



Kids on radio

Eyespy reporter, Sacha Neuage, has his own radio show. He cues in music, has segments of his show banned and makes lots of mistakes on the way. But it's lots of fun!

Being on radio is a weird experience. No-one can see you when you talk, so it's almost as if you are talking to yourself! I have a radio show called 'Encounter rock'. Kate Gerard helps me. She's twelve.

Encounter FM is a radio station that started last year in Victor Harbor, South Australia. Kate and I were the only kids who wanted to do a show (at least, we were the only ones who *told* the station we wanted to do a show).

I took a radio presenter's course through TAFE, and learnt how to operate the buttons and 'cue' the music. When I'm talking and I want to play a song, I put the CD on one of the two players and click it to the song I want. I press the pause button until I'm ready to play it, and then I turn the microphones off and press the play button at the same time. I'm the only kid who knows how to work the equipment in our studios.

Banned!

Kate and I choose the songs and we make up stories and contests. We do silly things too, like making up astrological forecasts that make no sense. We used to read things out of adult magazines that we thought were funny, especially the 'help' columns... then we were banned from doing that.

Here we are, only eleven and twelve, and we're already being censored! I think kids should have more freedom on the radio, but this is a community station and we could offend someone. We have to be careful.

Some of the adults complain about the songs we play. We even had a complaint from a

commercial radio station. They said there was rude language in a song we played. I read the words to most of the songs I play, but I didn't have the words to this Guns 'n' Roses song and . . . well, you can imagine!

Blunders and bloopers

The hardest part about radio is that you record it live. If we make a mistake, thousands of people will hear it. I've pushed the wrong buttons, and once I forgot to turn off Kate's microphone when a song was playing. She was singing along (she was off-key!) and you could hear her over the song. Kate was quite embarrassed, but I couldn't stop laughing!

Another time I introduced a triple-track (that's when you play three songs in a row). I pressed 'play' to start the first

song, but all I could hear was a 'grrrrrr-crunch!' It snapped and I was sitting there saying 'No way!'. Of course, everyone heard on the radio. So, it isn't easy.

World radio

I'm also working on a project called 'Children's Australian Radio'. It helps other kids learn about radio and to have a shot at the real thing. Then we send tapes overseas for other kids to hear. It was only set up last year, but it's growing all the time.

I recently visited the USA and Europe with my dad and brother. I took a professional journalist's recorder with me and interviewed pilots while we were in flight. While we were in Texas, we visited the home of country and western star, Willie Nelson. I also interviewed New York State

troopers, postmasters and even the goalkeeper for the USA Olympic hockey team!

My dad is involved with a project called 'Outlaw for Peace Australasia', which has radio shows played on Radio for Peace International. They are heard world-wide on shortwave and AM radio. We visited the headquarters of Radio for Peace in Oregon, USA, and it was there that we decided to do a children's show for the radio station in Costa Rica.

Community radio is a lot of fun. There are over 100 stations in Australia, so you can become involved, too. I don't get paid (unfortunately), but just being on air is good enough for me.

*Sacha Neuage
Victor Harbor,
South Australia*



Sacha and Kate—in trouble again! Once they were told by the head booth man to stop jumping. They were playing 'Jump' by Kriss Kross at the time. Unfortunately, the studio is in a caravan and has a tendency to rock back and forth. Oops!

Photographs: Sacha Neuage

You can do it, too!

If any kids want to put together a show—Australian music, Dreamtime stories or the like—go to your local community radio station and ask them for help. You can send the shows (half an hour in length) to *Eyespy* and we will send them to Radio for Peace in Costa Rica. The shows are heard in 145 countries, so it's a way for Australian kids to be heard all over the world.

If you'd like to join Children's Australian Radio (CAR), the phone number is (085) 52 4430.