

a toolbox for creating healthy places to learn, work and play

how to gather information



booklet **6**

what is a health promoting school?

There is an important relationship between student, staff and community well-being and the ability of any school to function at its best and achieve all that is expected from the process of formal school education. If people in schools are happy and healthy they can learn, work and play better.

A health promoting school is one that **works in a way** which demonstrates a **whole school** commitment to improving and protecting the health and well-being of the school community. More specifically, a health promoting school is one that uses a *health promoting schools* approach. A health promoting school cannot be defined by the presence of special projects, educational activities or specific physical characteristics. Nor is it a program with a beginning or an end.

the health promoting schools approach

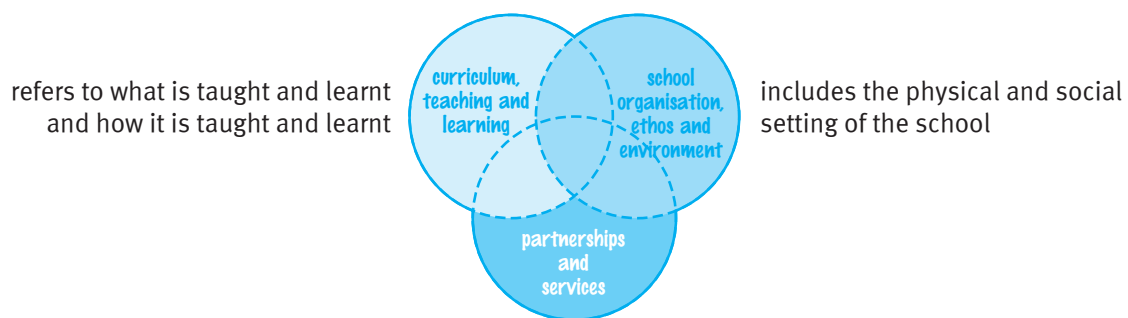
A *health promoting schools* approach is really a **way of thinking and working** that is adopted by the **whole school** in order to make the school the best possible place to learn, work and play. The approach is defined by:

- people from across the school community working together to plan and deliver school activities
- an ongoing consideration of the broad range of factors which make up the school, to ensure that positive and comprehensive school systems, environments, programs and activities are provided.

Many schools that adopt a *health promoting schools* approach find the *health promoting schools framework* an extremely helpful instrument for ensuring their thinking and planning processes are comprehensive and consider all aspects that make up the school.

the health promoting schools framework

The *health promoting schools* framework highlights three interacting components of a school. The framework is a useful guide to help plan what happens in your school in a comprehensive and holistic way.



refers to what is taught and learnt and how it is taught and learnt

includes the physical and social setting of the school

refers to the partnerships formed between the school and members of the community including parents, local businesses, non-government and government organisations

how to gather information

Gathering accurate information about the needs, views, opinions and current situation of the school community is an important part of the *health promoting schools* process. Gathering information can use up valuable resources, so it is important to be clear about what information you want and the best way to gather it before you start.

tools that can be used to gather information include:

- how to conduct a survey 3
- how to conduct a discussion group—*focus groups* 31
- how to set up a poster competition 37
- how to take observations 39
- how to check existing records 42
- how to conduct a literature review 44
- how to conduct an internet search 46
- how to gather ideas about the future—*futuring* 48
- how to gather ideas within an interview—*sketch interviews* 49
- how to create a mural 50
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- how to find other information and resources 58
- information and resource matrix 59
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Some of these tools can also be used to spread information at the same time as gathering information.

how to decide which tool to use

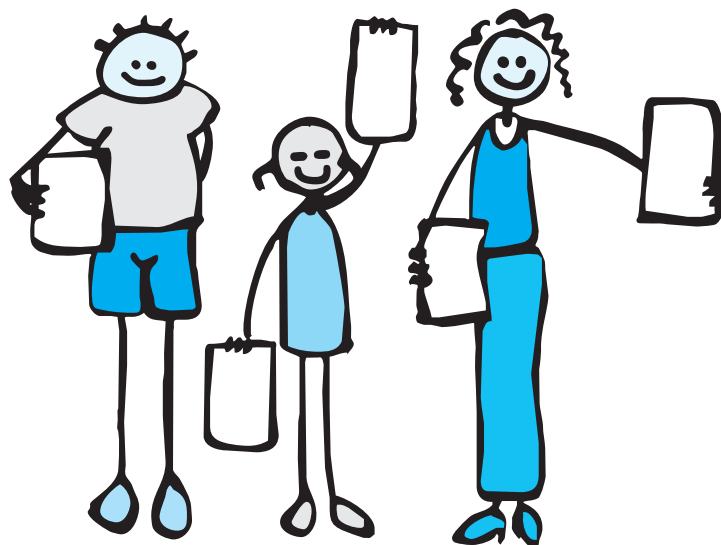
Before choosing a tool to gather information, it is very important to answer some questions to avoid problems later on.

- 🌀 What exactly do we want to know?
- 🌀 Why do we want to know it?
- 🌀 What will be done with the information when we get it?

decide which tools to use: step by step¹

Use the answers to the following questions to help determine which tool is the most appropriate.

- 🌀 What information is already available?
- 🌀 What additional information do we need?
- 🌀 How is this information best obtained?
- 🌀 What valid information can be obtained within the budget and other constraints?
- 🌀 How can a *health promoting schools* perspective be ensured? For example, does the tool promote the degree of school community participation we would like to see?



how to conduct a survey

background information

A survey is the gathering and analysis of information about a topic, an area or a group of people.¹ It is used to collect a large amount of information from many people. A survey refers to the whole process of gathering information.

A survey is an economical and efficient tool for collecting information, attitudes and opinions from people, and for monitoring progress. When designed and administered correctly, the information collected can be a true reflection of opinions held by the group from which you want information.² However, a high level of knowledge and skill is needed to design and implement a survey of high quality.

There have been many splendid books written on this topic alone. However, this section looks at three basic types of surveys:

- self-completed questionnaires
- face-to-face interviews
- telephone surveys.

There are 8 steps to follow when conducting a survey, whichever type of survey you use.

step 1: decide what you want to find out

step 2: decide who to survey

step 3: select the survey method

step 4: decide how many people to survey

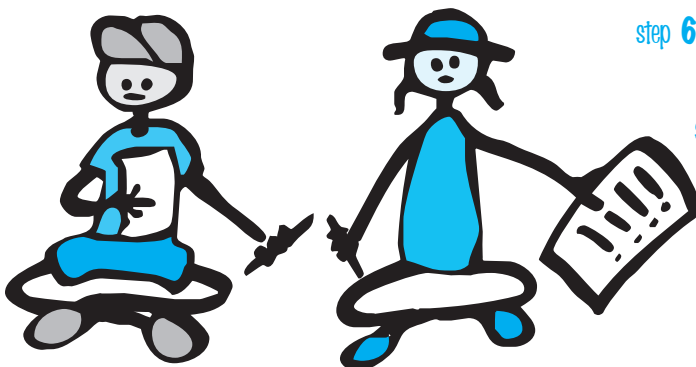
step 5: write the questions

step 6: trial the questionnaire or interview questions

step 7: conduct the survey

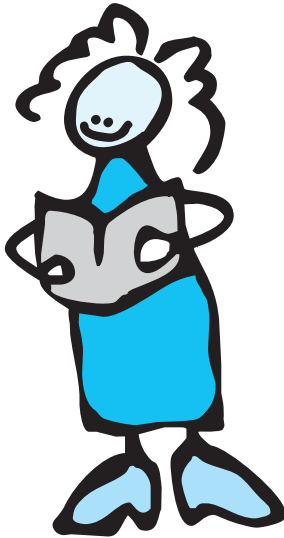
step 8: analyse the information and report what was found.

These will be discussed in more detail below.



what to do

step 1: decide what you want to find out



- First, decide what information is required. To keep track of the aims of the survey, it is useful to state the overall survey question or questions.

example of overall survey questions

- How much does the school community know about the *health promoting schools* concept?
 - How healthy does the school community think our school is?
 - What does the school community consider to be the current health issues that need attention?
- Second, decide if a survey is the best way to gather this information.

Deciding what information is required early in the process, helps to avoid frustration, wasted time and energy or unwanted information later. Having a survey question is also important for the following steps, such as deciding who to gather information from and which questions to ask.

step 2: decide who to survey

The perfect survey would involve getting information from every member of the group in which you are interested, for example, all parents, all students or the whole school community. However, this is not usually possible. Instead, a sample that represents the group is used.

The sample needs to be representative of the people you really want to talk to so that little bias occurs. A biased sample would mean the results of the survey do not accurately reflect the views of the people from whom you want information.

There are ways of selecting who to survey that helps reduce bias.

Table 1: types of survey samples

sample	what is it?	how to do it
random (has very little bias)	A random sample is a selection of people where each person, out of all the possible people, has had the same chance of being selected. A pure random sample is often difficult, as lists of all people are not always available.	If lists of all people from which information is wanted are available, number each person, and then select numbers randomly. Survey the people with the corresponding numbers.
systematic	Survey people according to some pattern or criteria.	Survey every third person on a list or 7 females and 3 males if a group of 10 is made up of 70 per cent females.
convenience (has much more bias)	Survey those people that can be reached easily.	Survey people who walk past or who visit a display, etc.

Choose the way that fits best within your constraints. All methods are effective if it is acknowledged that some bias is likely. The results will not be completely true or accurate but they will give a fair idea.

step 3: select the survey type



The survey type determines the way a survey is conducted, what is collected and what is recorded. The type of survey used depends on the type of information you want, how much information can be analysed, and the time and resources available. A combination of survey types can also be used. There are three common types of surveys:

self-completed questionnaires...

are most commonly presented as written questions on paper. The questions are completed or 'filled in' by the participant, usually without any assistance from the people who designed the questionnaire.

telephone surveys...

are those where an interviewer asks questions verbally to a single individual over the phone.

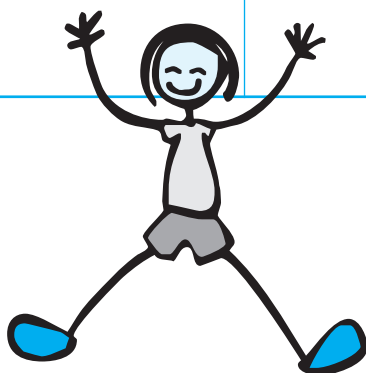
face-to-face interviews...

are similar to telephone surveys in that questions are presented verbally from one individual to another, but are conducted in-person, not over the phone.

The advantages of each type of survey are listed below.

Table 2: advantages of survey types^{3,4}

self-completed questionnaires	telephone surveys	face-to-face interviews
— least expensive	— good response rate	— highest response rate
— fastest/least time consuming	— allows for probing, reduces misunderstanding and missing answers	— allows for probing, reduces misunderstanding and missing answers
— can be mailed to respondents	— can give some assistance to the participant so they can respond accurately	— can assist the participant to respond accurately
— consistent as respondents are all asked exactly the same questions	— participants do not require reading and writing skills to be involved	— participants do not require reading and writing skills to be involved
	— good for getting large amounts of information	— good for getting large amounts of information — can ask more complex questions



The disadvantages of each type of survey are listed on page 7.

