

Pleasurable Food Education – Getting Started

We are a school. We want to deliver Pleasurable Food Education. What do we need to do to get started?

The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation model of pleasurable food education comes in many shapes and sizes in terms of school site, budget, community etc. That said, the outcome is always the same. The goal is for every school-aged child to experience pleasurable food education. The focus is for students to have a 'hands-on' experience in cooking, gardening and sharing a meal together so that they adopt lifelong skills and positive food relationships. They also do a lot of learning along the way.

Pleasurable food education is most successful when schools:

- Keep it simple!
- Start small – focus on just getting started, then build from there.
- Use what you already have to get started.
- Focus on the outcome. What is your school's big 'WHY?' for doing this? What do you want your students to gain? What should your school community get out of it?
- Think outside the box.

Here are schools' top suggestions for getting started with your version of pleasurable food education.

PLAN

- Establish a small support group or committee.
- Decide who will participate in your food education program and how often they will participate (staff and students).
- Sketch out a plan for getting started.
- Plan to be resourceful. What do you already have on ground to get started with? Teaching students to think outside the square and use what they already have is a powerful lesson.

IN THE GARDEN

- Locate the best space on the school grounds for the garden (north-facing is best for sunlight).
- Can you transform an inedible (decorative) garden space into an edible space?
- Focus on starting small and creating productive spaces – you can fit a lot into one square metre.
- Create a garden plan – with your students.
- Create a garden wish list and source donations.
- Look for support from local businesses, organisations and the parent body.
- Organise a working bee or create one bed at a time.



IN THE KITCHEN

- 🍅 Locate a kitchen space – use the canteen, art room, science room, staff room, gym – any space that can be refitted for a flexible kitchen space.
- 🍅 A short starter checklist: Sink? Running hot water? Fridge? Storage?
- 🍅 Stocktake what you do have then create a wish list to share with potential supporters.
- 🍅 Start in a temporary space with trestle tables and electric frying pans you have sourced from your community.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 🍅 Let your school community know your plans, through an event such as a community meeting if possible.
- 🍅 Seek out all opportunities for gaining community support – it might not be obvious at first.
- 🍅 Begin a weekly or fortnightly donation call-out for ingredients, tools, supplies, help ...
- 🍅 Connect with local stores to exchange produce for goods.
- 🍅 Celebrate all the wins along the way – this helps build momentum and awareness.



IN THE CLASSROOM

- 🍅 Links from your cooking and gardening activities will appear very quickly.
- 🍅 Keep an eye out for environment studies when establishing a garden site, geometry when planning garden beds, sustainability when arranging your compost system, literacy and seasonality when planning kitchen menus ... the links are infinite and endless.
- 🍅 Keep all teaching staff in the loop when planning garden and kitchen activities, and curriculum lessons throughout each term.
- 🍅 With plenty of discussion and open communication everyone will soon see the deep and powerful learning available through hands-on sensory learning, and having **fun**.

