

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

how have others
done it?

...case studies



booklet 10

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

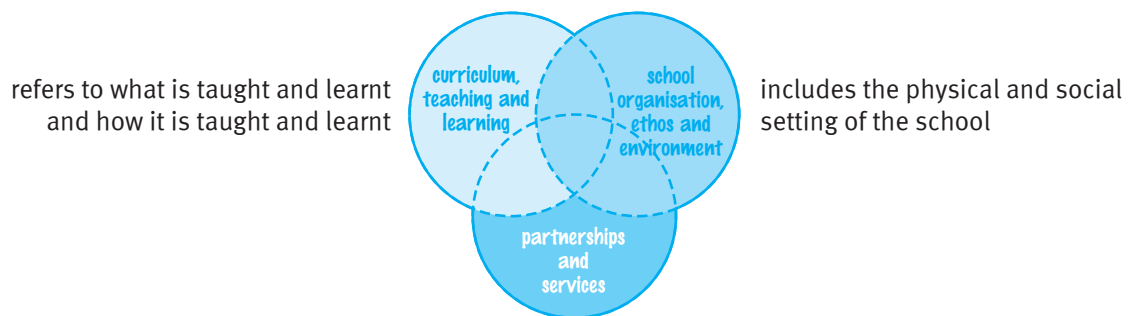
A *health promoting schools* approach is really a **way of thinking and working** that is adopted by the **whole school** in order to make the school the best possible place to learn, work and play. The approach is defined by:

- 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 have others done it? ...case studies

this booklet includes case studies
from the following schools:

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introduction

Many schools throughout Queensland have already adopted a *health promoting schools* approach. The following case studies provide an insight into the practical experiences of schools using this approach. The case studies illustrate:

- the understanding schools have of the relationship between good health and improved learning
- the commitment schools have to providing a healthy place in which to learn, work and play
- the process, strategies and actions used by schools to act on their beliefs
- the outcomes resulting from thinking and acting in this way.

These case studies highlight the wide variety of ways and levels at which a *health promoting schools* approach is being used in schools. The case studies are **not** intended to be examples of the best way to adopt a *health promoting schools* approach, as each school community is unique. They are intended to stimulate enthusiasm, motivation and thinking about how to begin, work within, maintain and sustain the approach in **your** school.

The case studies represent the diversity of contexts in which *health promoting schools* activities have been initiated. These include government and non-government schools, primary and secondary schools and schools in rural and metropolitan regions.

Each case study is a unique story about how the school became involved with this approach and their subsequent journey. The story has been told by members of the school community. The case studies are structured using the following format:

- 🌀 **starting out**—why and how the school decided to use the *health promoting schools* approach
- 🌀 **what happened?**—the processes and strategies/activities used by the school community to address their priority issue/s
- 🌀 **enablers and barriers**—what helped and what did not help when using the *health promoting schools* approach

- 🌀 **benefits**— what the school community gained from using the *health promoting schools* approach
- 🌀 **the future**— what plans the school has for the future – how they will maintain and expand the *health promoting schools* approach
- 🌀 **reflections**— the school community reflects on their experiences and shares what they have learnt through their involvement with the *health promoting school* approach and activities.

To further develop your understanding of how a *health promoting schools* approach can be used, it may be useful to read other case studies. Further case studies are available from the Queensland Health, *Healthy Schools* website (www.health.qld.gov.au/healthyschools). You are encouraged to investigate how other schools have become involved in *health promoting schools* activities and to also **share your own story**.



Browns Plains State High School 1999

Browns Plains State High School is a large metropolitan school situated in the Logan area, south of Brisbane. The school is well established and student numbers continue to grow. The school has about 1200 students, 80 teaching staff and an additional 20 support staff. The school offers a diverse curriculum to its wide range of students.

starting out

The school adopted the *health promoting schools* approach to improve and protect the health and well-being of the school community and to address health concerns identified by students. With the support of the principal, a *health promoting schools* working party was formed in 1998 to determine priorities and a plan for action.

Initially, the priorities established were:

- maintenance and hygiene of students' toilets
- smoking within the school
- social health of boys.

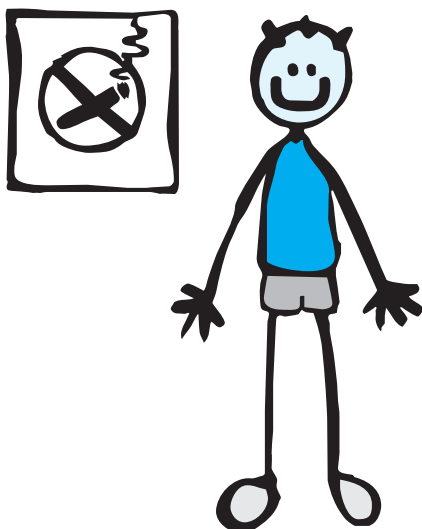
The working party consists of members of administration, heads of departments, teachers and one student.

“If we have any chance of greatly influencing the behaviours of a group, it is going to be the Year 8’s.”

teacher

what happened?

- ④ The school community decided to work together on creating a smoke-free school as their first focus.
- ④ The *health promoting schools* working party developed a policy on smoking as a key strategy in creating a smoke-free school, and presented it to staff, students and parents.
- ④ A high profile policy launch created a great deal of interest and enthusiasm among staff and students.
- ④ Staff have also been included in the smoke-free policy so that non-smoking staff can be role models of healthy behaviours for students.
- ④ Health and Physical Education staff developed units on smoking and health to include in the Year 8 curriculum.



“Although we have some good things working, we do recognise that we have a lot to learn and a long way to go to achieve what we set out to do.”

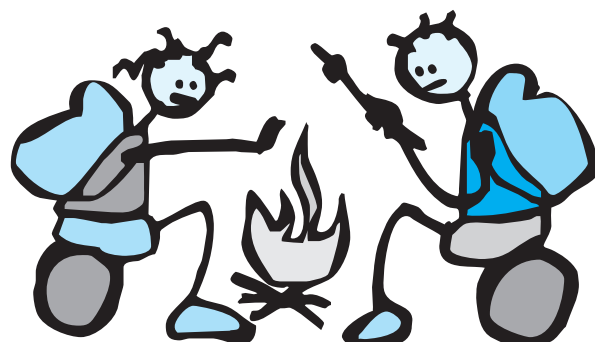
teacher

“From the time of our initial involvement with the health promoting schools approach, we have learnt much about the processes and strategies which are successful in our school, and those which aren’t.”

teacher

This ensured that what was promoted in the school was also taught in the classroom.

- 🌀 Students and staff were offered support in their attempts to reduce or stop smoking.
- 🌀 As familiarity with the *health promoting schools* approach increased, the school community has recognised that many of the school’s current activities and some of the ways in which the school operates already promote the health of the school community. For example:
 - peer support program
 - involvement of government and non-government staff in the school as counsellors and guest speakers
 - students, local employers and staff working collaboratively to plan an ‘Enterprise Day’ for students
 - senior students planning and implementing full school assemblies and special ceremonies.
- 🌀 As the *health promoting schools* working party’s understanding of the *health promoting schools* concept and framework has improved, the health and well-being of students and staff has been viewed in a broader way. The working party is currently looking at expanding these current activities to ensure that planned actions cover all components of the *health promoting schools* framework.
- 🌀 Some plans for improving the social health of boys have also been implemented such as:
 - lunch time activity groups for boys
 - involvement by male teachers in developing activities for boys
 - increasing awareness to involve boys in leadership and higher profile roles within the school.



- 🌀 The school has established a parent committee and a student committee to encourage greater involvement in school activities and operations. A Health Promoting Schools Prefect has also been nominated.

enablers and barriers

One of the greatest assets in encouraging students to adopt healthy behaviours has been the support offered by both students and staff to support smokers in their attempts to reduce or stop smoking. The time and effort devoted by the *health promoting schools* working party was also a key to the success of the smoke-free school activities.

The working party felt that they underestimated the need to consult with a wide range of the school community and the need to develop relationships with existing groups in the school and wider community. This resulted in a greater opposition to the introduction of the smoke-free policy than anticipated, despite the widely publicised policy launch.

“We underestimated the need to consult all stakeholders. We assumed that all of our stakeholders would be supportive and understand the decisions that were made.”

health promoting
schools working party
member and teacher

benefits

The school has identified a small positive impact on the smoking habits of some students and staff. Ex-smoking staff have become more positive role models for students.

The school community members directly involved with *health promoting schools* activities have greatly increased their understanding of the *health promoting schools* approach and process. They have learnt from their experiences and adapted the process to suit their unique school community so previous difficulties are not repeated.

the future

The framework and its three components,

- curriculum, teaching and learning
- school ethos and environment
- school partnerships and services,

are becoming a greater consideration when planning, as the *health promoting schools* working party becomes more familiar with the *health promoting schools* concept.

