kunskapsskolan Sweden



★ The winner of Business Challenge 2020 ★
Equal Care
 a company formed by students at
 Kunskapsgymnasiet Norrköping

KED Business Challenge 2020 was a tough contest between twelve participating teams from KED schools all over Sweden. The students have formed their own businesses that they presented in front of a professional jury. The winning company Equal Care provides band-aids for all skin colors.

KED Business Challenge is a yearly event for Business students in their final year at upper secondary KED schools in Sweden.

“It’s getting harder each year to select the winning team. The students have really good business ideas and presentations,” says Cecilia Carnefeldt, CEO of Kunskapsskolan Education and one of the members of the Business Challenge jury.

Each upper secondary KED school selects the best teams to represent the school at the national level in the Challenge against teams from the other KED schools.

During the finals in Stockholm, the students present their business cases and get feedback from the jury composed by experienced business professionals from various industries.

“This contest is a chance for the students to get more eyes and new perspectives on their ideas and business plans. It demands a lot more to step out of the regular school environment and try making your point to another audience than your teachers. When the students get out there, they also realize how good they are. They meet professionals from the real world who appreciate their ideas and performance. That means a big boost for their self-confidence,” says Viktor Larsson, teacher of Business Studies at Kunskapsgymnasiet Norrköping and organizer of the event.

The winner of Business Challenge 2020 is a company formed by students at Kunskapsgymnasiet Norrköping – Equal Care.

Their product is a set of band-aids in four different skin tones, together with a special band-aid container. Through the product’s design, the students want to promote equality in society.

“We often discuss issues related to equality in class and started talking about make-up and band-aids. There has been a lot of product development of make-up but not of band-aids. We found it to be an unexplored market niche,” says Karolina who is the head of marketing at Equal Care.

Initially, Equal Care’s business got delayed by manufacturing problems. The team learned hands-on how much work it takes to start earning a revenue, no matter how good your business idea is.

“We have become so much better at taking and giving feedback since we started our business,” says Karolina.