

Sustainable development

Source: Young and Commins, 2002, pp. 26—8

Aim: For participants to think about what sustainable development means in relation to their own lifestyles as well as to the school and community.

1. Give each group of participants the three quotations provided (Worksheet 7), and ask them which one they feel best describes sustainable development, and why. (There is no 'right' answer!) Ask them to arrange the statements to show their order of preference. If the group does not agree on the order, arrange the statements to reflect this — perhaps in a line.
2. Invite the participants to walk around the room to look at how other groups have arranged their statements.
3. Then give out to participants the statement on sustainable development from Cardiff County Council and the seven key concepts of sustainable development identified by the Panel for Education for Sustainable Development (1999) (Worksheet 8). Ask participants to discuss how these definitions relate to their earlier views of sustainable development.
4. Give participants a chance to share their thoughts as a whole.
5. Then separate the groups into two halves. Ask half of the groups to design the layout, policies and practices of a school that is a model for the promotion of sustainable development. Ask the other half to do the same but for a school that is against the promotion of sustainable development. The table below may help with some ideas on ways of promoting healthy sustainable lifestyles at school. The list of ideas is far from exhaustive.
6. Share ideas in a plenary session, possibly including discussion about which model your school most resembles.

How can we help ourselves to be healthy?	<i>Look after our bodies</i>	<i>Avoid harmful substances</i>	<i>Travel to and from school safely</i>	<i>Move round the school safely</i>	<i>Protect ourselves from the sun</i>
How can the school help us?	<p>Encourage us to eat healthy food: sell fruit and vegetables in a playtime tuck-shop</p> <p>Teach us to look after our bodies, as well as about the dangers of smoking, HIV/AIDS, excessive drinking, etc.</p> <p>Ensure that there is a pleasant and safe school environment</p>	<p>Use biodegradable and non-toxic cleaning fluids</p> <p>Remind us that medicines can be harmful</p>	<p>Remind us about road safety</p> <p>Implement a walk-to-school initiative</p> <p>Remind us not to go with strangers</p>	<p>Minimise barriers to moving safely, e.g. steep steps, no handrail, uneven paving</p> <p>Ensure that pupils move around the school in a considerate way</p>	<p>Have a shady and quiet playground area</p>

Worksheet 7

Quotations about sustainable development

Quotation 1

'The Earth provides enough to satisfy everyone's needs, but not for everyone's greed.'

Mahatma Gandhi, www.ieer.org/latest/oct2quote.html

Quotation 2

'The Earth belongs to everyone, not part of it to certain people but all of it to everyone, to be enjoyed and cared for.'

Michael Foreman, *Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish* (1999)

Quotation 3

'The interconnectedness of life is both a blessing and a curse; possibilities are boundless and consequences endless. Every value judgement we make ripples into a life somewhere.'

Paula Owens, Deputy Head, Eastchurch Primary School, Kent (2001)

Worksheet 8

Local and global sustainability

'Our collective activities and behaviour contribute to international problems such as global warming, climate change and deforestation. Our local actions, for example in what we buy, can have positive and negative consequences for communities living elsewhere in the world where these goods are produced.'

Cardiff county Council, Local Sustainability Strategy for Cardiff, 2000

Seven key concepts of sustainable development (Panel for Education for Sustainable Development, 1999)

1 Interdependence

Understanding how people, the environment and the economy are inextricably linked at all levels from local to global.

2 Citizenship and stewardship

Recognising the importance of taking individual responsibility and action to ensure the world is a better place.

3 Needs and rights of future generations

Understanding our own basic needs and the implications for the needs of future generations of actions taken today.

4 Diversity

Respecting and valuing both human diversity (cultural, social and economic) and biodiversity.

5 Quality of life

Acknowledging that global equity and justice are essential elements of sustainability and that basic needs must be met universally.

6 Sustainable change

Understanding that resources are finite and that this has implications for people's lifestyles and for commerce and industry.

7 Balance

Understanding of uncertainty and of the need for precautions in action.

References

Reproduced from Young and Commins, 2002, p. 39

Cardiff County Council (2000) *Local Sustainability Strategy for Cardiff*.

Foreman, M. (1999) *Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish*, Longman.

Owens, P. (2001) *Fields of Meaning*, Unpublished PhD thesis, Canterbury Christ Church University College.

Panel for Education for Sustainable Development (1999) *1998 Sustainable Education Panel First Annual Report*, DETR.