



Know-how for Horticulture™



**Nursery & Garden Industry
Australia**

**Final Report
HAL project: NY 07010
Completion date: July 2008**

KidsGrow Project

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~ Disclaimer ~

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2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NGIA KidsGrow Project 2007/08 (NY07010) was comprised of five segments including the KidsGrow School program development and promotion; KidsGrow@Home development and promotion; Industry program development and promotion; Sourcing of Funding and Sponsorship; and School Pilot Project evaluation. All the activities were designed to provide the industry with a sustainable and long-term strategy to engage children in gardening through educational programs and activities both at school and at home.

The information gleaned from this year's KidsGrow pilot project in 15 schools has been used to develop a schools version of the KidsGrow Toolkit and a KidsGrow promotional DVD. The pilot has also resulted in 15 case study examples of how pilot schools have used the KidsGrow materials to best effect, and has helped determine effective strategies for the future delivery and implementation phase of the KidsGrow Initiative.

The KidsGrow pilot has shown that school-focused garden-based learning links well to a range of education sector priorities such as environmental education, improving biodiversity and school environmental management plans. But the pilot has also shown that the KidsGrow gardening process lends itself to a range of core and cross curriculum links such as maths and technology; science; literacy; art; health and wellness; civics and citizenship and values. Making gardening part of mainstream classroom learning (rather than an add-on such as "garden club") is essential to embedding it in the school curriculum and ensuring its longevity.

A paper-based resource alone cannot achieve the penetration needed to get teachers using the KidsGrow toolkit and get kids gardening. People-based strategies focused at a local level are essential in delivering the resources in order to build trust, ownership and to provide on the ground support to schools. Like-minded organisations and individuals with gardening education skills will be trained to become accredited providers in the next phase of the KidsGrow Initiative. There are a growing number of school garden initiatives both locally and at a state level which KidsGrow could have a role in supporting, enabling and resourcing rather than competing with. This role for KidsGrow as a strong national advocate for ALL school gardening would move the industry closer to its vision of "Every school a garden, every child a gardener, every plant a learning experience".

The original "Industry Section" of the KidsGrow Toolkit has been developed into a stand-alone industry program called KidsGrow@Home. A selection of materials have been developed and trialled at different events and the promotional booklet for retailers has been scoped ready to be designed, printed and distributed to industry. The idea of the KidsGrow@Home concept is to extend the garden learning into the home to encourage the involvement of the whole family. The materials will continue to embrace the KidsGrow ethos of learning and comprise worksheets, activities and promotions for retailers to attract parents and children into the garden.

In KidsGrow, NGIA and HAL have invested in the development of a school gardening program that has the opportunity to be adopted nationally by State and Territories across Australia. To ensure the success and sustainability of the program it is imperative that NGIA seek and acquire investment partners for the future development and uptake of KidsGrow. A meeting request is currently sitting with the Australian Government Education & Training Minister, and a lead list is in development.

KidsGrow is an exciting program that presents many funding opportunities through the Australian Government, corporate Australia and through launching a more localised KidsGrow Sponsor a School Program. Rather than approach nursery and garden industry businesses for sponsorship they will be invited to come on board as supporters to provide in-kind product and services. Companies including Yates, Scotts and Gardening Australia magazine are currently supporters of the KidsGrow School Project.

3. INTRODUCTION

Every school a garden
Every child a gardener
Every plant a learning experience

KidsGrow has been designed as a long-term sustainable project to introduce gardening into the school curriculum across Australian.

Launching KidsGrow into schools is the opportunity for the nursery and garden industry to invest in its own future by taking an active role introducing Australian children to the benefits of gardens and gardening. KidsGrow will not only foster the gardeners, and our customers, of the future, these children are potentially our industry leaders, the growers and retailers who will ensure the sustainability of our industry.

In the simplest terms a student in Year 6 who participated in the 2007-08 KidsGrow School Pilot Project could potentially, if he/she left school in Year 10, be doing an apprenticeship in the industry in 5 years time. Similarly, that same student could have graduated with a degree in Horticultural Science in 10 years time. KidsGrow is a real investment in ensuring the sustainability and future of the industry.

