

CENTRE FOR POPULAR EDUCATION

The NSW Sustainable Schools Program: Communities and Schools



**Department of
Environment and
Conservation**



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A report for the NSW Sustainable Schools Program
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Foreword

Schools are vital areas for the work of environmental education. Their role in developing understandings, attitudes and skills for future generations is accepted, and the opportunities for integrating major community and policy expectations into existing teaching/learning initiatives and approaches are many. When considering the schools context, however, the following aspects need to be noted, their reach into the community and potential to influence families and the departmental systems in which they operate.

In NSW in 2005, there are 3,144 primary, central and secondary schools. Of these, 2,238 are government schools and 906 are non-government. (In addition, there are approximately 920 home schools.) Schools are organised into 10 distinct regions, with many programs like the SSP pilot, supporting groups of schools through regionally based staff. The school student population is over 1,000,000 – this represents approximately 16% of the NSW population. And, using estimates from across all school systems, this student population represents more than 500,000 families. Schools have enormous reach into households, communities and geographic areas. Improved environmental management practices on more than three thousand sites and deliberative efforts to communicate to the broader school community should be important targets for environmental agencies.

The NSW Sustainable Schools Program pilot was a significant event in the development and evolution of environmental education. It was ambitious in its scope, complexity and management: it took on a 'whole-school' approach across the whole range of environmental issues; it was built around a systems approach, in the belief that teachers alone, individual schools alone, cannot bear the responsibility for improving environmental practices and ensuring effective sustainability education of and by the whole school system.

And the SSP was founded on the strengths of people who were supported to be creative, to work together, to foster and accept change. For these reasons, the SSP took an evolutionary planning approach to management, rather than a 'strategic planning approach' that crossed the 't's and dotted the 'i's before it started. In this way, the program continued to be built on an action and reflection cycle. It began with commitments and sound principles linked to good education, sustainability and change. It established and supported action and diversity at a program, regional and school levels. Indeed, its strategic framework was in place to enable and support creative, appropriate, people-driven, school-focused learning initiatives. As the program grew, so did the ideas, the people, the support mechanisms, the relationships and the quality.

Let's consider these propositions: relationship is at the heart of good education; people are central to sustainability; relationship is at the core of good quality sustainability education. The SSP afforded an opportunity to examine sustainability relationships, to closely study the potential of strong school-community, sustainability-focused alliances. This report finds opportunities and power in good relationships. It reminds us that our diverse schools and communities will result in diverse types of collaborative arrangements. But within this difference, it tells us that the fundamental requirement is that opportunities be created to enable conversations about how communities can work with their schools and vice versa. To talk and keep talking. These conversations are critical to effective and focussed relationships.

The Sustainable Schools Support Team, the teachers and other staff of the almost 200 pilot schools, the members of the SSP Steering Committee, the Advisory Group, officers from participating councils and government agencies and the DEC/DET Education Officers are to be acknowledged for their actions and thoughts throughout the program's first phase. Thanks also to the support – financial, moral and structural – provided by the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage.

Finally, this report, provides advice on how to move from principle to practice for one of the underlying principles of the NSW Sustainable Schools Program: we can't get sustainable schools in unsustainable communities, and we won't see unsustainable schools in sustainable communities.

Phil Smith and Syd Smith April 2005

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1. Introduction

1.1 Research brief

The NSW Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) commissioned us to undertake research about the ways schools and communities work together for sustainable development.

In 2003 these two agencies, with support from the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage commenced a pilot program - NSW Sustainable School Program (SSP) - with the aim of supporting both government and non-government schools to:

- encourage and support their shift towards more sustainable environmental practices;
- identify opportunities within the school curriculum that support both quality teaching and school management processes and practices to achieve improved environmental outcomes for the future; and
- identify opportunities to develop deeper understandings of the impact of a school community's own practices on the environment.

Since then the SSP pilot has involved almost 200 schools from across NSW in the program. Most were government primary schools located in rural NSW (see Appendix 1 for breakdown of schools by type and location).

Schools were supported by a group of environmental educators - the Sustainable Schools Support Team (SSST). Their main role was to provide assistance to the primary, secondary and central schools involved in the SSP program in their area. Members of the team were based in thirteen school education areas across the state. Most were located at departmental regional environmental education centres, with a few others at council environmental education centres or at a school involved in the program.

One important feature of the SSP has been the value placed on schools developing 'partnerships' with communities. Yet it was stated in the brief given to us that there was little systematic analysis of these partnerships.

(We) want a picture of what's happening, what's known, what's been/being learnt about the role of school-community partnerships. We want to know what's working and why. And what else needs to be known (p. 2 of Contractor's Brief).

Henderson and Tilbury (2004: 45) suggest that 'expanding partnership capacity should be a planned component of whole-school sustainability approaches' but note:

However, no empirical research has been undertaken in this area making it difficult to answer the question "what constitutes an effective partnership?" or "how can effective partnerships" be developed.

We set out therefore to:

- define community-school partnerships;
- draw on literature to review various theoretical frameworks for ways communities and schools work together for sustainability;
- map and review how communities and schools in NSW are currently working together; and
- discuss ways community-school partnerships for sustainability can be supported and strengthened.

1.2 *Scope and methodology*

The project scope and timeframe enabled us to review literature, map activities and programs, conduct phone interviews, and convene three roundtable discussions.

The literature review drew on recent studies of community-school partnerships, environmental education initiatives in schools involving local communities, and reports and evaluations carried out for the SSP. The literature review is embedded throughout the report but most description and discussion takes place in sections 2 and 3.

In order to explore relationships at a statewide level a focussed roundtable discussion was organised in Sydney that brought together representatives from a number of key government agencies, environmental groups, a number of DET programs, and members of the NSW SSP.

We intended to convene three roundtable discussions in three local areas - an outer urban area of Sydney, a smaller regional centre, and a larger regional centre in NSW. A mapping exercise was carried out using phone interviews and e-mail correspondence in each area to identify who were the groups, organizations and projects working on sustainability issues with schools in the local area. Invitations were extended to a representative from each of these organisations to attend a roundtable discussion.

At the local level it became apparent that local councils played a key role in sustainable development. As a result for this study it was decided to focus the local roundtable discussions on three single local government areas (LGAs) and work together with a number of key staff from each local council to organise the roundtable. Two local councils hosted the roundtable discussions.

The local roundtable discussions brought together a range of key people from local community organizations - the local council, government agencies, community based environmental groups, networks & associations - who were already working for sustainability and expressed an interest in strengthening the links between themselves, the local community and schools.

After discussing the project with each DET regional director, a number of key consultants from each regional DET office, a representative from the DET Environmental Education Centre in the area, and the regional SSST teacher were invited.

The schools approached were those that had been involved with the SSP or where the school principal expressed an interest in sustainability. Among the schools in each area an invitation was extended to a representative from the school executive and a teacher involved in sustainability projects. Both government and non-government schools, primary and secondary schools were approached. Unfortunately no funds could be offered to school principals to cover the release of a teacher for a day to attend the roundtable discussions. Despite this lack of funding, a number of schools in each area did participate and sent a teacher along for all or part of the discussions.

For each roundtable between forty and fifty invitations were issued and between twenty and thirty people attended.

1.3 Summary of research findings

The term community-school partnership is used in various ways. We suggest that it is useful to conceive of a continuum of relationships (*relationships continuum*) between communities and schools and to distinguish between links, collaborations, informal partnerships, alliances and formal partnerships.

When referring to schools building relationships with ‘communities’ the types of communities can include those *within* a school; for example, the teaching community; student community, and the whole school as a community. It can also include those *outside* schools; for example, the parent community, local community service agencies, local environment advocacy groups, businesses, or interest-based groups.

Community-school partnerships create opportunities, and require skills, for planning informal and formal education strategies. It is also important to consider both the type of change they are working for (the *change continuum*) and the type of learning opportunities for participants (ranging from formal, informal, incidental to transformative).

Theoretical frameworks point to different types of community-school relationships shaped by *pedagogic purpose* and the *institutional boundaries*. They can be located on a continuum where at one end relationships are school-centred and at the other end are community-centred or advocacy oriented relationships.

We analysed 30 schools participating in the Sustainable Schools Program and found that:

- 16% of the 30 schools did not relate to communities directly and the only environmental education that occurred was through the efforts of an individual teacher;
- 70% did not relate to external community groups directly but had developed a whole-school community approach where students and staff across the syllabus, administrative and maintenance staff, and the parent body were involved in sustainability education;
- 46% have invited members of the local community into the school to contribute to the teaching of a particular subject area;
- 20% of the schools had initiated and developed relationships with external groups and included learning and action for the environment in the local community in their teaching program; and
- 10% were directly involved in learning and action for the environment inside and outside the school.

We recommend the development and maintenance of community-school partnerships as a new priority area within a program like the SSP and to devote staff time and resources to this area at state, regional/ area, and local levels.

It is useful to acknowledge and represent the perspectives of key participants. It is important to name and distinguish the various groups and agencies in the ‘community’ who can potentially work with schools because each can be strategically important to the program at a statewide, regional or local level. Also each group or agency has different capacities to work with schools, different sets of interests and is looking for a particular type of relationship or involvement with schools. The key groups and agencies featured in this study include:

- local government authorities;
- agencies involved in managing water, energy and waste;

- environmental advocacy and community environmental groups - local, regional and national; and
- parent groups and parents, and school-based before and after care centres (OOSH).

Local government authorities and agencies are already building productive relationships with schools. To date, local councils have largely been involved in visiting schools to deliver talks or run short courses in schools, or organising field trips, and in some cases enabling students and staff to be involved in local environmental protection projects. While agencies generally work with schools through specific school, focussed programs. These types of relationships can be called program or project-based partnerships.

National and regional environment advocacy groups (for example, Greening Australia) reported examples of project-based partnerships with clusters of schools. To date, the more substantial and longer-term partnerships have been regional and at a program level as opposed to local and project-driven.

At a local level there are numerous examples of schools and community groups working together for sustainable development. But the relationships are also largely in the form of short-term, project-based collaborations. Local environment advocacy and community environmental groups reported lacking knowledge and capacity to establish ongoing relationships with schools, although they had also worked with schools on specific projects. There is, however, interest from community groups and schools to strengthen the ways they work together at a local level. This can be supported by professional development that is dedicated to enhancing the knowledge and skills of stakeholders from both community groups and schools. Building relationships between communities and schools is a specialised endeavour.

There is potential to strengthen regional and curriculum-based partnerships where peak local government bodies or agencies collaborate with peak education bodies to jointly develop curriculum frameworks. For example Sydney Water developed a curriculum-based partnership where teaching materials were developed that link directly to school syllabi and environmental plans. This has enabled Sydney Water to work with over 100 schools on this initiative. Other agencies involved in managing water, energy and waste have not developed a curriculum-based partnership of this scope so far, but they should also be encouraged to follow Sydney Water's example.

It is useful to name and distinguish between the various 'players' within schools and the DET who can potentially develop relationships with community groups. They include:

- teachers;
- senior executive staff within a school;
- specialist consultants from regional offices; and
- senior program staff in regional and state offices.

Whole-school community approaches are starting to broaden the range of representation within a school community to include students, other school staff and have been used successfully for the purpose of undertaking environmental audits and reviewing ways schools use their grounds and resources.

The involvement of parents and parent groups in sustainability education is mostly confined to representation on various school committees and raising funds for particular projects. While OOSH Centre co-ordinators report interest in developing relationships with schools for sustainability education. As more schools move to taking on a whole school approach to

sustainability, parents, parent groups and OOSH centres will be called upon to take on a more active role in planning and working for sustainability.

Education for environmental action fostered by outward-looking partnerships linked to the curriculum are not prevalent. The challenge for the next stage of the program is to work strategically at each level to develop and support more effective and long term relationships among local communities, councils, agencies and schools.

2. Defining key concepts

2.1 Community - school relationships

Communities are diverse. Schools are diverse. It follows, therefore, that relationships between them can be diverse. In order to more precisely define the nature of particular relationships we propose they can be analysed on three levels. At the first level we suggest focusing on how formal or informal the relationship is. At the second level we suggest focusing on the nature of the activity the school/s and community group/s are working together on and how specific or generic it is. And at the third level the focus can be on the pedagogical orientations and values that shape the relationship. In this chapter we will elaborate on the first two levels and in the following chapter on the third level.

2.1.1 Level One – less formal to more formal

Here is a diagrammatic summary of a continuum that offers a typology of community – school relationships.

Relationships Continuum



At one end of the continuum the relationships between schools and communities are more informal and often based on individuals making contact and negotiating arrangements to work together. These relationships usually are dependent on those individuals and when the individuals ‘move on’ the relationships dissolve. At the other end the relationships are more formal and usually include formal commitments to invest resources and implement actions. It can be useful to keep in mind the range of relationship that can develop and the following definitions of terms may help.

