

SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS NETWORK JOURNAL

**St. Francis Xavier
Catholic Primary School**

Toby Osborne
City of Gold Coast: Water and Waste
Holley Summerville Knott
Chelsea McLean



Sustainable
SCHOOLS NETWORK

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EVENT CALENDAR

OCTOBER

29th - Regional Sustainability Summit & EfS
Consultation Workshop, Townsville

NOVEMBER

7th - Networking Night @ Currumbin RSL
Supported by Tugun Bendigo Bank

SAVE THE DATE

2020 Sustainability Symposium

27-28th April - student focus

28th April - Dinner

29th April - 2 May - Curriculum Masterclass with
Jaimie Cloud

Supported by ASAS Parents and Friends Association

SSN MEMBERSHIP NOW AVAILABLE

Email info@ssn.org.au for more information

NETWORKING EVENT

CURRUMBIN RSL
NOVEMBER 7, 2019
7:00 - 9:00PM

Tugun **Community Bank®**
Branch



CURRUMBIN
RSL



St. Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School

"I really loved meeting other courageous kids who've developed campaigns to help the environment,"

Mia, Grade 6 student

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School, renowned for its community spirit, are winners of the 2019 School Sustainability Awards: primary category. The school was built in 1975 in Runaway Bay and today has just over 650 students.

Committed to sustainability education, St. Francis Xavier first engaged with the SSN in late 2018. Aware there was work to be done, teachers, administrators, parents and students began taking action in 2019 and this escalated quickly. A turning point for the school was attending the inaugural Sustainability Symposium at Somerset College in early May. The Symposium energised the students and made them realise that their ideas could become reality.

Grade 6 student, Mia identified the Symposium, *"Inspired all of us and made us realise that kids can be change makers. There's no reason why we can't have an idea and make it happen. We don't have to wait for governments or decision makers to lead the way."*

One of the challenges St. Francis Xavier reported facing as a school was, "simply time". Like every school, teachers are busy, classroom time is jam-packed and any new initiative is always going to mean more work. Julianna Stewart, sustainability lead at St. Francis Xavier shared, *"When students talk about the environment, they often mention the 'mess they have inherited' or feel overwhelmed by the vastness and complexity of the problems they face, such as plastic waste, pollution and global warming. However, what is inspiring is that they are also incredibly forth-right, determined and courageous when it comes to environmental action."*

St Francis Xavier already had a Year 6 Sustainability Committee in place, but their role was absorbed managing the school recycling program. To free up some of the students, an action group was created to develop an environmental plan for the school.

Key strategies implemented were:

- Prioritising key improvement areas;
- Consulting with other schools;
- Listening to student input;
- Creating a '2020 Vision'.

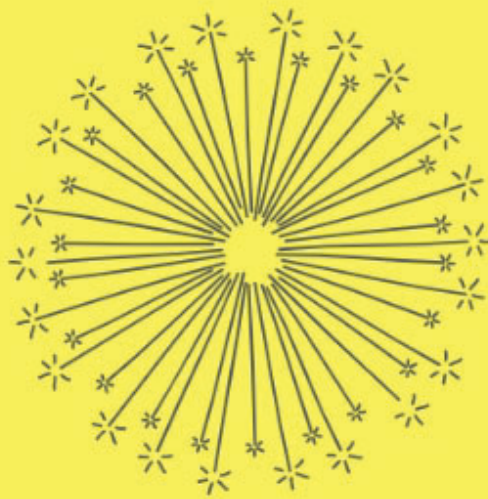
Two St. Francis Xavier students, brother and sister, Lincoln (grade 3) and Zara (grade 5), shared stories from their road trip around Australia where they witnessed first-hand the impact of pollution. *"We visited some deserted beautiful beaches in the middle of nowhere but we were shocked to see the sand was littered with all sorts of rubbish and micro-plastics which had been washed up,"* said Lincoln, aged 8.