The success of KidsGrow relies on the willingness of schools to adopt the program within the education and learning process. Previous experience with Blooming Ideas, and consultation with educators, has strongly indicated that it is not enough to just deliver a kit and expect schools to use it. **THIS APPROACH WILL NOT WORK; IT IS A WASTE OF TIME AND MONEY!**

The KidsGrow approach – purposeful gardening, smart gardening, connected gardening, fun gardening - is to let kids design, build, grow, plan and share the garden at school with the teacher acting as a facilitator. Keeping the school garden kid-focused is critical to maximising learning, creating ownership and building stewardship and lifelong habits. KidsGrow should not be seen as an extracurricular activity, nor is it a garden club. KidsGrow, based on sustainable gardening principles (Appendix 1), encourages a whole of school approach that promotes student-directed learning where kids are active participants in the decision making process.

With such a disjointed approach to education across the country, it is important to note that one size does not fit all, and that each state and territory has a different curriculum and education agenda.

4. BACKGROUND

KidsGrow, developed by NGIA and targeted at primary school children, was launched to the industry in 2006. Designed to encourage the industry to work with schools to incorporate gardening into the school curriculum, the toolkit was developed in collaboration with educators, to create a fun, hands-on learning experience to introduce Australian kids to the pleasure and benefits of gardening.

Based on sustainable gardening principles the toolkit included design plans for themed gardens such as the Seasonal Colour Garden, Australian Habitat, Munch and Crunch and Waterwise Sensory Maze garden as well as practical gardening tips and hints.

The vision behind the KidsGrow project is *Every school a garden, every child a gardener, every plant a learning experience*. The most important part of the KidsGrow project is that it is designed for the kids themselves to do the gardening, under adult supervision, as studies indicate that the hands-on approach is best.

Initially the KidsGrow Toolkit was created to give garden centres the opportunity to share their gardening and horticultural skills with the gardeners of the future, and was made available to schools through their local garden centre or electronically via the website www.kidsgrow.com.au.

In 2006 around 200 KidsGrow toolkits were distributed to garden centres nationally. An industry phone poll in 2007 found that although the industry overwhelmingly rated the KidsGrow Toolkit as an excellent resource, almost all participating garden centres found the kit difficult to promote to schools and recommended that the industry work directly with education departments and schools to launch KidsGrow into the school curriculum.

Prior to this, in 2003 NGIA and HAL commissioned education specialist, Shelley Woodrow to conduct a scoping study to explore the best way for the nursery & garden industry to access, engage and inspire children with plants and gardening with the aim of developing long-term, sustainable school gardening program to ensure the future viability of the garden industry (Appendix 3). Contrary to the findings of this report which recommended that the only way to integrate gardening into the school curriculum was through a hands-on approach that provided teacher training and one-one-one curriculum advice, the industry chose to develop resources for retailers to use to work with their local schools.

The industry has twice attempted to engage schools, students and teachers, firstly with Blooming Ideas in 1998 and secondly with the KidsGrow Industry Toolkit in 2006, both unsustainable without

hands-on support and training for teachers as evidenced in the initial findings of the KidsGrow School Pilot Project, due to finish in July 2008.

The KidsGrow Schools Pilot, in consultation with educators, was launched in 2007/08 into 15 schools across NSW, VIC, SA and QLD. The outcomes of the pilot have overwhelmingly supported the initial recommendations of the 2003 Scoping Study, on which the following strategy is based.

5. METHOD AND ACTIVITIES

There are 5 components to the KidsGrow plans for 2007-08 which comprise the following:

1. Industry Program Development and Promotion

An important part of the KidsGrow process has been taking the nursery and garden industry on the journey of development and communication of the KidsGrow project. This has included individual liaison with participating state CEO's and presentations at conferences on a national and state basis. It has also included regular updates to industry via national publications such as Clippings and e- CommPost as well as coverage in industry magazines such as Australian Horticulture and state publications.