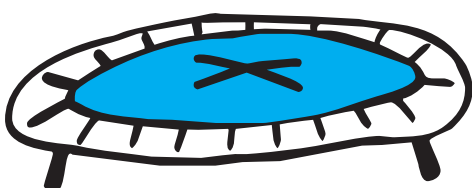


Table 3: disadvantages of survey types^{3,4}

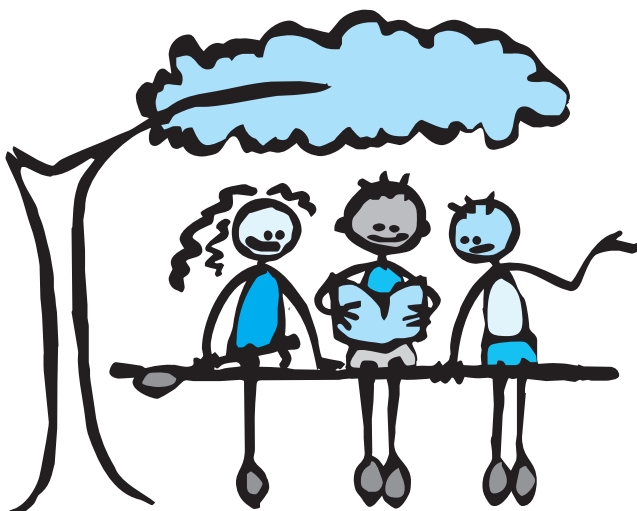
self-completed questionnaires	telephone surveys	face-to-face interviews
– lowest response rate	– time consuming and expensive	– most time consuming and expensive
– no opportunity for clarification, misunderstanding will go undetected	– all questions must be asked in exactly the same way for the answers to count	– more difficult for all questions to be asked the same way so the answers count
– questions asked can not be complex	– questions asked can not be too complex	
– participants require reading and writing skills	– participants must have a telephone	

Note:

A questionnaire can be used within the other two survey types. For example, a questionnaire could form the interview questions for a face-to-face interview or telephone survey.

step 4: decide how many people to survey

How many people are needed in the survey to gather accurate information? The more people surveyed, the more accurate the results are likely to be. However, the larger the group, the greater the time and energy needed to conduct the survey.



There are a couple of considerations when deciding the sample size (ie. how many people to survey):

- how much data can be effectively collected and then analysed when considering time, energy and sources?
- the type of survey you have chosen.

step 5: write the questions

Questionnaires should be designed to be attractive, easy to understand and easy to answer. Therefore, a lot of time is usually spent in getting the questions right.

This step looks at:

- types of questions
- designing questions
- the sequencing and presentation of questionnaires
- covering letters and introductions.

types of questions

There are no hard and fast rules to decide which particular type of question to use. The questions used will depend on the type of information being gathered. Whatever type/s of questions are used, the information that they gather must be useful and able to be interpreted. The types of questions being reviewed here are the following:

1. Open-ended questions
 - 1.1 questions that can have unexpected answers
 - 1.2 sentence completion questions
2. Closed-ended questions
 - 2.1 multiple choice question (one response)
 - 2.2 multiple choice question (multiple responses)
 - 2.3 yes/no or true/false questions
 - 2.4 scales and ratings
 - 2.5 rank order questions

1. Open-ended questions

1.1 Questions that can have unexpected answers

Open-ended questions allow the answer to be left entirely to the respondent so they can express their feelings without restriction. They generate a wide range of replies.³ Open-ended questions give 'qualitative' information. This type of information really gives the 'feeling' of what people mean. This information allows themes or ideas to be identified.

For example:

1. What do you think about the current level of health in the school? *(Please write your answer in the space below)*

1.2 Sentence completion questions

Participants are asked to complete a sentence about a subject.

For example:

2. Please answer the following question by completing the statement below.

I think the school could be improved by

Table 4: advantages and disadvantages of open-ended questions⁴

advantages of open-ended questions	disadvantages of open-ended questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – gives qualitative data – useful when the full range of responses to a given question is not known – useful when there are too many potential response categories – therefore it would be difficult to write a neat closed-ended question to explore the same issue – responses are not influenced by a pre-arranged set of answers – preferable for complex issues that can't be condensed into a few small categories – useful when respondents can give information to clarify their answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – has potential to collect useless or irrelevant information along with valuable information – because participants have the freedom to say whatever they like, analysis is much more difficult and time consuming – requires higher writing skills from respondents – may lead to a lower response rate as greater time and effort is needed from the respondent

2. Closed-ended questions

Closed-ended questions are questions followed by a list of answers and a format for making an answer.⁵ These lists of answers are called response categories. Closed-ended questions provide ‘quantitative’ information that can be counted. The information can be discussed in terms of numbers, frequencies, and percentages. For more information on these statistics, see *step 8 – analyse the information and report what was found*.

There are several types of closed-ended questions.

2.1 Multiple choice questions with only one response allowed

For example:

a) Are you: *(Please tick the appropriate box)*

male female

b) How many are there in a dozen?

(Please tick the appropriate box)

6 8 10 12

2.2 Multiple choice questions with multiple responses allowed³

For example:

a) Which of the following sporting facilities are available at your school. *(Please tick the appropriate box)*

swimming pool

full sized oval

indoor sports hall

tennis courts



2.3 Yes/no or true/false questions

For example:

a) Did you eat breakfast today?

(Please tick the appropriate box)

yes no

b) The period of gestation of an elephant is two years.

(Please tick the appropriate box)

true false

2.4 Scales and ratings

Participants are asked to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with a statement.³

For example:

a) Teachers do not have the time to speak with parents after school. *(Please circle your response)*

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	agree	not sure	disagree	strongly disagree

Please circle your response to the following questions using the scale below where 1 equals 'Not Important' and 5 equals 'Very Important'.

b) How important do you feel the following dietary activities are to your child's health?

1	2	3	4	5
not important	a little important	not sure	important	very important

Eating wholemeal bread

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Eating a piece of fruit per day

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

c) How would you rate your school on the following factors?¹

Please circle a number between 1 and 5 to show how you rate your school in the following areas. For example, circle (1) if you think your school is very quiet, circle (3) if you think your school is neither quiet nor noisy, etc.

1	2	3	4	5
very quiet	quiet	neither quiet nor noisy	noisy	very noisy

1	2	3	4	5
very clean	clean	neither clean nor dirty	dirty	very dirty

1	2	3	4	5
very safe	safe	neither safe nor unsafe	unsafe	very unsafe

2.5 Rank order questions

Participants are asked to number or rank a list of items in order of their importance.

For example:

a) Please number the following issues in your school in order of importance. Place a '1' next to the issue that you think is the most important. Place a '2' next to the issue that you think is the next most important and so on through to '4' for the issue of least importance.⁵

- loneliness and depression
- bullying
- suicide/self-harm
- conflict resolution

Table 5: advantages and disadvantages of closed-ended questions⁴

advantages of closed-ended questions	disadvantages of closed-ended questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – provides quantitative data (that is, it can be tallied) – closed-ended questions are consistent and easier to answer, code, analyse, and compare from person to person – the meaning of the question is often clearer to the respondent as they can tell from the response categories what is expected – are more likely to provide the exact information being sought – best used when categories are discrete, distinct and relatively few in number 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – may miss some crucial information because it was not included as a response category – respondents may feel frustrated that their response is not listed or is not exactly what they wanted to say – easy for respondents to guess or answer randomly – can be difficult to know which categories to include or there can be too many categories – makes the questionnaire look longer

Note:

To overcome some of these disadvantages, allow respondents the opportunity to add information that has not been included in the categories. Also, a 'don't know' category helps to ensure all respondents can answer the question but their answers may not inform your decision-making, planning, etc.

comparison of open-ended and closed-ended questions⁴

It is often assumed that open-ended questions will gather more information than closed-ended questions. However, open-ended questions can sometimes provide less information than closed-ended questions. For example, let's look at a question such as "What do you think about the current level of health in the school?" Each respondent is likely to write a different answer. Some may write about a particular experience they had with their child's last cold, or some might write one word such as 'terrible' or 'okay'. When interpreting this information, there is no way of knowing what it is about health that is 'terrible' or 'okay'. Are they concerned about the risks, about costs, or about services offered?¹

Knowing the type of information you want will help with the decision of which type of questions to use. You can use both open-ended and closed-ended questions in the same questionnaire or interview.

designing questions

The way the questions are worded is crucial to obtaining useful and relevant information. Figure 1 provides a checklist for designing questions and details some of the requirements of a good question.

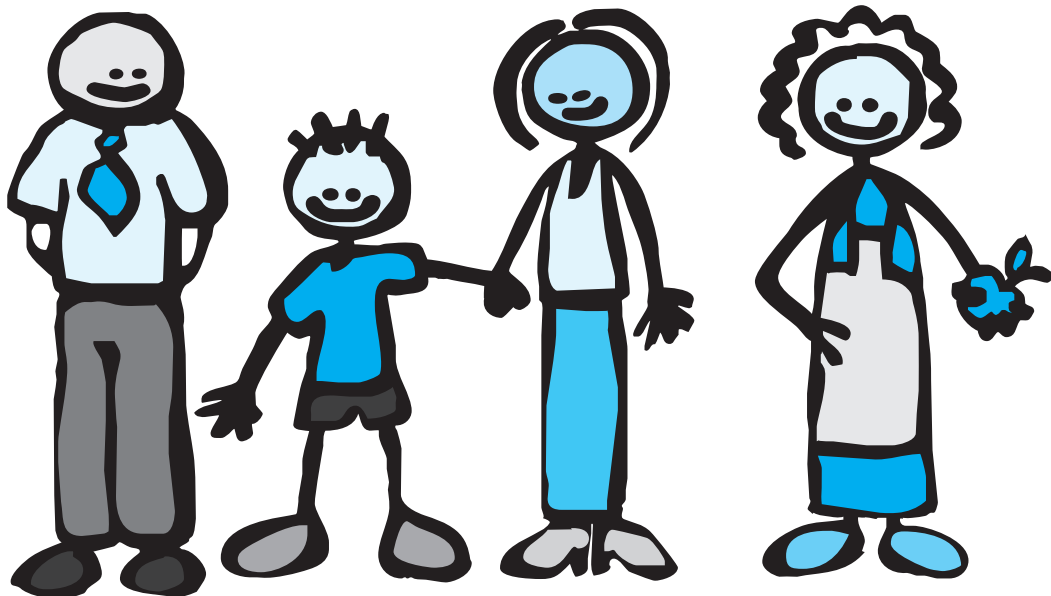


Figure 1: the steps you need to follow to create a question that can be answered

creating a question: step by step⁴

1. What information do I want from this question?
2. What is the most direct question that will obtain this information?
3. Does this question satisfy all the requirements of a good question?
 - Is it going to provide useful information?
 - Is it short and simple? “Do you have high blood pressure?” rather than “Do you suffer from hypertension?”
 - Is it answerable by all respondents? Use language to suit respondents. Limit use of jargon.
 - Does it appear relevant? People are likely to stop answering if they see the questions as irrelevant to the subject being surveyed.
 - Is it specific, clear, direct and fully explanatory? “Do you think school community members are satisfied with school practices?”
Although this question may seem specific, it is still quite vague.
Which school community members? — only students, or parents, teachers, students and other interested community members?
Which school practices? — those relating to health, tuckshop, and curriculum?
Over which time frame? — current or past school practices?
Therefore, you need to be clear about the dimensions of the variables. Provide very clear instructions on how to answer. Do not assume that respondents will know what to do? ³
 - Is it designed so people feel comfortable about sensitive questions? Preface sensitive questions with a statement that gives people permission to answer truthfully eg. “Some parents find it difficult to find the time to make nutritious lunches for their children every single day. How many times per week does your child(ren) have tuckshop for lunch? ...”
 - Is it designed with both positive and negative choices included? eg. “I find that the tuckshop food currently available is: too expensive nutritious of poor quality fresh well-priced limited in choice ”

continued over

4. Does the question avoid...

- ... ambiguity? eg. "Please tick which of the following school activities your child has participated in this year" rather than the less specific question, "Please tick the following school activities you know about".
- ... double-barrelled questions? This means asking for more than one piece of information. eg. "Do you think the school needs to improve the playground and the tuckshop?" — This should be asked as two separate questions.
- ... leading respondents? eg. "Don't you think a new tuckshop menu would be a good idea? Yes / No."
- ... double negative questions? eg. "Do you not think that teachers have no time for parents?"

