



educationally speaking



September 2006, Edition 1

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Welcome

Welcome to *Educationally Speaking* the first quarterly newsletter of Education Partnerships (Schools) Pty Ltd.

Education Partnerships was established in 2004 to facilitate the development of strategic partnerships between schools and the corporate sector. Since then, Education Partnerships has run successful community-based and national education programs with organisations that include Sydney Water, the Australian Olympic Committee, the Commonwealth Bank Foundation, UNICEF Australia and the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games.

The partnerships have provided benefits for thousands of school children as well as for corporations and organisations wishing to engage at a grass roots level. Whether it's a water wise message or one about managing dollars and cents, the opportunity to marry classroom learning to real situations is becoming increasingly popular with education departments and schools themselves. The opportunities today are only limited by our imagination.

While I began my career in education as a primary school teacher in the eighties, I moved into the corporate sector in the mid-nineties. I worked in the areas of education program development, stakeholder negotiations and campaign design for the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games, the Australian Rugby Union, and the Commonwealth Bank. Today, Education Partnerships very effectively bridges the gap between the corporate world and the classroom.

So as Education Partnerships continues to grow, develop initiatives and form new partnerships, I hope that *Educationally Speaking* will become a useful mechanism for all involved to keep current and to draw inspiration from others. Meanwhile, I'll look forward to continuing to build a strong network of education, industry and corporate stakeholders in our quest to seek valuable and long term partnerships.

Heather MacDonald
Director
Education Partnerships (Schools) Pty Ltd

A strategic approach to education partnerships

For educators

The Education sectors often seek support from business by way of sponsorship. In making an approach to business it is helpful to understand that sponsorship (either in cash or kind) is not always attractive to business. Whilst many businesses do sponsor school based programs and activities, it is more beneficial to both to look at a longer term partnership in which both parties are gaining measurable success.



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Below are some steps to assist the Education sector work strategically with business:

1. Research what the business is currently doing with Education – do they have an existing education program? Do they need to test some materials with teachers and students? What can the Education sector offer in terms of communications to the school community or other businesses?
2. Identify a contact person within the business to meet and discuss what you would like their support on and how you can in turn support them. If they do not have an education manager, the best people to speak to are usually within the marketing, communications, foundation or community department.
3. Prepare a proposal that specifies the business objectives and how your request will enhance their business. You may need to modify your original thoughts on the approach following the research you do. With the increasing focus on community involvement and corporate responsibility, businesses may be interested in how their staff can become involved in supporting or delivering the program.
4. Keep your contact person informed of developments through email, phone or face-to-face meetings.
5. At the conclusion of the program, meet with your contact to establish successes and weaknesses and ways to improve the partnership for the future.

For business

Hundreds of thousands of dollars go into developing educational resources for schools each year. While some programs are extremely successful and have high participation rates, others go straight to the school resource library and never get referred to again. There are a number of factors why programs may not be successful:

- **Limited research into developing the program**
Often educators are not consulted on what they want or need to meet their curriculum requirements. To ensure that a resource or program meets curriculum requirements, it is important to undertake comprehensive research with educators and curriculum advisors. This research should provide the scope of work to be undertaken including the method of delivery, content, target audience, and a concept timeline.
- **Lack of buy-in or ongoing consultation with education professionals**
Some organisations neglect to maintain a consultative approach with educators during the development and implementation of their education programs. If educators are not involved in and consulted with during the process of development, a program is less likely to be successful and adopted by the teaching community.
- **Inappropriate resource delivery**
While many schools are 'online', there remain issues with teacher professional development, broadband, hardware and software, and these can influence the effectiveness of delivery. For example, if your target audience is Physical Education educators, and the activity is practical-based, they will need a portable, easy-to-reference resource available for use on the school oval.
- **Ineffective marketing and communications**
Streamline your communications so that it directly targets your audience. Generally, initial communications to a school should be addressed to the Principal. The target audience for subsequent communications could be more specific. Consider whether workshops, letters, posters, emails or merchandise would more effectively promote the business.