A second part of the KidsGrow process has been embedding industry connections into the KidsGrow School Pilot Project via linking each pilot school with a garden retailer. Each of these retailers has been encouraged to support and mentor their KidsGrow pilot school by providing a local link to the industry. Each of these retailers was responsible for delivering in person KidsGrow resources and materials and encouraged to provide gardening advice and support.

2. Schools Program Development and Promotion

After initially liaising with education departments in NSW, SA, QLD and VIC, 15 pilot schools were selected and supported through a seven month school garden project using the KidsGrow resources to establish school gardens linked to the curriculum. Feedback from these schools has led to the development of a schools' version of the KidsGrow Toolkit to replace the existing kit and a people-based implementation strategy for the next phase of KidsGrow. A new themed garden has also been developed for inclusion in the new toolkit – "The Harmony Gardens" featuring an Aboriginal Meeting Place, a Peace Grove and an International Food Court - which links to environment, Indigenous, health, wellbeing, citizenship and values aspects of the school curriculum.

Other resources developed include a KidsGrow promotional DVD and a mini-poster explaining the KidsGrow 10 Step Approach to Gardening for schools, educators and potential sponsors and funding bodies. Two new cartoon characters "Gabby and Gary" have been developed to communicate with children and will be used on worksheets, awards, posters and other educational material. The possibilities for garden careers education was explored but learnings were not concrete till feedback had been received from the pilot.

Preliminary concepts have been formulated for development in 08/09 and could include 1. A work experience style program for Grade 6 students with a local nursery or hort. business; 2. Links to vocational educational and training by partnering senior students doing VECAL Horticulture at secondary school with a local primary school class doing a gardening project; 3. Gardening careers posters and resource materials for teachers to use linked to relevant curriculum focus areas.

Once the pilot outcomes and future implementation strategy were known, opportunities to present and promote KidsGrow to educators and the school garden sector were identified. Presentations have been made to the Victorian Association of Environmental Educators and to the inaugural National School Garden Network Meeting in Brisbane. Other opportunities are actively being sought and will include audiences such as Primary School Principals, school garden networks, science teachers, environmental educators and others.

3. KidsGrow Schools Pilot Program Evaluation

Through a mentored action research process, and using the KidsGrow Toolkit and the KidsGrow 10 Step Process as a resource, 15 pilot schools in 4 states (4 in QLD, 5 in NSW, 2 in VIC, 4 in SA) have involved about 750 students in the research, development, design and creation of 29 KidsGrow gardens.

The evaluation and documentation of these gardening experiences throughout the process by teachers, students and the KidsGrow education team has provided curriculum links, work samples and insights into the future rollout strategies for KidsGrow. These materials will be used in 2008-09 to educate a new round of KidsGrow Project schools, to improve the delivery strategy to schools and as resources for train-the-trainer sessions and will also be used to inform the development of new schools gardening resources in the future.

4. Development and Promotion of KidsGrow@Home as a Program Extension

KidsGrow@Home has been developed to replace the original industry section in the KidsGrow Garden Centre Toolkit. Materials include activity sheets, recipe cards, competition and event ideas, and handouts to be distributed to families by nursery industry retailers. All KidsGrow@Home materials are branded with logo and the recognisable cartoon figures of “Gabby” and “Gary”. All materials will be available on the website.

KidsGrow@Home is a way for the industry to link directly back to the KidsGrow schools project as research shows that 50 – 71% of children who garden at school also get their families into the garden at home. This is a magnificent opportunity for the industry to benefit firsthand from KidsGrow as it grows. KidsGrow@Home materials will continue to be developed in 2008 -09 project

with the national launch scheduled for November 15th 2008 at the Ball Australia Hortivation event in Victoria.

5. Application for Funding and Sponsorship

Supporters for the 2007-08 school pilot project were contacted to provide in-kind products to distribute to the pilot schools to encourage and motivate them in their KidsGrow gardening efforts. Supporters included Yates, Ryset, Gardening Australia Magazine, and Organic Crop Protectants.

