

TEACH Bulletin

Thorough Education Achieved in a Caring Home

Number 59

May 2002

May 2002: a Month of Mayhem for Schools

14 May 2002

Southland Times

Gore Main School principal Darrell Ward said on Saturday night, 12 windows at the school were smashed, apparently kicked in, causing about \$3000 damage. The previous weekend, a skylight was smashed by someone who had climbed on to the roof, while a few months ago youths were apprehended leaning over the edge of the roof removing floodlight bulbs. Cromwell Primary School principal Richard Scott said students and staff were also sick of arriving at school every Monday morning to senseless vandalism. <http://www.stuff.co.nz/in1/print/0,1103,1200906a1940,FF.html>

14 May 2002

The Bay of Plenty had the highest number of suspensions for drugs in New Zealand last year – 225. Kawerau College, in the small town of Kawerau, suspended 28 students, 20 of whom were suspended for using cannabis on the school grounds, principal Steve Hocking said. Three of the suspensions were for students who stole thousands of dollars worth of foreign currency from a visiting group of Japanese students. “Any secondary school that reckons they don’t have a drug problem is probably burying its head in the sand. Every secondary school in New Zealand has a drug problem in my view,” Mr Hocking said. <http://www.stuff.co.nz/in1/print/0,1103,1201748a1801,FF.html>

16 May 2002

The Dominion

A Cambridge High School student is suspended for submitting an

“essay” about his sexual arousal from talking to a fellow female student. The principal said it was sexually offensive, while the Office of the Commissioner for Children can’t see anything wrong with it. A Wainuiomata High School relief teacher was suspended for hitting a pupil who pulled her hair. Secondary Principals Association president Bali Haque says there has been a gradual increase in dysfunctional behaviour in the past 10 or 15 years. Post Primary Teachers Association president Jen McCutcheon says, “There’s been a growth in

dysfunctionality in society...an increase in drug culture and in ADD (attention deficit disorder). There are commonly three, four or five kids who are severely disruptive in every class, creating a lot of extra pressure on kids who just want to go on and learn.” <http://www.stuff.co.nz/in1/print/0,1103,1203494a1701,FF.html>

21 May 2002

Analysis of the Ministry of Education’s Suspension and Stand down Report for 2001 reveals that serious drug problems in primary schools increased five-fold between 2000 and 2001. Suspensions included 14 ten-year-olds, seven nine-year-olds and, for the first time, a number of eight-year-olds. In one South Island primary

(Continued on page 2: Mahem)

Give and Take

Budget 2002 has some good news for home educators wanting a more hands-on career path. An extra \$41m will enable the number of Modern Apprenticeships to more than double to 6,000 apprentices in training at any one time by December 2003. This vocational and training alternative is for 16 to 21-year-olds. An additional \$14m will go into the Industry Training Fund, increasing the government’s investment next year by nearly 48 per cent from \$60 million in 1999-00 to \$90m in 2002-03. Another \$12m package aims to improve the available information on skills needs in the economy. It will pay for an integrated website offering everything you want to know about the New Zealand labour market for job-seekers, employers and others.¹

Along with this increased funding, Assistant MoE in charge of tertiary, Steve Maharey, has a

five-year strategy for connecting up the entire tertiary system, including foundation skills training, workplace learning and all forms of academic study. He feels there is a need for a national strategy that aligns the tertiary education sector with important national development goals, as opposed to the policies over the last decade which have centred on competition among tertiary education providers. In other words, the state plans to gain more centralised control over the entire post-compulsory education and training sector of New Zealand. Items in Budget 2002 are designed to support the implementation of this strategy.²

Notes:

- 1) 30-May-2002 <http://www.theschooldaily.com/articleView.asp?articlePK=13198>
- 2) 30 May 2002 <http://www.theschooldaily.com/articleView.asp?articlePK=13197>

(Continued from page 1: *Mayhem*)

school, staff had to take a young boy to hospital because he had smoked marijuana until he was “zonked out” to the point of unconsciousness, said ACT Education Spokesman MP Mrs Donna Awatere Huata. <http://www.theschooldaily.com/articleView.asp?articlePK=12994>