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- **Lack of professional development to support the resource**
Educators are busy people and need an opportunity to absorb and discuss new programs and teaching materials. To introduce a new program, it is recommended that an organisation consider teaching workshops with consistent follow up.
- **Sustainability**
Educators are more likely to engage in programs or services that have a long-term education strategy. This way, educators can work with organisations to develop a program that will have long term benefits for both parties.

Case Study – Assessing what is already out there

Every organisation has different reasons for supporting education and investing in the development and implementation of programs.

UNICEF Australia's Education Program for Schools

 The long term outcome of UNICEF Australia's Education Program for Schools is for school communities to be advocates for the Rights of the Child. UNICEF Australia have a number of education programs for schools including their annual fundraising campaign "Cup for Kids", links to other UNICEF programs internationally, other partner programs with Fairfax Newspapers, an interactive CD Rom called "Kids have the Right", and an internationally developed resource in pdf format called "Kids Interactive". All of these programs are listed on their "School Room" website.

Initially, UNICEF Australia anticipated a large amount of their budget would be dedicated to resource development – something many organisations anticipate. Through the strategic planning and research process it was recommended that this was not necessary. This was the outcome...

Through research with interstate curriculum advisors in particular, there appeared to be a plethora of information available and the resources that UNICEF Australia had already were quite adequate for the needs of educators nationally. Also, the internationally developed "Kids Interactive" pdf resource was highly rated educationally but gaining access to it prevented it from being extensively used (the pdf document was in excess of 280 pages).

A number of recommendations were suggested that were budget sensitive and also drew on what educators needed. In addition to the need for resources to be better promoted there was a need for them to be supported through professional development. Professional development can cause budget blowouts but through the research it was discovered that professional development sessions were already being conducted on this type of topic and they were seeking additional resources to assist educators. The key lessons for UNICEF Australia were:

For the "Kids Inclusive" resource

- Provide links to national and state and territory curriculum.
- Prepare website copy highlighting the features of the resource.
- Make available on request the resource in CD Rom format.
- Distribute, through Global Education Learning Centres, professional development sessions and also promote the resource through the Global Education website (AusAID funded).

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For other elements of the UNICEF Australia education program

- Most educators have limited time to research certain topics. A slight redesign of the website made research information more educator-friendly.
- Develop a more comprehensive communications plan to promote the resources including frequent newsletters and a database of school contacts that engage with the program.
- Develop an online shop for books produced by UNICEF.

More information about UNICEF Australia's Education Program for Schools can be found at www.unicef.org.au/SchoolRoom.asp

Professionally Speaking

A business perspective – Commonwealth Bank Foundation

Commonwealth Bank
Foundation



The Commonwealth Bank Foundation was established in 2003, building on the Student Banking program introduced over 70 years ago, and contributing to the education and the development of money management skills of young Australians.

The success of the work of the Commonwealth Bank Foundation has been contingent on building strong relationships with education communities across Australia, particularly partnerships with Education sectors and professional teacher associations.

In 2005, the Foundation launched its national Financial Literacy Curriculum Resource, a free educator resource aligned with the Years 7 to 10 curriculum in each state and territory across Australia. To ensure its appropriateness and applicability for teachers Australia-wide, the Foundation established a Steering and Advisory Committee of education representatives from across Australia to map the curriculum in each state and territory, and oversee the research and development of the resource material. The project was managed by NSW Department of Education and Training.

Offering 12 teaching modules and covering a broad range of topics including *Earning an Income*, *Spending and Saving*, *Buying a Car*, and *Personal Investment*, the resource was developed with input from teachers in Government, Catholic and Independent school sectors throughout Australia.

It aims to support and assist teachers to improve the knowledge, skills and understanding of their students in the area of financial literacy. The Financial Literacy Curriculum Resource would not have had the success that it has had without this consultative development approach.