A *link* is an ongoing contact or a connection between individuals or people with specific roles within organizations. At this stage it is simply people who have got to know each other and consider the possibilities of working together.

A *collaboration* occurs when they take the step of working together and cooperating to achieve particular ends or objectives.

An *informal partnership* usually involves at least two key participants, a specific issue or issues, and an activity or a set of activities (Martin et al 1999:62) in a loose arrangement, without any formal agreement about the aims of the relationship (Tett 2003). According to a recent NSW DET document, a partnership in an educational setting is seen as

a relationship in which members of families, schools and communities develop mutual respect, understanding and ways of working together to improve students’ learning outcomes (DET 2003a: 5).

In this sense the partnerships are informal arrangements where people and organisations get together to work in their own ways to bring about change. The difference between

collaboration and informal partnership is a shift towards a greater degree of organization in the way organisations work together.

A *formal partnership* refers to those cooperative efforts that are set out and agreed to in some formal way. This usually involves an agreement that sets out goals, objectives and roles (Tett 2003). Features often included in formal agreements are a specific commitment of resources, a time frame, a mechanism for working together, a process for reporting, evaluating and dealing with disagreements.

A typology developed for the 2002 UN World Summit on Sustainable Development at Johannesburg suggested there was a need for two key types of partnerships for sustainability. One type were formal government partnerships; and the other were voluntary self-organising partnerships by government, international organizations or major groups that translate political or policy commitment into action (see Kara & Quarless quoted in Tilbury & Wortman 2004).

The NSW SSP pilot involved a formal partnership between two NSW government departments, the Department of Environment and Conservation and the Department of Education and Training. Both signed a memorandum of understanding to formalise and initiate their partnership for the pilot program. A steering committee and a Joint Agency Support Group (JAS) were established to support the program. Both the committee and the JAS brought together representatives from other departments, agencies, and educational bodies with the SSP in an informal arrangement to support the pilot.

During the pilot SSP phase schools and communities were encouraged to develop relationships at the local and regional levels, and most of their involvement was at the informal end of our continuum. In practice, much of the focus during the pilot was on encouraging informal arrangements - more about people and organisations getting to know each other, starting to work together, combining their efforts and resources where possible on specific projects or initiatives for sustainability - rather than focussing on formal agreements.

2.1.2 Project-based and program relationships

Schools and communities will sometimes work together on a particular sustainability project. For example, a high school, an adult education provider and a resident action group in a suburb of Western Sydney might work together on a campaign and action research project to have new bicycle and walking paths built. One goal of this campaign is to encourage more walking and cycling to and from schools. After 12 months they enjoy partial success and then the campaign and their relationship ‘fizzles.’ The relationship between the school and community groups existed only as long as the project.

Another example might be a collaborative effort between a local school and members of a local Landcare group to re-introduce more bio-diversity and native vegetation in the school grounds and neighbouring blocks of land. This initiative may be specific to this particular Landcare group and an individual geography teacher. It may only last for a year or part of a year, as the teacher involves one class. Or it may continue each year as long as the teacher remains at the school.

The two cases above are examples of project-based community – school relationships. According to the continuum presented above, they equate to collaborations as opposed to formal partnerships. They are local, rely on individuals championing the initiatives, and last as long as the particular project.

Schools and communities also work together at a program level. Program relationships are less related to specific and local project strategies and more to generic strategies that can be replicated with numerous schools and communities. For example, the health promotion unit of NSW Health, transport development unit of NSW Ministry of Transport and a transport workers union might negotiate with both DET and the Catholic Education Commission to jointly develop curriculum about more sustainable transport futures. This might be part of a ten-year strategy to facilitate learning and action for more sustainable transport. In this hypothetical example, both DET and Catholic school teachers would be expected to deliver the curriculum in the knowledge that local health and transport workers would be allowed to spend time supporting them in ways to be negotiated.

Sydney Water's *Every Drop Counts* program is an example of an actual program relationship. This includes an eight-lesson teaching package developed jointly by Sydney Water and NSW DET and which can be linked directly into the school curriculum. By the end of 2004 this program had been delivered in over 100 schools.

2.1.3 Pedagogical orientation

There is a long history of community-school relationships to support student learning dating back at least to the nineteenth century. We will sketch some of this history in the next chapter. There have, of course, been different traditions that have enjoyed various degrees of support and popularity. These traditions have been shaped partly by different pedagogical orientations. In other words, the way schools and communities work together have been, and continue to be, shaped by different ideas about what is valuable teaching and learning. For example, if it is believed the teaching and learning that may be planned and facilitated in an environmental advocacy campaign is of equal value to classroom teaching and learning this will encourage and shape the way schools and environment advocacy groups relate to each other. If there is little understanding of and indeed scepticism about the possibilities of teaching and learning in environmental action then schools and their teachers are less likely to seek relationships with advocacy groups.

We will discuss pedagogical orientations in chapter 3.

2.2 Communities

'Community' is a term that is used a great deal but not always defined. Some notions of community are defined by local geography, or religion, political values, ethnic ties, a shared loyalty to a football club, economic interests, children going to the same school, and an endless variety of other factors. Thomson (2002) summarises some of the most common ways of categorising different types of communities. They are:

- living in the same geographical area - geographic communities;
- sharing specific interests or lifestyles - environmental, sporting communities;
- belonging to a cultural or language group - cultural or language communities;
- belonging to a particular institution - institutional; or
- working in a particular occupation - occupational.

Warburton (1998:14) who wrote about community and sustainable development in the UK, emphasises place and asserted that there is an essential link between community and place. For her locality is crucial - it is where environmental issues matter most to people and where most people want to act - at the local level. For schools both place and communities of interest are important. In the environment movement communities of interest present

promising opportunities for relationships with schools. They might include for example, bush walking, surfing, bird watching and other 'interest' groups. For selective public and elite private schools they may have relationships with their parent communities which are not defined by a common geographic area because they live in various parts of a city or town. We do agree with Warburton's assertion that there is an essential link between community and action. A community is involved in action and is always dynamic, always changing - it is

created and recreated through action by people who are aware and committed to the principle of working together for a better life and world (Warburton 1998:18).

2.2.1 External and internal communities

It may be useful to distinguish between communities that are external and internal to schools. For the purpose of sustainability education the most common external types of external communities schools may relate to include:

- local government authorities;
- agencies involved in managing water, energy and waste;
- environmental advocacy and community environmental groups at local, regional and national levels; and
- parents.

Schools and their associated bureaucracies are large organizations and there are various 'communities' within them. These communities can form around the:

- teaching community;
- student community;
- parent groups;
- school-based before and after care centres (OOSH); and
- whole school as a community.

An important feature of an internal school community is that students and their parents are often part of the same cohort for a number of years. While rates of mobility vary, there is usually a significant proportion of students and parents who remain part of a particular school community for up to 7 years at a primary school and 6 years at a high school - as the children move through their education at the one school. This provides an opportunity for developing relationships that take a longer term view of school involvement with students and their parents. It also means that programs that are seeking to achieve change can look beyond more than just single projects and consider efforts that take place over a more sustained period of time.

2.3 Sustainability

A recently released major international study by scientists from 95 countries (MEA 2005) revealed that 60% of the ecosystems around the world in the study are being degraded or used unsustainably. And in Australia a CSIRO study of the state of Australia's environment highlighted significant deterioration in our environment and major challenges ahead (CSIRO 2002). In this context what does sustainability mean?

The NSW government's Environmental Education Policy for Schools defined sustainability as being about:

possessing the necessary resources to maintain or improve the current state of the environment (DET 2001:24)

(and) a pattern of activities which meet the needs of current generations without prejudicing the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It requires there is no unreasonable depletion of any resource (DET 2001:23).

UNESCO took a broader view and suggested that sustainable development is:

more a moral precept than a scientific concept, linked as much with notions of peace, human rights and fairness as with theories of ecology or global warning.... (it) requires us to acknowledge the interdependent relationship between people and the natural environment” (UNESCO 2002:6)

The views of participants in the roundtable discussions for this study showed there were also a range of views about the concept of sustainability, and not everyone saw things the same way. Some focussed on the future and especially future generations:

something for my grandkids.... so they can go down to the creek like I did.

it is basically what we use today and being able to use it in way that future generations can use it.

Others related sustainability to the broader issues of our lifestyle and our way of life:

ecological footprinting... it is about ways of measuring what sort of resources we use... if everyone lived like we do in Australia then we'd need six planets.

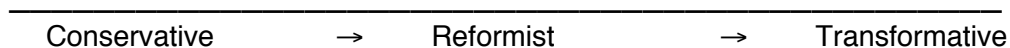
living within our means ... a huge challenge is living in a society where consumption is huge... how do we start living in a different way?... so it is about educating for a different lifestyle.

This means that a program like the SSP needs to be aware of the contested nature of the concept and develop a clear view of which aspects of sustainability it is working to achieve.

2.4 Change

The SSP is encouraging both schools and communities to work for sustainability. But what type of change is the program trying to achieve? One way of categorising how people view change for sustainability is to consider a *change continuum* that ranges from conservative views on the one hand to reformist or transformative views on the other.

Change Continuum



A *conservative* view of change for sustainability focuses on preserving existing conditions - to maintain things as they are, to be cautious, moderate and minimise any changes that do occur.

A *reformist* view sees change being achieved through improvement and alterations, usually achieved by tackling specific issues like cleaning up a creek, reducing litter and waste, cutting

energy or water use. According to Wheeler (2004:8) a reformist view addresses symptoms but does not tackle foundational norms or structures.

A *transformative* view involves significant change and as described by Wheeler (2004: 8) involves a deep approach to social change, addressing root causes and seeking to achieve major changes for sustainability.

According to Sterling (2005) a major transformative change in the education sector is required to achieve a more sustainable society. He concludes that most education policymakers and practitioners are unaware of the scale of change needed to achieve sustainability.

Sterling suggests there is a danger that most education for sustainability “becomes little more than another curriculum box to be ticked, rather than a key to transformation touching all aspects of educational provision”. He points to a need for a fundamental re-orientation of education policy to develop a new holistic vision in education for sustainability.

2.5 Education and action for sustainability

Sustainability education that fosters meaningful community participation and learning has been considered a requisite to sustaining our human and natural environments in many of the global conferences, agreements, declarations and charters since the 1972 UN Conference on the Environment in Stockholm. Similarly in Australia, the National Action Plan 2000 explicitly recognises that sustainability education is not confined to formal schooling but occurs in a wide range of non-formal education settings. While at a state level, the NSW Environmental Education Plan 2002-2005 advocates, “energising the community to act responsibly.” The emphasis placed on fostering community engagement is of particular relevance to this study of the ways communities and schools can work together.

There are two prisms we propose can be used to facilitate definitional understanding of education and action for sustainability in the context of schools and communities working together. The first prism is a typology about different settings and approaches to education and learning – formal, non-formal and informal. The second prism is a typology to define different orientations to sustainability education.

2.5.1 Prism One – formal, non-formal and informal education for sustainability

We begin with a disclaimer. Education for sustainability does not just happen in schools. We say this because we share the observation by Harris and Robottom (1997: 49) that many researchers and practitioners tend to consider environmental education to be “properly located within schools and universities.” While there is no shortage of policy pronouncements about sustainability education needing to take place outside schools, in practice the main focus is on education within schools. One indicator of this is the content of what is published in environmental education journals.

Flowers, Guevara and Whelan (2005) surveyed the content of four journals in order to identify the extent of research published on environmental education in community and workplace settings. In the *Australian Journal of Environmental Education* from 1996 to 2002 they identified only seven of a total of eighty nine articles, five of fifteen stories of practice, one of six special millennium essays, and two of eight reading notes, that were about education in community and workplace settings. This is a slight improvement to the survey

results of Andrew & Malone (1995) who identified just one of ninety-nine articles published during the journal's first decade that was directly concerned with environmental education outside schools. In the journal *Environmental Education Research* from 1995 to August 2003 they identified only twelve articles from a total of 170 articles that were concerned with environmental education in community settings. Parallel figures for the *Journal of Environmental Education* from 1996 to 2003 were twenty-four from a total of one hundred and twenty two, and the journal *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education* from 1997 to 2002 there was only one from a total of sixty-six.

Teaching in schools is a profession. 'Teaching' in the community is not. It is often not named as teaching, let alone as education practice. This partly explains the higher status and level of attention enjoyed by formal educators. This shapes the ways schools and communities relate to each other and schools are more often than not the dominant partners. A recent Australian study (Chodkiewicz & Hayes 2003) found that teachers did not perceive educational value in working with local community and youth workers. Heather Chaffey from Winmalee Youth Services wrote about her efforts to raise the image of youth workers in the eyes of school teachers in order to strengthen collaboration between youth services and schools.