Students have utilised these story-telling opportunities as a call to action. Julianna has also viewed the 2019 School Sustainability Awards in a similar manner, *"It was ... very humbling to meet teachers and students from other schools and hear about some of their great initiatives. Winning the Sustainable Schools Award is different to winning a reading or maths competition, where you walk away feeling like your school is at the top of the leaderboard. When it comes to the environment, we are all on an equal playing field. Working together is the key to helping us all reach our shared goal."*

"At the end of the day, all of us kids want the same thing - we all want a healthy planet."

Jack Stewart, Year 6 student.





CONNECTING REGIONAL QUEENSLAND

SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

October 29, 2019

9:00 AM - 12:30 PM

St Patrick's College, Townsville

Learn from local sustainability leaders (Reef Guardians)
and Larissa Rose (Glowing Green Australia)
'Let's not waste the Reef'

EMAIL INFO@SSN.ORG.AU FOR MORE INFORMATION



**Sustainable
SCHOOLS NETWORK**



Introducing

TOBY OSBORNE

Currumbin Community Special School E-Waste Coordinator, Teacher and Guidance Counsellor

An eco-warrior himself, Toby Osborne involves his students in projects that can help them appreciate and participate in the conservation of their local environment. He knows creative educational programs are a powerful force that improve a student's confidence & achievement. In this interview, we have a look at the person behind Currumbin Community Special School's E-Waste Warriors Program.

Having spent his childhood out and about in nature, Toby feels it was those outdoor experiences that led him to be so determined to help his students become more engaged with the natural world. With this in mind, Toby is a strong advocate for taking his students out of the built environment and into natural areas for enriched learning experiences.

"The South East region is one of the most richly biodiverse places on earth. It's important that young people are given the opportunity to explore and experience these areas," says Toby.

Toby has worked in the education system in a variety of settings for the last 12 years. While working with students in the high school system he noticed many students were faced with a variety of challenges and were often arriving at school disengaged and struggling to deal with things. He wanted to do more to support his students. In 2012 he completed his Masters of Education in Guidance and Counselling, so he could have the skills to support the needs of his students.

The son of an eco-architect who grew up in the country, Toby's memories are of his Father exploring and developing alternative building designs and sustainable building materials. There was also a lot of repairing, and the making and modifying of different tools and machines. This left a mark that today reflects in Toby's mindset, *"As a child growing up I recall that if something broke you tried to fix it well before you considered replacing it,"* he adds, *"The modern belief that many young people have that 'new is always better' is concerning. Products are being replaced and thrown out at an alarming rate these days. The environmental impact in terms of wasted raw materials and pollution is immense."*

It was this growing concern and his attendance at a Substation 33 presentation from local e-waste guru Tony Sharp's that lead him to become more involved in more sustainable practices such as e-waste recycling. With this in mind, he decided to take action and developed a recycling program called 'The E-Waste Warriors'.

The E-Waste Warriors Program, winner of the secondary category of the 2019 School Sustainability Awards, is a valuable internal work experience activity that offers many benefits for the students involved in the program.

For Toby, working in a special school setting means catering to the individual needs and abilities of a broad range of students. Currumbin Community Special School (CCSS), students involved in this program are learning valuable work experience skills that enable them to use simple tools to recycle their own waste products. This program aims to enhance the student's vocational skills whilst also providing enriched learning opportunities in science, math and literacy. The students involved in this program are engaged in the recycling process in a way that is challenging and enjoyable at the same time.

There is a growing interest in the broader community for schools to become more involved in sustainable practices. Sustainability is now identified in the Australian Curriculum as a cross curriculum priority. A key focus of this curriculum is to encourage students to think and act creatively to determine more sustainable ways of living in the future. Sustainability education is futures-oriented, focusing on protecting environments and creating a more ecologically and socially just world through informed action.

Sustainability is being embraced at CCSS via containers for change recycling and paper brick recycling programs and organic food production via the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen garden program.