“We didn’t do enough to foster partnerships with different groups or outside agencies as we felt we had enough to do – but without this, it is unlikely that we will be truly successful.”

teacher

The school continues to expand the application of the *health promoting schools* process. Although the working party has lots of ideas, putting the process and plans into action is a slow process. Lots of time, energy and commitment from different groups are required.

The school community plans to work together with the newly formed parent and student committees to benefit the implementation of activities and help to achieve improved outcomes. The Year 12 Health Promoting Schools Prefect, together with the student committee, will play a key role in seeking input from students and in presenting ideas to the whole student body.

reflections

The school recognises that the impact of the smoke-free policy was initially very positive, but the sustainability of the outcomes has been difficult. Despite this, the working party will continue to try new approaches and improve their processes and plans.

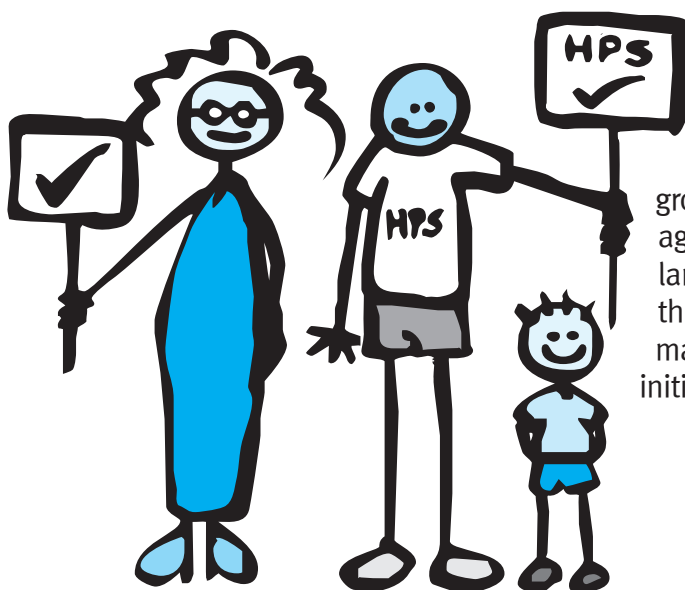
As a result of the learning and experience from the first year of implementing a *health promoting schools* approach, the school community now aims to:

- consult all stakeholders
- work to develop more effective partnerships.

The school now considers it important to seek the input of those directly affected by the planned actions. Processes must ensure that input, feedback and support are sought

from students, parents, and staff, including auxiliary staff.

The school community also considers it important to develop and strengthen links with different groups in the school and with outside agencies. Because the school is so large, they feel that they must rely on the involvement and commitment of many, different people to ensure the initiatives are sustainable and ongoing.



Chevallum State School 1999

*A multi-age school is one where the needs of students of different ages are accommodated in the one classroom.

Chevallum State School is a semi-rural primary school set in south-east Queensland, near Nambour. It is a multi-age* school with an enrolment of 200 students. Nine teaching positions are shared between eleven teachers. Support is provided by a number of aides, support teachers and visiting specialists. Chevallum State School, as a community, has a strong commitment to a multi-age philosophy, quality schools approach and the school's behaviour management policy. The parents of Chevallum are generous and supportive of all school initiatives.

A Shared Vision

"The school's philosophy underpins everything that we do.

We all have the same beliefs about where we are going."

teacher

starting out

The school's involvement in *health promoting schools* activities resulted from a need identified by staff and students to improve the quality of students' social interactions in the playground. Once the need was identified, members of the school community worked together to create a positive social and physical environment. From this initial activity the school's commitment to the *health promoting schools* approach has grown.

While staff readily acknowledge that the *health promoting schools* philosophy has become a foundation of the school, they believe the school's philosophy and operations were already aligned to the *health promoting schools* approach. The approach has been applied in a comprehensive way to the organisation of a broad range of school activities. As a small school, it has been relatively easy to integrate the *health promoting schools* approach. Staff have come to appreciate the value of operating as a *health promoting school* and each year the school continues to expand its application.

what happened?

- 🌀 Students expressed concerns after studying a curriculum unit on gender. The students felt that gender and power were negatively influencing student behaviour, particularly in the playground.

*A learnscape is a friendly physical and social setting in which students can learn, work and play.

- ④ An additional curriculum unit was developed focussing on power, bullying, violence and gender construction through a study of recreation, leisure, play and sport spaces within the school. The unit incorporated material from a range of current curriculum resources such as 'Enough is Enough' and 'No More Fear'.
- ④ The enthusiasm of the students motivated the school community to do more about the issues of gender and power. The school then used the *health promoting schools* approach and process to plan how they would create a more interesting and supportive social and physical environment in the playground.
- ④ The students researched play preferences, attitudes to the school environment, playgrounds around the world and materials required.
- ④ Class discussions and information evenings were conducted to gain a shared understanding of issues, terms and their definitions.
- ④ The school community negotiated designs and decided on a final plan that included the construction of a learnscape*.
- ④ Local professionals were engaged (for example, an author and art design consultants) to work with students and teachers. This assisted students in articulating their ideas and designing models of learnscapes.
- ④ A learnscape was constructed that included an amphitheatre, playground and sensory trail. These outdoor spaces are used for a range of classroom and play activities.
- ④ Involvement and donations from school community members were sought to aid in the construction of the learnscape, for example, donations of turf, logs, and time. The persuasive writing skills taught by the local author helped students to 'sell' the plans.
- ④ The school held a media launch and invited sponsors to herald the opening of the new learnscape and amphitheatre.
- ④ After using the *health promoting schools* process to improve the playground, it was recognised that the approach provided a useful framework and planning

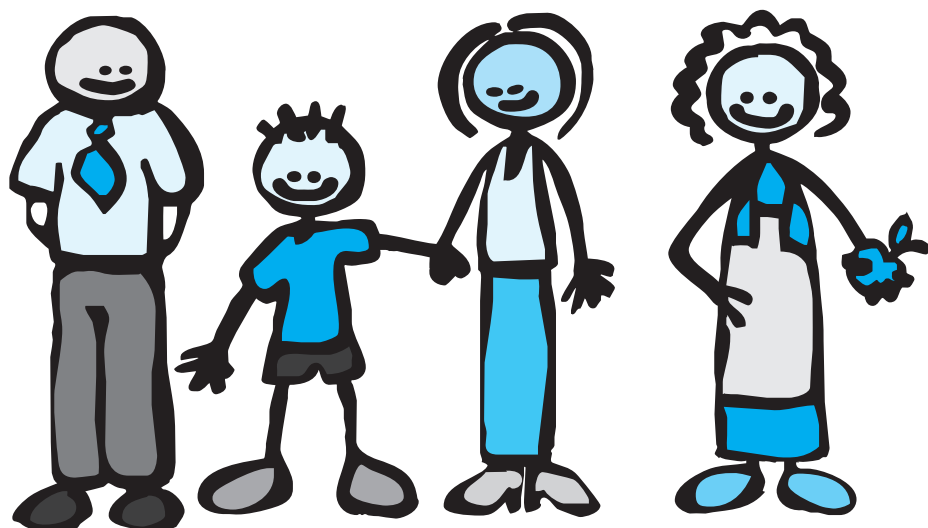


process to organise **all** school activity. The school community reoriented their focus away from the learscape, once construction had been completed, to consider broader health and well-being issues of the school community.

“It is what people want. Every strategy that appears in the action plan is something which people want to do and are committed to. Everyone is on side, ready to be involved.”

teacher


- ④ The *health promoting schools* process was used to develop the school’s behaviour management program which is based on William Glasser’s ‘Quality Schools’ approach. Parents provided suggestions and every class brainstormed ideas that were then collated and grouped under three codes of behaviour:
 - caring for ourselves and others
 - caring for our learning
 - caring for our environment.
- ④ School rules are worded, “I care for my environment and the evidence of this is ...’ rather than ‘You shall not run through the garden beds’. Misbehaviour can be addressed by saying “Were you showing a care for your own learning and your own safety?”
- ④ A peer support program was developed for students.
- ④ Information and results were reported back to the school community.
- ④ The school community was involved in generating an annual action plan. This included bringing together staff, administration and other school community members



to brainstorm priority issues. The school community uses the following process each year to identify the year's priorities and develop an action plan. The school community:

- establishes the school's vision and goals
- identifies concerns of members of the school community
- identifies issues that need to be addressed within the school.

The action plan is used by staff to promote ongoing development of the health promoting school.

-  The school community generated a plan to develop effective and meaningful partnerships with the school community and encourage involvement.

“At times, it has been challenging to teach students the skills they needed to put their plans into action. It requires patience from teachers. Students need to own the process themselves.”

teacher

enablers and barriers

The school's philosophy and aims have contributed greatly to the achievement of *health promoting schools* outcomes. The school community, including the principal, strongly supports the school's philosophy and our pursuit to be a quality, health promoting school.