Working with schools can be very much trial and error. Youth workers often feel that they need to prove themselves all the time. One of the barriers in dealing with schools is that youth work has long been considered an unprofessional occupation. This is a reputation that many youth workers don't necessarily deserve. Many youth workers are highly committed to best practice and professional development. However, there can be a lot of tension between youth workers and the schools - 'who are youth workers?', 'what are they doing?', 'is it a rogue person who volunteers their time to hang out with young people?' are questions that are raised. However youth workers are trained and paid staff and have the potential to work effectively with schools on specific programs (Chaffey 2005:14 and 15).

It is against this background that we highlight definitions of sustainability education which place value on learning in formal **and non-formal** settings. The importance of the community education or non-formal education within the context of environmental education is not new. Fensham (1978: 450) observed that during the UNESCO Conference on Environmental Education in T'bilisi, Georgia in 1977, "the significance of non-formal education was stressed – something formal education often ignores." This recognition is equally present in Chapter 36 of Agenda 21 (UNCED 1992) entitled, "Promoting Education, Public Awareness and Training" which

encompasses all streams of education, both formal and non-formal, basic education and all the key issues related to educating for sustainable human development, including environmental education.

More recently, another reorientation of education towards sustainability seems to have been an outcome of the 1997 Thessaloniki conference on environmental education, which identified strategies to attain the goals and objectives of Chapter 36 of Agenda 21 but also recommended that "environmental education be referred to as education for environment and sustainability" (Knapp 2000:32). Similarly, despite the reorientation, the Thessaloniki Declaration specifically identified that education towards sustainability involves, "all levels of formal, non-formal and informal education in all countries" (Knapp 2000: 39). Similarly, at the conclusion of the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) the participants ratified the Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning (1997:5) which explicitly identifies that

education for environmental sustainability should be a lifelong learning process. ...
Adult environmental education can play an important role in sensitizing and

mobilizing communities and decision-makers towards sustained environmental action.

At a national level, while the *Environmental Education for a Sustainable Future: National Action Plan* (2000) strengthens the environmental education of children it also emphasises the need to take environmental education “beyond the classroom - reaching the community, industry and business leaders, and government at all levels.” At a state level, the current NSW Environmental Education Plan 2002-05 entitled Learning for Sustainability (2002:15) states that

to effectively address specific sustainability issues, environmental education must comprise a comprehensive set of programs designed to be complementary across all relevant sectors (ie. all stages of the formal education sector, government agencies, the community, non-government organisations, industry, local government).

Clearly, there is no lack of environmental or educational policies that acknowledge the value of sustainability education across school and community settings, and using a range of educational approaches.

Let us now be more precise about defining formal and non-formal sustainability education. We prefer to use the term informal as opposed to non-formal sustainability education. Because the latter has more currency (see for example, UNESCO 1986) we will define our understanding of informal education in some detail. Foley (2000) presents a four-fold typology of education and learning that incorporates formal and non-formal education, informal and incidental learning. The first two ‘types’ – formal education and non-formal education – deal more with the context in which teaching and learning take place.

The second two - informal learning and incidental learning - deal more with the way in which the teaching and/or learning is done. The different ‘types’ are not exclusive. For example, a great deal of incidental learning may occur in both formal and non-formal education contexts.

We suggest, therefore, that it makes more sense to have two typologies - one of education and another of learning. To the two types of education, we think a third should be added, namely that of informal education. Our version of the typologies is presented in the following table.

Typology of education and learning

Type of Education	Type of Learning
<i>Formal education is characterised by a defined curriculum and is often credentialled. It is often based in the classroom but can include experience-based and action-oriented learning activities in community settings.</i>	<i>Informal learning is characterised by the learners consciously trying to learn from their experiences, but does not involve formal instruction.</i>
<i>Non-formal education is characterised by systematic instruction but is mostly non-credentialled. It often takes the form of short courses, eg. in aspects of sustainability education.</i>	<i>Incidental learning is characterised by Foley as learning that is “incidental to the activity in which the person is involved, is often tacit and is not seen as learning - at least not at the time of its occurrence” (2000: xiv).</i>
<i>Informal education is characterised by ‘educators’ planning and intentionally creating the conditions that facilitate informal learning. It may include some systematic instruction but which will rely on many other means.</i>	

(Based on Foley 2000)

Non-formal education can be defined in such a way as to embrace the informal education we refer to. But the term 'non-formal education' has come to be understood in quite specific ways. It has gained currency in international development circles and is used by multilateral aid agencies, and in countries of the majority world. For example, in Thailand and in the Lao People's Democratic Republic there are government departments of non-formal education. These departments are responsible for adult basic education (literacy, numeracy, basic vocational skills training, and second-chance education for adults completing school equivalent qualifications).

In practice, much of this education has defined curricula, is course-based, and credentialed. But it is seen to sit outside the formal education system of schools, colleges and universities. The term non-formal education refers more to a difference of sponsorship and setting. In Australia, the term non-formal education has little currency. Adult and community education is more widely used and refers to education provision outside the 'formal' system.

Jeffs and Smith (1990) argue that informal education is to be defined less by its setting or sponsorship and more by a form of pedagogy, a way of working. Jeffs and Smith propose seven features that characterise informal education (1990, p. 6):

- informal education can take place in a variety of physical and social settings – for example, schools, community centres, protest actions, peer support groups;
- there is no prescribed form of informal education. It might involve group activities, projects, structured discussion and many other types of activities;
- the learning may initially appear to be incidental but is, in fact, planned and monitored. It is important to understand that learning takes place not only through overt educational strategies such as workshops and projects but also by being engaged in a particular process of interactions;
- timescales are highly variable;
- learning is negotiated through collaborative forms of working;
- informal education is dialogical. There are contesting perspectives on what learning through dialogue is and means, but Jeffs and Smith (1990) maintain that informal education is not about the simple conveying of information or the facilitation of discussion. Informal educators "give careful attention to words, the ideas that they express and the actions that follow" (p. 9); and
- informal education can involve a variety of ways to facilitate learning. It can include, for example, some didactic instruction, experience-based learning activities, and action-research.

Of course, not all education that takes place in community settings is informal education. Community educators may provide formal structured courses, and the participants in an informal activity may well give it a structure and purpose and so formalise it themselves.

2.5.1.1 Learning in families

Nor can we say that informal education is limited to community settings. Clearly it can also take place in school and family settings. For example, informal education takes place between students and their parents. There is emerging evidence that as a result of sustainability education at school, students are influencing the environmental attitudes and behaviours of their parents (see Rickinson 2001:22 who cites key studies by Ballantayne et al 1998, Leeming et al 1997, and Evans et al 1996). The studies found the most common examples of this kind of education involved children:

- discussing environmental projects and activities with parents; and
- involving their parents in research for environmental assignments.

There were also some cases where children could influence parents and families to modify their behaviours around the house - especially in water and energy use, and participation in waste reduction and recycling programs - and even encourage participation in local clean ups and bio-diversity projects (Ballantyne et al 2001). In this way both primary and secondary school students could be encouraged and assisted through school activities or programs to act as informal educators or catalysts for environmental change with their parents and other family members.

With this typology of formal, non-formal and informal education we are not suggesting that one type is necessarily better than another. But we are suggesting they are distinct fields of practice that require distinct sets of competency. Informal educators do plan and facilitate learning in quite different ways to school teachers and trainers. The implications of this when considering ways to support schools and communities to work together for sustainability are to recognise the specialised skills and knowledge required for the respective fields of education.

2.5.2 Prism Two – orientations to learning and change

Whether one is planning and facilitating formal and /or informal education the practice will be shaped by one's orientation to learning and change. In other words, educators will have particular beliefs about what sort of learning and change is most likely to bring about sustainable development. To help schools and communities negotiate ways to work together for sustainability a useful exercise would be to name and discuss their orientations to learning and change. There are numerous theoretical frameworks that can be drawn up to name various orientations. We will sketch just three.

One common framework is characterised by three notions of sustainability - education either **about**, **in** and **for** the environment (Schools Council 1974, Fien 1993). Education about the environment aims to raise awareness and knowledge. Education in the environment favours experience- and problem-based learning. It encourages learners to investigate problems of sustainability in 'real' environments. Education for the environment favours action-oriented learning and so encourages people to learn through taking action to bring about more sustainability.

Another framework:

might see environmental education as potentially occupying three planes: first, 'acquiring learning', second, 'developing concern' and, third, 'solution finding' (Uzzell 1999: 401).

The third framework comes from a number of intellectual traditions; from the empirical tradition, the searching for technological solutions; from the hermeneutic tradition, interpretation to find explanations and develop analysis; the critical theory tradition of the Frankfurt School, seeking transformative change. The following tables describe the nature of learning and change in each of these traditions. They can be used by practitioners in community-school relationships to define the sort of education they are seeking to facilitate. The descriptors in the low, medium and high boxes enable an assessment to be made of the level of achievement for each of the three types of education.

TECHNICAL AND FUNCTIONAL CHANGE AND LEARNING

This refers to the learning of technical and functional skills and facts.

LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
<i>Learners who participated in the program or project miss out on opportunities to gain specific, functional skills.</i>	<i>Learners who participated in the program or project gain some useful technical knowledge and skills.</i>	<i>Learners who participated in the program or project gain skills and knowledge that enable them to be more aware of, and able to offer practical strategies to advance, sustainability.</i>

INTERPRETIVE CHANGE AND LEARNING

This refers to gaining knowledge and understanding of, and ability to analyse, sustainability challenges.

LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
<i>Despite the project or program people learn nothing new about analyses of sustainability.</i>	<i>Because of the project or program learners gain insights into the experiences of other people and groups. They gain some new knowledge about issues, challenges and sustainability initiatives.</i>	<i>Because of the project or program learners win deeper and new insights and knowledge of issues, challenges and sustainability initiatives. They gain more understanding about the perspectives of other people and group towards sustainability.</i>

TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE AND LEARNING

This refers to that change when people who previously had low self-efficacy believe in the value of their own knowledge and ability to actively bring about change for more sustainability. It also refers to that transformative change when powerful groups are questioned about their practices which threaten sustainability.

LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
<i>Despite the project or program people seem to be resigned to the way things are, even in the face of things that make them unhappy. They do not question the status quo. They do not question others who threaten sustainability. They do not question inequalities, social exclusion and apathy. They believe they do not have the necessary qualities, skills and knowledge to be 'active citizens.'</i>	<i>Because of the project or program people begin to name things that make them unhappy. In particular, they begin to name sustainability challenges and issues in their community. They question what they perceive as injustice. They imagine the possibilities of being 'active citizens' and of change for the better in themselves and their communities.</i>	<i>Because of the project or program people assert their 'action competence' to bring about change for more sustainability. They question taken-for-granted assumptions about sustainability challenges. Powerful groups seek to include previously excluded people in analyses and actions. People see themselves as 'active citizens' and sufficiently powerful to make change.</i>

3. Review of community-school models and frameworks

What constitutes a good community-school relationship? For the purpose of this study it will be a relationship that will facilitate change and learning for sustainability. But there are, of course, contesting definitions of sustainability and contesting theories about what sort of change and learning is necessary. Furthermore, there are contesting notions about which parts or traditions of ‘community’ schools might best relate to. We have already described and discussed various definitions of these key terms. In this chapter we turn our attention to frameworks and models that can guide planning of community – school relationships.

3.1 Historical traditions

Here we will describe and discuss seven traditions of building school – community relationships and thereby place them in historical and international perspective. Our purpose here is to enable practitioners to identify which particular traditions relate to the contemporary practice they are observing.

3.1.1 Parents and school community

In NSW, when one mentions building community-school relationship most teachers will initially associate this with the relationships between the school and its parents. That is why we are sketching this tradition of a school community relationship first. Supporting parent participation provides opportunities for schools to enhance their sustainability initiatives. Parent participation can take two main forms:

- assisting teachers with programs and activities - be it lessons, field trips, sports, arts or other: and
- involvement in school governance - be it the School Council, working committees etc. This means that parents participate in the formulation of the school’s educational goals and policies.

For the purpose of sustainability education, schools might also relate to parents by seeing them, not just their children, as learners. This could be supported by working with adult education providers. But it can also be supported by designing activities that are likely to encourage the children to ‘teach’ their parents. We described research about children teaching parents in the previous chapter.

But parents make up one small part of ‘community.’ And we would encourage schools to continue their efforts at broadening their engagement with the community. The following traditions show ways this can be done.

3.1.2 Local neighbourhoods and school community

From an international and historical perspective one of the strongest traditions of the nine we are sketching is the community schooling movement. In this tradition the focus is on the possibilities and desirability of strengthening relationships with neighbourhoods in the local areas surrounding the school.

