

## Case Studies

**Name of School:** Laramba School

**School context:** Laramba school is a remote Aboriginal school located 220 km north-west of Alice Springs in the Western Desert of Central Australia.

The Community consists of 250 to 300 people all of whom speak Anmatyerr as their first language. The school has 82 students enrolled ranging from 4 to 17 years of age.

We have four multi-age classes: junior, senior and two secondary classes (separate men and women 's class as of 2006).

The secondary program was implemented 4 years ago to cater for the ongoing education for students beyond primary age on site.

### Issues:

- Health of students in terms of diet and regular intake of vegetables and fruit
- a previously successful garden in the community has been abandoned
- Not enough shade areas in the playground

### Aims:

- to establish a school vegetable garden that includes native plants with whole school input
- to utilise crops in the school cooking and nutrition program
- to create shade areas in the school grounds by propagating and planting native trees
- for students to develop vocational horticultural skills
- to gradually involve the wider community in the school garden
- to ultimately utilise interest and skills in re-establishing the community garden (long term plan)

### Vision:

Community health and well-being improved by taking responsibility for re-establishing and maintaining a community garden for which everyone has ownership and easy access to. Use and preserve cultural knowledge of local indigenous bush tucker and utilise practical horticultural skills.

### What we did:

Learning

<b>Sustainability program – Term 1</b>	<b>Sustainability program – Term 2</b>	<b>Sustainability program – Term 3</b>	<b>Sustainability program – Term 4</b>
Students planned a vegetable garden and prepared the garden for planting. Students discussed the term sustainability and created a concept map.	Students prepared the soil for the vegetable garden. Students also planted seedlings, maintained the garden and kept a photo diary. Students learnt about the life cycle	Students maintained the vegetable garden and researched which seedlings to plant. They planted new seedlings. In mid term students visited	Students mapped the school grounds including designs of shade areas. They completed their power point presentations and presented them briefly to junior and senior classes

	of plants.	Desert Park in Alice Springs to propagate local indigenous shade trees. They installed the irrigation system and kept a gardening diary. They commenced creating a power point presentation using photos from the gardening activities.	(using a data projector). They discussed junior and senior involvement in the vegetable garden. They re-visited Desert Park to re-pot the shade trees that will be ready for planting in 2006.
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#### Students learnt

- How to develop a vegetable garden and plan for development of school grounds
- Be able to make healthy life style choices
- Decision making strategies from school to wider community
- Action planning to bring about change
- Understanding of traditional and modern gathering and cultivation methods

#### Governance

- Whole school has had a say in planning of shade areas and vegetable garden
- Junior and senior classes will be involved in the vegetable garden and tree planting – this term and in 2006
- Laramba community will be involved in planning community vegetable garden with students in 2006

#### Resource Management/School Grounds

- Students have created and maintained a vegetable garden
- Students have produced a landscape design for shade trees
- Students have grown indigenous trees from seed at the Desert park to be planted in 2006

#### Community Links

- Secondary visited Desert Park Alice Springs to plant seeds with nursery staff and botanists
- Links have been established with Greening Australia to organise a tree planting day
- Local nurseries have been consulted in regard to choice of plants
- Ties have been established with CDU horticulture department to source indigenous bush tucker plants for a vegetable garden in 2006
- Waterwatch project (with Lucas Jordan from CDU) has a cross-curricular link with sustainability project by enhancing understanding of local ecosystems

## **What happened?**

### **Educational Benefits**

- Maths – Mapping, measuring, recording data, design and to scale drawings
- Vocational skills – practical horticultural knowledge and skills
- IT – photo diary and power point presentation
- ESL – reading and writing skills
- Science – Life Cycle of plants

### **Social Benefits**

- Health – improved nutrition for the whole school through cooking with produce from the garden
- Working collaboratively as a team
- Accepting more responsibility for maintaining and sustaining a healthier environment
- Enhanced self esteem as a result of what has been produced by their efforts
- Being role models for the younger students and wider community
- Peer tutoring

### **Environmental Benefits**

- Improved school grounds – shade
- Aesthetic value of the school environment
- Dust reduction through improved ground cover

### **Economic Benefits**

- Savings from growing own vegetables