Throughout the school pilot project resources have been compiled to develop a funding and sponsorship proposal. This includes the KidsGrow DVD and information from the 15 pilot school case studies including class garden journals and student work samples.

A sponsorship plan is currently being developed to target potential sponsors and a meeting request has been made to the Australian Government Education Minister.

6. EVALUATION

I. Industry Program Development and Promotion

The promotion of KidsGrow to industry comprises the following elements:

- Liaison with CEO's via newsletters;
- Coverage in industry publications including e-CommPost, Clippings and Australian Horticulture
- Presentation of KidsGrow at industry events
- KidsGrow sight visits for industry key opinion leaders
- Linking each pilot school with industry contacts including a local garden retailer and garden mentor

While this has been an on-going endeavour in the project, it has been difficult to communicate the long-term benefits of KidsGrow to the wider industry. The support for the program is overwhelming, which has resulted in many requests for the kit with little understanding of the overall project and the strategy needed to embed KidsGrow into the school curriculum. In short, most of industry cannot think of KidsGrow beyond a school garden club where adults do most of the work and the children are mere spectators – of course KidsGrow is the opposite of this with the kids doing all the planning, making all the decisions and taking ownership of the garden.

Since showing the DVD at industry events it has been hard to contain the enthusiasm for KidsGrow – everyone wants a piece of it. KidsGrow@Home has been developed in response to this to give industry a part of KidsGrow that they can use to promote gardening to local children and their parents.

OUTPUTS

- Updates for state CEO's (Appendix 2)
- Industry media coverage - e-CommPost, Clippings, state publications and Australian Horticulture (Appendix 3)

OUTCOMES/ RESULTS

- KidsGrow updates were sent out to participating growers and garden centres
- Extended communication about the program sent out to Horticulture Media, external and internal industry publications
- Presentations made at Ramm Botanicals Conference (Sydney), NGIQ Conference (Brisbane), NGIA National Conference and Exhibition (Adelaide) and NGISA Conference (Adelaide)

- Updates to be sent to State and Territory CEOs
- A sight visit was arranged by the children for Jane Edmanson (ABC Gardening Australia presenter), Stephen Potts (CEO, NGIV) and Jan Carr (Edible Classrooms) to visit the Footscray west Garden. This format will be followed in each of the states over the next year.

II. Schools Program Development and Promotion

After initially liaising with education departments in NSW, SA, QLD and VIC, 15 pilot schools were selected and supported through a seven month school garden project using the KidsGrow resources to establish school gardens linked to the curriculum. Feedback from these schools has led to the development of a schools' version of the KidsGrow Toolkit to replace the existing kit and a people-based implementation strategy for the next phase of KidsGrow.

Preliminary concepts have been formulated for development in 08/09 and could include 1. A work experience style program for Grade 6 students with a local nursery or hort. business; 2. Links to vocational educational and training by partnering senior students doing VECAL Horticulture at secondary school with a local primary school class doing a gardening project; 3. Gardening careers posters and resource materials for teachers to use linked to relevant curriculum focus areas.

Once the pilot outcomes and future implementation strategy were known, opportunities to present and promote KidsGrow to educators and the school garden sector were identified. Presentations have been made to the Victorian Association of Environmental Educators and to the inaugural National School Garden Network Meeting in Brisbane. Other opportunities are actively being sought and will include audiences such as Primary School Principals, school garden networks, science teachers, environmental educators and others.

OUTPUTS

- Final KidsGrow DVD (Appendix 4)
- Bi-weekly email updates in 2008 to KidsGrow Pilot Schools (Appendix 5)
- New components for the schools version of the KidsGrow toolkit: schools resource page to explain the KidsGrow 10 step process (Appendix 6);
- Draft of new themed garden "The Harmony Gardens" and new page design to improve readability of Themed Gardens (Appendix 7) ;
- Recording sheets for curriculum linking (Appendix 8);
- Mentor sign up sheet (Appendix 9)
- Letters of Agreement (Appendix 10)
- Sample communications with schools (Appendix 11)

- School “Certificates of Achievement and Recognition” for final stage (Appendix 12)
- Student KidsGrow Awards (Appendix 13)
- KidsGrow Garden Kit samples – stickers, aprons and garden gloves (Appendix 14)