The enthusiasm and willingness of the staff to be 'perpetual learners' has greatly benefited the school. Teaching and support staff frequently engage in a wide range of professional development activities. This has helped develop their understanding of student needs and how these can best be addressed. In addition, the school's administration team encourages and supports members of staff in implementing their initiatives. This support and the feeling that the staff are headed in the same direction has motivated staff to implement a range of new and ongoing *health promoting schools* activities.

Community members have been an invaluable asset in helping the school follow through with their *health promoting schools* plans. Without the support and assistance of school community members and businesses who contributed their time, knowledge and materials to the *health promoting schools* activities, it is unlikely that the outcomes would have been as successful or as significant.

The school has been fortunate to gain numerous grants to support their activities. Often students have begun grant

applications by brainstorming ideas with a partner on a classroom computer. Grant applications are further refined by staff members. Some of the grants that the school has secured include Rural Arts Development funding, Queensland Health grant, Lending a Hand funding and Telstra: Women of Achievement grant. Securing funding is a challenge that the staff readily accept.

Members of the Sunshine Coast Public Health Unit have worked with the school over a period of about five years. The support, encouragement and knowledge gained from this collaboration have been integral to the sustainability of the *health promoting schools* approach.

In moving their dream to reality, the school encountered some barriers, although they were not insurmountable. The greatest barrier encountered was the need to develop skills to implement the plan. Local businesses and professionals were engaged to help students and staff develop their skills. In many ways, the time needed to develop skills meant that, “we moved slowly, when we really wanted to get going”. It was sometimes very tempting for staff to take ownership of the process to speed it up. Staff also acknowledge that a lack of time has sometimes prevented them from achieving as much as they would have liked.

A wide range of resources has supported Chevallum’s activities. These included human resources and curriculum materials from Education Queensland including the resources, ‘Enough is Enough’, ‘No More Fear’ and ‘Gender Consciousness-Raising Issues’.

benefits

Adopting the *health promoting schools* approach has enabled the school to strengthen its activities and involve the school community in a more comprehensive way. Positive and mutually beneficial relationships have been fostered with members of the school community.

Student behaviour in the classroom and in the playground has improved as a result of *health promoting schools* activities. A school ethos and environment that is supportive of individuals has been created. From working and talking with members of the school community and health promotion officers, staff have taken on board new ideas, skills and approaches and learnt how to use monitoring and evaluation strategies and strategies which promote sustainability.

“It’s no good just talking to one person in a place, you’ve got to have the school support.”

teacher



By applying the *health promoting schools* approach, the school has developed better ways of operating. Instead of being task oriented, the school community now focuses its attention on the “bigger picture—the school’s vision.” The *health promoting schools* approach is incorporated into the planning of all school activity including identifying school priorities, action planning, policy development, annual operational planning and budgeting. In this way, the school’s annual plan supports the vision and promotes the health and well-being of school community members.

The school community focuses its attention on the happiness of individuals as well as their physical well-being. The school’s practice is guided by underlying principles:

- Are people happy here?
- Is the school a place where people can grow?
- Does the school help people grow in a belief of themselves?
- Do people feel good about themselves?

The school community was encouraged by the *health promoting schools* model to shift their focus to a more student-centred approach. Teaching and learning now focuses on a constructivist, cooperative learning approach. This approach is implemented as standard teaching practice and not seen as an approach used just to teach health issues. Teachers have been encouraged to evaluate:

- what is done in the classroom
- how it impacts on the learner
- what type of learning environment they create.

The *health promoting schools* approach has encouraged the school community to develop and articulate a shared vision and put into action, plans to make their vision a reality.

the future

Although key staff at Chevallum State School frequently initiated *health promoting schools* processes, all staff and members of the school community contribute to *health promoting schools* activities. The school community has devoted considerable time to determining priorities and developing an action plan for the subsequent school year.

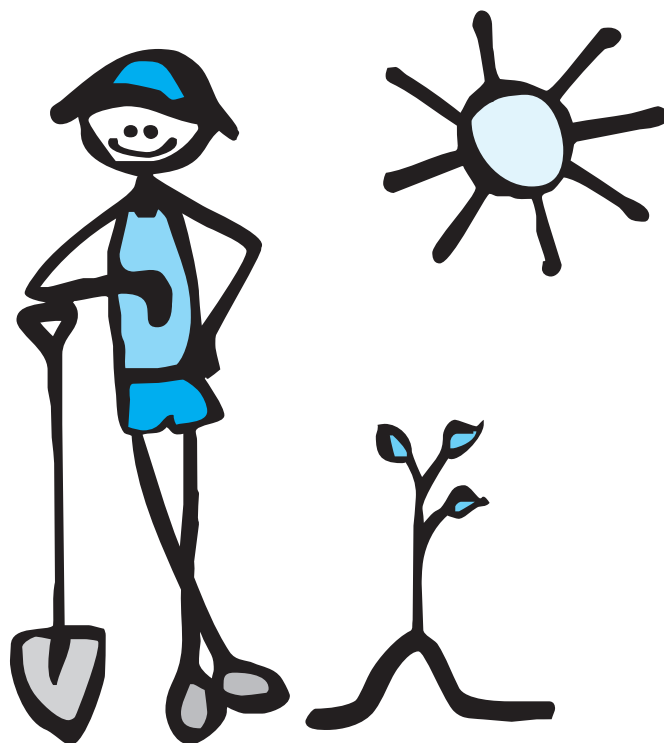
They expect that they will be able to implement their initiatives within the next 12-18 months. The involvement of a range of school community members in this process has ensured that the document reflects the needs of the school community.

reflections

“ I encourage people to WALK their TALK rather than just espousing words which mean very little.”

teacher

Chevallum State School staff believe that it is empowering for the school community to develop a clear vision and goals. They would encourage other schools to create and articulate a shared vision. Shared ownership of the vision encourages the whole school community to be active in bringing their dreams to fruition. In conclusion, their advice to other schools is, “have a go”.



Eatons Hill State School 1999

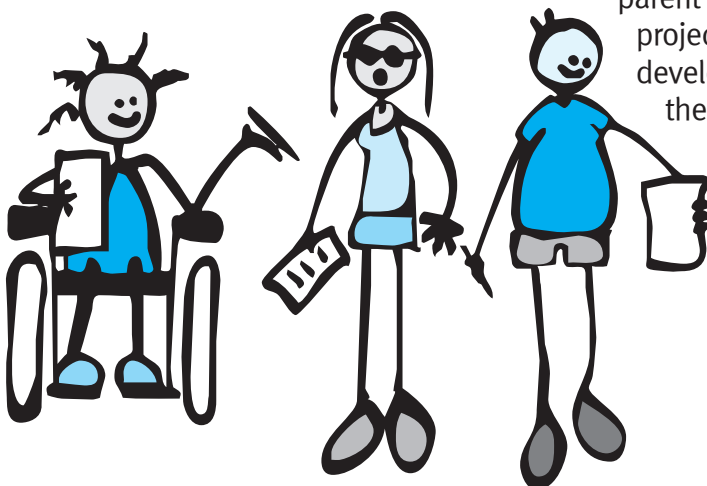
Eatons Hill State School opened in 1998 with 310 primary and 100 preschool students. The school's enrolment is expected to reach about 800 by 2005. The school is located in an outer suburb of north Brisbane and operates multi-age classes with lower, middle and upper primary sections. Staff base their teaching practice on the values of cooperative learning, the principles of effective learning and teaching, sound early childhood practice, *health promoting schools* and learning through, with and about technology.

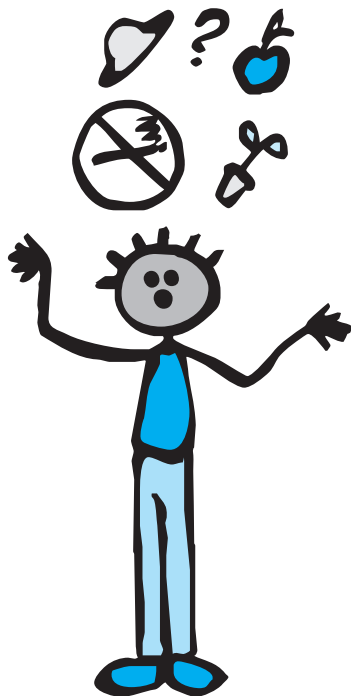
An active and involved Parents and Citizens' Association holds high expectations of the school. A school council has been established as a result of the school's commitment to school-based management. The council operates on the knowledge that the community desired to be involved in strategic processes. They also had an interest and a legitimate contribution to make to their school and its future.

starting out

The principal had heard about the *health promoting schools* approach soon after his appointment as the inaugural principal of Eatons Hill State School. He recognised the value of the *health promoting schools* approach and has encouraged members of staff and the school community to become involved in *health promoting schools* activities, since the inception of the school.

To ensure the *health promoting schools* approach was an integral part of the school, a key staff member worked with a parent and the *health promoting schools* project officer from Education Queensland to develop an interim action plan prior to the school's opening. See Booklet 9 for *Example Policy 3*. The *health promoting schools* approach was presented to and fully endorsed by the Parents and Citizens' Association prior to the school opening.