5. What range of answers am I likely to get?

6. Do all the possible answers provide the information I am looking for?

7. Can I analyse the answers to this question to find the information required?

If you have answered **'yes'** to all these questions: *test the questions on someone else*

If you have answered **'no'** to any of these questions: *try again*

Remember: *people cannot provide answers to questions that are not asked.*



sequence and presentation of surveys³

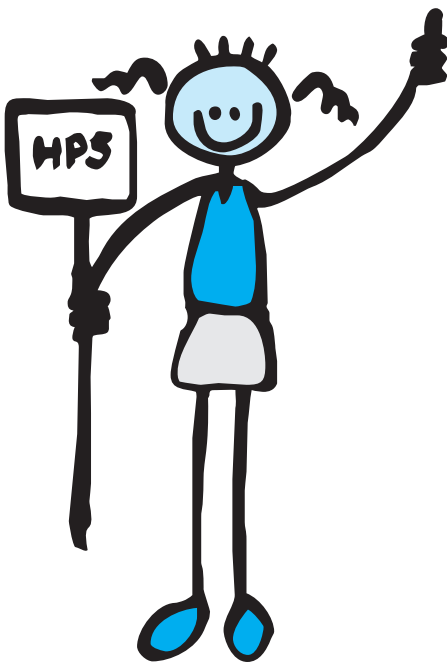
The sequence of questions and the presentation of the questionnaire can influence the willingness of people to participate in the survey.

sequence

- 🌀 Use a logical sequence, for example, ask about number and age of children before asking about childcare needs.
- 🌀 Include questions to gain demographic information of interest such as age, family size, year level at school, gender, ethnic status or other factors at the beginning.
- 🌀 Begin with easier questions and place difficult, sensitive or threatening questions near the end.

presentation of written questionnaires

- Leave space between questions.
- Select a good font and print size for easy reading.
- Ensure it is clear where the responses for each question are to be written, for example, lined up, answers all on one side where it is clear and easy to notice if questions have been missed.
- Within budget, use colour, graphics, and good quality paper to increase attractiveness.
- Consider using cartoons or pictures to maintain the interest of the respondent.



covering letter or interview introduction³⁴

A covering letter accompanies a self-completed questionnaire. Interview surveys contain introductory remarks. These aim to interest respondents and persuade them to participate or help focus them on the topic.

While still keeping the introduction short and easy to understand, these are some points that should be addressed in the covering letter:

- the importance and purpose of the survey and the credibility of the organisation involved
- the importance of the respondent's participation
- the time it will take to complete the questionnaire/ interview
- your assurance that their information is confidential, if appropriate
- a note of urgency
- your appreciation for their valuable time and effort
- a contact person's name and contact details for further enquiries
- an offer for feedback of results
- an explanation as to why they were selected to participate.

Ensure clear instructions are also included on the actual questionnaire in addition to the covering letter. For a spoken introduction, speak firmly, clearly and not too fast. For face-to-

face introductions, make eye-contact and smile. When giving feedback about the results of the survey, do not promise anything that cannot be given.

step 6: trial the questionnaire or interview questions

A trial or pilot study refers to testing or having a practice run of the questionnaire/interview.

This is done to ensure:

- the information you receive is the information you set out to get
- there are no flaws
- the information you have obtained can be interpreted¹.

Circulate the questionnaire among colleagues, friends and a variety of people to get their opinion.⁵ Incorporate any valid suggestions into the questionnaire design. It is also good to choose a small number of the actual target group, get them to fill in the questionnaire or sit through the interview and then talk to them afterwards. This way you can find out:

- if each question was easily understood
- if the response categories, layout and sequence were adequate⁵
- if the presentation was attractive and easy to read/listen to
- if any questions were considered too threatening or offensive
- and whether the information wanted is being obtained.

A trial also allows a practice of the data analysis to make sure the data received can actually be used. Any missing or unnecessary information can be detected and questions can be either added or removed as a result.

Do not forget to re-test the questionnaire after changes have been made.

step 7: conduct the survey

for questionnaires

elect a questionnaire coordinator

A coordinator can be responsible for the distribution and return of self-completed questionnaires and/or organisation of reminder notices as discussed below.

organise questionnaire distribution

Write the covering letter to accompany the questionnaire. Include details about how and when to return the questionnaire. Double check that the questionnaire instructions are clear. The number of people who respond could be increased if you warn participants that a questionnaire will arrive soon. For example, send out an initial letter or notify people via the school newsletter, etc. This allows you to give some background information about why the questionnaire is needed and how important it is for people to respond.

organise questionnaire return

Set a due date for the return of questionnaires. Ensure that the date allows a reasonable amount of time for people to complete and return the questionnaires. Organise a place of return. This may include a box or location where people physically return their questionnaires. Alternatively, envelopes printed with the return address could be included with the questionnaire. Whether postage stamps are to be included must be decided.

send reminder notices for self-completed questionnaires

Reminder notices increase the number of people who complete the questionnaire. A new questionnaire may or may not be included with the reminder notice. A reminder notice could be sent halfway through the allowed return time. See the example below.

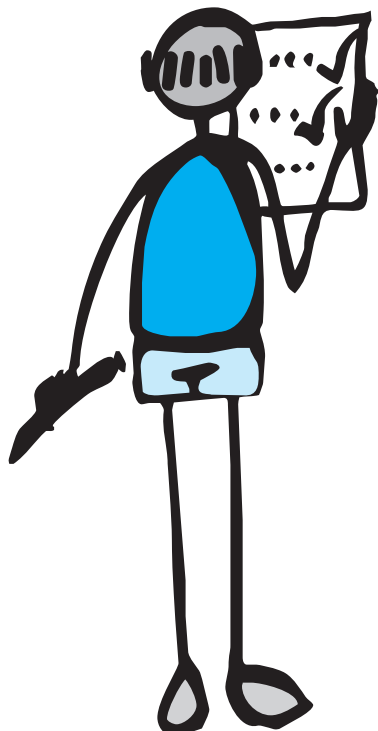
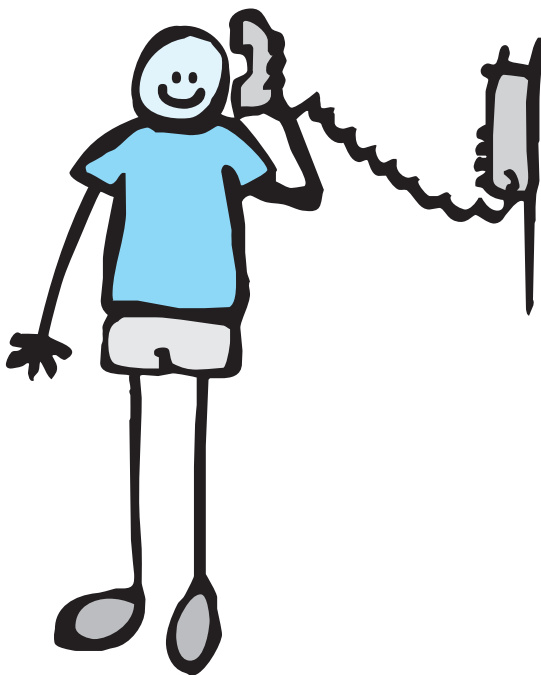


Table 6: example timetable of questionnaire distribution

Week 1 Monday 27 July	Letter and notification via newsletter to advise participants that a questionnaire will arrive in a week.
Week 2 Monday 2 August	Questionnaires sent/distributed
Week 4 Monday 16 August	Reminder notice sent
Week 6 Wednesday 1 September	Questionnaire due date



for telephone surveys or face-to-face interviews

elect a coordinator

A coordinator of telephone surveys or face-to-face interviews can be responsible for contacting participants to organise interview times. A coordinator can also organise the interviewers if more than one interviewer is used and organise interview rooms.

set up an interview procedure

A procedure needs to be designed and followed to ensure that all participants are being told and asked the same information, especially when there is more than one interviewer. This will standardise the way the survey is conducted. The procedure may include what to do when callers are not home, or when participants do not turn up. The procedure could also contain the introduction that interviewers say to participants and instructions on how to answer participants' questions.

step 8: analyse the information and report what was found

Analysis is conducted to make sense of the data collected. It is important to think about how the data will be analysed when designing the survey. Gathering information is useless if it cannot be analysed. Analysis is likely to take up a significant amount of time in the survey process. The method of analysis used depends on the type of data gathered.



analysing closed-ended questions by hand (quantitative data)

For small surveys (under 100 participants), the analysis could be sorted and tallied by hand. However, this can be time consuming and prone to error.¹

Some basic analysis is discussed below:

Frequencies are tallies of the responses. These are the actual number of participants who chose each response. For example:

Question 1 on the example questionnaire:

'yes' response	=	32	participants
'no' response	=	8	participants
'not sure' response	=	5	participants
Total responses	=	45	

Percentages are the proportion of people who chose each response out of the total number of participants. For example, the percentage of participants who chose 'Yes' would be:

frequency (32), divided by the total number of responses (45), multiplied by 100 to equal a percentage. For example:

Question 1 on the example questionnaire:

'yes' response	=	$32 \div 45 \times 100$	=	71%
'no' response	=	$8 \div 45 \times 100$	=	18%
and 'not sure'	=	$5 \div 45 \times 100$	=	11%

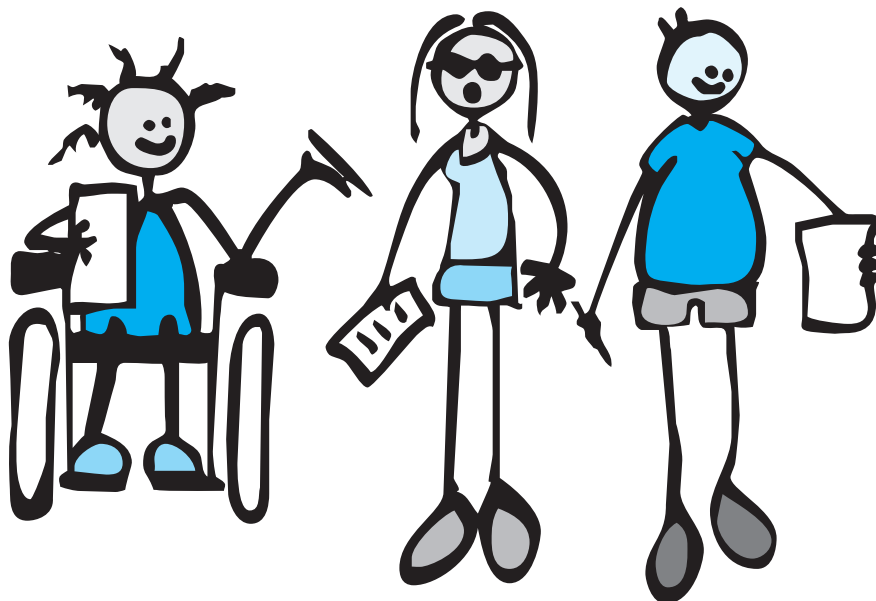
There are examples on how to use percentages and frequencies when reporting in this booklet.

analysing open-ended questions (qualitative data)

For open-ended questions, the analysis of responses is more complex. Before the responses can be tallied, the responses have to be sorted and categorised. To do this:

- for each open-ended question, sort through the responses to find common themes, words or elements
- group responses into common categories. Sometimes it is helpful to cut up the questionnaires so that responses can be physically put into different ‘piles’ during the categorisation stage. Other times, the responses can be coded for computer analysis by assigning numbers to the categories¹
- tally the number of responses in each category
- repeat the same procedure for each question.