Toby identifies, *"At the heart of sustainability is the need to understand and protect the natural world. We need to recognise that the earth's resources are finite and there are consequences to our actions. For far too long people have separated themselves from the natural world and we need to do away with this misconception. This mindset is destructive and unhealthy both environmentally and socially and the sooner we can all evolve beyond this 'industrial era' mentality the better."*

Moving forward, Toby is looking forward to building partnerships to support local schools to become more active with recycling initiatives. He reported, *"We are growing our partnerships in our community to create an alliance of interested schools and organisations that can raise the profile and capacity of e-waste recycling on the Gold Coast."*

Toby reminds us that, *"Actions speak louder than words and ultimately it's what we do rather than what we say that makes the difference."*



DID YOU KNOW?

Currumbin Community Special School E-waste Warriors

We want to recycle your E-waste!!

Computers- any type and any vintage DVD players/VCR/set top box, cameras, mobile phones, game consoles, stereo and amplifier equipment

INFORMATION ABOUT E-WASTE DONATIONS PLEASE CONTACT CURRUMBIN COMMUNITY SPECIAL SCHOOL: 07 55 599 333 OR EMAIL TOBY OSBORNE: TOSBO30@EQ.EDU.AU

City of Gold Coast, Water and Waste Directorate

The Water and Waste Directorate of the City of Gold Coast (WW) consists of more than 500 professional, technical and field-based staff. Water and Waste is responsible for providing safe drinking water supplies and sewage collection, treatment, reuse and disposal. WW are also responsible for solid waste, recycling and green waste kerbside collection, collection of waste, infrastructure, operation of waste and recycling centres and resource recovery. WW are responsible for sustainable management of our aquatic, riverine and marine ecosystems, keeping our catchments and waterways healthy and resilient to change.

Water and Waste operates within the framework of City of Gold Coast's Corporate Plan which outlines the City and community's shared vision for a sustainable city that focuses on preserving our natural environment and quality of life. It identifies key focus areas that reflect the community's aspirations for the city's 30-year vision.

An exciting Program initiated by this Directorate is currently being developed for schools; The Schools Water Conservation Program. Collaboration and partnerships underpin the Program, with exciting opportunities to strengthen the key outcomes of water conservation, cost savings for schools, and increased water literacy. You can read about the Schools Water Conservation Program on page 9, and get in touch with Program representatives by emailing waterconservation@goldcoast.qld.gov.au.

In September, the SSN will focus on water management as we educate, connect and imagine a sustainable future.

SCHOOLS WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM

KEY BENEFITS



**WATER EFFICIENCY
AND CONSERVATION
THROUGH DATA ACCESS**



**COST-SAVINGS
FOR SCHOOLS**



**INCREASED
WATER LITERACY**

SMART LOGGING TECHNOLOGY

- 30 schools installed with loggers in spring 2017 for Schools Water Conservation Program trial.
- Trial provided schools with access to water use data, conducted site visits, surveys and set baseline.
- Data access enables leak identification and tracking, benchmarking, and increased customer awareness.
- Smart loggers transmit data to online portal, displaying total daily consumption (kL), associated cost (\$) and demand profile (L/min).
- Following the trial, all 90 Gold Coast schools with a potable water connection were fitted in early 2019 with smart logging technology.
- Schools that participated in the trial have continuing access, while the other 60 schools have now been offered data access.
- Enabling a data-driven approach to promoting sustainable water management and water literacy for all Gold Coast schools.



**AUTOMATIC WEEKLY
DATA SUMMARY
EMAILED TO SCHOOLS**



**WATER USE
BENCHMARKING
ACROSS GOLD COAST
SCHOOLS**

**1 IN 3 SCHOOLS
HAVE LEAKS**



OPPORTUNITIES



Holistic approach to sustainable resource management at schools; including water, waste and energy.



Reliable & consistent communication maintained between city and schools.



Schools become experts in proactive leak management and water consumption awareness; improving the water literacy of school communities.



Long-term water use benchmarking study enabled through data tracking, to improve understanding of water consumption at schools.

City of Gold Coast
Gold Coast schools
Seqwater
Queensland State Government
Griffith University
Solar Schools
Sustainable Schools Network

**SUSTAINABLE
WATER
MANAGEMENT
STEWARDSHIP**

To access your school's water use data, contact the team
via email waterconservation@goldcoast.qld.gov.au

CITY OF
GOLDCOAST.