Although the school is very new, numerous processes and strategies have already been put in place which embody the *health promoting schools* approach. The *health promoting schools* approach is seen as one way Eatons Hill State School can address health and well-being issues which are relevant to students and members of the school community.

what happened?

As a new and establishing school, Eatons Hill only has a short history. Despite this, the school community has implemented the following strategies and actions.

🌀 The *health promoting schools* approach was introduced to staff and the school community. Information about the approach has been spread through staff meetings, Parents and Citizens' Association meetings, workshops and newsletters. The school continues to foster understanding about *health promoting schools* among members of the school community and raise awareness of health issues.

🌀 A Health Promoting Schools Working Party was established consisting of staff members and parents.

🌀 Surveys of students, parents and staff to identify priority health issues and strategies were conducted. Those identified were:

- Healthy Tuckshop
- Environmental Care and Recycling Program
- Sun Safety
- Bullying
- Stranger Danger.



🌀 A healthy tuckshop menu was developed in consultation with staff, parents, a representative from the Australian Nutrition Foundation and food suppliers. The tuckshop menu was designed to appeal to students and staff. The school was awarded Queensland's first Gold Pyramid Award by the Australian Nutrition Foundation for its tuckshop menu.

🌀 The School Communities Recycling All Paper (SCRAP) project was introduced. Students are actively involved in recycling and composting waste within the school. Students from different year levels are rostered to manage the deposit of waste and recycling materials.

Health Promoting Schools Charter

Our school aims, over the next three years, through our activities and structures, to assist our students, staff and other members of our school community to experience social, emotional, mental, spiritual and physical well-being.

Our school will be one which:

- is a safe, happy and stimulating place to be
- caters for all learning styles and social/cultural backgrounds
- appreciates good communication amongst the school community
- encourages respect for each other, our surroundings and equipment
- considers ideas and opinions from all school community members in planning and promoting our school activities.

- Sun safety procedures for students were implemented and expectations that staff model sun safe practices were developed. Students are expected to wear appropriate hats while outside. The school uniform includes a range of sun-safe hat styles.
- Numerous publications on health issues were collected and made available for access by parents in the administration building.
- A school community Terry Fox Fun Run was organised. This idea was generated by students who wanted to support a classmate whose father had recently died from cancer.
- Student participation was organised in JUMP ROPE for HEART activities that are coordinated by Heart Foundation.
- SunSmart and smoke-free policies were drafted ready for consultation.
- An environmental club for students was established as a lunch time activity. Students from all year levels have been invited to participate. In addition, students from lower school classes are allocated time to assist in improving the school environment by gardening and weeding.
- A staff social club was introduced. One activity of the social club is a 'secret friend' system that encourages members to 'get to know each other'. A secret friend is allocated each term.
- Endorsement was obtained for an Eatons Hill State School *Health Promoting Schools* Charter which was developed by the Health Promoting Schools Working Party (see side margin).

enablers and barriers

The enablers that have provided the greatest support to the *health promoting schools* initiatives are the commitment, enthusiasm and active participation of members of the school community. In particular, the Health Promoting Schools Working Party is made up of school community members who are committed to the ideals and philosophy of the *health promoting schools* approach. The principal is also supportive of all *health promoting schools* activities and encourages

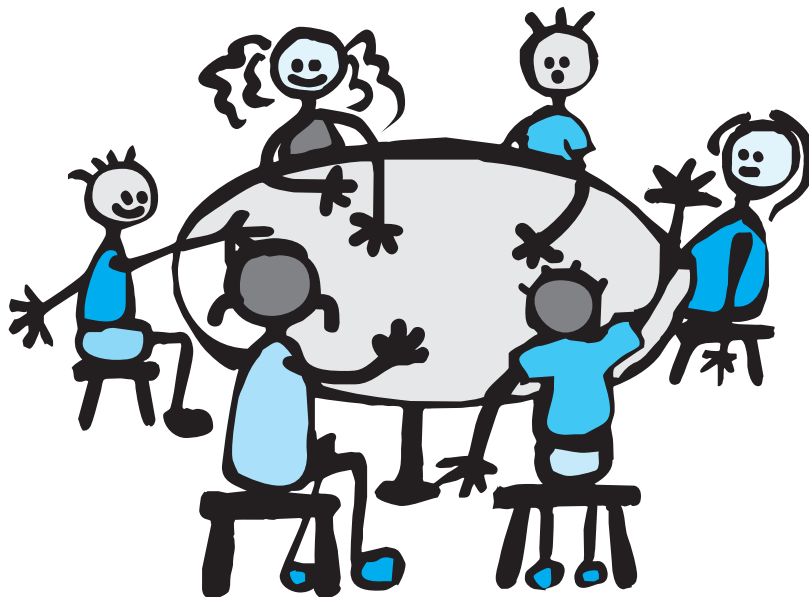
“It is important to consult widely and equally.”

teacher

participation of staff and parents in related professional development.

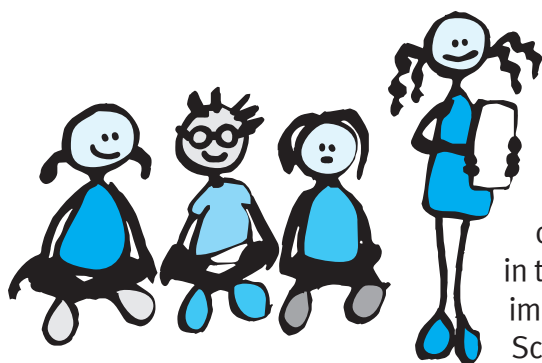
Services offered by a wide range of government departments, councils, businesses and community organisations have been invaluable. The assistance and advice offered by professionals and groups has continued to inform and motivate the members of the Health Promoting Schools Working Party. Many of the resources utilised have been gained through these contacts. Contact with and visits to schools who have implemented successful *health promoting schools* activities have informed the strategies selected by Eatons Hill State School.

One barrier was that, at times, the Health Promoting Schools Working Party failed to consult sufficiently with all stakeholders before implementing *health promoting schools* activities. At the start of the school year, staff expressed concern that they had not been sufficiently involved in the decision to adopt the *health promoting schools* approach or in the development of the interim action plan. To address this concern, a *health promoting schools* workshop was held to provide the school community with the opportunity to explore their vision for their new school. This was a useful activity to gain greater support and involvement from staff, but unfortunately was not well attended by other members of the school community.



benefits

Students are proud of their efforts to improve the school environment. The school is actively working towards providing comprehensive health messages to students and the school community. Members of the school community have reported that health issues that have been addressed at school are being discussed at home and in the playground.



The Working Party feels that staff are also developing a greater understanding of health and well-being and their importance in the lives of members of the school community. This shift in thinking by the school community is seen as an important step forward by the Health Promoting Schools Working Party.

the future

The Health Promoting Schools Working Party plans to consolidate and extend its activities as the school grows. In the future, the school plans to address the ‘curriculum, teaching and learning’ component of the *health promoting schools* framework in a more deliberate way. The upcoming release of the Year 1-10 Health and Physical Education Syllabus (in July 1999) will provide a strong rationale for a more comprehensive health education program across all year levels.

“Having initiated involvement in the health promoting schools process, do not be afraid to move back and start the process again if you feel that particular groups of the school community have not been involved as much as they needed to be.”

teacher

reflections

Consulting with and involving all members of the school community is essential for the *health promoting schools* approach to be successful. Members of the working party acknowledge that undertaking such an approach is time consuming. They feel it is necessary to take time to educate the school community about the *health promoting schools* approach.

In dealing with particular health issues, members of the school community need time to access information, resources and talk with other people to develop their own understanding of issues. Providing this time allows people to gain an appreciation of what is trying to be achieved and time to consider how they might like to be involved.

Elanora State School 1999

Elanora State School is located in a suburban area of the Gold Coast. The school consists of 85 staff and 1100 students from preschool to Year 7. The school has a very active school council and a strong Parents and Citizens' Association.



“[It was] very widely publicised [both locally and statewide] that the children were interested in promoting health in their own school.”

teacher

starting out

The school has always been interested in the health and safety of students and staff in the school. The school began working with Queensland Health in 1994 when the school contacted their local Public Health Unit. A survey of toileting practices was developed collaboratively by teachers, a health promotion officer and the student council. Students in Years 4 to 7 were surveyed and some of the younger students were asked about their concerns. The survey identified that the students were not happy with how their health needs were being met, particularly in relation to toilet facilities and student behaviour in the toilets.

what happened?

