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2013

# Kitchen garden programs in schools - developing basic health-related literacies and more

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## Publication Details

Yeatman, H., Quinsey, K., Condon-Paoloni, D., Dawber, J., Eckermann, S., Fildes, D., Green, J., Grootemaat, P., Morris, D. & Nielsen, W. (2013). Kitchen garden programs in schools - developing basic health-related literacies and more. PHAA 42nd Annual conference: Abstract & Program Book (pp. 92-92). Australia: Public Health Association.

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# Kitchen garden programs in schools - developing basic health-related literacies and more

## **Abstract**

Abstract of paper presented at PHAA 42nd Annual conference, Melbourne, 16-18 September 2013.

## **Keywords**

related, health, basic, developing, schools, literacies, garden, more, programs, kitchen

## **Disciplines**

Education | Social and Behavioral Sciences

## **Publication Details**

Yeatman, H., Quinsey, K., Condon-Paoloni, D., Dawber, J., Eckermann, S., Fildes, D., Green, J., Grootemaat, P., Morris, D. & Nielsen, W. (2013). Kitchen garden programs in schools - developing basic health-related literacies and more. PHAA 42nd Annual conference: Abstract & Program Book (pp. 92-92). Australia: Public Health Association.

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Heather Yeatman, K Quinsey, D Condon-Paoloni, J Dawber, S Eckermann, D Fildes, J Green, P Grootemaat, D Morris, and W Nielsen

**22. Kitchen garden programs in schools – developing basic health-related literacies and more**

**Presenter:** Heather Yeatman, University of Wollongong, NSW

**Authors:** K Quinsey, D Condon-Paoloni, J Dawber, S Eckermann, D Fildes, J Green, P Grootemaat, D Morris & W Nielsen

**Background:** A number of kitchen and or food garden programs have been implemented in recent times. They may offer important opportunities to build confidence and skills and food and health knowledge, and active learning environments to teach other curriculum areas.

**Aim:** Identify the contributions to health and wider curriculum made by kitchen garden programs.

**Methods:** Initiative (N=28) and Comparison (N=14) schools. Surveys of parents (N=300), students (N=491), teachers (N=62) and volunteers (N=60); semi-structured interviews with school staff (N=86); and focus groups with students (30 groups; N=229).

**Results/discussion:** Improvements were reported in children's food choice activities, as reported by the students ( $t=2.26$ ,  $p=0.024$ ); kitchen lifestyle behaviours; and more confidence in kitchen skills (using knives and equipment, reading & following recipes and kitchen safety and hygiene). No difference in garden lifestyle behaviours but students reported more confidence and 80% reported they learned new things. Social behaviours also improved.

Schools also reported teaching their curriculum in different ways – science, technology and maths being taught in the garden and English, maths and health and PE being taught in the kitchen.

**Conclusion:** Skill-based programs should be considered to build children's confidence and can provide opportunities for active learning within the school.