The first community school was probably the New Institution opened in 1816 in England. Designed by the socialist pioneer Robert Owen it was the centrepiece of his model new town

New Lanark. It was a non-sectarian educational, social and recreational centre providing free full-time schooling, a venue for adult classes, public lectures, dances and meetings. In the USA dual use of school premises had been growing since the first recorded example in 1810. By 1857 in some places the legal right to use school premises for political and social events had been secured. To illustrate, Port Community School in Missouri had, besides regular school activities, a vacation school, agricultural short courses, cadet work for rural leadership, and the maintenance of social and economic clubs, musical organisations, nature study clubs, etc. for the young people as well as for their parents. In Scandinavia a large Folk High School Movement began late last century, combining high school, adult and further education. The Folk High School Movement is credited with playing a significant role in the rapid community and economic development of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland this century.

Americans and Scandinavians proclaimed the need for a new school that would:

- develop a community oriented curriculum;
- be an educational and cultural centre;
- be an art centre and gallery, containing works of the highest quality;
- serve as a museum preserving the archives and history of its community;
- house the local library; and
- provide community health services.

For Henry Morris, who was the Chief Education Officer of Cambridgeshire in England from 1922 to 1954, a school should be the centre of the local community – the village hall and reading room, the evening classes, the sporting activities, the agricultural education courses, the Womens' Institute, the British Legion, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, the recreation ground. As the community centre of the neighbourhood it would be holistic and break down the divisions between school and community, between school and further education. Morris is regarded as a founding leader of an international schooling movement.

Key features of the community schooling movement include:

- the school as a centre for social, sporting, recreational, cultural and educational provision, ie. sharing of facilities and extension of community access to school resources and expertise;
- negotiated and locally defined curriculum that is relevant to the local community;
- participative management;
- the school as a base for community development and social action; and
- encouraging collaboration with community development agencies and other education providers.

In NSW there are both government and non-government community schools. They present rich opportunities to advance education for sustainability. But the concept of a community school is not always relevant and possible. For example, some schools do not serve a community with identifiable boundaries. In fact, some schools compete for pupils and for funding. The school curriculum and exam requirements are already so full and demanding there can be little time and space left for 'other' activities.

Schools try to prepare individuals to lead fruitful lives and build a more sustainable world. But how do students and families in the twenty first century view what constitutes a fruitful life and a sustainable world? For many it has less to do with engaging in service to the local community and has more to do with creating opportunities to do exciting and adventurous things in a world well beyond the local neighbourhood. Schooling may have increasingly less

to offer in terms of preparing oneself for a role in the community, and become more focused on preparing one for work in the global economy.

3.1.3 Separatist interests and school community

In NSW non-selective public schools continue to relate to their local neighbourhood community. But some private schools seek relationships with separate parts of community - often they are based on shared religious beliefs. They might be Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Jewish or Islamic schools. These relationships add another layer to the ways schools and communities might work together for sustainability. Separatist communities may have particular values and beliefs about sustainability that are related to their religious values and ways of viewing the natural world.

3.1.4 Independence, community action and school community

A school and its 'community' can be strengthened by a shared commitment to undertaking some sort of advocacy campaign or social action. The school could, for the time of the campaign, become part of a wider community coalition. Fort St High School in inner Sydney, for example, took a stance against aircraft noise and was part of wider community coalition campaigning on that issue.

There is a long and proud tradition of building school communities through struggles to define an independent voice and express a commitment to political values. In the late 18th and well into the 19th centuries some working class communities in England developed, managed and controlled their own schooling and informal education networks. This was at a time when the ruling classes seriously contended that either the working classes do not deserve the privilege of schooling or if they do go to school they should only learn menial skills. This working class self-education movement organised independently run schools, study groups, a free radical press, and other learning activities. Education was overtly political inasmuch as it was driven by a desire to enable working people to understand their society, and to help them transform it for the better.

There are contesting views about what is worthwhile education. Some would argue that this sort of education for community action does not fit into a school curriculum. Others argue that such learning can define schools as more independent and more community minded and that in the long run this would help students learn about and take action for sustainability.

3.1.5 Community service, business partnerships and school community

In this tradition schools organise community service projects and work-experience projects for students. There are three aspects of this tradition to highlight.

The first aspect is that of schools, especially privileged and elite schools, being of service to disadvantaged communities. During the nineteenth century numerous public schools in England and North America established residential settlements in poor inner-city areas. These enabled current and ex-students to undertake projects designed to improve the moral and social well-being of the poor. This type of community service can offer young people a genuine learning opportunity rarely available within the classroom. It is a tradition that is transferable for the purpose of advancing sustainability.

While the NSW public school system has established a network of environmental education field centres they have yet to establish specific links with disadvantaged groups or communities for sustainability projects. A more common links is developing through a

number of public housing community garden projects that link to local schools or schools in disadvantaged areas that open up their community garden to disadvantaged groups in their local community.

The second aspect is that of building partnerships with businesses for fund-raising purposes.

The third aspect is that community service and business partnerships provide valuable opportunities for students to engage in project-based learning activities. In some cases, this provides opportunities for people in community service agencies or businesses to act as mentors to school students. Business and community service projects can have sustainable development goals.

3.1.6 Consumerist and market-driven communities and school community

With the increasing number of private schools and the encouragement of public schools to become more specialised, schools are being defined increasingly by their marketability. Prospective students and their families ask - how popular are they? How many students are there on the waiting lists? What do they offer that other schools don't. And so, school communities can be increasingly defined as groups of consumers willing to apply for and pay for a particular service. There are those who argue that these sorts of school-community relationships add more value to the quality of teaching and learning than any other forms of school-community relationships.

There are tensions. On one hand, there are proud traditions of public education, of inclusive education, of education that seeks to foster values of democracy, sharing, egalitarianism, mateship, caring, tolerance and compassion, and of concern about our environment. On the other hand, there are strong traditions of individual pursuit of wealth and of consumerism - urging parents to view themselves as autonomous consumers shopping in a market place for the best deal for their child.

3.1.7 An inward sense of a whole - school community

Perhaps it is utopian for schools to think of building community by looking outwards. It may be more constructive to support enduring efforts to build a sense of community by looking inwards. Emphasis on the importance of building a sense of community within schools is hardly new. Numerous strategies have been adopted including:

- compulsory dress codes imposing uniformity;
- encouragement of team games;
- sponsorship of collective productions - eg. school trips and school plays;
- imposition of rules requiring respect for the rights of others;
- creating an ambience of community within the classroom through group activities, collaborative learning, décor and layout;
- participation in competitions with other schools fostering acceptable forms of 'us against them';
- organisation of clubs and social activities which draw students together, cement friendships and encourage a common identity;
- creation of caring ethos often supported by specialist staff such as year co-ordinators, counsellors; and
- democratising management structures.

This tradition places a focus on building a relationship across the school with its students; its parents; its teaching, administrative and cleaning staff. In other words, it is about building a

whole-school community. This can generate a critical mass as opposed to a lone teacher championing a particular project. But whole-school community approaches can also be inward-looking.

3.2 *Practice guides to developing community-school frameworks and models*

We have selected four reports or papers that offer guidance about planning community-school relationships. The first two are descriptive in that they offer practical, 'how-to-do' advice for planning relationships. The other two are analytical and can be used to help practitioners reflect on the type of relationship their school and community currently have and may want to change to.

3.2.1 *Epstein framework*

A framework to support the development of community-school partnerships that enhance student learning was developed by Joyce Epstein (2001) from John Hopkins University who has researched and written extensively on school, family and community partnerships in the US for more than a decade. She developed a framework based on six different types of involvement between schools and communities. They are:

TYPE 1--Parenting: Assist families with parenting and child-rearing skills, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions that support children as students at each age and grade level. Assist schools in understanding families.

TYPE 2--Communicating: Communicate with families about school programs and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.

TYPE 3--Volunteering: Improve recruitment, training, work, and schedules to involve families as volunteers and audiences at the school or in other locations to support students and school programs.

TYPE 4--Learning at Home: Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-linked activities and decisions.

TYPE 5--Decision Making: Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through PTA/PTO, school councils, committees, and other parent organizations.

TYPE 6--Collaborating with the Community: Coordinate resources and services for families, students, and the school with businesses, agencies, and other groups, and provide services to the community (Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships, John Hopkins University 2005, www.csos.jhu.edu)

Only Type 6 focuses specifically on partnerships with the community. The main features of this part of Epstein's framework for creating and maintaining a school, family and community partnership are:

- create an Action Team in each school which includes teachers, an administrator, other relevant school staff, parents, and a community representative;
- obtain funds and other support;

- identify starting points;
- develop a three-year outline and a one-year action plan; and
- continue to plan and review annually (Epstein 2001:416).

A recently released family-schools framework developed by ACSSO and drawing on Epstein's work is being used by the Australian government department of education in a national trial of family-school partnerships that will include 6 NSW schools (DEST 2005).

3.2.2 PSFP framework

One of the NSW DET equity program areas - the Priority Schools Funding Program (PSFP) - has also emphasised over a number of years the importance of home, school, and community partnerships in supporting student learning. For the PSFP its main focus is on ways that schools can work more effectively with parents and families to support students. It sees parents as being the most important group outside the school to work with as a support in developing student learning.

At the same time the program also sees the need for schools to work with the local community - community is described as being other government departments, agencies and community groups. According to the PSFP working with the community requires schools to:

- know their community;
- know what school activities could be supported by collaboration with other agencies;
- develop networks in the community; and
- draw on the resources available to support the school (DET 2003a:24).

A more specific focus on inter-agency collaborations was also developed by the PSFP (DET 2003). The framework to support this involvement sets out five key steps for a school:

- getting to know other community agencies;
- using other community agencies;
- developing joint activities with other community agencies;
- developing community capacity and governance; and
- changing school culture (DET 2003:9).

3.2.3 Scottish popular education framework

A different way of thinking about partnerships was taken in a more analytic Scottish popular education framework that was developed out of a major study of school-community collaborative partnerships across Scotland (Martin et al 1999, Tett et al 2001). The framework focused on two sets of key dimensions of partnerships.

One set outlined by Ian Martin and colleagues from the University of Edinburgh (1999: 68) focused on four key dimensions - the values, purpose, tasks, and conditions - in collaborative partnerships between schools, parents and community. How practitioners see these dimensions shapes the kind of partnerships that develop.

- *Values and Purpose* are closely inter-related. Values refer to the beliefs about working together, who one works with and why. The purpose refers to the aims and objectives of a partnership - what they are trying to achieve.
- *Tasks* refer to the set of activities involved in a partnership, the way they are organised and carried out, what is done, who is involved, and how they are involved.

- *Conditions* refers to the particular community and school context or conditions in which a partnership is set up, the key policy and organisational factors that shape and impact on the partnership.

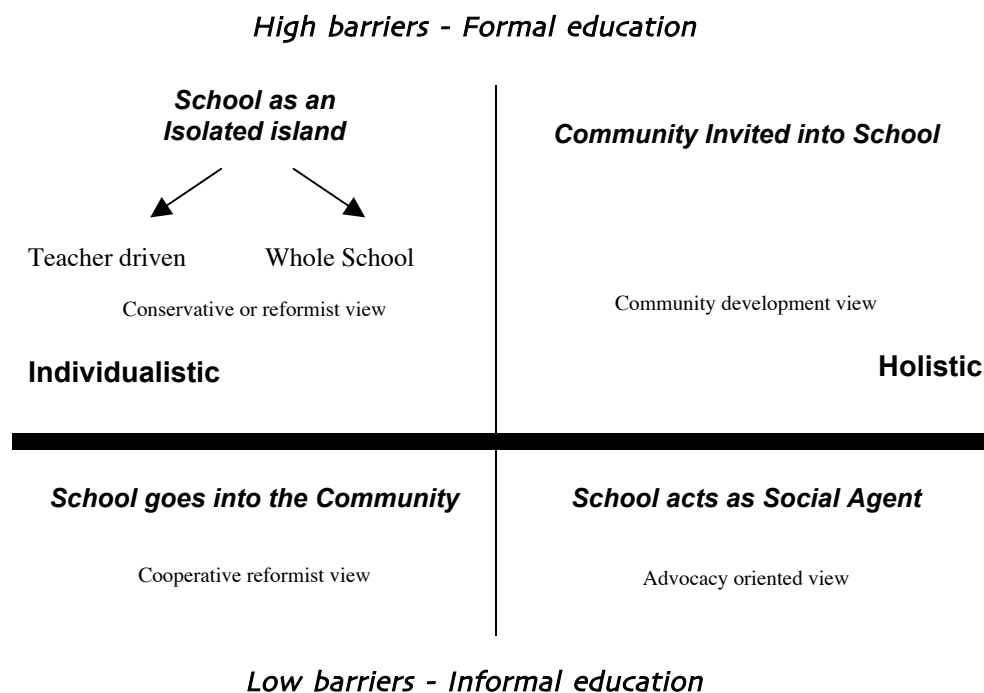
The other set of dimensions outlined by Lyn Tett and colleagues also from the University of Edinburgh (2001) focused on two continuums of practice they believed were crucial in understanding how relationships develop - the nature of the *pedagogic purpose* of a relationship and the type of *institutional boundaries* involved in any school community collaborations or partnerships.