- 🌀 The school looked at the results of the survey and decided to focus on one issue that was raised by the students — toilet hygiene. This issue was also the subject of teacher complaints.
- 🌀 The school planned to teach younger children how to use the toilets and wash their hands correctly so that the issue of spreading disease would become reduced in the school. To do this, the school worked with the Gold Coast Public Health Unit and the local Key Learning Area Regional Coordinator (KLARC). Together they developed an infection control / toilet hygiene program which was called the Gembusters program. Year 7 students in particular, had a lot of input into the content of the Gembusters kit.
- 🌀 The Gembusters program¹ uses peer educators to teach younger students about appropriate toilet behaviour, the dangers of germs and disease, and how to effectively wash their hands. The aim of the program is to create

an hygienic school environment. The Gembusters kit includes instructions for peer educators, posters, Gembuster characters, the Gembusters song, master copies of activity handouts and materials to practice correct hand-washing techniques.

- 🌀 Gembusters was developed using a *health promoting schools* approach. The needs of the school community (in this case, toilet hygiene) were addressed by developing and implementing a health education program which linked the three components of the *health promoting schools* approach²:
 - curriculum, teaching and learning
 - school ethos and environment
 - partnerships and services.
- 🌀 The learning and skills of the young students that were being developed through the curriculum, were reinforced within the school environment by installing soap and towel dispensers.
- 🌀 Resources and education were made available to parents to ensure that good hygiene behaviours were also reinforced in the home environment². Certificates were given to participants to take home to encourage students to discuss hygiene with parents.
- 🌀 The development of the Gembusters program was widely publicised, both locally and statewide, and celebrated with a launch.
- 🌀 Peer educators (Year 7 students) dedicated their lunch break to increasing their teaching skills and learning about how to handle difficulties that may arise.
- 🌀 In addition to the Gembusters program, the school developed a system to aid the social development of the younger year levels by implementing a peer mediation program. To do this, interested older students were trained to understand which situations they could deal with and how to relate to younger children. These ‘buddies’ wore coloured bibs in the playground at lunchtime and organised games, ensuring all were included and provided assistance to the young students.
- 🌀 Health units have been also included in the curriculum. Students learn about their bodies and how they function. This is further enhanced by annual visits from the Life Education van.

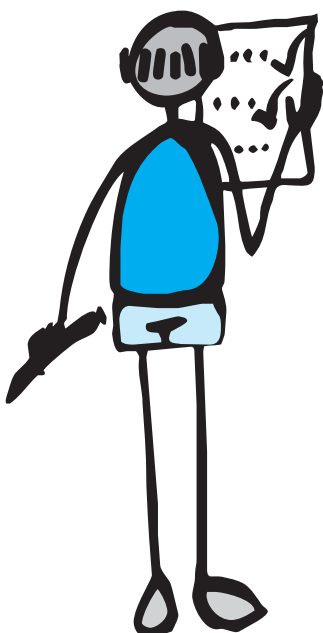


“The students are really trying hard to look after their school and to keep it as a healthy, safe place for them to be.”

teacher

“We have learnt that we have just touched the surface — so much more for the children to learn and for the adults as well.”

teacher



enablers and barriers

The funding provided to the school by Queensland Health was vital to designing and developing the Gербusters program.

The school community was very enthusiastic about students becoming more responsible for their own hygiene. This support from the school community, especially from administration, helped the Gербusters initiative to be successful.

Developing the Gербusters program and organising the buddy system was time consuming. Lack of time for teachers and for students participating in the developed programs is a barrier that must be creatively addressed to ensure they continue from year to year.

benefits

Since the implementation of the Gербusters program, almost everyone in the school (students, teachers and administrators) has become much more interested in workplace health and safety. Students take an interest in making their school a safe place to be.

Students have gained a wide knowledge of their bodies and how they function. The state of the toilets and toilet hygiene behaviour has improved. The older students have gained a sense of achievement and learned new skills as they have implemented the programs.

The whole school community (students, parents, teachers, and administrators) gained a great sense of accomplishment from working together themselves and with other partners (health promotion officers and advisory staff) to develop the Gербusters program.

the future

As a goal of the school community is to keep the school safe, there are plans to implement the Kidpower³ program. This uses whole school involvement by setting up a Student Injury Committee of school representatives to develop strategies that prevent injury within the school environment.

Also, staff will be educated in workplace health and safety to increase awareness of rules and regulations required by law. There are also suggestions to look at nutrition in the school.

reflections

The school has learnt that promoting the health and well-being of the school community does not stop with the inclusion of one or two programs in the school. The school has realised that there is much more that the school community can learn and therefore, much more that the school community can do. They have discovered the students are interested in keeping their school healthy and safe and that this should be encouraged.



Elliott Heads State School 1999

Elliott Heads State School is located on the outskirts of the Elliott Heads township, 22km east of Bundaberg. The school operates a preschool to Year 7 campus and caters for 80 students drawn from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds. There is a relatively high enrolment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Many students are highly motivated and exhibit patterns of strong academic interest. The school offers a high level of pastoral care and a balanced curriculum to meet the needs of a diverse range of students whose interests, abilities and prior experiences vary considerably.

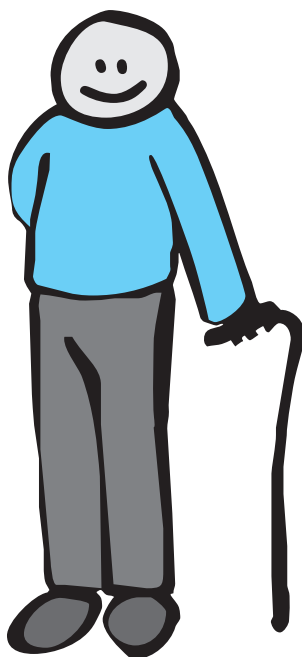
starting out

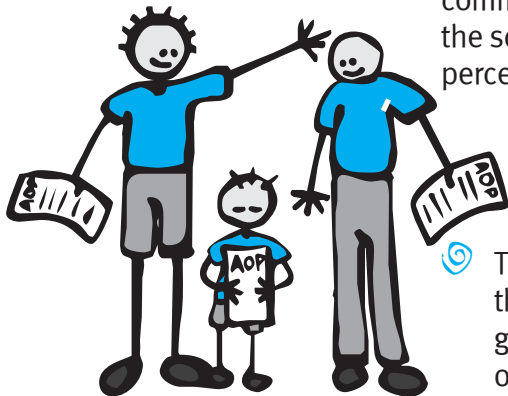
All schools in Wide Bay were invited to submit for funding under a Wide Bay Health Promoting Schools Seeding Grant program, through the Central Public Health Unit—Wide Bay. The Elliott Heads State School submission for a social networking program was successful, along with 11 other school communities in Wide Bay.

For some time staff had wanted to improve the links between the school and the wider community and increase the level of community involvement in the school. As the local population consists of many older and retired people, the school wanted to put in place ongoing strategies that would encourage and enable older people to be involved in the school.

The population of older persons was considered a significant part of the community. Many students did not have regular contact with older people, such as grandparents. It was important to the school to provide an avenue for students to have regular contact with older persons/generations to encourage a rapport, understanding and respect between these two groups. The school believed that quality contact with 'elders' is intrinsic to the well-being and general development of students. Thus, with funds, motivation and support from the local Public Health Unit, the Adopt-a-Granny/Grandpa social networking program was initiated in 1997.

The Adopt-a-Granny/Grandpa social networking program was designed using the *health promoting schools* approach





and aimed to give students contact with older people in the community. It was also hoped that the activity would improve the school's image and generate a more positive public perception of the school.

what happened?

“The older people are actually, making these things for a reason. We thank them and acknowledge the contribution they have made to our school.”

principal

“The craft class got the residents out of the retirement village and sharing their knowledge with parents and the adult community. What they were doing was really appreciated.”

principal

- ④ The social networking program was included as part of the school's Annual Operational Plan and budget. The goal was linked to Education Queensland's strategic goal of 'confidence in public education'. By linking it in this way, it was thought the *health promoting schools* activity would more readily become a formal part of the school's program.
- ④ Two volunteer Community Liaison Officers were engaged to coordinate and manage the social networking program. These people were members of the Parents and Citizens' Association and possessed extensive knowledge of the local community.
- ④ The social networking program was publicised in the school newsletter and local newspaper. The feature article in the newspaper generated much public interest and as a result, local, younger people joined the program. However, the specific, local target group of senior citizens did not initially perceive they had a lot to offer and gave a limited response.
- ④ Personal letters were sent inviting older people who possessed particular skills and talents to share these within the school. The letters highlighted the involvement the school would like people to have.
- ④ Funding was used to transport retirement village residents to the school once a fortnight as, due to travel restrictions, some initially declined the opportunity to participate. They joined with members of the Elliott Heads Parents and Citizens' Art and Craft club to make handcrafts that are donated and sold to generate profit for the school.
- ④ The school thanked the retirement village residents for their contribution. A bus was provided to transport the residents to the school's 'cent sale' where their contributions were publicly recognised. Residents thoroughly enjoyed the day and entertainment provided.