The most commonly expressed themes could form a list of issues. This type of data can give frequencies and identify general trends. Qualitative type data cannot reveal percentages. When discussing the results from open-ended questions, it is better to generalise about the frequency of responses (for example, “the majority...”; “most respondents indicated...”, or “a few participants identified...”) You cannot say, for example, that 40 per cent of respondents thought tuckshop food was an issue that needed addressing. If someone fails to mention something in an open-ended question, it is unknown whether it is because they didn’t think of it, or because they thought of it and dismissed the idea.



analysing questions by computer

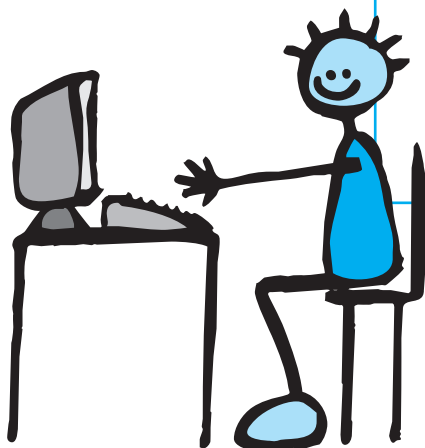
For larger surveys, computer analysis may be necessary. To analyse the data with a computer, a program and someone who is familiar with the program is needed. It may be necessary to engage the services of a consultant to assist. To do computer analysis, three stages usually occur.

Stage 1

Each response category is given a number code. An example is provided below but the exact coding depends on the specific computer software.

Table 7: example coding of questionnaire responses

question number	question	variable name	code
1	Are you aware that our school has decided to adopt a <i>health promoting schools</i> approach?	aware	1 = yes 2 = no 3 = not sure
4a	What health issues would you like to see addressed in the school?	issues	1 = shade 2 = tuckshop 3 = health education 4 = recycling, etc
6a	Is Healthsville State School a healthy place for students to learn?	studhealth	1 = very healthy 2 = healthy 3 = uncertain 4 = unhealthy 5 = very unhealthy



Stage 2

These codes are entered into the computer and become the database.

Stage 3

The computer program is used to sort the data and perform the operations needed to get useable information.¹ If only descriptive statistics are wanted (for example, frequencies, percentages, means/averages), most computer programs are simple enough to allow these functions to be performed easily enough yourself. If inferential statistics such as correlations, factor analysis, etc are wanted, consulting a statistician for advice would be beneficial.

**interpreting the results**

When interpreting what the results of the survey mean, it is important not to generalise too much. For example, the results of a health needs survey at one school, would not necessarily apply to another school.

It is also important to recognise any possible bias in the results. Not all people in the school community have been asked (only a representative sample), and not all people asked have given their responses (because not all people completed the survey). Therefore, the survey results will not represent the exact opinions of the whole school community. Some bias will exist. This should be remembered when making decisions that affect the whole school community.

The **response rate** is the number of people who actually responded to your survey, expressed as a percent of the number of people who were approached.¹ (For example, 45 people returned the survey out of 100 surveys sent which gives a 45 per cent response rate). Looking at the response rate can indicate how biased the results are likely to be. The lower the response rate, the more biased and unrepresentative are the results of the group that was surveyed. This is because the type of person to complete the survey is likely to be different from the type of person who did not participate (for example, people with good reading and writing skills are more likely to participate than people who have trouble reading and writing). This example highlights the need to be aware that process can exclude some groups within your community. Researchers generally aim for a response rate of 65 per cent or better from the target group or community.⁵ A response rate of this proportion will allow you to make accurate judgments about the group surveyed.

Surveys attempt to make sure that all respondents are presented with the same series of questions.⁵ This would mean that different responses occur because of a difference between the people sampled, not because of a difference in the way the questions were asked. For example, for consistency to occur with interviews, each question has to be asked in exactly the same way, including tone of voice and body language. In telephone surveys, all respondents must be asked the same questions.

It is important to minimise response bias in a survey. Response bias is when people give a response that they think you want to hear, rather than what they really think. Ensuring anonymity and confidentiality and having a non-judgmental interviewer can help to minimise response bias.

reporting the information found

It is important that information gathered is given back to the community from which the information was obtained. The survey results should also be given to and used by the decision-makers. The survey is only as good as the sorts of planning decisions and interventions that grow from it and this depends on how well the results can be communicated to others.⁵ In the report, it is important to recognise and discuss any difficulties or problems that might affect the interpretation and generalisation of the findings. The people you are communicating the results to should be aware of how representative of the school community the results are.

Traditionally, the results of surveys are conveyed through written reports. For information on writing reports, refer to Booklet 5 – *How to let people know*. It is useful to keep a record of the survey procedures used, the questionnaire or interview questions and the results found, which may or may not be in the form of a formal report.

Survey results can be communicated through a letter, in newsletters or newspapers, within meetings, through displays and/or electronic media. For other ways of communicating survey results, refer to Booklet 5 – *How to let people know*.

An example of how results can be communicated to participants and the school community is provided, following the example covering letter and example self-completed questionnaire.

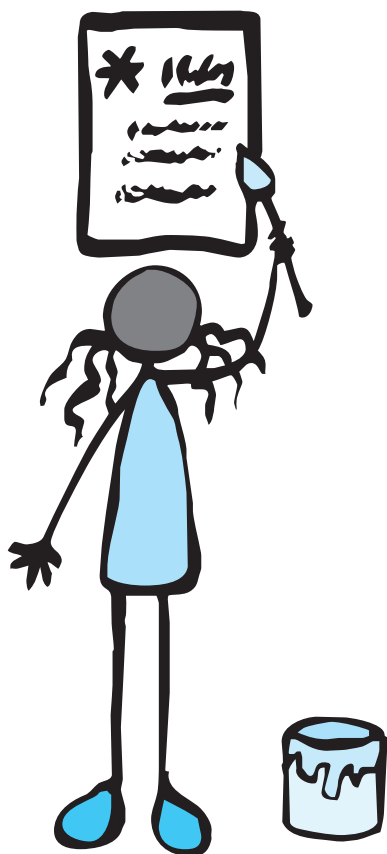


Figure 2: example covering letter for survey

Healthsville State School

Health Promoting Schools Survey

Dear Sir/Madam

The importance of health for students, staff and the wider school community has been recognised by Healthsville State School. As part of the *health promoting schools* approach that our school has adopted, we are asking all parents and staff how healthy they think our school is, and what areas need attention. The results of this questionnaire will be used to prioritise current issues so we can address them. We would also like to find out how much people know about the *health promoting schools* concept.

This questionnaire will take approximately five minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. It is your own responses that are important. Responses to the questionnaire will be kept anonymous and confidential. Page three of the questionnaire (which may include your contact details) will be separated from the questionnaire upon opening the return envelope so that all other questions remain anonymous.

Please return completed questionnaires by Wednesday, 20 August.

Return questionnaires to your child's teacher, or to the box in the school administration office.

A summary of the findings will be available from the school administration office on completion of the survey. If you have any questions, you are invited to contact the *Health Promoting Schools* Coordinator, Ms Julie Purban on ph 3234 5678.

Thank you for your valuable participation. Your opinions are important to us.

Yours faithfully,

Julie Purban
Health Promoting Schools Coordinator

Please return to school by Wednesday, 20 August

Figure 3: example health promoting schools survey

Healthville State School
Health Promoting Schools Survey

Page 1

Please tick the appropriate boxes or write your answers in the spaces provided.

1 Are you aware that our school has decided to adopt a *health promoting schools* approach? yes no

2 Are you aware of the *health promoting schools* approach and concept? yes no

2a If yes, what do you think a *health promoting schools* approach is?⁶

3 What issues would you like to see addressed in the school?
*Please list these below.*⁶

3a Rate these health issues in terms of importance where (1) is the most important. *Place ratings in the boxes above.*

Healthsville State School Health Promoting Schools Survey

Page 2

Please complete the following statement.

4 I think our school could be improved by...

Please use the following scale that ranges from 'very healthy' to 'very unhealthy', to answer the following questions. Please tick the appropriate box for each question.

5 Is Healthsville State School a healthy place for students to learn?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
very healthy	healthy	uncertain	unhealthy	very unhealthy

6 Is Healthsville State School a healthy place for teachers and staff to work?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
very healthy	healthy	uncertain	unhealthy	very unhealthy

7 Are you willing to participate in making our school a healthier place?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
yes	not sure	no

Healthsville State School

Health Promoting Schools Survey

Page 3

7a. If yes, would you be prepared to offer help in the following way(s):
(You may tick more than one box)

- by providing feedback on ideas for activities
- becoming a committee member
- giving time to help on some weekends
- donating money/equipment
- participating in fundraising ventures
- supporting school activities

other: *(please state)*

Optional:

If there is a possibility you may be able to participate in *health promoting schools* activities either now or in the future, please provide your contact details here.

Name _____

Address _____

Contact phone no _____

**Thank you for completing this survey.
Your participation is much appreciated.**

**Please return the questionnaire to your child's teacher or
place in the box in the administration office by
Wednesday, 20 August.**

Figure 4: example of written communication of survey results

Healthsville State School
Health Promoting Schools Survey Results

**Sincere thanks to all those who participated
 in the health promoting schools survey**

There were _____ questionnaires distributed and of those, _____ were completed and returned.⁶

This is an acceptable number of returned questionnaires. Therefore, the information gathered from this questionnaire is quite a good reflection of the views of the whole school community. However, as with most surveys, some bias is likely as not all people returned their questionnaires.

The following is a summary of the results obtained:⁶

_____ per cent of the people surveyed were aware that our school has adopted the *health promoting schools* approach and _____ per cent were not sure.

_____ per cent of the people surveyed indicated that they understood the concept and philosophies of *health promoting schools* and _____ per cent were unsure.

The health issues identified by participants, in order of importance, were:⁶

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Many suggestions were received about ways of improving the school. Some of the most common suggestions were: _____,
 _____, _____.

_____ per cent of participants indicated that Healthsville State School is a 'very healthy' or 'healthy' place for students to learn.

_____ per cent of participants indicated that Healthsville State School was an 'unhealthy' or 'very unhealthy' place for students to learn, with _____ per cent uncertain.

_____ per cent participants indicated that Healthsville State School was a 'very healthy', or 'healthy' place for teachers and staff to work.

_____ per cent of participants indicated that Healthsville State School was an 'unhealthy' or 'very unhealthy' place for teachers and staff to work, with _____ per cent uncertain.

The majority of people surveyed were willing to participate in making our school a healthier place. This is great to see so much enthusiasm in our school community so we can work together. Once again, thank you very much for your participation. This information will help us identify health issues that need to be addressed in our school.

As a result of this survey information, we are holding a *health promoting schools* information night on

_____ at _____.

This meeting will help us decide where to go next and what actions we can take.

Please also find enclosed a pamphlet on *health promoting schools*.

Thank you for your participation



how to conduct a discussion group

— focus groups **background information**

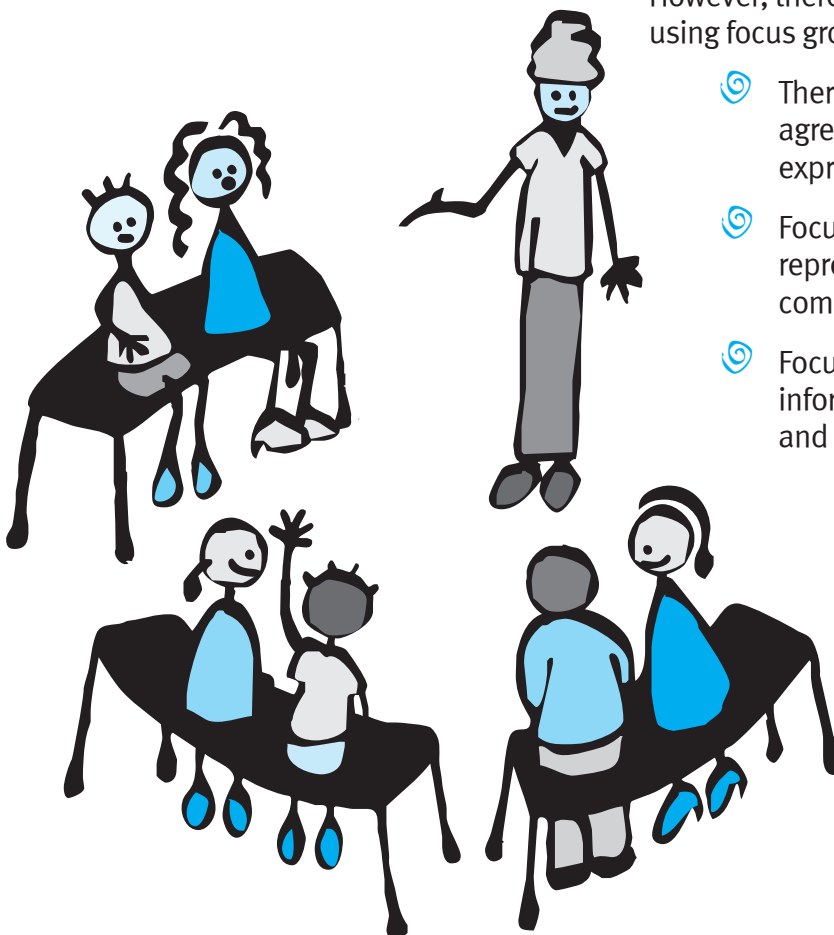
A focus group is a group discussion with a small group of people. It is used to gather information on people's views about a specific topic. A facilitator guides the discussion around the particular topic. Group members are able to say what they think and respond to the views of others.