In any community-school relationship there will be a continuum of pedagogic purposes. At one end there is more value placed on the personal and educational development of individual learners (*individualistic purpose*). At the other end of the continuum value is placed on a holistic and inclusive approach to learning where it is important for both individuals and the community to develop and learn (*holistic purpose*).

The second continuum refers to *institutional boundaries* - whether the school staff place high or low boundaries between themselves and the community. At one end where a school is focussed internally, seeing learning as only taking place within the school and seeing only a minor role for parents and the community, it has a *high boundary*. At the other end where a school sought to engage others in learning and include both parents and community, both inside and outside the school, it has a *low boundary*.

Considering both these dimensions led to the development of a four part framework that combined these two key dimensions in four distinct quadrants, enabling partnerships to be analysed as focussing on either:

1. *pupil development* – individualistic purpose with high institutional boundaries;
2. *individual development* – individualistic purpose with low institutional boundaries;
3. *citizen development* - holistic purpose with high institutional boundaries; or
4. *whole community development* - holistic purpose with low institutional boundaries.



Community-school relationships will be stronger the closer they are to the end of one continuum. Where there are low institutional boundaries and there is a holistic purpose, in other words when they are situated in the advocacy oriented quadrant.

3.2.4 Uzzell models

David Uzzell (1999) from the University of Surrey argues that environmental education is invariably based on a teaching and learning model which is top-down and centre to periphery. He is critical that schools do not work more closely with communities and create more opportunities for children to learn by engaging in environmental action. He proposes four models of the relationship between schools and communities. The models see the school as either:

- working on its own - *School as an isolated island*;
- inviting the community into the school - *Local community invited into school*;
- being a guest in the local community - *School as a guest in the community*; or
- working together with the community - *School as a social agent*.

3.2.4.1 School as an isolated island

In this model of environmental education the learning takes place only *within* the school. Generally it involves activities or projects within the classroom or the school grounds and does not engage with or deal directly with the local community. If local environmental issues are addressed in any way by the school, teachers or students, they do so indirectly.

A suggested modification to this model, based on our research for this study, distinguishes between a teacher led model and a whole school model. The teacher led model involves individual teachers working with students (usually one class at a time) on environmental issues within the school. While the whole school model is where the whole school community are involved in activities or projects. This would include teachers, students, administrative staff, cleaners, canteen, P & C's and OOSH centre staff.

3.2.4.2 Local community invited into school

In this model members of the local community (agencies, local councils, or local groups) are invited into the school to discuss or take part in specific issues or projects that impact or take place within the school. Mostly this involves presentations, talks or discussions and the issues raised are usually related directly to particular learning areas and particular school classes or years. The model does include a range of activities where agencies or community groups or parents may be invited into the school to assist with a school-based project like a developing a garden, or a bio-diversity project in the school grounds.

3.2.4.3 School as a guest in the community

In this model teachers and students become involved *outside* the school and becomes involved in specific local environment issues and actions in and with the local community. According to Uzzell in this model the actions are mostly initiated and controlled by the school. They can include such activities as classes monitoring a local creek or taking part in a dune care restoration project.

3.2.4.4 School as a social agent

This is another model where the school goes *outside* into the community and works with groups from outside the school, with the aim of bringing about significant change for

sustainability in the community. Community members may come into the school and pupils are active in the local community. In this model actions take place both in the school and the community. Examples include where a school becomes involved as a partner in local environmental campaigns such as the struggle against aircraft noise, or the preservation of native habitats from development or acting to stop the building of a freeway.

The emphasis in this form of environmental education was to encourage within pupils the development of responsible, action-oriented strategies to solve real concrete problems within their local environment and thereby understand more fully not only how the natural but also the social, cultural and political environments operate in practice (Uzzell 1999, p. 412).

Drawing on the models described above we analysed 30 schools participating in the Sustainable Schools Program and rated by the program as outstanding schools within their own region (SSP 2004). We found that:

- 16% of the 30 schools did not relate to communities directly and the only environmental education that occurred was through the efforts of an individual teacher (school as an isolated island teacher driven);
- 70% did not relate to external community groups directly but had developed a whole-school community approach where students and staff across the syllabus, administrative and maintenance staff, and the parent body were involved in sustainability education (school as an isolated island with whole-school approach);
- 46% have invited members of the local community into the school to contribute to the teaching of a particular subject area (local community invited into school);
- 20% of the schools had initiated and developed relationships with external groups and included learning and action for the environment in the local community in their teaching program (school as a guest in the community); and
- Only 10% were directly involved in learning and action for the environment inside and outside the school (school as a social agent).

These findings can only be seen as indicative because they rely on a 'text analysis.' A SSP program officer prepared summary descriptions of 30 schools from reports sent to her by SSP field staff. We used these descriptions to deduce which type of relationship existed between each school and community. Having made these qualifications the findings of this text analysis resonate with the accounts we generated from our roundtable workshops.

3.3 Administrative models

3.3.1 *Enviroschools New Zealand*

The *Enviroschools* program in New Zealand has evolved over a period of time, beginning just over 12 years ago. Importantly it sits administratively outside the school education system and is run by a charitable trust - the *Enviroschools* Foundation. The main role of the Foundation is to provide support and strategic direction at both a national and regional level.

An important aspect of the program is the organization of community partnerships and networking at both a national and regional level (*Enviroschools* 2005). A recent development is the requirement for organisations who want to be involved in the program to formalise their relationships with the program (usually through an MOU). Setting in place formal partnerships is seen as a way of building in a degree of stability and continuity in these relationships for both the participants and the program.

National and regional levels

At the national level the Enviroschools Foundation partners with the Ministry of Education's Environmental Education Professional Development Programme, a Mauri charitable trust (Te Mauri Tau Inc), the Department of Conservation, and the New Zealand Association of Environmental Educators (NZAEE).

Regionally the program is supported by regional co-ordinators and facilitators, who are paid for by local councils. Partnerships are also organised at a regional council level. The Foundation, the NZAEE and schools in 14 regions of New Zealand work together with partners who provide funding, people, and networking to the program schools.

The partners involved vary from region to region and are drawn from local councils, community environmental groups or trusts, training facilitators and educational colleges or universities. Businesses are also being connected to schools through links with a number of business networks. About 220 primary schools now participate in the program across New Zealand and the program says it takes a 'whole school' approach to environmental education which is designed to outlast the lone enthusiastic individual teacher (Stevenson 2005).

3.3.2 Victorian SSP model

The Victorian Sustainable Schools Program is also organised administratively to sit outside the Victorian Department of Education. It is located as an initiative of two non-government organizations - the CERES Community Environment Park and the Gould League.

According to Armstrong & Bottomley (2003:6) a key feature of the Victorian SSP model is "collaboration between governments, schools and partnerships at national, state and local level ... focussing on targets ... encouraging school ownership of the program and culture change in the whole school community".

The program has built on the experience of a previous Victorian program - the EcoRecycle Waste Wise Schools Program. The organisations involved now include agencies such as EcoRecycle Victoria, Sustainable Energy Authority Victoria, the Environment Protection Authority, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, water companies, and other corporations.

Like other SSP programs it addresses four key themes – waste and litter, energy and air quality, water and stormwater, and biodiversity and natural resources (Armstrong & Bottomley 2003:7). Setting targets is seen as a key factor driving the program. The Victorian SSP program aims to assist schools to achieve the following measurable outcomes in the first year - reduce waste to landfill and litter in the school yard by 50%; reduce water use in the school by 15%; reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions from the school by 10%; expand the area of gardens by 20%; increase biodiversity in the school ground by 50% (CERES 2005).

At the same time the program has included a strong focus on the development of plans to engage the whole school community - in particular parents - and the building of links with families and local communities. However most of the focus to date appears to be on activities within schools and providing schools with resources, services and support. Among the main services provided to schools have been:

- sustainability audits & consultants to assist with audits;
- strategies to develop an overall long-term school sustainability plan - assistance with setting targets, action plans for operations and curriculum & implementation;
- professional development and awareness building;

- curriculum resources linking curriculum to practical action, cost-saving ideas, reference material;
- follow-up and assistance with monitoring;
- coordination of the whole program;and
- a school help-line (CERES 2005).

3.3.3 Queensland SSP model

A key feature of the Queensland Environmentally Sustainable Schools Initiative (QESSI) is its Alliance model. The Alliance is described as a network of people and organisations that have a shared understanding of education for sustainability working in a voluntary cooperative model.

The Alliance model is based on the understanding that organisations will want to be involved in supporting and working with the program, but their level of involvement will vary. QESSI have created a range of membership categories to allow for the different degrees of involvement by partnering organizations - ranging from core members to partner members, affiliate members, sponsors, friends and supporters (DEA2004: b-2).

The core members include the Department of Education and the Arts (Education Queensland), the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency, and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. Among the partner members are Sustainable Futures Australia, Keep Australia Beautiful, the Gould League, and agencies such as Queensland Transport (Travel Smart program), Envirocom (Wipe Out Waste program), Energex and Ergon (Energy Efficiency in Schools program).

Regionally two key features of the support for local action in schools are regional plans and regional hubs. The hubs are mostly drawn from the existing network of DEA Outdoor and Environmental Education Centres across Queensland and supplemented by state department or local council facilities (DEA 2004:d1).

4. Community and schools working for sustainability

When planning community-school relationships we suggest that it is important to understand the different perspectives of the various key stakeholders. There can be diverse views in the community, within schools and their regional offices. While there is always common ground, acknowledging the impact of these differences on relationships for sustainability - at a program, regional or local level - is important in the development of more effective partnerships.

In this chapter we describe relevant sustainability activities and programs and analyse the views about how community-school relationships can be developed and maintained, from both a community and a school perspective. The views are drawn from insights provided by participants in our series of roundtable discussions and an SSP workshop with local councils.

4.1 Views from the community

Which particular community views are reflected here? It was decided to focus on groups and organisations that had an interest in working with schools for sustainability. A preliminary mapping process helped identify:

- particular organisations, groups, networks, associations, consultants ; and
- a person who had responsibility for work with schools or was delegated by the organization or groups to attend.

The key organisations and groups in the community who this study found to have an interest in working with schools were:

- local councils;
- agencies involved in managing water, energy, and waste;
- regional and local community based environmental groups; and
- parent groups and parents, and school based before and after care centres (OOSH).

4.1.1 Agencies - Local Councils

Each local council is a key organization in its local community because of the large number of environmental and sustainability issues each council is directly involved in. At the same time councils have been expanding their links with local schools on environmental issues.

Increasingly larger local councils are employing staff whose job includes working with local schools on environmental issues. Some councils employ environmental educators with a wide brief across their community, while others employ staff who work on specific issues such as waste and recycling, stormwater, creeks and rivers, bush care and regeneration. This means there are now a number of different areas and various people within a council who potentially can develop links with local schools and work together for sustainability.

This study found that local councils also had links and were often closely involved with local community based environment groups in their area. In some cases the Council funded the groups, included council staff on the group's management committee, or at least was aware of the group, its activities and who to contact.

Councils also receive targeted state and federal funding to address specific environmental issues councils such as stormwater, biodiversity, bush regeneration, salinity, waste, air and water quality.

According to a recent SSP consultation with local councils (DEC 2004a) local government environmental educators often approach schools to be involved in:

- specific programs such as Stormwater and Bushcare; and
- special environmental focus days such as Clean Up Australia Day, Enviro Fairs or Enviro Expo Days.

Council staff also said they were also responding to requests from local schools for information, resources or assistance with school environmental audits. Engagement with schools generally had a local focus near to the school and was often reactive to the needs expressed by the schools at the time. Also there seemed to be only limited opportunities for council staff to engage in discussions with teachers often due to time issues and the large number of schools in their area. Engagement with non-government schools was seen as difficult. Although one northern city council said it has established education groups that meet regularly and included representatives from local non-government schools (DEC 2004a).

One regional city council reached its local schools through a variety of sustainability projects it organised and funded - particularly projects in local creeks, bushland, bush regeneration, tree planting, and clean ups. It also published an annual Green Page directory and organised an annual small environmental grants program for schools to support a range of school based projects.

Among its latest initiatives the council was also developing an environmental education program called *Schools as Good Bushland Neighbours* which was developed in consultation with a range of other local agencies, DET and community groups. It will initially work with 10 local schools who are near nature reserves. The aim of the program is to preserve habitats and protect plants and wildlife in the school grounds and local areas (NCC 2004).

A similar initiative is underway in a southern Sydney shire with the council bringing schools together in a *Greenweb* program to protect and enhance native plant and animal populations in key bushland habitats in the area (SSC 2004).