- It was initially thought that the older people would be able to work with the students on an individual basis. However, they found that for a number of reasons, the older people were anxious about working with students and preferred to work more directly with other members of the school community. To overcome this concern, the older people began working with parents and other school community members, who together work with students occasionally.
- Four local people are involved in the school on a weekly basis and another two who participate in special events. One of the latter is an elder of the local Indigenous community and the other is an ex-serviceman who participates in ANZAC Day activities.

enablers and barriers

The Community Liaison Officers played a vital role in the success of the program. Throughout the program the personal approach used by the Community Liaison Officers to invite and encourage participation of elderly people has greatly enhanced outcomes. The funding received from the Wide Bay Health Promoting Schools Seeding Grant was also a strong enabler.

The rural location of Elliott Heads State School posed some barriers to easy access and transport for older people. The school overcame this by providing a bus service. However, finding the funding to continue and expand the social networking program may be a barrier that will need to be addressed by the school and the Parents and Citizens' Association.



The school found that although they wanted to involve more retirees in school activities, many of these people already had a wide range of other commitments and really did not have time to be involved. Those people who had time to be involved did not have easy access to the school.

“We’ve gone a long way in enhancing public confidence in our school. This was our school’s strategic goal. More members of Elliott Heads and the broader community have come to know our school. Because the elderly program has been viewed in such a positive light the whole view of the school has been enhanced.”

principal

benefits

Initiating the Adopt-a-Granny/Grandpa program has changed the way the school works with the broader community. It has demonstrated an approach of greater contact, interaction and more open communication with the local community. It has raised more opportunities to include older people as a part of school activities. This is appreciated for the links and relationships the students and school are able to establish. Public confidence in the school has also been enhanced.

It is felt that the mental health and well-being of the older participants in the program have been enhanced. The program helps to reduce the isolation of older people and provides an opportunity for them to share their knowledge. Retirement village residents were also given a purpose to their tasks (for example, making craft for the school cent sale) and felt a connection to the outside community.

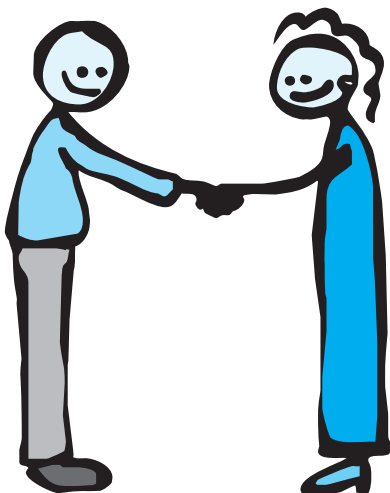
Outcomes for students are difficult to measure. For students directly interacting with older people, it appears that the contact can be invaluable. Conducting a survey about attitudes of the students and the older people may provide interesting data about outcomes.

the future

The school is currently discussing how it can viably and financially maintain its involvement in the Adopt-a-Granny/Grandpa program as *health promoting schools* activities become dependent on sole funding from the school. As a small school Elliott Heads finds that future *health promoting schools* activities will need to be funded through the school budget and Parents and Citizens’ Association funds.

The social networking program fits within the informal curriculum. It is expected that the release of the new Year 1-10 Health and Physical Education Syllabus will provide more opportunities for the school to link the program with the formal curriculum. By including the social networking program in the Annual Operational Plan, it is hoped that the activity will become a formalised part of the school program.

The school is hoping to work more closely with the Indigenous community by including the local Indigenous people in the social networking program. It is felt that direct student contact



“We acknowledge good nutrition makes a difference to concentration and learning. You can’t teach them if they are hungry. It’s a really basic need.”

teacher

“We had a plan, but it didn’t work. We really had to change things as we went along.”

principal

with this group is needed to genuinely assist in making Indigenous culture a valued part of the school community.

There is also opportunity for including more people from Bundaberg in the social networking program on a more regular basis. Alternative approaches (such as a more personal or mentoring approach) and finding other networks will be needed to achieve this. The school hopes to operate with an approach that people can come in and regularly work more directly with the students. The school also plans (if funding allows) to provide transport (a bus circuit) to the school for targeted, local people. If the school is able to allocate funding to continue the program, the school will consider collecting data about outcomes on which to base further actions.

The school is currently considering how it can introduce other initiatives that will enhance the health and well-being of students. A need has been identified to provide a breakfast and lunch program for students whose nutritional needs are not being met. This together with the introduction of a Healthy Tuckshop policy would enhance students’ nutrition.

reflections

The school has learnt much from their involvement with the social networking program. Of greatest significance is an appreciation of the difficulty of involving the whole school community in school-based activities. To overcome these difficulties, the school recognises the valuable contribution that existing networks can make in providing access to individuals within the school community.

“An effective way to teach diversity is:

- to let children experience diversity
- to meet people from diverse age groups and cultures
- to encourage respect for diversity, including age
- and therefore to encourage respect for elders”.

“Our core business is education – not just academic education, but also social education. If you can add that into the school to enhance what children learn, that’s even better.”

Jundah State School 1999


Jundah State School is a small outback school with an annual average enrolment of 20 students across five year levels. The school is located 220km south west of Longreach in a small town of about 100 people. Staff include a full-time teaching principal, a part-time teacher aide, administrative assistant, cleaner and grounds person.

starting out

Health promoting schools literature and information was received by the school's Parents and Citizens' (P&C) Association and tabled at one of their meetings. It was decided that the school would like to pursue further information. The school had an existing health program that involved health talks and strong links with the Primary Health Centre and other community groups in Jundah. There had also been some discussion within the school community about addressing sun safety issues. The P&C Association and teaching staff felt that adopting a *health promoting schools* approach fitted with what they were already doing and the direction they wanted to take.

The school was offered the opportunity to obtain a funding grant and support from the local Queensland Health, Central Public Health Unit. A sun safety proposal was designed using the *health promoting schools* approach and submitted for funding. The *health promoting schools* approach has since been applied to the school in many more areas other than sun safety.

what happened?

 Prior to learning about the *health promoting schools* approach, the school had a number of activities in place. These included:

- a health program consisting of a series of fortnightly health talks, attended by students voluntarily after school. This program strongly involved staff from the local health centre
- an 'Adopt-a-Cop' who had been with the school for the previous five years. The 'school cop' interacted

with the students in the Project Club

— an interest in addressing sun safety issues.

- ④ As part of the school's *health promoting schools* approach, these strategies expanded and become more structured through using the *health promoting schools* framework.
- ④ Initially, teaching staff had chosen the health talk topics. Health issues were later chosen by the students with some interesting topics arising, including hair and skin care, and visits to the hospital. The aim was to provide interesting, fun and educative health talks. Health talks were well attended despite being voluntary, with attendance ranging from at least half the students to almost full attendance.
- ④ Addressing the issue of sun safety had gained support from the teaching principal and the P&C Association, but the support of the whole school community was desired. To ensure that this issue was important to all, a survey (the 'sun protection' survey) was sent out to parents through the school newsletter. Those surveys received by the school showed overwhelming support for pursuing sun safety within the school. This information was gained before going ahead with the *health promoting schools* submission.
- ④ A Queensland Cancer Fund education officer was invited to the school to talk with the students about the risks of sun exposure and skin safety.
- ④ A "No Hat — No Play" policy was already in place in the school and continued to be enforced.
- ④ Wide-brimmed hats were added to the school uniform and compulsory wearing of these hats was enforced. The school was able to talk with retailers about the *health promoting schools* approach and how wide-brimmed hats and sun safety were an important issue in their school community. The school felt that this gave them greater bargaining power and resulted in reduced cost of the hats, allowing the school to purchase Jundah State School hat badges.
- ④ The school celebrated the arrival of the wide brimmed hats with a launch that included 'Syd the Seagull' and the Queensland Cancer Fund education officer as special guests. The whole community was involved with the launch with parents and the community invited.

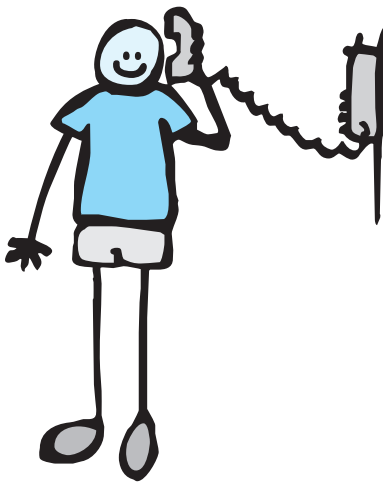
"We did a survey to check that this was everyone's opinion, not just the P&C executive's and mine."

teaching principal

"If agencies work together, it can be a win-win situation for both parties."

staff member

- ☉ The application of sunscreen was incorporated into the students' visits to the pool.
- ☉ 'Portashades' (portable shade shelters) were purchased for use at outdoor events for protection against the sun.
- ☉ The school maintained the Adopt-a-Cop program as it felt that strong community relations were important, especially in small communities.