24 May 2002

A gang of seven of Taradale’s finest young men were sent to jail for from two to two and a half years each for the sickening sexual violation of a fellow student who had only recently told them of feeling at home among them at Taradale High School after of lifetime of bullying at other schools. <http://www.stuff.co.nz/inl/index/0,1008,1212866a11,FF.html>

25 May 2002

Manawatu Evening Standard

A 13-year-old epileptic girl has had her nose broken, her hair pulled out and her uniform ripped by two girl bullies at Monrad Intermediate, her mother Fiona says. They often chased her home on their bikes, kicking and pushing her. Once they kicked her daughter to the ground and caused her to

have a fit. Principal John Forsyth says the two girls were removed from the playground for three days and kept back after school for five minutes to let Fiona’s daughter get home safely. (They have rights, too, according to Mr Forsyth.) Another mother said her daughter was scared to go to school after the same two girls had assaulted her daughter twice. “They pushed her on the ground and kicked her.” <http://www.stuff.co.nz/inl/print/0,1103,1214068a1804,FF.html>

29 May 2002

Manawatu Evening Standard

A 13-year-old Freyberg High School student, visiting his girlfriend during school lunch time at St Peter’s College, was called over to a group of students, punched four times in the face, pushed to the ground and kicked last Monday. He is now nursing a black eye and bruises. <http://www.stuff.co.nz/inl/print/0,1103,1218082a1804,FF.html>

31 May 2002

New Zealand’s high teen pregnancy and drug suspension rates

show the compulsory health curriculum doesn’t work, says ACT Education Spokesman MP Donna Awatere Huata. [Actually, some research indicates they are working only too well. — Ed.] <http://www.theschooldaily.com/articleView.asp?articlePK=13259>

On top of all this violence and chaos, secondary teachers have been out as a group or having their own wildcat strikes every week.

Important lessons their actions model: when you cannot get all you want from your employer, it is ok to:

- *Threaten to abandon children entrusted to your care.
- *Actually abandon the children.
- *Refuse to show up for work as per any employee’s duty.
- *Refuse to accept the agreement negotiated on your behalf by your own union reps.

When students decide unilaterally not to show up at school, a place they are compelled to attend by law whether they want to or not, truancy officers are sent out to track them down and bring them in. When teachers decide unilaterally not to show up at school, a place they voluntarily committed themselves to attend in order to carry out what they themselves say is a service essential to the future prospects of the children in their care, no authority goes out to round them up. They violate the trust of parents. They violate their commitment to students. Both students and parents are inconvenienced the most, caused the most upset in their daily routines and, if we are to believe teachers when the quality of their teaching is criticised, have had their future prospects threatened for lack of education during the strikes. It is the teachers who have broken their moral obligations to the students and to their employer, the state. When soldiers, employed by the same boss, the state, abandon their duties, their careers are ruined. In some cases they are tied to a post and shot.

Few would say teachers’ demands are unjustified: I personally think they are being asked to do the impossible. But teachers lose all credibility and professionalism when they strike. They are always on about working for a peaceful world, tolerance, looking after the underdog. But, once again, the whole system is organised in such a way that the underdog, the one least able to do anything about it – the children – are manipulated the most, consulted the least and treated the worst.

Is it any wonder more and more parents are considering the peace and safety of educating their children at home? The system daily gives us more and more reason to rescue our children from its chaos, violence, wonky values and political power struggles.

TEACH Bulletin

is a monthly publication of the Home Education Foundation, and is concerned with those things which may impact on home educators. Articles will deal with political developments, statist and professional trends, correspondence with educationalists, and other items of general interest to home educators. Information herein is not to be construed as legal advice. Opinions expressed in TEACH Bulletin are those of the writer and should not be assumed to reflect those of the Home Education Foundation Trustees or Board of Reference Members.

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All correspondence to:

The Editor, Craig S. Smith
PO Box 9064
Palmerston North
Ph.: (06) 357-4399 Fax: (06) 357-4389
hedf@xtra.co.nz

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Ph. (07) 308-0387
Whakatane

School Copies the Family to Gain Success

Quest High School opened in 1995 and is part of a suburban school district on the outskirts of Houston that serves 24,684 students. It is a small school of 165 students with a capacity for 400.

Quest accentuates personalized learning and service to others. [If they would add work experience it would mirror the three-point Moore formula of Dr Raymond and Dorothy Moore.]