Focus groups can be used:

- for generating and exploring a range of ideas and attitudes
- for gaining an in-depth understanding
- when there are time and money constraints
- with people who may have difficulty completing written questionnaires
- to clarify and follow-up information mentioned during the focus group discussion.

However, there are some disadvantages to using focus groups that should be noted.

- There is a risk of bias when people agree with others instead of expressing their own views.
- Focus groups are not representative of the whole school community.
- Focus groups generate lots of information that has to be recorded and summarised.



what to do

who participates?

A sample of people is selected. The make-up of the group will depend on the issues being explored. You will need to consider what will best suit your topic. For example, there may be instances where it would be appropriate to have all male or all female focus groups, or same year level groups of students, or a mix of parents and teachers. Consider that differences in characteristics (for example, age, gender, occupation, etc) may provide a larger range of opinions or views than a group of individuals who have many similar characteristics. The recommended number of participants is 6 to 10.

how many focus groups?

Because the people in any one focus group cannot fully represent the views of the whole school community, it is best to run more than one focus group. Ideally, focus groups should be run until little or no new information comes out of the discussions. The number of focus groups will depend on the time and people available.

topic

Before running the focus group, develop a 'discussion guide'. This is a list of questions to ask the focus group participants. An example discussion guide (shown in Table 8) is provided for a focus group looking at how the *health promoting schools* process has been going.

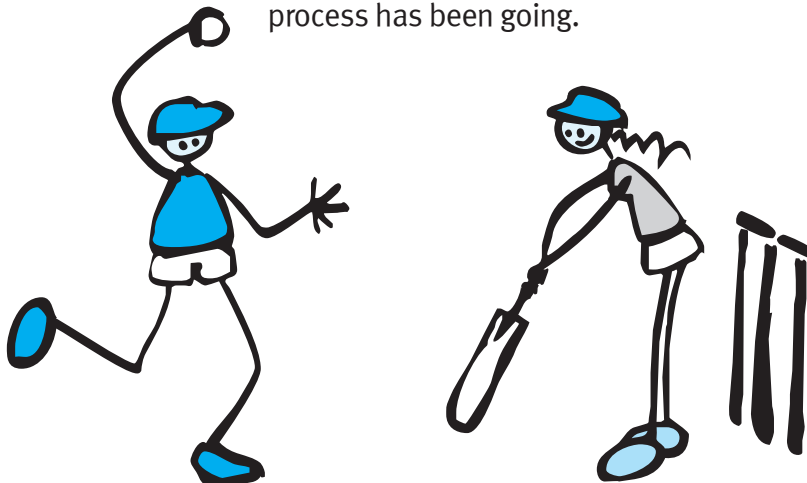
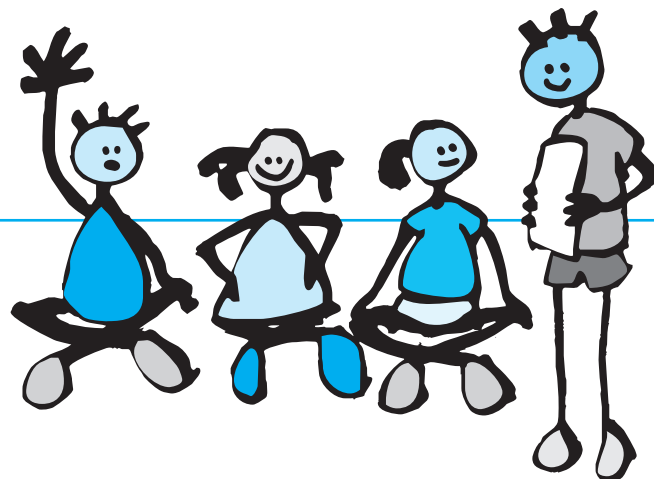


Table 8: example focus group discussion guide

discussion guide		
Focus group 1	11.00 am	28 October
Introductory question(s)		
<p>🌀 When did you first hear of the health promoting schools approach?</p> <p>Start with some easy to answer questions to help make participants feel comfortable conversing in the group.</p>		
Broad question(s)		
<p>🌀 What do you think about the way the health promoting schools process has been handled in this school?</p> <p>Raise the topics you want to discuss. Use a broadly focused, open-ended question as this allows the group to generate a range of ideas and may raise issues that have not been anticipated.</p>		
Probe questions		
<p>🌀 How much knowledge did you have of what was going on?</p> <p>🌀 What do you think the process has achieved?</p> <p>🌀 How do you think the coordinating role was managed?</p> <p>The discussion guide may also have some more specific probe questions or prompts such as these. These probe questions are just a guide to make sure that you get all the information you want. Not all questions need to be asked as many questions will be covered as people express their views and volunteer information.</p>		
<p>The questions can be ordered so that some funnelling occurs where each new question narrows in further on the issues³.</p>		



interviewing and facilitating

In a focus group, the facilitator guides the conversation and handles the dynamics of the group.² If you are wanting to address issues that could be described as sensitive or controversial, consider engaging an outsider to run or facilitate the focus group. Take into consideration the bias that can be introduced by having someone from within your own school community (for example, a deputy principal) who may be extremely influential. Focus group members may feel more comfortable discussing how they honestly feel about a particular issue if they know there is no risk of their remarks causing offence to the facilitator. For information on effective facilitation, see *How to conduct a meeting or workshop* in Booklet 5.

Flexibility is important in a focus group. The facilitator should be open to opportunities as they arise and not break the flow of the discussion each time a question is asked.² A facilitator must be careful not to bias the group discussion by giving their opinion or indicating agreement or disapproval of any comments made by participants; either verbally or non-verbally. It is best if the facilitator is familiar with the topic area but they do not have to be an expert.³

leading a focus group

Participants need to have an understanding of the way a focus group works, the purpose of the group and the need for recording the information discussed. The facilitator can explain these points at the beginning of the focus group, as well as explaining their role as facilitator, their non-expert status and any rules of the group.⁵ Participants should be reassured that their comments are valuable, that there are no right or wrong answers, and that differences in opinions and perceptions are encouraged.⁵ This helps to create rapport which is necessary for focus groups to work well.

Begin with introductions and sit in a semicircle or circle or at a round shaped table.⁵ After introductions and general discussion, ask the first broad question on the discussion guide. During the discussion the facilitator should try to ensure all participants are given the opportunity to express their views. If one person is dominating the conversation, others can be encouraged to join in by having the facilitator:

- ‘direct the conversational traffic’ by making space for someone less inclined to interject or compete with more confident group members
- nod at other individuals who look as if they also wish to speak
- ask if anyone else has the same or a different comment to make
- ask individuals by name if there is anything they would like to add.

At the end of the focus group, remember to thank people for their participation.



recording the data

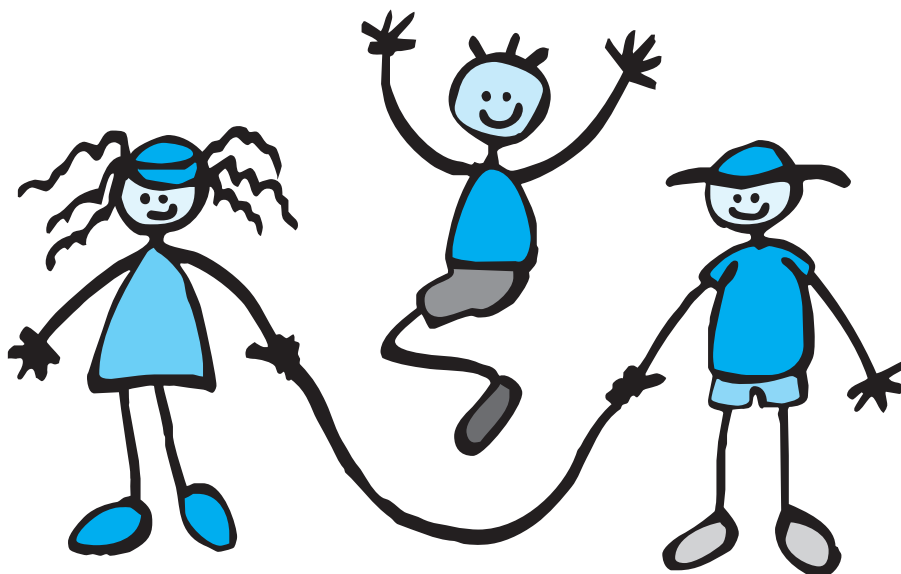
Someone or something (for example, video or cassette recorder) records the data. This is not the job of the facilitator who will be busy facilitating the group discussion. If only general information is required, it may be sufficient to have a person present to record the main ideas, thoughts and views of the participants. This can be done on butchers paper or a whiteboard in view of the participants. However, the session is usually tape-recorded and is later transcribed into pages of data.

interpretation

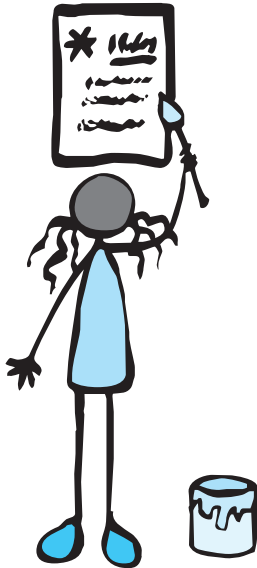
There are a number of ways to interpret the data. The data collected from a focus group is called qualitative data as it is not numeric. The recorded data is usually grouped into topics or themes. It is important not to interpret the data with numbers. The idea is to gather and report the whole range of views, even if only one person mentioned a particular opinion.⁵ Interpreting qualitative data is discussed in more detail in *How to conduct a survey* in this booklet.

reporting

How you report the information from the focus group will depend on your situation. In pure research, the results and findings are written up in a formal report. In the school situation, it is most important to use the information to make decisions. It may be worthwhile communicating what was found at meetings, assemblies, and through school newsletters. It is useful to describe the range of responses, the themes found and add a couple of direct quotes to illustrate what was found.⁵ Aim to give the information gathered as well as the ‘atmosphere’ of the discussion.² Direct quotes should be reported anonymously. For example, One participant said, “.....” or some parents stated, “.....”. For more information on reporting, refer to *How to conduct a survey* in this booklet, and *How to write reports* in Booklet 5.



how to set up a poster competition



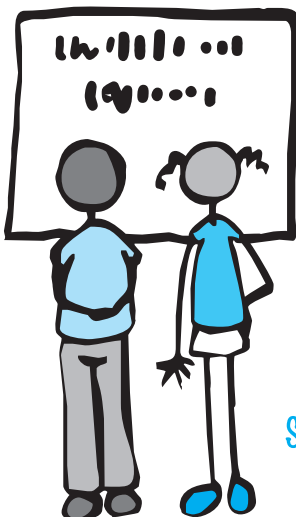
background information

A poster competition can be used for both gathering information and spreading information. A poster competition can:

- be used to gather information from students. For example, to identify students' responses to "How can we make our school a healthier place?"
- help to spread information to students and school staff about *health promoting schools* as well as getting them involved
- be used as a fund-raising activity – for example, you could charge 50 cents per entry
- be set up and run by students.

what to do

step 1: give clear instructions



Ensure competition details are included. For example, state the prize; how, when and by whom it is to be judged; how many prizes (1st, 2nd and 3rd); age group categories, competition close date; and any other competition rules.

