

## EAT DIRT CASE STUDY – Bellinghen High School

There are three non-negotiable elements to this program:

- All learning takes place outside.
- The teachers come to the students; the students stay in the same spot.
- We all learn from each other and treat each other with respect.

The program ran every Thursday for one day per week. During the first term Bellinghen Bush Regeneration was hired to work with the students removing weeds, planting and mulching. The students responded well for the most part and it was obvious that they enjoyed the challenge of cutting down large woody weeds. They also planted, learnt how to propagate, and participated in nature journalling. The day would always start with a welcome from Uncle Micklo Jarrett and a lesson in Gumbaynggirr culture and language. There were some behavioural issues, and it was clear that some students did in fact prefer a more traditional education approach, so with assistance of the principal, we developed an EOI for year 8.

In the second term of the project we engaged an art therapist to work with the students. It became apparent that some of the students were finding it hard to be engaged, so a DASS was used which determined that a number of them were anxious, severely anxious or depressed. This is consistent with data that suggests that 4,065 Australian youth (aged 12-25 years) one third of Australian young people (34%) report high or very high levels of psychological distress.

Throughout the project we were constantly evaluating and self-reflecting to ensure a process of continual evolution and refinement. We were not going to be beaten! We had to discover what worked and what didn't. However, as you as educators know, not all young people like or respond to the same things. Hence the need for learning that is more student focused. In the words of William James, the Principles of Psychology, volume 1, "Millions of items of the outward order present to my senses which never properly enter into my experience. Why? Because they have no interest to me". Put simply, where we put our attention, determines just about all else. So if they are not interested, they will not be attentive and they will not learn.

Finally felt  
*happy* when  
waking up!

Bellinghen High Eat Dirt Student

Eat Dirt, Reimagining Education

This is fairly obvious, however it has huge implications for teachers and lesson planning. So where did we land?

So - you'll see our lesson plan on the following two pages.

Fun fact:

*"Every book I have read on memory and brain science has had some reference to the genius of childhood, and many books encourage people to learn and think like a child if they wish to increase their IQ or capacity for memory. I always wonder why we work so hard to train this genius out of children in the first place, rather than building on it" (Yunkaporta,. 2019).*



Eat Dirt, Reimagining Education

## Program Lesson Plan - Eat Dirt - Bellingin High School

Theme: Community

ACTIVITY	RESOURCES	SET-UP
Introduction and rundown on the day's activities		Sitting down at tables Put bags down
<b>Own the Zone -</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sweep the area</li> <li>• Collect flowers</li> <li>• Arrange flowers</li> <li>• Chop fruit</li> <li>• Pick-up rubbish</li> <li>• Clean black/white boards</li> <li>• Collect buckets</li> <li>• Arrange in circle with cushions on top</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brooms</li> <li>• Flowers</li> <li>• Fruit</li> <li>• Chopping boards</li> <li>• Knives</li> <li>• Platters</li> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Plastic cups</li> <li>• Clay self symbols</li> <li>• Buckets</li> <li>• Cushions</li> </ul>	Everyone
Gumbaynggirr Learning	Easel for capturing the language and stories.	Mentees sit at tables and chairs.
Check-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circle</li> <li>• Scale</li> <li>• Self-symbols</li> </ul>	Everyone sits in circle and gives two words about how they are feeling and places the self-symbol on the scale.
Community activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mats</li> <li>• Music</li> </ul>	Everyone is given a mat and asked to find a spot where they will not disturb anyone else
Vegetable gardens, surrounding areas; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weed your vegie bed</li> <li>• Mulch between beds</li> <li>• Remove weeds from around the beds</li> <li>• Check for seedlings</li> <li>• Continue painting mural</li> <li>• Practice lighting fire</li> <li>• Show plants they propagated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paints</li> <li>• Gloves</li> <li>• Brushes</li> <li>• Paint containers</li> <li>• Uncle Micklo's fire kits</li> <li>• Ply x 2</li> <li>• (ask Amanda)</li> <li>• Plants they've grown</li> </ul>	These activities run simultaneously with darts which is introduced period 4.

## Program Lesson Plan Con't

ACTIVITY	RESOURCES	SET-UP
Darts and maths games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Darts</li> <li>• Dartboards</li> <li>• Paper</li> <li>• Pens to work out maths questions</li> </ul>	
Bush regen – trad removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gloves</li> <li>• Flagging tape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put flagging tape out earlier earlier to designate two zones</li> <li>• The group who clears it first wins the first challenge</li> <li>• Split group into wolves and tigers</li> <li>• Activity continues until there is a winner</li> <li>• Everyone has to participate</li> <li>• Set up journalling once they are all on task</li> </ul>
Groups choose between the three activities below		
Primal and team games	Journalling	Planting, weeding and rubbish collection
Facilitator 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow bucket with the gear</li> <li>• Tug of war, captain ball, tunnel ball, over and under</li> <li>• Football</li> </ul>	Facilitator 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Books</li> <li>• Blanket</li> <li>• Paints etc</li> </ul>	Facilitator 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plants they've propagated</li> <li>• Trowels</li> <li>• Bamboo sticks</li> <li>• Rubbish bags</li> </ul>

- There's a five-minute break when the bell goes and mentees come back when the second bell rings.
- They have to stay within sight.