At Quest, personalized learning means students belong to one of seven "families" that meet from 8:30-9:05 a.m. every day. Each family includes 20-25 students from grades 9-12, is led by a family facilitator and is supported by two additional staff members. The families reside in two "houses" which are approximately four times the size of an average classroom. Students not only receive academic advisement (sic) in their families but also participate in trust-building activities, celebrations and discussions of school, local, and global issues. Students remain with the same family until graduation.

For service, the school has partnerships with more than 40 community sites, including elementary schools, state parks, veterinary clinics, retirement homes and local assistance ministries. Quest

students serve at one of these sites every Wednesday morning.

Ian, a student in grade 11, said, "To me Quest is home. . . . Here at Quest, they recognize that students learn in different ways."

Jeff, a student in grade 10, said, "They treat at you (sic) like a person as opposed to a number."

From: "One Size Doesn't Fit All", *Principal Leadership*, February 2002, Vol. 2 No. 6, publication of National Assn of Secondary School Principals, http://www.nassp.org/news/pl_onesize_0202.htm

High Cost of Free Education

The widespread practice of charging parents for outside-classroom education and learning materials is largely illegal, says public policy researcher Sandy Latimer in her Masters study, *User Pays In New Zealand's Free Compulsory Education System*. Nevertheless, parents are paying schools about \$30 million a year in donations for free state education.

Ms Latimer argues that the Tomorrow's Schools model does not adequately protect the right of New Zealand's children to free compulsory education. The Ministry does not monitor implementation of its policy, and many schools disregard the policy when imposing additional charges. "I doubt these practices would stand up if the same level of legal scrutiny were to be applied as in the recent High Court case on special needs education where the court found the Ministry's policy was not congruent with the Education Act," Ms Latimer says.

Dr Brian D. Ray of the National Home Education Research Institute in Salem, Oregon, says in *Home Schooling on the Threshold* (1999) that a summary of research shows "the median amount that [HE] families spend per child per year for home education is about US\$450, with a mean of about US\$575." (School uniforms here in

NZ can cost this much, let alone more money for field trips, etc.) While this figure is roughly one tenth of the average per pupil spent in public schools (US \$5,325), it still consistently produces scores on standardised tests among home educated youngsters in the 65th-80th percentile range while state schooled pupils average at the 50th percentile. Clearly, home educated children get far more value for money.

University Tuition on "Fly Buys"

A Treasury paper presently in circulation is proposing a scheme devised by commercial and private interests and backed by Government ministers that would see commercial sales incentives such as Fly Buys points helping to finance a child's future tertiary education.

Under the scheme, guardians or relatives would open an account on behalf of a child. The Government could be prepared to provide around \$250 to launch each account. Money could be paid into this account by friends, family, whanau, etc., either directly or by using reward programmes such as, and maybe even including, the Fly Buys customer loyalty scheme. A charitable pool of money would make up part of the scheme, a pool for access by low-income families. However, the money in the account could not be used for any purpose other than the payment of fees, course costs and living allowances.

Called FUNZ, the proposed scheme has been widely promoted to Government ministers and other interested groups by professional director Diana Crossan, who is being paid by businessman Tur Borren, a director of investment company Hellaby Holdings. The total development costs of the scheme are estimated at \$5 million.

An Official Information Act request for information on the scheme lodged last month was

denied by Education Minister Trevor Mallard, but documents seen by the *NZ Herald* suggest the minister and a small group of CEOs have met regularly to thrash out details.

Since the Government, that is, the taxpayer, currently pays for just on 70% of the entire tertiary education system, student groups and those on the left see it as a regressive step, favouring the rich and bringing further disadvantage to the poor, especially should these voluntary accounts begin to replace the taxpayers' involuntary 70% contribution. It could well be a first step in an overall strategy to give tertiary education over to the private sector.

From *NZ Herald*, 31 May 2002, <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storyprint.cfm?storyID=2044228>

Passionate Parents

In a well argued paper presented to the Eighth International Thinking Conference in Edmonton in 1999, Dr Colin Gibbs argued that teachers with passion, passionate people, impress students and thus become, to use the educational jargon, "significant others". Significant others in this sense are those whom the student is influenced by and seeks to emulate. They enthuse others, because they themselves are enthusiastic. Observations of such things by people like Dr Gibbs can be very instructive for home educators. Being passionate about our own children, being enthusiastic about the close contact and opportunity to give our children the best start in life should be a lot easier for us as parents than teachers in schools, not only because we are working with our own children but also because teachers are so severely restricted by timetables, student numbers and other logistical considerations.