Holley Summerville Knott



An environmentalist, CEO, founder of a social enterprise and a charity foundation, Holley is the perfect example of a generation that takes action for the Planet.

"I want to inspire other youth to become changemakers and leaders, and I want to be living proof of the fact that you can do anything you want at any age," says Holley

Lennox Head local, Holley Sommerville Knott is an inspiring 15-year-old. A passionate environmentalist, gifted singer and powerful public speaker, Holley has been taking action to help the planet, people and animals from the age of five. The CEO and Founder of the social enterprise, Tell Someone Who Cares and charity, The Stardust Foundation, Holley is committed to spreading kindness and inspiring other youth to become change-makers and leaders.

Sustainability for Holley is, "Not just a buzzword, it is a collaborative effort between all areas of society to create innovative solutions to issues that pose a threat to our ecosystems." She is certain that having a holistic perspective of sustainability and improving the way government, business, schools and households operate in all levels, "We will be able to sustain our planet for generations to come".

Holley has been using her voice to raise awareness about sustainability and the actions that can be taken to protect the environment from a young age. Holley spends her days:

- Running Tell Someone Who Cares;
- Writing songs, speeches & slam poems;
- Designing new products;
- Participating in environmental events.

Holley has been speaking on stage since age 7. One time, she was asked to speak at a premiere for a movie-documentary called 'Rise of the Eco Warriors' about the environmental problems derived from the production and use of palm oil -the largest driver of Indonesian deforestation. This led to the creation of Tell Someone Who Cares (TSWC), a solutions based business that helps protect rainforests and endangered wildlife and empower Indigenous peoples.

As any successful philanthropist and entrepreneur knows there have been many challenges along the way. Starting a business at the age of 12 ensured a great deal of enthusiasm matched with no previous experience. Being a CEO while starting high school was also problematic. Holley struggled at first to find funding for TSWC but found creative ways to get around this like applying for scholarships and entering awards.

Nevertheless, she learned that adversity sometimes presents other opportunities. For example, if being too young was a barrier for funding, she recognised it was exactly this (her age) that ensured youth would connect to her message. Creating TSWC was a way to rally young people behind her message, even if it was hard at first.

One of Holley's favourite moments was a few years ago, when she was contacted by a school in Hong Kong. The students at this school were very passionate about sustainability and had their own palm oil action club. The students knew about Holley's activism and had already decided to host a RAD (Rainforest Action Day). Holding a RAD DAY allows Schools and businesses to be part of the solution and fundraise for the cause by bringing in a gold coin donation and collaborating on fun activities like green cupcake bakes or green discos.

This was one of the first international RAD she had helped to facilitate and it was a complete success! Holley described, *"every student came in fully decked out in green (and some students even wore green hairspray), with the entire school decorated with posters. They sent through lots of photos, videos and interviews with the very excited students on the day. Everybody totally got on board, had a fantastic time and they ended up raising \$2,500!"*.

Holley's message is, *"The world is not on remote, you gotta get up and change it yourself"*. She wants to grow her consumer movement TSWC, and give people the opportunity to create change through their everyday purchases, and expand her product range with a new youth skincare range (featuring the Illipe of course).. Holley wants to continue her mission to use her voice to create change, and to see the younger generation gain knowledge, skills and empowerment to take action in their own schools and lives. She hopes every school can host a RAD Day!

*For more information go to:
www.tellsomeonewhocares.org*





Chelsea McLean

Chelsea McLean is the SSN's Circular Economy Education Coordinator and a parent of students at Worongary State School

Chelsea has been working in PR and marketing for the past 20 years in a range of industries. A passionate composter, Chelsea believes sustainability means preserving our planet for our grandchildren and their children as she quotes Sir David Attenborough, *"How could I look my grandchildren in the eye and say I knew what was happening to the world and did nothing?"*

Following her interest in sustainability, Chelsea became concerned about the amount of waste ending up in the landfill every day, so she quickly decided to make a change and started finding out ways to reduce her household waste. Soon, she started composting, buying in bulk, returning soft plastics to supermarkets for recycling, carrying her own bags, cutlery and containers around with her, and buying less 'stuff'. Chelsea believes we need to move from our take-make-dispose linear economy to a circular economy. A circular economy means closing the loop, where valuable resources are recovered and continuously repurposed and waste is designed out of the system. She sees young people as the ones who will lead us towards a circular economy by innovating solutions to keep resources in the system for longer, at their highest value.