“Ensure that projects are attainable. If we had made it too huge, we would have lots of barriers. We made sure the project was attainable – we sat down as a group in the beginning and worked out ‘what’s reasonable here’.”

staff member

enablers and barriers

A phone call every now and again from staff at the Central Public Health Unit in Rockhampton provided support that the school community felt they needed. It was also encouraging to receive acknowledgment, acceptance and praise from other schools for adopting the *health promoting schools* approach.

The *health promoting schools* approach provided a structure and framework in which the school could place what it was already doing. The input and role modelling of staff and parents was important to success.

School community members were inspired and had a better understanding of the *health promoting schools* process after accessing the Queensland Health Promoting Schools Network homepage on the internet and reading the available case studies. Other resources, such as “Working toward a Sunsmart Queensland” by the Queensland Cancer Fund, were also useful.

It was felt that more time would have allowed greater promotion and awareness raising of the *health promoting schools* process and activities within both the school community and the wider community.

Another barrier was remoteness that is something the school community lives with all the time. Limited human resources were a potential barrier to such a small school, but this was overcome by setting attainable goals and objectives based on consideration of available resources.

benefits

The trips to the hospital arranged through the school’s health program have resulted in reduced stress surrounding

“..the students have been the winners here: they’ve got their parental support, education and awareness of sun safety has increased and that’s what our schools are all about – increased learning outcomes for our kids so we’ve achieved that.”

staff member

“I suppose it’s (the health promoting schools approach) given us a direction too.”

staff member

“Sunscreen is not a problem now. The kids form a kind of chain and do each others backs when we go to the pool.”

staff member

medical procedures for the students. Due to their experience with medical procedures in a non-threatening, supportive environment, the trauma of immunisation was greatly reduced. Also, the students became familiar with the flying doctors’ nurse, ambulance officer teachers’ aide.

There has been a change in attitude and behaviour for both students and staff in their hat wearing behaviour. The wearing of hats and application of sunscreen has been easy to enforce as students and staff are aware of the risks and prevention strategies.

The hat launch was fun! The celebration included races between staff in erecting the ‘portashades’.

Adopting a *health promoting schools* approach had benefits for all parties involved. Community links were strengthened and expanded to other government agencies. Parents became more involved and had a say in the school.

The school community felt they were more focused as to what issues were important to the school community. The *health promoting schools* approach provided “the academic rigour” and a more formal basis to the direction the school was seeking already at a chalk-face (grass-roots) level.

This approach has raised the awareness of students about a variety of health issues that are important to them and the rest of the school community. The Life Education van teacher commented on the sun safety knowledge of the students. This was evidence that the students’ learning had increased.

Differences have occurred and continued to occur in the way that teaching and learning was approached – through the increased use of out-of-school resources and the greater involvement of students in selecting topics that will be addressed in the school program.

the future

The school is currently planning activities for Melanoma Day this year in conjunction with the Cancer Fund. Compulsory wearing of wide-brimmed hats will be linked into the ‘supportive school environment’ document.

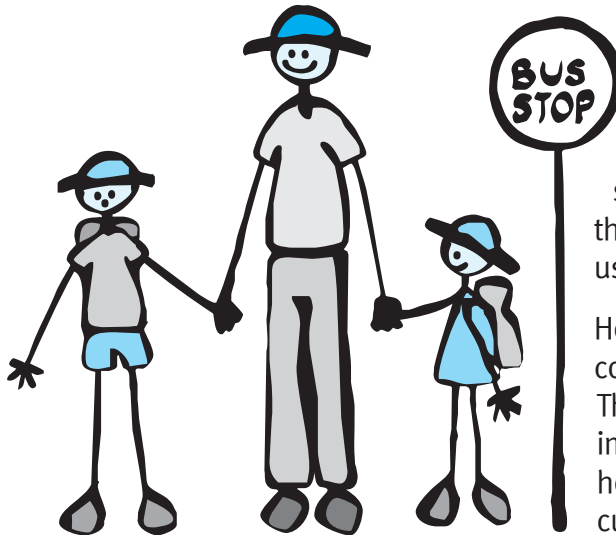
The future will involve working to maintain what has already been established. It is easier to start programs than it is to maintain the programs, practices and awareness levels. The school community may look at starting a new project next

“If you’re not in it, you can’t win it.”

staff member

year but they remain aware that this is only worthwhile if the school has the ability to follow through and maintain present projects.

The school community plans to continue expanding the sun safety project to include swim shirts for use by students when swimming. Consultation with parents on the design of a new school uniform is also under way and will be continued.



Members of the school community involved in the ‘Save Our Skin’ project plan to sit down together and reflect on the achievements and processes used so far.

Health talks are currently conducted outside of school hours. The school intends to look at integrating the promotion of health issues into the mainstream curriculum.

reflections

“In a positive way I’ve learnt that if you’re prepared to make the effort and pick up on things, there can be lots of great initiatives out there that are going to have benefits for your whole school community – if you’re prepared to nurture it and make it happen.”

staff member

When the school reflected upon what had happened, they were pleased with what they had done and how much they had achieved. However, at the time, they did not consider it to be that special and they did not anticipate the benefits.

Although difficult, it was important to maintain the practices started and continue them all the way through. “We were able to achieve because we set an obtainable goal.”

The school recommended reading the *health promoting schools* correspondence. They felt that it expanded their awareness of initiatives and provided ideas and advice.

“For **our** school community, what we’ve done and the way we’ve gone about it, has been appropriate.”

“Overall it’s been very positive for our school community to be involved in it.”

School of Today 1999



The School of Today is a small, independent primary and secondary school consisting of 35 students and seven staff. It is situated at Pandoin, just outside Rockhampton. The school caters for a wide variety of students including those with learning disabilities and chemical sensitivities.

The school aims to provide every child with a safe, healthy, caring learning environment. The staff of the school believe that this environment can minimise the effect of chemicals and other health problems on academic and social development and performance.

starting out

The school had adopted a health promoting philosophy since its inception by a naturopath, two years ago. The school first heard about the *health promoting schools* approach when contacted by staff from the Central Public Health Unit in Rockhampton. Prior to this, the School of Today was already following many of the principles of the *health promoting schools* approach.

what happened?

- It was the belief of the initiator of the school that improving the physical environment could lessen the toxic effects of the environment on children's health. Based on this philosophy, the school set out to provide the environment that the students required.
- The school employs supportive and dedicated staff who understand the children's problems and therefore, contribute to a healthy, happy environment.
- The academic approach adopted by the school is to develop student-centred curriculum ie. curriculum that is designed to meet the individual needs of each student. Students are provided with a learning environment that allows progress at their own individual rates rather than

"We use a very broad and holistic approach to the health and education of students."

teacher

The school “tries to promote [health] in all spheres of the school – through the way we make our fundraising, through the curriculum, through our own staff actions and through [educating] parents [to] carry it through at home.”

teacher

“We put as much emphasis on the students’ social and emotional health as we do on their physical health.”

teacher

being expected to perform to a standard set by the school system. Students still have certain requirements to fulfil for completion of each year level. However, because students can work at their own pace, this means students are rewarded for hard work by reaching their goal sooner.

☉ The school’s commitment to catering for individual needs means that the school can often be more flexible than most. For example, a child diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) who finds sitting still for the entire morning session impossible, may be allocated extra playtime, or be encouraged to work on a number of different activities during that time. The other students understand that this is not favouritism but a necessary part of providing an appropriate environment for this student.

☉ Providing a clean and unpolluted physical environment for students and staff is of vital importance to the school. In addition to encouraging the use of only natural, organic, unscented personal care products, the school:

- uses only water-based paints for art and classroom activities (the paint used on classroom walls is also water based)
- uses non-toxic ‘edible’ glue
- does not use pesticides or herbicides
- limits the use of whiteboard markers.

☉ The school has a policy that strongly encourages healthy food at school for both staff and students. Staff are encouraged to set an example. Healthy food and snack ideas are often provided to parents in the school newsletter. A small school tuckshop offers only pure, natural and healthy food.

☉ Special curriculum units include cooking, food and nutrition (including learning about the chemical quality of food), vegetable growing and general health.

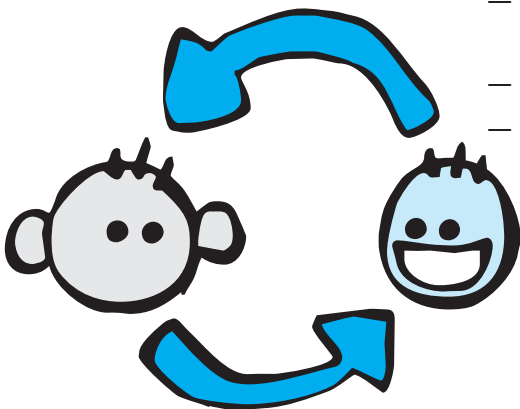
☉ Daily exercise is incorporated into the school day with half an hour of morning activity. This includes cross-patterning exercises (aerobic style exercises) which aim to improve coordination and communication between the two sides of the brain by encouraging the left and right hemispheres to work together.