Another council runs a *Kids Environment Education Program (KEEP)* program for local schools aimed at year 3 and 4 primary school classes and a mini- KEEP for K-2 classes. Presented by council staff in schools the program focuses on waste, recycling, stormwater, creek pollution, native plants and animals (FCC 2004).

Another recent development among some councils is for council waste educators to provide regular talks on waste issues and organise tours to new hi-tech waste processing facilities for classes from K-12 in schools across their municipality (NCC & FCC 2004).

4.1.1.1 Curriculum

Although curriculum issues were not raised often in this study's roundtable discussions, in the SSP workshop organised with a group of Sydney councils, there was some interest expressed in "gain(ing) greater knowledge of the curriculum (process) and the relevant time to approach schools" about council programs and activities (DEC 2004a). With the NSW Board of Studies review of the mandatory outcomes for NSW K-6 syllabuses, council staff expressed concern "over the reduction of environmental education outcomes identified through the HSIE and Science and Technology Syllabuses" (DEC 2004a).

4.1.1.2 Developing relationships

The roundtable discussions highlighted the importance of schools developing relationships with their local council - finding out about the available council programs and services, who are the key personnel, and on what issues was there potential for valuable interactions between councils and schools to develop.

A number of councils said they were committed to exploring new ways of engaging with their local schools in various environmental projects - both as participants and partners (DEC 2004a).

At a program level a representative from the Local Government and Shires Association (LGSA) was included as part of the SSP Steering Committee. Given that the SSP is moving into a further stage of development, it may be timely for the SSP to explore at a program level with the LGSA ways of developing a more strategic and ongoing relationship between the SSP and local councils.

There are a number of regional groupings of councils, such as WESROC in western Sydney and REROC in the Riverina, where appropriate contact could prove of some value. The DET Environmental Education Centres in each region have the potential to be a key regional player linking councils and schools and supporting the development of relationships.

At a local level a number of strategies are likely to be needed to support councils and schools to work more effectively together. In the first instance individual schools need to be encouraged to make contact with their local council and explore the development of either project based or ongoing relationships. Where groups of schools form networks they need to be supported and encouraged to include work with other agencies, especially their local councils.

4.1.2 Agencies – water, energy & waste

There are a number of other key agencies - water authorities, catchment authorities, energy providers, and waste services - that are involved in providing services and programs to schools. For the SSP these agencies can play an important role in working with schools in the key SSP areas of school resources, school grounds and in some cases linking to the school curriculum.

These agencies are important because of the various sustainability programs and projects they are involved in. They also have access to particular sets of skills and expertise, and, in some cases, funding to support their initiatives. When approached most indicate they are keen to work with schools at a regional or local level.

Each agency usually operates in a particular area of the state, and the boundaries do not align with either local government areas or school regions, making it difficult to know where their boundaries are.

A number of specific school focussed programs that aim at reducing the consumption of, the maintenance or improvement in the quality of natural resources were identified during this study. The main ones were:

- *Streamwatch* program (Sydney Water);
- *Every Drop Counts* schools program (Sydney Water);
- *Rainwater Tanks in Schools* program (Sydney Water);
- *Solar for Schools* program (DEUS);

- *Solar Cities* program (DEUS) and
- *Recycling* services – Visy Recycling, Kurrajong Recyclers, SCRAP.

4.1.2.1 Water

Sydney Water organises a number of schools programs. *Streamwatch* is one example of an ongoing collaboration between an agency and schools addressing water quality in rivers and streams in Sydney, Hawkesbury Nepean and the Illawarra. The program has grown since it began as a pilot in 1990 and now involves students from more than 160 schools. It continues to make a positive and sustained contribution to collecting data and monitoring the health of rivers and streams.

Every Drop Counts is another Sydney Water program that includes a schools component. By the end of 2004 Sydney Water had worked with more than 100 schools in its regions - examining the school's water use, encouraging the school to learn about the water cycle, how water is used in both the home and schools, conduct water audits, and develop a water saving plan.

The *Rainwater Tanks in Schools* was another Sydney Water program that was made available to both government and non-government schools in the Sydney, Blue Mountains and Illawarra regions connected to a Sydney Water main. Schools were required to develop a water conservation plan and received a rebate of up to \$2,500 of the cost of installing a rainwater tank of at least 10,000 litres. About 140 schools had registered to take part in the program by the end of 2004.

4.1.2.2 Energy

Energy companies such as Energy Australia, Integral Energy, Country Energy, Australian Inland, and AGL operate in particular parts of the state and are engaged in various energy reduction and green energy programs in the areas they serve. Most see the potential for developing better relations with schools. While some already approach schools individually, they recognise the need for more strategic ways of working with schools across their regions.

One green energy program that has focussed specifically on schools is the *Solar for Schools Program*. Sponsored by Integral Energy, the program was run through a partnership between DET and SEDA, which is now part of the Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability (DEUS). The program works with schools to install solar power systems to generate electricity from sunlight. It also includes a curriculum component. By the end of 2004 there were 43 NSW schools with solar systems installed under the program. The *Solar Cities* program is a new Commonwealth funded initiative to trial solar power, energy efficiency, smart electricity meters and new electricity pricing methods.

4.1.2.3 Waste

Waste management and recycling services are also organised regionally and cover particular areas. The service providers also see that links with their local schools are important. For a number of years SCRAP - a non-profit group based in Sydney has worked on waste management and recycling issues with schools. Now there are a number of companies that are available to schools in particular regions such as Visy Recycling, Summerhill Recycling, or Kurrajong Recyclers who provide recycling services to schools for the collection waste. Visy have a state government contract to pick up waste from schools at a set price depending on the region. Also as we mentioned earlier, local councils and waste management companies organise school field trips to their facilities for students to learn about waste management and assist schools in developing better waste management and recycling systems.

4.1.2.4 Curriculum

While many programs developed by agencies include a resource package and some are supported by facilitators who visit schools, few have linked their program to the school curriculum. A feature of the *Sydney Water - Every Drop Counts* program for schools and the *Solar Schools Program* was the development of teaching materials. The *Every Drops Counts* program also developed a teaching package for Stage 3 (years 5 & 6) primary school students. The eight lesson program was developed with the assistance of NSW DET curriculum representatives to ensure the package linked directly into the school curriculum and school environmental plans. In addition the program sets out to help school manage their grounds better and focuses on behavioural change strategies and activities that do not cost schools any money.

4.1.2.5 Building links

The participants from agencies who took part in the roundtable discussions indicated that they and their agencies were interested in building links with schools. They were keen to explore new ways of linking more effectively with schools, and of working with other agencies who are already working with schools for sustainability issues.

A number of the agency participants expressed strong support for schools carrying out environmental audits. They saw this was a good way for a school to gain a better understanding of the resources they were using. It was also an important step along the way to introducing changes that would contribute to sustainability and make savings for the school.

Also among the recently formed catchment management authorities (CMA) across NSW, each authority had or would be employing catchment education staff on the ground who would be making contact with schools. These staff would be working with both students and staff to make them more aware of catchment management issues and engage school in new initiatives when they were announced.

In the case of one regional catchment authority it already employed five CMA Community Support Officers who worked with the seven local Landcare groups in one LGA. It reported that a number of its staff were already involved in some educational work with local schools.

Again a key factor in working with these agencies that emerged from the discussions was knowing who to contact. It can be particularly difficult at a local level for schools to know who to contact, where to go to try and initiate a relationship or take part in a program. The lack of appropriate information was seen as a major barrier to the development of any relationships.

4.1.3 Community environmental groups

For this study the mapping process revealed that there were a number of community based environmental groups, networks and associations active in each local government area, in regions and with statewide initiatives that had an interest and the potential to be more connected with schools for sustainability. One roundtable discussion brought together key participants at the program level (groups that had a statewide or national organization) while the others did so at the local government area level. At the local level the groups were based in the local area and usually focussed on a specific local environmental issue - a creek or river, bush reserve, local habitat, flora and fauna, transport or air quality issue.

4.1.3.1. Program level

The national or statewide groups contacted were:

- Conservation Volunteers (also locally based)
- Greening Australia (also locally based)
- Bio-diversity - National School Tree Planting Day (Planet Ark);
- Campaigns - Greenpeace, Critical Mass, Planet Ark.

There were also a number of key peak bodies, networks, associations and environmental consultants working with schools and local communities:

- Peak body: NSW Nature Conservation Council;
- Networks and Associations: Australian Association for Environmental Education (AAEE); National Environmental Educators Network (NEEN); Australian Water Association(AWA); Sydney Environmental Educators Network; EcoEdge Network (Lake Macquarie); and
- Environmental consultants: Oz GREEN; Elton Consulting; Green Measures (Wagga/ACT).

4.1.3.2 Local groups

Among the local groups involved in three local roundtable locations were:

- local Landcare groups, Conservation Volunteers, Greening Australia groups, Wilderness Walkers; Friends of the Lagoon;
- a Community Creek Clean Up group; a Five Creeks group; an Indigenous Flora Park group; a Flying Fox group; a creeks and wetlands group; and
- Community Greening, a Creeks Alive group, a Coastcare group, a Tree preservation group, a Society of Frogs and Reptiles, and a Nature Watch Diary project.

4.1.3.3 Regional projects

A number of community-school projects that involved schools across a region were described at the roundtable discussions. A feature of these projects was that school involvement was generally initiated by the community group and was made possible because the group had received specific program or project funding.

In a large regional centre links were often maintained as a result of contacts made through previous project funding eg. a stormwater project had built links for a local group to work with two local schools in helping to maintain creeks and monitor water quality. While in a smaller regional centre after a group had successfully involved local students from a number of schools in cleaning up the local lagoon, the group was looking at new ways of continuing to engage with these schools.

Conservation Volunteers

Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) has worked with schools across one rural region for a number of years. They have been able to take groups of students on 4 to 5 day bush camping trips or various habitat improvement projects such as building a walking track or establishing a sanctuary for native birds in the bush. They felt they could engage schools only because of the quality of their program. They had well trained volunteers to run their programs, who were able to assist the school teachers, parents and students involved in any of their activities. They also offer an accredited training program in active volunteering, which appeals to high school students.

Greening Australia

Most schools are important landholders and have remnants of bush in their grounds. Greening Australia (GA) run a program that is offered to schools across a region - western Sydney. The project works across four local government areas (Fairfield, Blacktown, Penrith, Liverpool), and engages with five schools. It involves a three-stage process. In the first stage GA works with schools to carry out a bio-diversity scan of the school grounds, followed by a school visit to the GA community nursery at Doonside to show them how their grounds might look like in the future. Back at the school GA staff work with a class and help them establish new gardens. The gardens can then be used as an outdoor learning area and to attract back native animals and birds by planting Cumberland Plain flora. GA usually make contact with a school through an environment group or garden club. In one school the garden club is an alternative to the sports program. GA also offer tree-planting days in their community nurseries, which some schools do year after year. GA are also involved in plant propagation, organising class excursions to their nurseries, and visits and talks in schools.

Oz GREEN

Oz GREEN's MYRiveR project is an example of a regional project involving many schools, students and local communities in an active project for rivers in NSW. Oz GREEN is an independent not for profit organizations that started the MYRiveR project to strengthen the capacity of young people, their families and communities to be informed and active participants in restoring landscapes to better health, and building sustainable ways of living and working throughout their river catchment.

The Oz GREEN model involves students, together with families and local communities, in a process of monitoring and testing a river, developing a vision and an action plan, and implementing the actions in the local community. Over three years from 2002 to 2004 Oz GREEN worked on MYRiveR school projects in 3 different river catchments in NSW – the Murrumbidgee, the Darling and the Murray. The Murray river project in 2004 not only saw actions taken locally along the river, but students from the Murray river project were invited to a sitting of the South Australian Parliament to present their plan for the river (Oz GREEN 2004).

4.1.3.4 Local links

What emerged from the roundtable discussions was that at the local level most community based environmental groups and schools were finding it a challenge to form and maintain relationships for sustainability. While the groups were active, generally they were quite small and relied on a few dedicated volunteers. Most reported having some links with schools and some school involvement in projects they had undertaken. But at the time of the roundtable discussions, most of the local community environmental groups said they were struggling to engage with schools in more than just one off short term projects or events. Some groups reported it was a struggle to reach their local neighbourhood communities and involve members of the community, let alone make contact with local schools.

Members of groups expressed the view that it would be mutually beneficial to build relationships with the schools who were in close proximity to a particular creek, river, bushland or habitat that the group was working on. The small local groups recognised their limited knowledge about who to contact in a school and their limited capacity to have people who had the time and ability to plan and build a relationship with a school. The larger groups - those that were better funded and often supported by the local council - were in a better position to build and develop these links.

All the groups involved in the roundtables expressed an interest and a willingness to explore new ways of building relationships with schools as a way of supporting and extending their environmental actions.