Provide accurate information on the size of the poster, purpose of the poster, specific information that must be included, audience of the poster and any colour restrictions if the posters are to be printed.

step 2: publicise

- Publicise the competition to encourage participation through newsletters, school assemblies, teachers who then inform their class, and placing posters about the competition around the school.
- Publicise the results to recognise and commend participants.

- 🌀 Spread the information in the posters by displaying the poster entries around the school, at school assemblies and meetings, and in newsletters.

step 3: organise a prize

Try seeking a prize donation from local organisations. Select a prize that would be good to win. For high schools, it may be possible to offer prizes such as a gift voucher from an organisation related to the activity (such as an art supplier), art supplies, art training or an opportunity to work with an advertising firm.



how to take observations

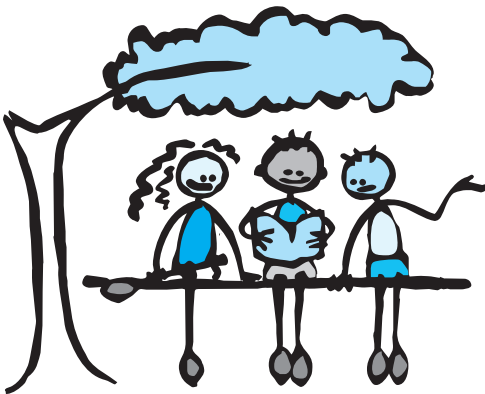
background information

Observation involves collecting information by methodically watching and recording what is happening. One person or a group of people can observe an event, a person, or a situation. Usually, information is only collected on a few specific behaviours or actions.

what to do

step 1: decide what to observe

Be clear about the types of data to be collected. For example, it is no use frantically writing down everything that occurs in a playground if you are only searching for how many students sit in the shade. Make a list of about 3-5 things you want to observe (for example, aspects of the action plan being implemented, current behaviours in the playground, who buys fruit at the tuckshop).



You may want to just keep these 3-5 things in mind whilst observing, or you may want to use a checklist of items that should be observed.¹ However, using a checklist requires caution as recording only certain pre-planned observations may shut out other important information.

step 2: observing

Ensure your role as an observer is understood and accepted. It is not a secretive operation and you should be open about telling people what you are doing.¹ Remember, it may be appropriate to observe in a number of different environments.

step 3: recording

You may want to record exactly what you observe happening – who, what, where, when and how. For example, if you are looking at specific behaviours, such as how many students use the drinking taps, using a simple table where behaviours can be tallied may be sufficient.

Table 9: example table for recording observations only



number of students using the drinking taps beside the toilets	
Date: 28 November	
time	tally
before school	
morning tea	
lunch	
after school	

Or you may want to record your observations and make judgments and interpretations at the same time. Observations and interpretations need to be kept separate. Interpretations can include: what the observations appear to mean, what conclusions can be drawn, and/or how observations link or relate to others. Ensure any exact words or phrases recorded are placed in quotation marks.

Table 10: example table for recording observations and interpretations

number of students using the drinking taps beside the toilets		
Date: 28 November		
time	activity (what happened, by whom, where, how etc ?)	interpretation (what did it mean, what conclusions can be drawn?)

Only brief notes will be able to be taken during the observations. These brief notes should be written up in greater detail after observation, preferably in the same day. If it is not appropriate to write notes at the exact time of observation, notes can be jotted down as soon as possible afterwards.

step 4: summarising and reporting observations

Before reporting, detailed notes may be summarised by writing down the main themes of each paragraph. These themes can then be reported.

When reporting, include sufficient information to back up conclusions, together with how the conclusions were reached. Write conclusions in simple, clear, unambiguous language. Try to hone them down to short and easily understood statements.¹

For further information on reporting, see *How to conduct surveys — Step 8: Analysing the information and reporting what was found* in this booklet.

Suggestion

Get students to run the research. Incorporate the observation process into the curriculum across a number of key learning areas. For example, surveys, graphs and statistics in Mathematics, report writing in English, and analysing health issues in Health and Physical Education.



how to check existing records

background information

Record checks involve looking through items that already exist so you can use the information. The information collected could be useful for:

- making decisions about health needs
- making realistic goals for change
- as 'baseline' data.

A further benefit of checking records is that you will not repeat work that has already been done.

what to do

Valuable information can be gathered from past and current records, relevant people or other organisations. Remember to respect confidentiality. For example, information on frequencies, amounts or reasons could be gathered but names are likely to be unnecessary.

examples

- needs that have been expressed by members of the community, for instance by putting their names on a waiting list
- attendance records
- number of sick days for students or staff
- reasons for sick bay attendance by students
- number of and reasons for detentions/suspensions/expulsions
- number of students doing certain subjects
- check records from other community sources for example, Police, Police Citizens Youth Club, Community Youth Service, Health Department, etc
- minutes of meetings of school boards, P&C or P&F meetings, school development meetings, and previous meetings

- feedback/evaluation sheets from previously run workshops, seminars, information nights, etc
- rosters
- referrals and appointment books
- newsletters
- photos and memos
- census data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Results of the ABS Censuses are available from the ABS analysed by Metropolitan area, Local Government Area, Federal and State Electorate Districts, Postcode, or, for no extra cost, a specific area you designate.¹

You can examine the records found by asking questions as if they were current. What insights do they give you into the current situation? How would you do things differently?⁹ For example, you could investigate why staff or students are having more sick days than usual, or why some school services are being used less than hoped.

If you are refused access to information, you can use the Freedom of Information Act. This does not provide a free service and some information may still be unavailable.



how to conduct a literature review

background information

A literature review is an investigation of current writings on a certain topic. It is useful for finding out what is known about a topic, what other people have done before, and what is considered to be good practice. A literature review is often conducted using books and journal articles, but can also include Internet searches. See *How to conduct an Internet search* in this booklet.

what to do

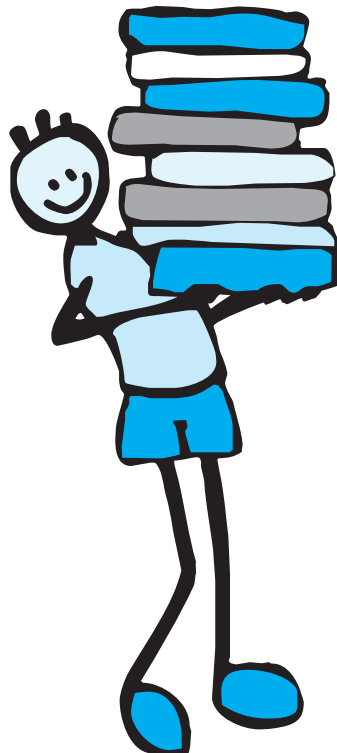
- ④ Determine the topic you want to review.
- ④ Search current literature. Use a library.
- ④ Use the library catalogue to look for relevant literature. Each library catalogue, usually on a computer, will be slightly different, but instructions are always available. Type in the topic. The topic can be made more specific by adding more words. Many catalogues also allow you to restrict literature searches by year, place (for example, Australia) and other categories.
- ④ Some libraries also have CD ROMs that allow you to look up journal articles on specific topics. Use a CD ROM that is relevant to your topic. For example, the topic of *health promoting schools* could be on an education and/or health CD ROM. CD ROMs are searched similarly to library catalogues where you enter the topic and can restrict the search. CD ROMs have the added advantage of including the abstract of an article. (An abstract is a brief statement about the content of an article). These can be printed out or read from the screen to help you determine whether the article is relevant to your topic.

Note: The books on a library catalogue are usually available from that library or can be accessed from other sources by the library on your behalf. However, CD ROMs list all journal articles and the relevant journals may not be available from your library. CD ROMs do not provide call numbers. Once you have identified the relevant articles, go back to the library catalogue and search for the appropriate journal or book.

- Look through the results of your search and select relevant books or articles. Include the library call numbers and collect the books/articles from the library shelves.

Hint: With computerised library catalogues, it is useful to find out if the books are in the library and have not been borrowed already. This saves time in searching for books that are not there.

- Read the books/articles. Read the abstracts of articles first to ensure the article is relevant.
- A literature review involves a critical comparison of current knowledge. You may like to summarise and contrast the information you have collected.
- Share your findings with others. It is useful to write up or talk about your thoughts with others to spread the knowledge that you have gained.⁹



how to conduct an internet search

background information

Electronic methods of retrieving information are becoming more popular. The internet is a collection of computer networks that connects millions of computers world-wide. It is a valuable source of information and has up-to-date information from around the world on a huge range of topics.

what to do



- ④ Access the internet (See your school or local library. Internet cafés and internet access points are often available commercially in your local community).
- ④ If you are looking for a particular website and you know the address, this address can be typed at the address prompt. Begin the address with 'http/www.'. (A website refers to a specific site or place on the internet which a person or organisation has created for others to access).
- ④ If you do not know of a specific website, select a search engine (from the browser menu). Search engines are programs that allow you to search for websites on a certain topic (similar to a computerised library cataloging system).
- ④ Type in the topic. Some tips for limiting your search include:
 - using specific keywords
 - typing in as many keywords as you can
 - including a country.
- ④ A list of websites will be given. There are often tens of thousands in the list. Some search engines also give each listed website a percentage to show how accurately it matched the topic you typed in.
- ④ By double clicking with the mouse on a listed website address, you will be connected and can then look through the website to find the relevant information. You can print out the information or read it on the spot.
- ④ Some websites provide links to other related websites. Using these links (by clicking on the appropriate icon/ place) can often be useful and reduce your search time.

- ④ Share the information you find. You may be able to link relevant websites to your school's *health promoting schools* website (if you have created one), or you could leave print outs in communal places, etc.
- ④ You can also bookmark websites (save your favourite sites) so you do not have to go through the search engines again.



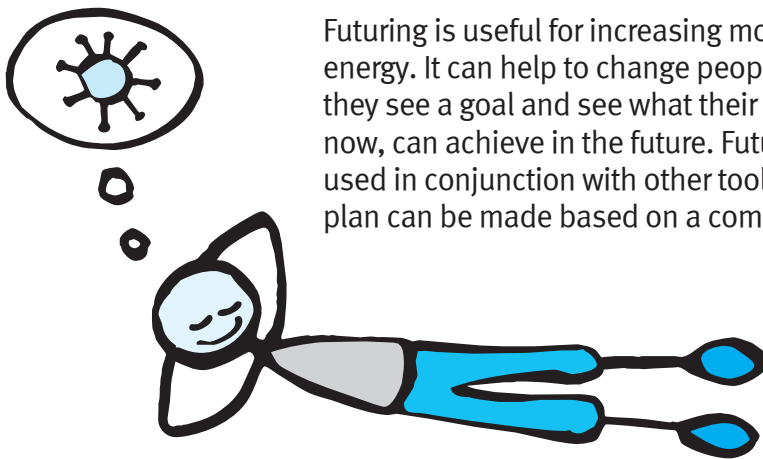
how to gather ideas about the future – ‘futuring’

background information

Futuring or scenario writing is a form of forecasting where knowledge of the current situation and intuition are used to predict and describe a future environment.² This future environment is referred to as the scenario.

Futuring is useful as it helps us change our perceptions, build the future and prepare for alternative and new possibilities so we can change what we do now.¹⁰ Futuring is also a useful tool for creating new visions of the future as needs change and new opportunities arise.