OUTCOMES/ RESULTS

- Pilot schools in 4 states (4 in QLD, 5 in NSW, 2 in VIC, 4 in SA) were enlisted in September/October 2007 to participate in trialling the KidsGrow Toolkit resource and use it to undertake curriculum linked garden projects in the school.
- The Principal and 2 teachers were briefed in an initial session with the KidsGrow Education Consultant and projects planned.
- Materials have been developed in collaboration with teachers who are using the Toolkit materials in a classroom scenario.
- The DVD and preliminary findings have been presented at relevant education meetings in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.
- Meetings have also been held with school and community garden groups to explore how we can all work together to achieve the KidsGrow target of “Every school a garden, every child a gardener, every plant a learning experience” including the Stephanie Alexander Foundation where we have been in discussion about delivering the curriculum materials to support their program.

KidsGrow Pilot Overview:

	KidsGrow team will:	School will:
September 2007	Send KidsGrow Toolkit and introductory letters and forms.	Return completed Pre-pilot self evaluation.
	Introduce Shelley Woodrow and Helen T to each pilot school by phone or visit where possible.	Identify each school's two participating teachers.
	Identify garden retailer to partner with the school.	Identify preferred themed garden projects for the pilot in discussion with Helen T.
	NGIA to sign and send KidsGrow Pilot Agreement to each pilot school	Return KidsGrow Pilot Agreement
October 2007	Send monthly progress report updates.	Identify garden mentors
	Send second KidsGrow toolkits and Feedback Appraisal Proforma at the beginning of Term 4.	Each school starts planning KidsGrow project. Plan how to keep track of any suggestions and samples of how you have used the KidsGrow toolkit. For example, use the second KidsGrow toolkit provided to mark with relevant notes and suggestions.
November 2007	Send each pilot school a package of garden materials via their garden retail partner.	Get the KidsGrow Garden Package from partner KidsGrow Garden Retailer.
	Send monthly update to KidsGrow pilot schools, mentors and KidsGrow garden retailers	Discuss KidsGrow garden plans with mentors and garden retailer and explore possibilities for support during the KidsGrow

		pilot.
December 2007	ENJOY THE HOLIDAYS!	ENJOY THE HOLIDAYS!
January 2008		
February 2008	Ongoing support for each school in putting KidsGrow plans into action.	Start the school year with some KidsGrow hands on action! Use the KidsGrow voucher to purchase garden supplies from your designated garden retailer.
March/April 2008	Provide ongoing advice and encouragement to pilot schools.	Record comments to keep track of curriculum and other uses of the KidsGrow toolkit. Mark up the second KidsGrow toolkit with suggestions, modifications or additions.
May 2008	"	Gather together all the school's documentation including photos, samples of work, sample programs and forward a copy to the KidsGrow team.
June 2008 and beyond	Compile 15 case studies into document to be shared with other schools. Revise KidsGrow Toolkit to create a schools' version.	Review draft of school's own case study and documentation. Consider celebrating and promoting the schools KidsGrow achievements through local networks and/or media

III. Development and Promotion of KidsGrow@Home as a Program Extension

Industry resources are an important component of the program to engage support, develop networks and increase industry participation. This includes KidsGrow@Home which is designed to provide point of sale and promotional opportunities for retailers and growers alike.

Many of the materials in the existing Garden Centre KidsGrow Toolkit are being re-branded and adapted to be used to communicate with parents and children to encourage gardening at home. These materials also provide a great opportunity for retailers to get involved with their local school and generally promote the credentials of the industry by showcasing KidsGrow. Everything related to the KidsGrow brand MUST AT ALL TIMES reflect the educational integrity and sustainable gardening principles of the program.

OUTPUTS

- KidsGrow@Home Activity sheets (Appendix 15)
- KidsGrow@Home poster (Appendix 16)
- Draft outline for Industry Information Booklet (Appendix 17)

OUTCOMES

- KidsGrow@Home has been in the planning for the last twelve months but it was only following the presentation of the DVD to the industry at conferences that it became clear what role this segment of the project should take. Following this an information booklet is being

developed to be available for retailer, growers and allied traders to use to initiate Kids Garden activities and promotions.