4.1.4 Parent groups, parents & OOSH centres

Parents and parent organizations can be seen as straddling both the school and the local community. As such they are in a special position in any community-school relationships because they have a view within both the school and the local community.

4.1.4.1 Parent groups

The roundtables were able to include a representative from parent and citizens groups (P & C) at a state, regional and a local level. A representative of the Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations took part in the SSP Steering Committee during the pilot phase.

At a regional level, there had been little involvement by regional P & C's with the SSP during its pilot phase. But parent association representatives said they were keen to be involved in sustainability initiatives, although they were not always sure about how to get involved with the program. According to one regional P & C president in western Sydney because P & C's now had a regional structure there needed to be communication with them at that level.

At the local level there were examples where schools were involving parents and a representative from the school P & C as members of school environment committees. In some cases the P & C was asked to raise money and help find volunteers for particular school based environmental projects.

4.1.4.2 Parents

Parents described three main challenges they faced when seeking to foster their participation in school and community sustainability initiatives. The first is knowing how much time one can expect parents to contribute. The second is to provide enough information about the school curriculum on environmental topics so that parents know what students were studying and could see the link between projects and their children's school work. Thirdly, for parents involved in local environmental groups, the new school excursion policy requires that OHS, public liability and child protection issues to be addressed.

4.1.4.3 OOSH

Many primary schools have a community based out of school hours centre (OOSH) in the schools grounds or at least nearby their school. They can be a valuable member of any school community but are often overlooked when it comes to building relationships. According to a representative from the association of Out of School Hours care centres in schools (OOSH), centres can become a valuable partner because they run before and after school programs during school terms, and vacation care programs during school holidays. One school teacher reported that their primary school included its OOSH centre on the school environment committee and their principal recognised the opportunities that would arise from collaborating with the centre. One regional OOSH representatives suggested there was a potential for the SSP to link to groups of OOSH centres, through regular council run meetings for all the OOSH centres in their local area.

4.2 Views from schools

The teachers who took part in our roundtable discussions were mostly from government primary schools. But one or two teachers from local non-government schools and at least one high school teacher also participated in each roundtable. A number of consultants from regional DET offices took part, including consultants from the PSFP program and specialist

key learning areas, as well as a regional SSST teacher, and a representative from a DET Environmental Education Centre. Senior school staff included a high school deputy principal, a primary school principal and an assistant principal from a primary school.

School staff reported taking part in a range of sustainability activities across all three key SSP areas - school resources, school grounds and the school curriculum. But most of the activities mentioned took place within schools and only a few involved engagement outside the school with local groups or organizations. Some teachers reported working on their own and being able to initiate things with one or two classes. Others said that their school took a more inclusive approach and tried to engage teachers, students and parents across the school. A few, particularly in smaller regional primary schools, said they had managed to reach across the school and engage their whole school community in plans and activities for sustainability. This meant including not only teachers, students and parents, but also administrative staff, canteen staff and cleaners as well.

4.2.1 School environmental committees and environmental audits

A major achievement of the SSP has been the establishment and operation of school environmental committees and subsequent environmental audits. An example where this worked was in a western Sydney primary school in a socio-economically disadvantaged area. Despite initial scepticism about the value of environmental education among parents, led by an assistant principal and developed over a number of years, the school successfully engaged both parents and students. Initially parents were surveyed about composting, waste management, garden programs, ground improvement ideas. The survey received about a 17% parent response – higher than normal for a parent survey. A SEMP committee was set up with four teachers, eight students and two parents. It worked closely with the school P & C, the canteen, and its cleaners. Meetings are held once a term after school.

While in one large regional city area the implementation of environmental audits focussing the school's efforts on the key areas identified by the SSP - mainly energy and water use, waste and recycling, native plants & habitats. As a result of this work this spread the effort across the school and to other schools in their areas - becoming a feature of the work of a number of other schools.

4.2.2 Resources and grounds

The SSP pilot helped focus on their use of resources in particular water, energy and waste. As mentioned above audits have helped encourage schools to examine the resources they use and to develop ways of reducing their use. One primary school in western Sydney discovered that, as a result of a water audit carried out with the assistance of their local water provider, they were losing a lot of water. The school put in place measures to address the problem, which included checking if water was being stolen during vacation periods.

Numerous school grounds projects have been started, The most commonly mentioned were habitat restoration projects, bush regeneration projects, and school and / or community gardens. Various agencies, community environmental groups, and specialised conservation or nature centres have become involved in these projects. For example one regional city high school has taken a keen interest in restoring the sand dunes near the school and has worked closely with the local community dune care group to restore and rehabilitate the sand dunes.

In the far west of NSW the local power and water authority initiated a regional partnership that included eight local government schools (six primary schools and two high schools), the local council, and a number of other agencies to focus efforts on environmental sustainability issues across the area, including a major focus on water conservation.

At a primary school in western Sydney, a teacher was able to gain the support of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney to set up a community garden at the school. They were given a couple of hundred varieties of plants and four apprentices for two months to establish the garden which is the size of two or three house blocks. Since the garden started in August 2004 about seventy children in years 4, 5 & 6 from the school garden club have worked in the garden with a core group of parents and grandparents from El Salvador, Vietnam & China.

4.2.3 Curriculum

At each of the roundtables and in many of our interviews it was highlighted how desirable it would be to link partnership activities directly with school curricula. And some examples were described. Among a number of primary schools, for example, teachers were linking SEMP inspired efforts on water, energy, waste, and school grounds to particular learning areas and curriculum outcomes. A number of primary school teachers pointed to the possibilities of extending the school SEMP activities into fine arts and performing arts, not just the sciences. We have already mentioned *Streamwatch* and *Every Drop Counts* as examples of partnership programs that present the possibility of being embedded in school lessons.

Much partnership activity with communities is however not linked to curriculum on a long-term basis. Teachers reported organising field visits to centres like their local regional DET environmental education centre, council waste collection or treatment centres, or botanic gardens. Schools were continuing their involvement in one off events, such as clean up days, tree planting day. These provided opportunities for linking the activities to particular learning areas. Participation by students in local bush, dune or habitat regeneration projects also provided a similar opportunity for some class teachers.

4.2.4 Student involvement and environmental advocacy

A few teachers and one principal of a small country primary school were passionate about the involvement of their students in all stages of planning, developing and advocating in the community on behalf of important sustainability issues in their local area. A feature of the work in one southern rural region has been the involvement of students - mostly primary school students - as advocates for sustained environmental change. A number of initiatives have brought students together, involved them in specific projects or congresses, and featured students showcasing their findings to the wider community (MYRiveR projects, Riverina meetings, Murray Youth Congresses).

4.2.5 Networking within regions

A significant development at the time of the local roundtables was the emergence of a number of local networking initiatives by groups of schools within a region. In the latter part of the 2004 a number of members of the SSST were involved in various network initiatives (SSP 2004a). They included West Sydney, South Sydney, and North Sydney regions and added to earlier networking carried out by groups of schools in the Riverina and Hunter regions. Five outstanding SSP schools from across NSW indicated they would be establishing international links with *Green Schools* in China in 2005, and a leading Riverina primary school had organised for a six months teacher exchange with a Green School in China.

Bringing together groups of schools within a region was seen by participants as a way of maintaining the momentum of schools already in the SSP and an effective way of sharing ideas, increasing the number of schools involved in the program, assisting new schools by acting as mentors in developing their plans, and consolidating links with Environment

Education Centres, local councils, agencies, and environmental groups. These networks can often provide the basis for future collaborations or partnerships.

4.2.6 Support for schools to build relationships with communities

Support for the development of links with local communities was seen by teachers as essential. At the school and regional level teachers, executive staff as well as DET consultants believed that the kind of support that had been provided by the SSST teachers in the SSP pilot period during 2003-2004 was vital. This was also supported by findings in a draft SSP evaluation report (Funnell & Larri 2004). Program support driven from a regional level, and where possible at the school level, was seen as important. Locating the support regionally was consistent with the way NSW DET was organised and with how other DET programs were being supported. A number of DET programs used a mix of regional consultants, community information officers, as well as specifically funded school based staff to support their programs.

Teachers in regional NSW believed it was important to have SSP teachers act as a 'lighthouse' for other teachers and schools - to demonstrate what they had done and how they achieved successful results. According to one DET program consultant, there was potential for the SSP to establish links with other DET programs like the Priority Schools Funding Program (PSFP), and work together to reach schools that the SSP found difficult to involve in its pilot phase - particularly schools in disadvantaged areas. The PSFP has published a guide for developing school and community partnerships and commenced professional development workshops.

4.2.7 Environmental Education Centres

An important support for any environmental initiatives like the SSP in NSW are the 23 NSW DET environmental education centres (EECs) and two zoo education centres across the state. Each centre is headed by a school teacher, assisted by other teaching staff and together they design and deliver activities across all age groups and key learning areas (DET 2004a: 30).

Most centres were directly involved in the SSP pilot, and already worked with schools who visited EEC centres as part of particular curriculum related field study trips for both primary and secondary school classes. In one regional EEC the staff reported that they worked closely with all the 20 SSP schools in their region during the SSP pilot, as well as running their ongoing school field study visits program. They were also active in producing a *Green Access* calendar, which listed all key environmental events and organisational contacts for the region. The centre also organised a two day Planet Savers event for primary school children, an environmental competition for Year 11 students, an orientation day for families of kindergarten children, and a shorebird education program.

In another smaller regional centre the EEC had taken on a networking role in its region. It was the base for a local network of schools and relevant local agencies for sustainability and was assisting in the development of a regional sustainability plan. The plan included staff training across the region that drew on the experience of 'demonstration projects' and 'lighthouse teachers' in successful schools to show the way forward for other schools across the region. Another outer suburban EEC centre had also been able to set up a local network of schools for sustainability that included exploring potential links and relationships with the local community.

EECs appear to be in a good position to take up this new expanded regional role. They should be able to do this by supporting networks, linking schools with local agencies and groups, in addition to carrying out their ongoing field trips and curriculum work with individual schools.

4.2.8 Summary - building on links

Community groups or agencies and schools are keen to explore new ways of working together for sustainability and to build on existing links and connections. At the regional level:

- there is potential to engage with a range of groups and agencies and strengthen links and networks;
- agencies would become involved with schools where they had programs or services that could be targeted at schools and help meet mandated energy, water and waste targets; and
- for community groups funding was crucial - where groups had existing funded programs or could tap into additional project or program funding, their capacity to approach and work with schools increased significantly.

At the local level:

- schools remain the drivers of most community-school activities;
- schools continue to link up with agencies and groups on particular issues and specific short term (usually less than a term) projects;
- groups were keen to work with schools but relied on funded projects - often small amounts - to drive their connections with schools; and
- most examples can be described as short term collaborations - we found no examples of formal ongoing partnerships - these had yet to develop.

What emerged clearly was the need to move beyond developing collaborations that were for one-off projects or to address a short-term issue. The challenge was to develop initiatives into longer-term ongoing activities - building on the links and connections already made between communities and schools, moving them along to developing more ongoing collaborations and informal partnerships.

4.3 Key barriers

A large study of partnership programs in US schools (Sanders 2001) found that the main obstacles or barriers to partnerships were a lack of:

- participation by school staff, families, students and community members;
- time;
- community partners;
- leadership;
- funding;
- communication; and
- focus (Sanders 2001: 26) .

A recent Australian study (Hayes & Chodkiewicz 2003) found that the main barriers to effective community-school partnerships in socio-economically disadvantaged communities in the middle school years were:

- lack of time; and
- limited resources.

Other key barriers facing school and district staff were:

- making connections with parents;
- the cultural and social diversity of the local community;
- the lack of school champions in a school;
- the lack of appropriate skills in the community on student learning issues; and
- links with community were not perceived as a core activity for schools.

Parents highlighted:

- poor communication with teachers;
- lack of information from schools; and
- language barriers.

And among local community groups the main barriers were:

- a lack of interest by schools in community based projects;
- teachers felt involvement with the community created extra work; and
- often there was no real reason for the school to establish or maintain a link with a community group (Hayes & Chodkiewicz 2003:19).

4.3.1 Community and school view of barriers

In our roundtable discussions the main barriers to community-school partnerships mentioned by both local community and school participants were:

- lack of resources;
- knowing who to contact;
- communication and sharing of information; and
- child protection and public liability issues,

Participants from the local community also raised a set of other barriers, including:

- parent fears of schools;
- lack of knowledge of schools;
- lack of teacher training, staff turnover and burnout;
- difficulty of finding a consensus;
- lack of incentives; and
- competition among community groups.

While among school and departmental staff the important barriers were:

- priorities & a crowded curriculum;
- relevance of the activity;
- reliance on one dedicated teacher;
- lack of planning and coordination of activities; and
- the cultural diversity of a community; and
- a focus on visible aspects.