Futuring is useful for increasing motivation, enthusiasm and energy. It can help to change people’s current behaviour as they see a goal and see what their change, actions and effort now, can achieve in the future. Futuring is also useful when used in conjunction with other tools. For example, an action plan can be made based on a completed scenario.



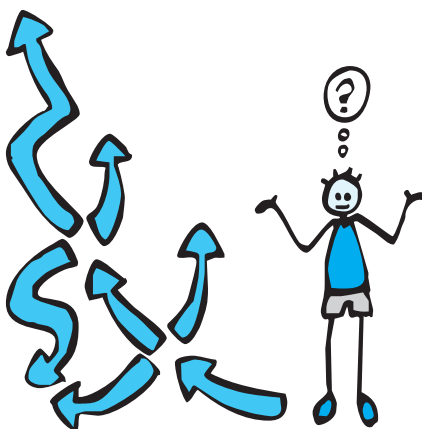
what to do

Futuring can be used with individuals or groups.

Individuals write a scenario (in words or pictures) after being asked a specific question such as:

- “What will our health promoting school look like?”
- “If we adopted the *health promoting schools* approach, what would our school be like?”.

Groups discuss what the future would look like and then record all their ideas. The ideas can be combined to create the one scenario, or a series of scenarios based on time. Ideas could be expressed verbally, pictorially or both.



how to gather ideas within an interview

– sketch interviews

background information

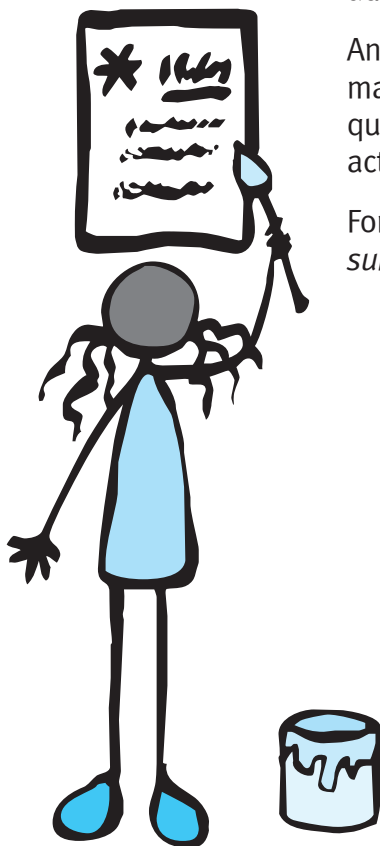
A sketch interview is an interview where the participant's ideas and responses are drawn rather than recorded verbally. It is a tool usually used for interviewing one person, but could be used for a group. As the participant sees the sketch, it often prompts them to think of more ideas and helps them to articulate their preferences.²

what to do

The participant is asked a broad question by an interviewer and then responds. A sketcher sketches the ideas and responses of a person as they talk. Probe questions are asked to gain more detail. The sketcher draws the idea(s) that the participant can see at any time. In this way the participant can add, change or further explain what they see.

An alternative sketch interview could involve the participant making their own sketch with the interviewer asking questions about the drawing. Students could easily use this activity.

For further information on interviewing, see *How to conduct a survey* in this booklet.



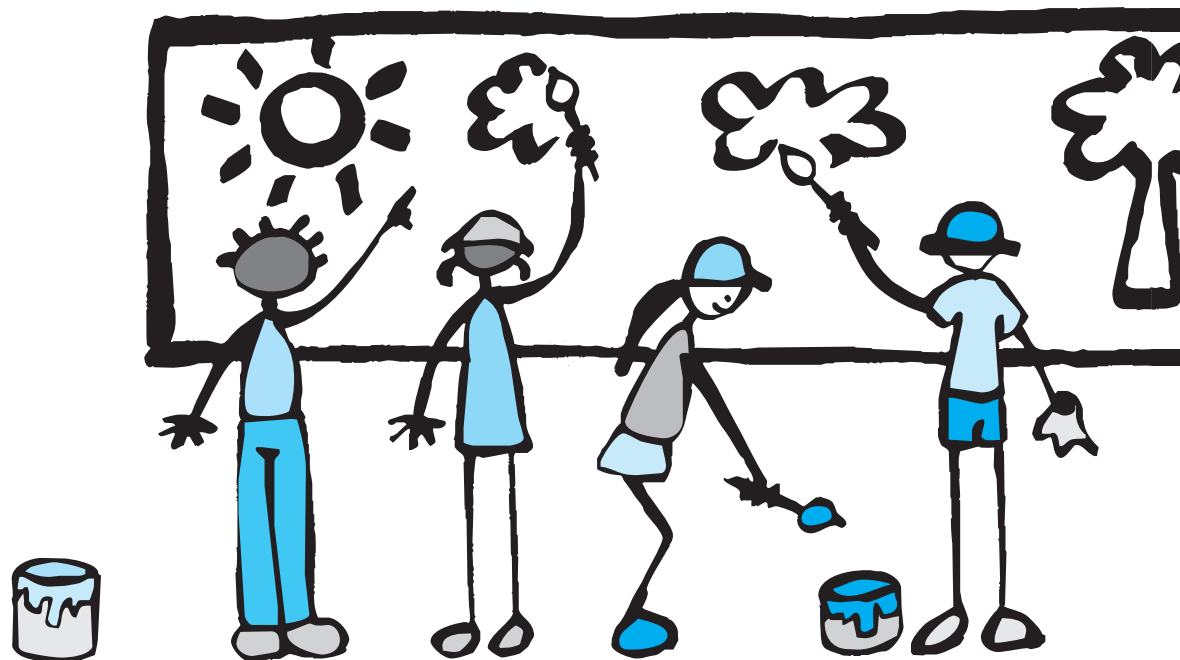
how to create a mural

background information

A mural is a public, visual display that potentially spreads and gathers information. A mural allows participants to explore an idea, and provides a chance for onlookers to become aware of an issue in an informal way.² Murals are often used to beautify public areas.

A mural:

- provides a chance for involvement and can encourage people to express visually what an issue means to them²
- can be used for gathering information as planners can identify what issues are important to people and talk to the mural designers about these ideas
- can be used to spread information to those involved and to onlookers.

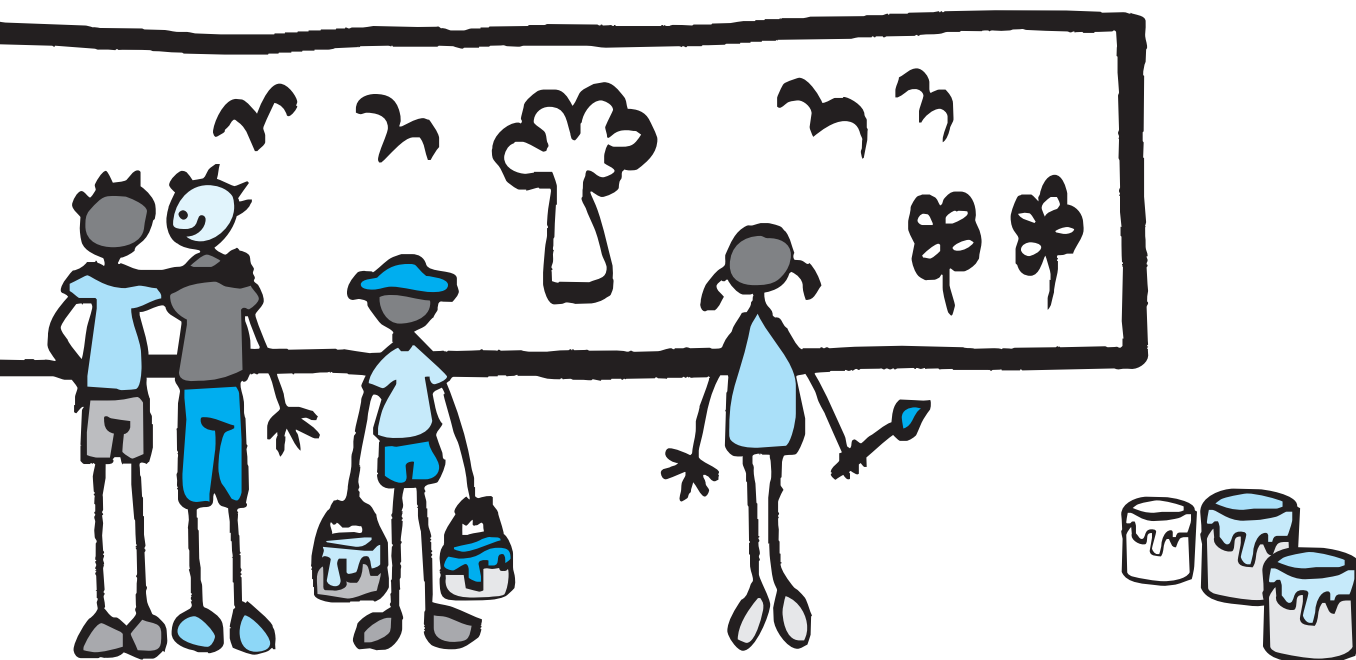


what to do

Firstly, decide on an issue or idea or title that is to be expressed visually. For example, “What a Health Promoting School means to us”. Advertise that the mural is being created. Promote involvement of the school community by providing dates and details in newsletters, newspapers, school assemblies, etc. Thank people for their participation.

Some suggestions for using murals include:

- classes or year levels of students entering a design with the winning mural to be painted
- using the mural to stimulate discussion on a topic
- murals drawn in chalk in the carpark or on concrete at lunchtime²
- a special mural day at school
- a mural painting activity or display at a school fete
- painted on a prominent wall in the school (for example, a mural could also be an action to improve the aesthetics of the environment ie. paint a mural on the toilet block)
- a series of murals that are then displayed together (for example, each class designs and paints a different health issue).



how to gather ideas on certain issues

! – ideas competition



background information

An ideas competition involves inviting school community members to participate in a competition where they comment and give ideas on certain issues. An ideas competition could be used to:

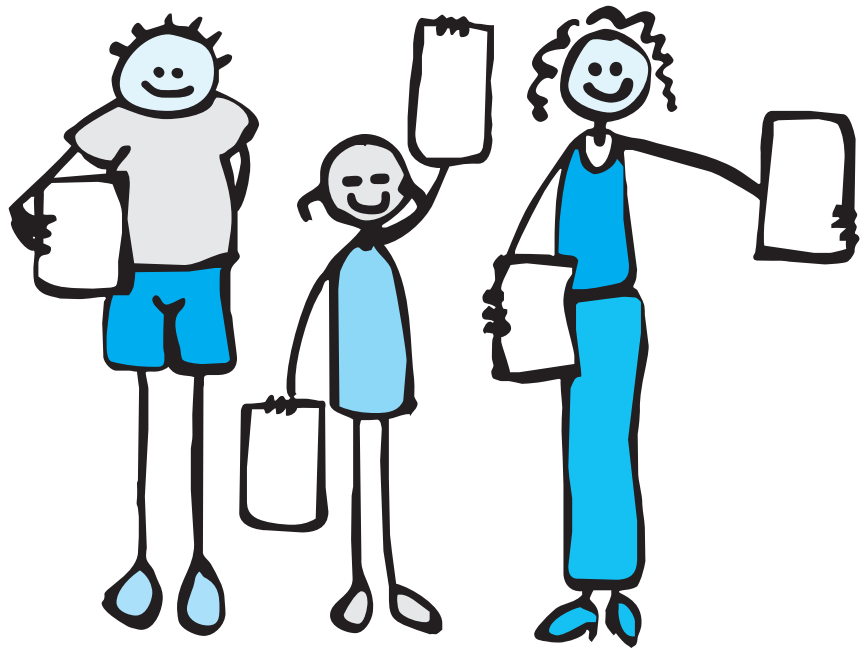
- determine health issue priorities
- find solutions to health problems
- provide ideas for improvement of the current situation.