Current brain research indicates the importance of passion for two main reasons. First, what is verbally said by the teacher is much less important than what the teacher is saying with body language and other so-called situational cues. Teachers should not

be overly concerned about making the students listen to them but should be very concerned about what students see and sense while watching them.

Emotion is the other main reason. Somehow our brain is hardwired to react to the emotional. A passionate teacher engenders positive emotions in students and that leads to enthusiastic learners. Conversely a teacher without passion deadens and destroys learning. And so we parents can not only monitor our own performance in this area, but when we find ourselves lacking, we can do something about it immediately, such as calling it quits for the day and taking the children for a brisk walk or play outside. Teachers have no such luxuries. As Alan Cooper said in reference to this talk by Dr Gibbs, "Our schools have the dead hand of far too many passionless teachers on them."

(Parts from *The Cooper Column* by Alan Cooper, 3 April 2002, <http://www.theschooldaily.com/articleView.asp?articlePK=11805>)

Early Reading May Ruin Eyes

Douglas Fredrick, associate clinical professor of ophthalmology at the University of California in San Francisco, has written an article in the May 2002 *British Medical Journal* in which he says the hypothesis that intensive reading and writing in childhood can cause myopia has a substantial amount of supporting evidence. That is, children who read obsessively and do a lot of close work are more likely to become short sighted and require glasses than those who push their books aside and climb trees instead. This supports what pioneer home schooling advocates Dr Raymond & Dorothy Moore have been saying for decades.

Myopia can be caused either by the eyeball itself being too long or by the lens curvature being too strong to focus an image on the retina. There appear to be genetic factors involved since myopia rates vary between ethnic groups, from 70% to 90% in Asia, to 30-

40% in Europe and America, and 10-20% in Africa. Because babies are usually far sighted but settle down to near perfect sight between the ages of five and eight, the question for scientists, says Mr Fredrick, is how big a part is played by genetics on the one hand and early visual experience on the other.

The question for parents is how much bookwork, reading and writing they should be making their five to eight-year-olds do if such close-in work could be causing myopia.

If a child predisposed to short sightedness does a lot of reading while the eye is settling down, the defocused images may cause the eye to continue searching for a focal point. This can turn mild myopia into moderate myopia in late adolescence. More close work at university or in a job can lead to still worse sight, he says.

(Parts extracted from *The Guardian*, 17 May 2002, <http://education.guardian.co.uk/Print/0,3858,4415232,00.html>)

"Mental Hygiene" and Socialisation

Criticism of home education (HE) avoids, with good reason, how well they do academically. American statistics show that HE children consistently score an average around the 77th percentile on standardized tests. Instead, the big issue of concern from educational bureaucrats down to the nosy neighbour next door is whether HE individuals are properly "socialized".

The December 1996 issue of the American Psychological Association's publication *Monitor*, for instance, features a report by *Monitor* staff reporter Bridget Murray that points to a new "wariness" among psychologists about parent-directed HE. Talking with psychologists, Murray reports, elicits such questions as whether HE parents are "trying to protect children from becoming adults?" Will their children be misfits with mainstream life when they are older? Will they be shel-

tered completely from diversity in our culture? Will they go against what society values as proper behavior?

This concern for shaping children's social development has a long history. Turn-of-the-century psychologists were notorious for writing novels sketching Utopian schemes controlled by "professionals" in which family life would be replaced by social engineering and traditional religion run out of town. The discipline has a long tradition of using the public schools to direct personality development quite apart from the academic goals the public assume are pursued.

Small committees of intellectuals and professionals started the "mental hygiene movement" during World War I with John Dewey, at the time considered the world's foremost educational psychologist, as a guiding influence and leader of the movement. Their ideas took hold in teacher education textbooks in the '30s. Personality development became a key priority for public education.

