

DEVELOPMENT OF NUTRITION EDUCATION RESOURCES

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Food and Nutrition Education must be relevant to the needs of the students both in broad educational terms, as well as in terms of the unique skills (or application of skills) it can offer to food related issues. The brief of the National Nutrition Education in Schools (NNES) Project is to produce resources for schools (P-12) across Australia. It is therefore important that participation and input is received from a wide cross-section of stakeholders in school and community Food and Nutrition Education.

NNES is using a facilitated action research process to develop and evaluate materials for nutrition education. The business plan for this process entails a number of phases.

In 1993, contact was made with every school in Australia to seek expressions of interest and willingness to participate as pilot schools. Ten percent of all schools responded, and four percent indicated an interest in being pilot schools for the trial of materials. This initial contact has been continued by regular newsletters to the 1000 schools that responded.

A draft curriculum development framework has been developed in consultation with networks of stakeholders in school and community nutrition education that have been established in each state in Australia. This framework and the nationally developed Health and Physical Education Learning Area documents have formed the basis of a series of sample lesson sequences written for all learning levels. In conjunction with these sample lesson sequences, draft professional development for teachers has been developed to outline the background of the project and describe the theoretical framework, as well as to offer guidance for the use of the draft lesson sequences.

Two Teacher Reference Groups (TRGs), consisting of practising teachers from both primary and secondary levels, were established to undertake and respond to the draft professional development package and the sample lesson sequences. They were also asked to trial lesson sequences with their own classes and report back with comments and suggestion for improvement. An additional two reference groups received only the professional development package. When this trial is evaluated, modified resources will be developed and reviewed by members of stakeholder networks nationally, as well as trialled by some 40 pilot schools across Australia during the second half of 1994.

In parallel to the development of resources facilitated by TRGs, a number of 'case study' schools have also been identified. These schools are already undertaking innovative programs, particularly as Health Promoting Schools. Their work will be researched and may be incorporated into final resource development.

The process of review and evaluation of the development of resources by the networks of stakeholders in each state will ensure that final resources are educationally sound and have practical application in all school settings throughout Australia.