The winner of the competition receives an award or prize and has the opportunity to discuss their idea.² An ideas competition can help to gather information, encourage participation, raise awareness of an issue and/or ideas, stimulate debate and thinking about an issue and create enthusiasm and motivation in carrying out the ‘winning’ idea(s).

what to do

- ④ Decide on an issue that needs ideas (for example, an issue that requires solutions, design suggestions, improvements or prioritising).
- ④ Write a ‘design brief’ which details what competition entrants are expected to do. (for example, an essay of 500 words, a design sketch or a ten step action plan).
- ④ Advertise and promote the competition in newsletters, newspapers, school assemblies, etc.
- ④ Be sure to include information about the issue and any important surrounding facts.
- ④ Include competition rules and details (see *How to set up a poster competition* for more detail).
- ④ Consider displaying the entries.
- ④ Organise a prize or award.
- ④ Organise an opportunity for the winner(s) to speak to the organisers about their idea.

- 🌀 It could be helpful to start planning how the idea can be implemented with the competition entrants.
- 🌀 Thank people for their participation.



how to gather suggestions

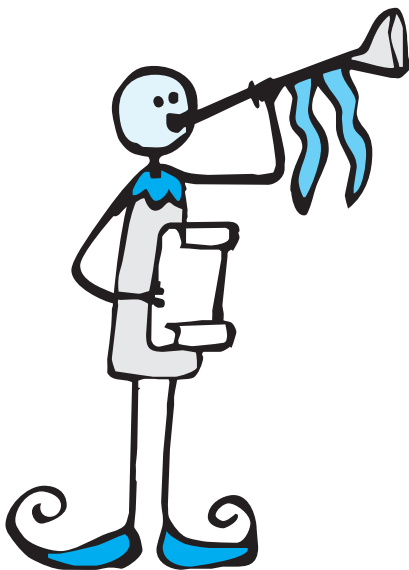
background information

A suggestion box is a tool for gathering information from a range of school community members. It involves inviting school community members to comment openly on specific issues and place their comments in a particular place, for example, a box in the school office.

A suggestion box can be used for gathering feedback and review information, and can stimulate participation and feelings of involvement in the *health promoting schools* process.

what to do

- ☺ Promote the presence of a suggestion box. If information is wanted on a specific issue, raise awareness of the issue, for example, at assemblies, through advertising in newsletters, newspapers or posters around the school, or displaying the details of the issue and the suggestion box in a prominent position.
- ☺ Consider displaying the suggestions on a board— this may encourage further participation as people add to the comments already received.
- ☺ Use the suggestions where appropriate.
- ☺ It may be possible to provide replies to people's suggestions, either publicly or privately.
- ☺ Thank people for their participation.



how to document your progress

background information

Documenting your progress is important for a number of reasons such as:

- keeping a written history of what has happened and how it has happened
- allowing those not previously involved to see what has happened and including new people into the school in what is happening now and why
- having a record to look back on in the future when faced with a similar situation (ie. What did we do back then?)
- allowing reflection and review on the impact and success of adopting a *health promoting schools* approach – without knowing exactly what occurred, its difficult to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of what happened and how it happened
- providing information that could be shared to help others.



what to do

Documenting progress is really recording the history of the *health promoting schools* approach in your school. There are a number of ways to document your progress. Using several of these together will ensure a comprehensive understanding of what and how the *health promoting schools* approach happened in your school.

- 🌀 Record minutes for all *health promoting schools* meetings and file these.
- 🌀 Keep photographs.
- 🌀 File all other related documentation, such as reports, articles in newsletters or newspapers.
- 🌀 Develop a proforma that suits your school, to record what happened. See *How to develop a record proforma* in this booklet.

how to develop a record proforma



background information

A record proforma can be used to document the progress of the *health promoting schools* approach in the school. Develop the proforma to suit the way your school applies the *health promoting schools* approach and to meet the needs of your school.

what to do

You may want to fill in a separate record for each different planned activity, set of activities or major area of the *health promoting schools* approach. Table 11 lists some examples of what could be included in a record proforma. Table 12 provides an example record proforma.

Table 11: possible categories for the record proforma

information to be recorded	possible proforma categories
When it occurred	Date, time, start-finish
What happened	Action, activity, task, strategy, planned activity
Who was involved? Who carried out the action?	Number of people involved, key person, responsibility
What was used to make it happen?	Resources, materials
Which aspect of the <i>health</i> the <i>health promoting schools</i> approach was being addressed?	Target area, aim
Anything important and worth noting	Key notes, important bits, key points, comments
What support was there	Support of community, no of participants
How successful it was	Impact, effectiveness, brief comments about how it went, what worked well, what could be changed

Table 12: **example record proforma**

date	action taken (description of what happened)	number of people involved	comment	support of community	comments on what worked well	comments on what could be changed

how to find other information and resources

background information

This tool provides a matrix to help you explore the full range of possible resources that could assist you in planned activities. The matrix is designed to help you generate ideas and identify different places where you can find help.

what to do

- 🌀 For any given issue or situation, use the matrix to brainstorm as many different sources and / or types of resources, help, information and assistance as possible. See *How to brainstorm* in Booklet 8.
- 🌀 Talk to other people to generate more ideas. It is unlikely that any one person will be able to think of the full range of opportunities available.

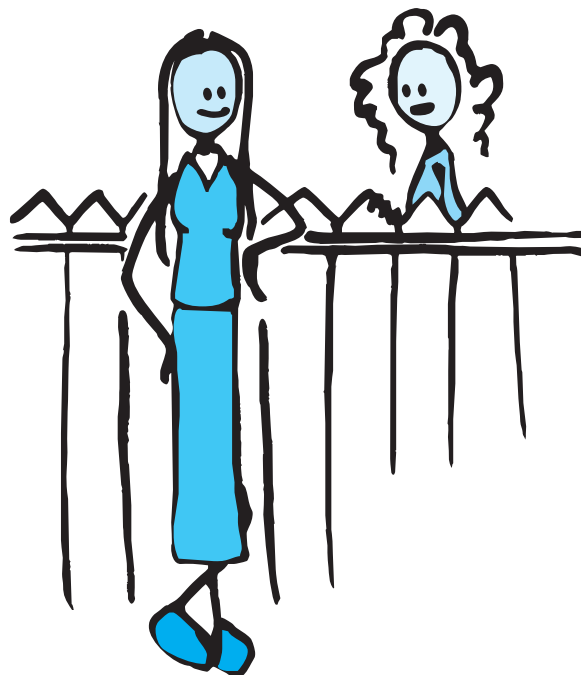


Figure 5: information and resource matrix

information and resource matrix

Issue/Situation: _____

- Remember to consider the resources you will require during planning, implementing and reviewing.
- Think about resources required in each of the three components of the *health promoting schools* framework.

where to look	type of resource		
	human (people)	financial (money)	physical (other things you can see and feel)
	expertise and knowledge, time to help, referral to others	grants, sponsorship, donations of money or other resources	equipment, building materials, computers, internet, libraries, books, curriculum resources
School-based individuals and groups			
Individual community members			
Local community groups and businesses			
Local government authorities			
Large non-government organisations			
State government representatives, staff programs or departments			
Federal government representatives, staff, programs or departments			

how to engage outside agencies

background information

Before engaging the services of community organisations, it is important to discuss the *health promoting schools* approach with the organisation and explain what you are trying to achieve. This allows the organisation to provide their services with an understanding of your aims, goals and perspectives.

what to do

Before engaging the services of community organisations, consider the following:

- ☺ Does the school have appropriate personnel and resources to support the *health promoting schools* activities?
- ☺ Is the community organisation the most appropriate group to support the activities?
- ☺ Does the community organisation have sufficient information about the school's plan to be able to complement/support the *health promoting schools* activities (for example, policies, background)?



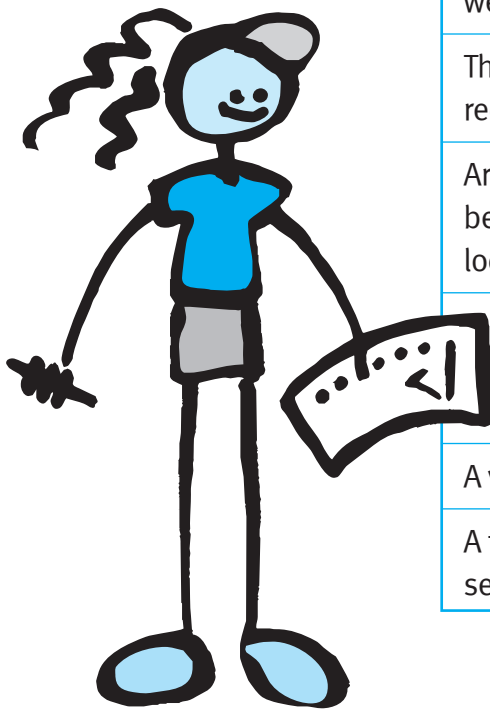
- ④ Does the community organisation support the *health promoting schools* objectives developed in the action plan?
- ④ What resources will the community organisation require to work with the school community?
- ④ How well do the services being offered by the organisation complement the curriculum?
- ④ How well do the services being offered by the organisation fit with the school's organisation and ethos?
- ④ What experience has the organisation had in working with schools? If little or none, discuss the school setting in more detail (for example, student groups, needs, resources available, expectations of the school).
- ④ Check how your expectations of how the community organisation will be involved, matches that of the organisation. Allow time to negotiate what the role of the organisation will be.
- ④ Has the school community approved the involvement of the organisation?



checklist



checklist for school staff engaging community agencies and external personnel ¹¹	
The school policy and program relating to the topic has been reviewed prior to contacting the agency	
The principal supports and approves the visit by the proposed agency	
The agency has been contacted one month before the visit	
— two alternative dates have been identified for the visit	
— discussed questions included in the previous section	
— name, address and phone number of the contact person have been recorded	
The requested information has been supplied to the agency in writing	
The contact person has been phoned to confirm the date and organisational arrangements one week prior to the visit	
The room is set up to the agency person's requirements	
Arrangements have been made for the visitor to be met, welcomed and guided or escorted to the location of the presentation	
Arrangements have been made for the class teacher to remain and participate throughout the session	
A verbal vote of thanks has been arranged	
A thank you letter and feedback to the presenter is sent within a fortnight	



checklist

checklist for community agencies and external personnel conducting school sessions

You may have to ask for the following:

the school contacts you at least one month prior to the proposed visit to allow you adequate preparation time and organisation of your work schedule

the school provides a written response to the questions asked in the initial interview

a contact name and phone number in the school

groups to be kept to a workable size

the class teacher to be present and to actively participate

venue to be set up – advise the school of your requirements

- video or TV
- overhead project / data projector
- room layout
- butchers paper

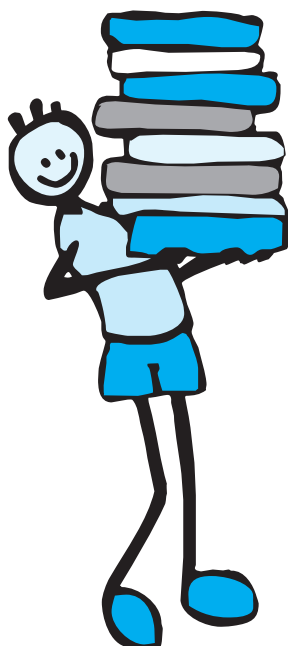
the school to make contact one week prior to your visit to confirm organisational arrangements

relevant staff and students to provide feedback in the fortnight following your visit



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- 2 Department of Primary Industries (1994) Community consultation techniques: purposes processes and pitfalls — A guide for planners and facilitators, Land Conservation: Indooroopilly
- 3 Adapted from Hawe P, Degeling D & Hall J (1992) Evaluating Health Promotion: A Health Workers Guide, MacLennan & Petty: Sydney
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