“It moves me to see the innate intelligence and understanding children have about the need to protect our planet,” says Chelsea.

Focusing on environmental sustainability and SDG 12: ‘Responsible consumption and production’, Chelsea recognises that the linear economy contributes significantly to the environmental crisis as it uses raw materials to make products and packaging that are thrown away after use. Thus, her interest on the circular economy, which keeps resources in use for as long as possible, extracting their maximum value, then recovering and continuously repurposing materials and nutrients.

Chelsea emphasised, *“The global economy is already about 9 percent circular thanks to countries in Europe and Scandinavia leading the way.”*

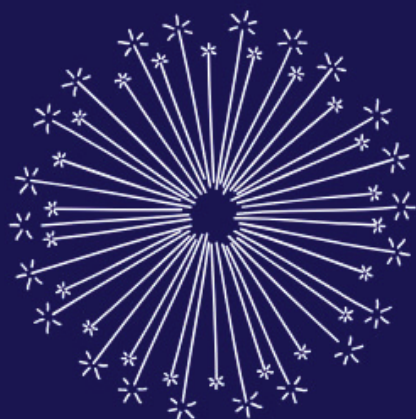
Being a natural happy person, Chelsea enjoys her work educating Australians about the benefits of the circular economy and she identified, *“The SSN provides an opportunity to deliver her message to school communities”.*

However Chelsea cautions, *“changing behaviours is not easy in a world that’s not quite geared up for the challenge. Not even 20 percent of Australian councils recycle food organics and garden organics (FOGO) and in Queensland it’s only 1 percent. Each of us is empowered to take action by asking our local council for a FOGO bin and composting our food waste”*

As a parent Chelsea is aware of the time and effort to make lifestyle changes can be challenging. *“Going out of our way to buy in bulk and making things from scratch instead of buying in plastic, for instance, isn’t always possible,”* says Chelsea. She recommends focusing on, *“Progress, not perfection,”* she believes even small contributions make a difference.

To have an influence, Chelsea works with students at her children’s primary school on recycling programs and with early learning teachers. Volunteering her time, Chelsea supports Worongary State School to lessen their impact on the environment by setting up worm farms and compost bins, recycling container programs and introducing ‘sustainable swaps’.

Chelsea enjoys working with children and believes their minds are switched on naturally to the possibilities of science and technology to deliver us a better future. In one of her favourite projects she recalls, *“We collected over 12,500 pieces of soft plastic to earn a buddy bench for our school playground last year. We also composted students’ lunch scraps for our school vegetable gardens and started Waste Free Wednesdays. IN 2019, we started Containers for Change to finish air-conditioning our classrooms. My mission is to champion opportunities that encourage young people to move Australia towards a circular economy by 2040,”* concludes Chelsea.



SAVE THE DATE

2020 SUSTAINABILITY SYMPOSIUM

27 APRIL - 2 MAY 2020

ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN SCHOOL
CURRICULUM WORKSHOP VENUE TBC



We are looking for sponsors!

The 2020 Sustainability Symposium aims to connect Northern Rivers and South East Queensland Schools in their commitment towards sustainability education. The four main objectives are:

- establishing a common language regarding sustainability,
- addressing the 16th sustainable development goal (peace, justice and strong institutions),
- youth empowerment, and
- building partnerships for sustainable education within our local region.

Students, teachers and school communities are invited to learn, share & develop 21st century skills such as collaboration, communication, responsible citizenship and critical thinking. Day session for students; workshops for business managers, grounds and maintenance staff; curriculum masterclass series; parent workshops; and, networking dinner in the evening. We are looking forward to igniting souls and inspiring change!

Email: info@ssn.org.au for more information