These factors from a community and a schools perspective can be summarised in the table below. The first part of the table lists the factors that were similar in both the community and schools, while the bottom section lists the factors that were seen as important but different between the community and schools.

Community	Schools
Resources	Resources & time
Knowing who to contact	Knowing who to contact
Communication	Communication /sharing information
Child protection/public liability	Organising visits –transport, supervision, clearances
Parent fears of school	Priorities & a crowded curriculum
Lack of knowledge of schools	Relevance of activity
Lack of teacher training, staff turnover and burnout	Reliance on one dedicated teacher
Difficulty of finding a consensus	Lack of planning & coordination
Lack of incentives	Cultural diversity of community
Competing community groups	Focus on visible aspects

4.4 Key success factors

There is an extensive discussion in recent literature of the key factors in the success of partnerships in general and of community-school partnerships in particular. Most focus at the local and individual school level - not at the regional or program level. We have drawn together insights from some of the school-community partnerships literature (Welch & Sheridan 1995, Kilpatrick et al 2002, Tett et al 2001, Henderson & Tilbury 2004), together with insights from this study's roundtable discussions, an SSP workshop with local councils (DEC 2004a) and an SSP evaluation report (Funnell & Larri 2004).

In their work on school-community educational partnerships to support students at risk Welch & Sheridan (1995:364) include the following key factors:

- a clear mission statement;
- a coordinating committee;
- involving parents and children in all stages;
- making clear the school is a partner not in charge;
- using both top down and bottom up administration ;
- developing service plans to meet needs;
- management of plans by partners;
- providing staff with training ;
- using systems of accountability; and
- including evaluation procedures.

Note: according to Clark (1992 quoted by Welch & Sheridan 1995:364) in the US almost 80% of school-community partnerships were initiated and driven by the school.

4.4.1 Scottish collaborations

Factors contributing towards effective collaborations, based on research in Scottish schools concluded that the key factors were:

- organisations needed to share or have complementary purposes;
- being clear about the tasks that they were undertaking;
- having time to build up trust in each other; and

- participants operating under similar or complementary conditions, especially in relation to resources, time, money and staffing (Tett et al 2001: 12).

4.4.2 Australian

A recent study in rural communities across Australia found the key factors in effective school-community partnerships were:

- leadership;
- responding to community needs;
- relying on community's own resources and strengths and drawing on outside resources for funding, technical expertise and influence on policy;
- having a long-term orientation; and
- developing strong relationships based on mutual trust and respect (Kilpatrick et al 2002: 16).

In order to maintain the partnerships the most important factors were:

- policy support;
- continuity of resources; and
- effective school public relations (Kilpatrick et al 2002:17).

4.4.3 Whole school approaches

According to the program managers and participants of the sustainability projects that Henderson & Tilbury (2004:46) reported on, if schools were taking a whole-school approach to sustainability, to be effective programs needed to be:

- relevant to school, community and stakeholder needs as well as national curriculum;
- resourced with expertise, supporting materials, facilitators and long term financing;
- reflective including critical reflection and evaluation;
- responsive with a flexible structure to respond to current models of theory and examples of best practice; and
- reformative with the capacity to change according to new ways of thinking and practice.

4.4.4 Key success factors – community and schools

The key success factors based on views from both the community and school sectors in this study, also found some common themes including:

- providing a bigger picture or a context for activities;
- communicating effectively and providing information; and
- involving parents.

According to community participants other important factors were:

- the involvement of the school principal;
- staff involvement, enthusiasm and interest; and
- having an active and supported school environment committee.

While for schools they were:

- clear links to the school curriculum,

- accessing local networks, and
- publicity & doing visible activities that raise the school profile.

The table below summarises the factors identified by both the community and schools, with the top part highlighting the similar factors and the bottom section the three factors that were different in the community and schools.

Community	Schools
A bigger picture	Providing a context
Communicating effectively with schools	Information, communication
Involving parents	Involving parents
Involvement of the school principal	Clear links to the school curriculum
Staff involvement, enthusiasm & interest	Accessing local networks
Active and supported school environment committee	Publicity and doing visible activities that raise the school profile

5. *Ways to strengthen community-school relationships*

This study has found that there are a number of ways the SSP can strengthen community-school relationships for sustainability and build on what was started during the initial SSP pilot phase. Given the size and complexity of the NSW school education system - the thousands of government and non-government schools (primary and high schools) and the geographic spread over 10 school regions - the SSP needs to work at a number of different levels.

While the program may seek to develop a single approach, in practice communities and schools at a local level will develop various types of relationships. It can help to draw on the *relationships continuum* (chapter 2) and consider that a range of relationships need to be encouraged and supported - from links to collaborations, informal and formal partnerships.

We propose participants should consider:

- the type of change they are working for (use the *change continuum* and consider they will be dealing with a range of views from conservative, reformist to transformative); and
- the possibilities that emerge to link formal and informal education.

One way for the SSP to strengthen community-school relationships is for the program to have a specific focus on the development and maintenance of partnerships between communities and schools, and to nominate this as a priority area in the program.

This study has highlighted the importance of:

- ensuring the perspectives of different participants are represented;
- carrying out a mapping exercise and roundtable discussions - they can be useful tools to assist the program to develop more effective relationships;
- establishing and maintaining ongoing relationships with a set of key participants such as local councils, agencies (water, energy, waste), and community based environment groups; and
- developing relationships at three distinct levels - program, regional/area, and local.

The framework outlined below should assist the SSP to develop relationships in a more systematic way. It draws on frameworks and models developed by Martin et al (1999), Tett et al (2001) and Uzzell (1999).

5.1 Mapping - Who are the key participants?

Start a mapping exercise by asking:

- who are the key participants – where links already exist?
- who else could or should be included?
- what kind of strategic relationship is appropriate?

5.1.1 Program Level

Given there are three distinct areas the SSP has focussed on - resources, grounds and curriculum - there may be value in setting up three distinct working groups or networks that bring together key stakeholders with an interest in a specific SSP area. Among the programs to consider working with at a program level are:

- Primary principals & High school principals
- DET Programs (eg EECs, PSFP, Curriculum consultants etc);
- TAFE and ACE;
- Non-Government schools associations;
- OOSH association;
- Federation of P & C's
- Local Councils peak body (LGSA);
- Peak Environment Groups;
- Agencies involved in water, energy, waste and bio-diversity issues; and
- Statewide programs such as *Every Drop Counts*, *Streamwatch*, *Rainwater Tanks*, and *Solar Schools*.

5.2.2. Regional / Area Level

At a regional or area level the SSP could work with and involve:

- Regional groups or networks of schools;
- DET regional office consultants;
- Environmental Education Centres;
- Regional Local Council groupings;
- Regional Environmental Groups and networks;
- Regional Agencies involved in water, energy, waste and bio-diversity such as local catchment authorities, energy suppliers, and waste services.

5.2.3. Local Community / School Level

At the local community and school level an important first step to consider was identifying who were the key participants in any relationships for sustainability both *within* the school and *outside* the school. This meant focussing on:

- the whole school – school executive, head teachers, support staff, administrative staff including grounds, canteen, cleaning staff;
- parents and the school P & C; and
- the local community – the local council, local agencies, local environmental groups, local businesses with an interest in sustainability.

5.2 Action framework

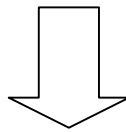
The proposed Action Framework involves a set of additional stages and key questions.

ACTION FRAMEWORK

Stage 1 Exploratory

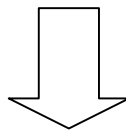
Roundtable discussions to address:

- Purpose
- Values



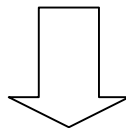
Stage 2 Developmental

- Pedagogic view and boundaries
- Models



Stage 3 Establishing partnerships

- Conditions
- Aims
- Tasks
- Type of mechanism
- Resources and funding
- Time frame



Stage 4 Action Review Cycle: Evaluation, Review and Revision

EVALUATE, REVIEW and REVISE

In this Action Framework *Stage 1 the Exploratory phase* explores both the purpose and the values that underpin the work between the community and schools being undertaken. The key questions to ask would be:

- purpose - what was the purpose of the relationship?
- values - what sort of change was being worked for?

In *Stage 2 Developmental phase* it was important to consider how the program viewed the pedagogic approach being taken in its work for sustainability and what its view about the institutional boundaries between communities and schools could be. These aspects are linked to thinking about which of Uzzell's models would underpin the program's work with schools. Among the questions would be:

- pedagogic view and institutional boundaries - how is the community viewed as a partner in student learning? what is the role for the community?
- model - what model will apply? – a single teacher and class, whole school approach, community invited in, going out into the community, or acting together for change?

In *Stage 3 Establishing partnerships* the aspects to consider would include the conditions, aims, tasks, the type of mechanisms for working together, the resources and funding, and the time frame:

- conditions - what are the key conditions that shape how the community and a school can work with together?
- aims - what are the specific aims of any relationship?
- tasks - what issues can be tackled? What type of leadership? What type of projects or activities? What resources and funding - time, money, staff - can be committed and over what period by participants? Timetables – timeframe?
- mechanisms - what is the appropriate way of working together?
- resources and funding - what resources and funding can be committed?
- time frame - what is the time frame for the relationship?

The final *Stage 4 Action Review Cycle* emphasises the importance of including an Action Review cycle into the program planning so that at the end of a period - after a year or two of activity - the program would carry out an evaluation, a review and a revision of its community school partnership activities. This would involve:

- an evaluation of activities over an agreed time period;
- a review of what had been achieved; and
- a revision of the programs objectives and processes based on the evaluation and review.

6. Further research and conclusion

6.1 Further research

This study has highlighted a number of areas for further research. They include ways of supporting local community based environmental groups working with schools, ways of establishing and maintaining inter-agency collaborations, and a number of evaluation issues.

Supporting local community based environmental groups working with schools

This study has shown that of all the potential partners in community-school relationships, local based community environmental groups remain the least resourced and hardest to engage with in an ongoing way. An important area for future research is to explore ways of supporting local environmental groups to engage and work with schools. An area where these collaborations prove the most difficult to develop are curriculum initiatives.

Inter- agency collaborations

The SSP demonstrated the importance it placed on inter-agency collaborations when it established the pilot program. A key question is what was learnt from the experience with the project Steering Committee and the Joint Agency Support Group? Also what are some of the ways of developing and maintaining inter-agency collaborations and partnerships for sustainability at a program, regional and local level? And what processes help at a local level to move schools to become more involved in networks and inter-agency collaborations?

Evaluation

A feature of the SSP pilot was the SEMP planning process. The plan included a set of indicators that were developed to assist schools in the evaluation of their initiatives. In a similar way, if community-school relationships are developed as a new priority area in the SSP, it will be important to research the development of a set of appropriate and useful indicators for assessing the effectiveness of community-school partnerships for sustainability.

Given the importance placed on developing partnerships at a number of levels - program, regional and local – it will also be necessary to develop indicators that can be used at each of these different levels.

Transformative learning

If one of the aims of the SSP is to achieve significant changes for sustainability, another key area is to research the kinds of transformative learning taking place among schools involved in the program and document the SSP contribution to active citizenship among teachers, students, parents, and the local community.

6.2 Conclusion

The importance of educational initiatives such as the SSP pilot in NSW at a local, regional, state and national level cannot be underestimated. The inclusion of a specific and dedicated focus on the development and maintenance of community-school partnerships seems to be both timely and significant.

For the very reason that partnerships and collaborations are formed - they bring people and organisations together to combine their efforts, resources and talents in an ongoing relationship to achieve essential changes for sustainability.

However if the SSP is to move beyond the rhetoric of community-school partnerships it is evident from the participants in this study that the program needs to take advantage of the considerable potential demonstrated so far and build on what has been achieved in the pilot phase so far.

Participants emphasise their interest in moving further along to establish and maintain new relationships for sustainability. This study has highlighted that potential for the development of more effective and longer term relationships among local communities, councils, agencies and schools. Whether this potential is realised, and the initiatives that develop are supported is a major challenge for the SSP and its committed partners.

Appendix 1: SSP Schools 2003-2004

Schools – Type of schools

SSP Schools	Government	Non Government	TOTAL
Central	5	4	9
High	28	7	35
Agricultural High	2		2
Other	School of the Air Broken Hill		1
Primary	141	10	151
TOTAL	177	21	198

Summary

89% of SSP schools were government schools

11% of SSP schools were non-government schools

76% of SSP schools were primary schools

19% of SSP schools were high schools

5% of SSP schools were central schools.

Schools - Location

SSP Schools	Sydney Metropolitan	Rural	TOTAL
DET High	7	23	30
DET Primary	43	98	141
DET Central		5	5
Other		1	1
NG High	3	4	7
NG Primary	4	6	10
NG Central		4	4
TOTAL	57	141	198

Summary

29% of SSP schools were in the Sydney metropolitan area.

71% of SSP schools were in rural areas of NSW.

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