Just as physical hygiene had proven crucial for the urban public health crises of the late 1800s, they argued, so should a mental hygiene program of psychoanalytic and behaviorist psychologies be implemented to prevent schizophrenia and juvenile delinquency. In 1950 the summary statement of a White House Conference on Children announced that the public education system was indeed the primary agent for socialization of the nation's children. John Dewey's dream that social development should replace academics as the dominant concern of American education had arrived.

As a graduate student at U.C. Berkeley in the mid-1970s, I was the beneficiary of a National Institute of Mental Health fellowship for the study of "mental health consultation in the public schools." I found that no specific, measurable, agreed-upon, realistic, timed, operational definition of mental health existed. Elite professionals were attempting to impose their idea of mental health on

the rest of us without either defining what they meant by that phrase or even asking the opinions of (never mind showing any respect for) those whose mental health they proposed to achieve.

Since then we have accumulated a two decade-long record of failed programs for social development wasting billions of dollars. A precise summation of it all was provided by psychologist Dr. William Coulson, partner of the late Carl Rogers and former proponent of the principles of the mental hygiene movement: "What we helped achieve was an educational system which brought kids down, rather than up."

School instruction *does* involve more than academics. It is inescapably ethical, which is what all the concern over "socialization" is about. The question is, whose ethics will define proper "socialization"? Many HEs are not particularly interested in tailoring their beliefs to fit the culture's current dictates nor what the academic gurus assure us is the wave of the future. Instead, they are concerned to see their children socialized in the manner they themselves believe is best. From left-wing alternative lifestyles to evangelical Christians, most HEs strongly hold that the primary responsibility for education-socialization resides with parents. And of course research is replete with findings that more parental involvement, not less, is the key to high academic achievement and low drug and alcohol abuse in children. Education improves in direct relation to the degree to which parents are in charge.

(Excerpts from "Who's In Charge of Johnny's Personality?" by Andrew J. Peterson, Ph.D., the education issues correspondent for *California Political Review*.)

Home Education Revolution!

by Samuel Blumenfeld

The only effective group of citizens today in open opposition to big government are the home

schoolers. They are the only [ones] willing to take on the public education system that props up the entire statist enterprise of big, intrusive government.

There is no doubt that [home schoolers] are revolutionaries in the true sense of the word. They have rejected the tax-supported school system, which is the chief instrument the totalitarians use to construct a socially controlled society.

Only by reasserting the need for educational freedom can this nation restore its adherence to the principles of a free society.

The fact that parents can still legally take their children out of the government schools and educate them at home is an indication that this revolution can be won peacefully. The simple fact is that the home-school movement has reached critical mass and cannot be destroyed without causing a civil upheaval, and no politician can afford to let that happen.

(Extracted from *The School Liberator* e-letter Vol 2, No 9, 20 May 2002, owner-schoolliberator-list@free-market.net)

(Continued from page 6: *Workshops*)

Barbara Smith, Helen Pearson, Phil Astley, Rob Williamson. Large range of resources available to purchase.

September 7: **THEN Home Educators Conference Hamilton**

Venue: Gateway Christian Centre
Contact: Vicky, Ph (07) 847-8016
or Peter, Ph (07) 847-2595
email: ixoye@paradise.net.nz

October 14-19: **Home Education Awareness Week**

(Check out what is on or create something for your own area.)

October 19: **Palmerston North Home Education Workshop**

Contact: Ph: (06) 357-4399
email: hedf@xtra.co.nz

Coming Events

June 7/9:

Above Rubies camp, Marton
Contact: Toni, Ph: (06) 328-5757
email: toni_rentoul@hotmail.com.
Barbara Smith is taking electives on Home Education

June 15:

Rotorua Home Education Workshop

Venue: St Johns Presbyterian Church hall

Cost: \$10.00 for day or \$3.00 per session paid by 8 June

Contact: Ph: Heidi (07) 349-3355
email: mark.heidi@xtra.co.nz

Programme

9:30-10:30 "Avoiding Burnout"

10:30-11:00 Morning tea.

11:00-12:30 2 Electives:

** "Home Education: Getting Things into Perspective" -- what's it all about; schooling versus education; character training; can I do this?: parents' qualifications; tutoring/mentoring; where is this going?: developing vision

** "Training Our Children's Minds" -- Practical tips on Training the Mind, eliminating stress, making life easy, yet maintaining excellence.

