

PRESS RELEASE

STEPHANIE TOLAN TO VISIT VICTORIA IN APRIL 2008

Stephanie Tolan is the author of the famous article “Is it a cheetah?” Translated into over 40 languages, it has made **the cheetah an analogy for gifted students** all over the world and has become the logo of many groups working on behalf of these children. Time and time again this deeply moving and vivid short article has helped teachers, parents and policymakers to grasp the different attributes of the gifted child and the need for specific provision for these children. It has also been a powerful symbol to generate networks devoted to the conservation of the cheetah. The power of that article reflects both Stephanie Tolan’s deep commitment to gifted children and her outstanding ability as a writer both of fiction and of authoritative material on gifted education itself.

Stephanie Tolan is recognized internationally as a leading expert especially in the emotional, social and ethical development of the gifted, and is a Senior Fellow of the Institute for Educational Advancement in the US. She is constantly in demand for workshops for parents, teachers and young writers.

She was **co-author with James Webb and Elizabeth Meckstroth** of *Guiding the Gifted Child: A Practical Source for Parents and Teachers*, which won the National Media Award from the American Psychological Association on its first publication and still regarded as one of the best books ever written on the topic.

She is also the winner of numerous literary awards, including the prestigious **Christopher Award** for her new book, *Listen!* She has specialised in writing books which explore the sensitivities of adolescence, especially those of the gifted adolescent. That makes her a rare and precious find for those of us who know hard it is to find reading material for this group.

Her novel *Surviving the Applewhites* which tells the story of a homeschooling family won the prestigious **Newbery Honor Book Award**.

Stephanie Tolan’s work challenges traditional thinking and practice. In November 2006 she gave a mini-keynote speech to the **NAGC Convention** titled “*Education for a New Millennium: Recognizing Whole Mind.*” The program abstract read: “Essential change often requires a shift in perspective that takes us out of our comfort zone. For most of us the word “mind” is synonymous with intellect. But the human mind is far more than that. Medicine is beginning to explore mind/body systems and recent studies have shown thought and emotion to be inextricably entwined. If we wish to prepare the kids we live and work with for meaningful participation in a world we cannot yet foresee, we must move beyond the limits of our current view of mind.”

Stephanie has realized from the feedback of many grateful readers that she has a role as a “**story healer**”. Her work breaks down the isolation and negativity many gifted people feel and helps to heal the stories that they are telling themselves about their lives.

This will be Stephanie’s first-ever visit to Australia which she anticipates will be “the experience of a lifetime”

While in Victoria she will present a session on The Cheetah Analogy at the Savannah Centre at Werribee Open Range Zoo, workshops for parents and gifted young authors at Dromkeen, a book chat and signing session at Belgrave Library and a lecture at Melbourne University.

For full details of the Stephanie Tolan tour of Victoria see the GIFTED RESOURCES website
www.giftedresources.org

