

A DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE DRAFT FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION FRAMEWORK OF THE NATIONAL NUTRITION EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS PROJECT

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This paper presents a discussion of the draft theoretical framework underpinning the work of the National Nutrition Education in Schools (NNES) Project.

The ultimate aim of the NNES Project is for school students (P-12) to develop health promoting nutrition behaviour through the acquisition of knowledge and skills in healthy food selection and preparation, as well as the development of skills in learning, reasoning, communicating, planning, decision making, acting, reflecting and evaluating. It is believed that a sequential and developmental program which addresses these skills will facilitate the development of positive beliefs, attitudes, values and intentions towards health promoting nutrition behaviour.

Many current nutrition education resources are not supported by an explicit theoretical framework (Bremburg 1991). The NNES Project has developed a theoretical framework which recognises the broader socio-economic and environmental determinants of health (Colquhoun 1993) and is founded on a social and emotional, as well as a physical view of health. This view is in correspondence with the nationally developed Health and Physical Education Learning Area Statement (1994) and incorporates the notion of wellbeing as central to the definition of health. Downie et al.(1990) describe true wellbeing as a person's validly based beliefs and feelings about their degree of autonomy or control over their own life. In this respect, health promoting nutrition behaviour, or food choices, are described as those dietary choices which support health in the physical, social, emotional and spiritual domains and which contribute to personal wellbeing.

The NNES Project has therefore developed a draft curriculum framework for Food and Nutrition Education programs which attempts to recognise and capitalise on research in health promotion, effective teaching and learning practices, as well as research into psycho-social factors which influence decision making in health.

This framework has been modified as a result of input from stakeholders in school and community Food and Nutrition education across Australia. Draft lesson sequences based on this framework will be trialled in a major pilot project in the second half of 1994.

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