“People volunteered because they could see the social benefit that the school community was giving the community at large.”

teacher

- ④ Volunteers (including parents) are valued in the school and encouraged to be involved with school activities, including work in the classroom.
- ④ School staff noted that low self-esteem of students stemming from their academic and/or family problems was affecting their school work. The staff felt some of these problems were too big or too personal for them to deal with themselves. Therefore, the school employed a full-time school counsellor to provide support and assist with the mental and emotional health of students, their families and the rest of the school community (including staff and their families). The counsellor’s role also includes:
 - teaching social behaviours and how to work effectively within a social situation
 - educating students and families in areas such as respect of self and others
 - parent/child communication and family conflict resolution.
- ④ The location of the school was chosen with consideration of the type of environment it would provide for the school community, that is, it is set in two and a half acres of bushland away from the chemical pollutants of the town.
- ④ The school is committed to raising community awareness of the adverse effects of chemicals, preservatives and additives in food on everyone’s health, and in particular, children showing symptoms of ADD.
- ④ The broader school community is encouraged to become involved through:
 - family bar-b-que days where food with no preservatives is provided
 - the use of newsletters which include brochures, information and seminar invitations
 - parent evenings
 - the welcoming and valuing of volunteers.



enablers and barriers

The dedication of staff and the large proportion of volunteers have been very helpful in maintaining and implementing the policies and approach of the school. The school principal is a full-time volunteer.

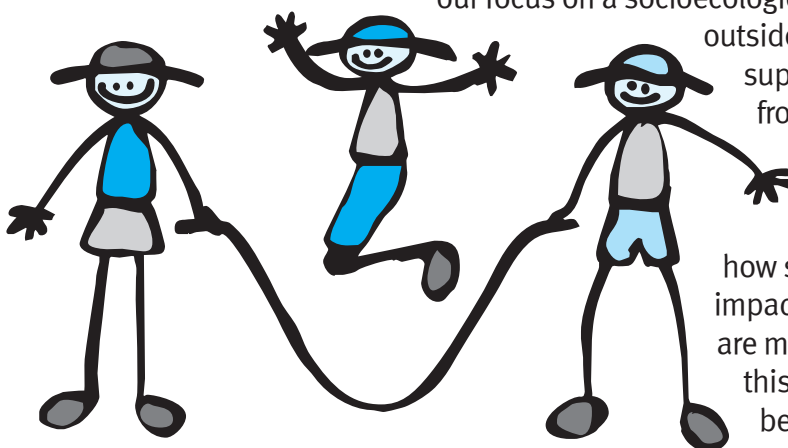
Financial support was gained from the government who recognised the school as deserving of some funding. This financial support allows the school to accept all students, regardless of socioeconomic background as fees can be adapted to suit family needs.

Parents who understand the principles of the school are important to the success of the school. These parents understand the limitations placed on what students can do, eat or can be around and help to uphold the policies of the school. However, a lack of understanding in the community, in the families of students, and in the students about their own conditions, can be a barrier. Time often has to be spent educating the parents as to how they can help their children cope better with their conditions.

The constant change that is necessary to cater for the individual needs of students can be very challenging for the whole school community. This is particularly obvious when new students come to the school. The process of making decisions that is sometimes necessary to ensure the best processes/plans are identified for a particular student can sometimes lead to disagreement among those involved.

An unexpected barrier was the difficulty the school has had in convincing professionals and agencies to acknowledge that there is “more to health than the five food groups” and that what the school is doing is actually beneficial. Because of our focus on a socioecological model of health, support from outside agencies has been limited. The

support that is received is usually from the academic community rather than the health sector where people have a broader understanding of ‘health’ and how significantly our environment impacts on our health. These people are more likely to recognise the benefit this school can offer students with behavioural or learning difficulties.



“My own lifestyle away from the school has changed from working here.”

staff member

“The more contact [people have] with the school, the more they tend to integrate the ideas we promote into their own lifestyle.”

staff member

“If the benefits are obvious and can be seen, this is the best way to promote the school and to promote health in general.”

staff member

benefits

The philosophy and principles of the school attract dedicated staff and a strong group of volunteers. The dedication of staff to the school’s principles is evident in the lifestyle changes they are prepared to make in order to work in the school.

The management and control of the environment can, in some cases, lead to reduced medication for students and better behaviour at home.

The school has had an impact on the staff, volunteers, students and the families of students because the school encourages a whole lifestyle change. The use of natural, organic products, healthy eating and daily exercise is commonly continued in the homes of school community members. The secondary students are especially aware of what they eat.

The impact on the community as a whole is questionable, but individuals have often come into contact with the school and left with one or two facts that can be used to create a healthier lifestyle for them.

Improving the quality of food consumed by students has resulted in a significant improvement in student behaviour. Students have a greater ability to concentrate, which improves their school work, have a greater comprehension of what the teacher is saying, and are more willing to follow directions. Such improvements in diet have a positive impact on general health as well.

the future

The School of Today intends to continue with their current ideas by trying to promote health in all spheres of the school. This includes continuing to:

- promote the importance of the school’s principles and policies to parents through newsletters, parent interviews and family events at the school
- give families simple advice on how to incorporate the health aspects adopted by the school into their own life without ruining the family
- demonstrate that the benefits of considering health and

“I think the most important aspect though, or how we transmit most of the knowledge to the students is through conversation with them or setting the examples ourselves.”

staff member

the surrounding environment for a child with problems will also apply to the entire family.

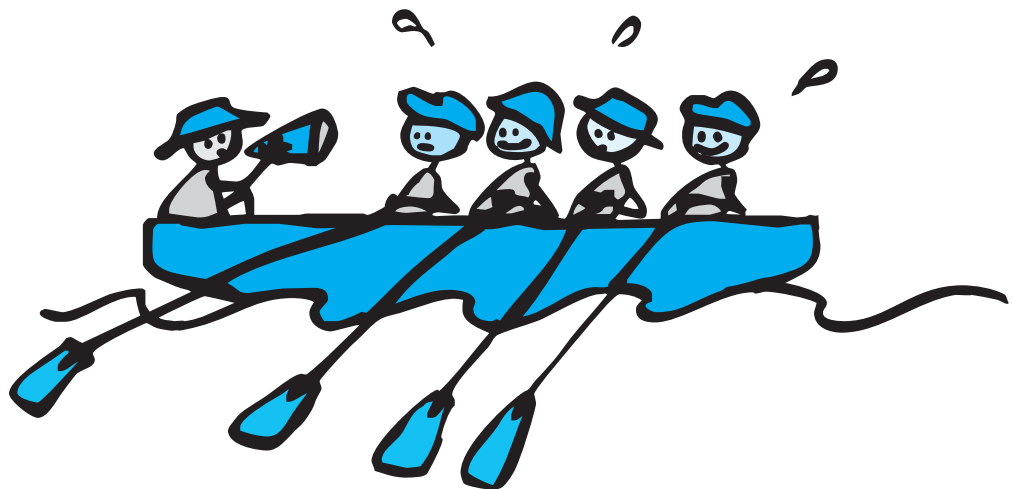
The staff of the school hope to increase the awareness of the community by promoting health. They expect to set an example for the community and prove by the quality of their students that what the school is doing is beneficial.

Members of the school community plan to embark on some fund-raising ventures that also promote the school and its emphasis on health. Instead of chocolate or pie drives, the school hopes to sell organic based, naturally scented shampoos or cosmetics.

“Ideally, we would like to see all our students following a healthy approach to life—in all areas of their life, not only at school but outside of school, as well as the staff and the parents involved in the school.” The school will keep striving toward this ideal in the future.

reflections

It is often a battle for the school to convince parents that health is one of the most important aspects of the school’s behaviour management policy. “If an idea is not widely accepted within the community as a whole, you can’t expect it to be instantly, widely accepted within the school community.” It is likely to take some time and effort. It is important to educate the parents, the staff and the volunteer helpers so that everyone is working in the same direction.



acknowledgments

The school communities represented in these case studies willingly shared their *health promoting schools* experiences. The valuable contribution of key people within these schools is acknowledged. Their enthusiasm and contribution is greatly appreciated.

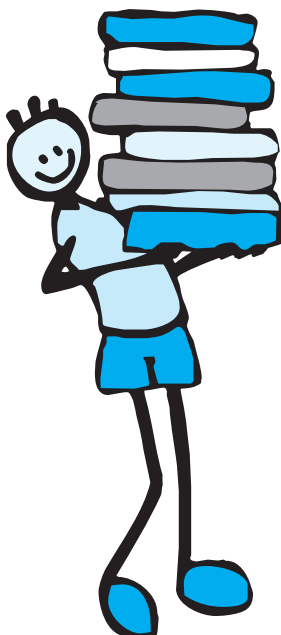
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- School of Today

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references



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- 3 Carter J (1998) *Kidpower: Kids reducing injury in schools*, Queensland Health Promotion Council, Education Queensland (Metropolitan West Region), West Moreton Public Health Unit, West Moreton Community Health and Nursing Services: Brisbane

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