In addition to the Curriculum Resource the Commonwealth Bank Foundation offers several other programs which have been developed in partnership with education, including the e-Learning Grants for primary schools, the Financial Literacy Grants for secondary schools, the Australian Financial Literacy Assessment and more recently the Speakers Program involving Bank staff presentations.

These partnerships with education have ensured that our programs are relevant, educationally sound and have been well-received by educators.



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More information about the Commonwealth Bank Foundation's education programs can be found at www.commbank.com.au/foundation

*Wendy Mason, Programs Manager
Commonwealth Bank Foundation*

An education perspective

As a teacher I often find myself sifting through many resources either on the web, in libraries or from colleagues in order to gain inspiration, motivation and/or an idea for teaching a particular topic. We often forget about the corporate world, as we feel there may be some hidden agenda.

I have learnt over the years that opening up to the corporate world in terms of education can be an extremely valuable experience, not only for the students but also for the teachers.

As a teacher in a remote top end school in Arnhemland for many years, resources were limited, but I found the corporate world and their education officers very willing to offer their assistance in any way possible - they helped with resources, activities and excursions.

One of the highlights of my teaching career was working with the Sydney Paralympic Organising Committee (SPOC), through their LEAP program. A fledgling idea of supporting disabled athletes through letters, became an educational experience of amazing opportunities for my students and myself. Not only did we learn about people with disabilities and the struggle these athletes had to overcome, we also became their friends. We dreamed about being there and cheering them on, but we were 3,500kms away in remote Arnhemland.

The dream soon became a reality with support from Heather and the SPOC team. They lobbied the Federal Government for travel subsidies for all students attending. Other doors opened up as the media followed our story. Like a fairytale, we were there at the Opening Ceremony, and the closing Ceremony and all the days in between. We screamed and cheered for the Aussies - all made possible by SPOC and the corporate world.

Working together, collaborating on and sharing resources and ideas can secure a better world for the students of today and the future generations.

*Maree Timms, Former Head Teacher
Gunbalanya Community School, Arnhemland*

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Education Calendar

September 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 21 – Tree Planting Day. http://eno.joensuu.fi/treeceremony.htm■ 24 – World Heart Day. http://www.worldheartday.com/home/
October 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 9 – ‘100 Days to Go’ Event Launch of 2007 Australian Youth Olympic Festival profiling football. http://www.olympics.com.au/index.cfm?p=267■ 13 – Commonwealth Bank Foundation Financial Literacy grant recipient schools announced. http://www.commbank.com.au/financialliteracygrants■ 15 – 21 – National Water Week 2006. http://www.nationalwaterweek.org.au■ 27 – National Bandanna Day. http://www.canteen.org.au/index.cfm?pid=5&pageid=5
November 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 16 – International Day for Tolerance. http://www.unesco.org/tolerance/teneng.htm■ 19 – Skin Cancer Action Week. http://www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart■ 20 – International Children’s Day
December 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 3 – International Day of Disabled Persons. http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/disiddp.htm
January 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 17 - 21 Australian Youth Olympic Opening Ceremony and Festival Week. http://www.olympics.com.au/index.cfm?p=267

Contact Education Partnerships

Education Partnerships (Schools) Pty Ltd develops education and communication strategies that bring together the education, corporate and government sectors in mutually beneficial partnerships.

Education Partnerships is an organisation that assists partnerships between Australia’s corporate and education communities, developing strategic and effective resources to support education. Education programs have been developed for the Commonwealth Bank, Sydney Water, the Australian Olympic Committee, 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games, the Australian Rugby Union and the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games.

Enquiries

To contact Education Partnerships by email, [click here](#). Alternatively you can phone Heather on 0427 008 827, or mail Education Partnerships, PO Box 307, Redlynch QLD 4870. www.educationpartnerships.com.au

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