12:30-14:00 Lunch Time. Talking freely with people, displays etc.

14:00-15:30 "Home Educating Through Secondary and Preparing For Tertiary Education and the Workforce"

15:30-16:30 Question and answer session

Break.

7:30-9:00 Separate meeting for Christian Home Educators at 110 Springfield Road, Rotorua. "Fathers Role and a Vision for the Future"

June 22:

AHE Forum & NCHENS AGM

Venue: Grey Lynn Community Centre

Contact: braamha@free.net.nz

July 20:

Wanganui Home Educators Workshop

Venue: Central Baptist Church cnr

Wicksteed & Dublin Streets
Cost: \$10.00 person/couple
Ctc: Marice, Ph: (06) 345-3660
email: jmmmhill@xtra.co.nz

Programme

9:30-10:30 "Avoiding Burnout"

10:30-11:00 Morning tea

11:00-12:30 2 Electives:

** "Getting Started" Looking at both starting 5-6 year olds and taking older children out of school

** "Training Our Children's Minds" -- Practical tips on Training the Mind, eliminating stress, making life easy, yet maintaining excellence.

12:30-14:00 Lunch Time. Talking freely with people, displays etc.

14:00-15:30 "Home Educating Through Secondary and Preparing For Tertiary Education and the Workforce"

15:30-16:30 Question and answer session including a section on the Fathers Role in Home Education

July 27:

7th Annual TEACH Leadership Forum

Venue: Dayspring Resource Centre, 541 Ruahine Street, Palmerston North

Contact: C. Smith (06) 357-4399
Email: hedf@xtra.co.nz

Cost: None

Annual forum for all those interested in starting or co-ordinating support groups, helping others, national home education issues.

August 3:

Palmerston North Home Education Workshop

Venue: Harmony House, Reformed Church, 541 Ruahine Street, Palmerston North

Cost: \$10.00 per person/couple or \$4.00 per session

Contact: Ph: (06) 357-4399
email: hedf@xtra.co.nz

Programme

9:00-9:30 registration and view resources

9:30-10:30 Welcome; Current issues with MOE/ERO; Avoiding Burnout.

10:30-11:00 Morning tea

11:00-12:30 4 electives

** "Home Educating on a Biblical Foundation"

** "Using Hospitality as a Socialisation Tool"

** "Training our Children's Minds"

** Tour of Dayspring and a look at curriculum materials

12:30-1:30 lunch time

1:30-3:00 3 electives

** "Getting started" - dealing with MOE/ERO, pulling children out of school, filling in an exemption form

** "Sibling Rivalry or Sibling Friends"

** "The Tools of Learning" and "Motivating our Children"

3:00-3:30 afternoon tea

3:30-5:00 3 electives

** "Home Educating Through Secondary and Preparing For Tertiary Education and the Workforce"

** "Home Business"

** "Training our children and youth in purity"

August 10:

Shore Home Educators Workshop

Venue: Rawene Centre, 31 Rawene Rd., Birkenhead, North Shore City (4 minutes north of the bridge.)

Cost: \$35 per couple, \$30 individual, teens accompanying parents free. Register EARLY to ensure your choice of sessions (some have limited numbers) and to receive a free catalogue (Elijah or Rainbow Resource) and free theme pen. Morning and afternoon tea provided.

Contact: Denise, (09) 479-1488 or Christine, (09) 483-6991
info@shenetwork.org or:
shorehomeeducators@hotmail.com
www.shenetwork.org

Programme

(See enclosed brochure.) 3 session times; 18 workshop topics to choose from. Speakers include Craig &

(Continued on page 5: Workshops)

Please Note: For ALL the above, dependent infants and youth are welcomed, but there are no facilities for children.

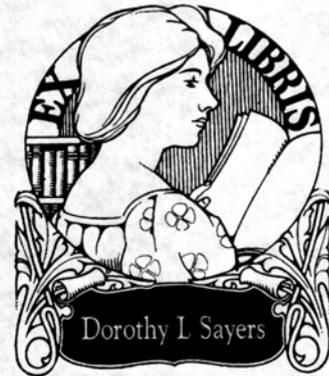
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Preparing for an ERO Review

by Craig S. Smith

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