- Worksheets have been trialled at the Tropical Garden Spectacular in the Darwin Botanical Gardens.
- A concept of a Treasure Hunt has also been trialled at the same event to great success and materials are being developed for Ball Horticulture to run a similar promotion with local schools under the KidsGrow@Home banner.

IV. Application for Funding and Sponsorship

In KidsGrow, NGIA and HAL have invested in the development of a school gardening program that has the opportunity to be adopted nationally by State and Territories across Australia. To ensure the success and sustainability of the program it is imperative that NGIA seek and acquire investment partners for the future development and uptake of KidsGrow.

KidsGrow is an exciting program that presents many funding opportunities through the Australian Government, corporate Australia and through launching a more localised KidsGrow Sponsor a School Program.

Rather than approach nursery and garden industry businesses for sponsorship, they will be invited to come on board as supporters to provide in-kind product and services.

Australian Government

It is recommended that KidsGrow approach education, sustainability and health portfolios for federal funding of the project. A meeting request is currently with Julia Gillard's office

Corporate Sponsors

The next steps in acquiring corporate funding is to pull together a list of targets, including health funds, financial institutions and other companies that have a focus and/or commitment to ensuring the health and education of young Australians.

Industry Supporters

It is recognised that the best way for nursery and garden industry businesses to get involved in KidsGrow is to become official supporters where they provide in-kind products and services to help sustain the project.

KidsGrow Sponsor a School Program

The KidsGrow Sponsor a School Program presents an opportunity for local and smaller businesses to get involved in sponsor a local school, for example it would work well in an area where a mining company could sponsor their local school.

For \$15,000 the sponsor would be kept up to date on the progress of the KidsGrow Project and receive stories and updates from students and teachers as well as involvement in the school garden launch and a KidsGrow Sponsor Story Board to hang in their boardroom or foyer to celebrate their sponsorship.

OUTPUTS

- NGIA KidsGrow 2008-2013 Strategic Plan (Appendix 21)

OUTCOMES

- We are the process of pulling together a list of sponsorship targets as well as a list of community/ school garden groups so that we have a clear vision of the lay-out of the land.
- Discussion with garden groups and educators highlights much angst over the funding for the Kitchen Garden Program at the expense of everything else – proving that the best way to achieve our key objective of “Every school a garden, every child a gardener, every plant a learning experience” is to work with all the groups who are currently delivering garden programs of all shapes and sizes into schools by providing proven curriculum linkage materials.
- It is therefore imperative that our submissions for funding reflect this endeavour of strengthening community networks.

V. School Pilot Program Evaluation

Pilot schools were surveyed at three stages throughout the pilot:

1. Before they started (in Nov 07), a pre-pilot questionnaire was filled in including an indication of the school's current gardening activity;
2. In February 08 a phone survey assessed their understanding of what was required and of the basic principals behind KidsGrow; and
3. In July/August 2008 schools were visited (where possible) by the KidsGrow education consultants and a questionnaire completed and photos, documentation and work samples collected.

Throughout the pilot, contact records and samples of communications were kept to provide process evaluation information.

OUTPUTS

- Data collection tools (Appendix 18)
- “Key Learnings Summary” from 15 schools (see page 12)
- Process evaluation tools including phone record sheets, visit reports, input records and staged evaluation questionnaires (Attachment 19)
- Documentation from 15 pilot schools including photos, class journals, student work samples, curriculum link charts (samples provided in Appendix 20)

OUTCOMES/ RESULTS

- The data collected throughout the pilot is being used to shape the new version of the KidsGrow toolkit as well the delivery/ implementation strategy for the next phase of the project.
- 15 schools engaged about 750 students in the research, planning, design and creation of 29 gardens.
- All pilot schools linked their KidsGrow gardening activity to the curriculum in varying ways and have shared those links and work samples with the KidsGrow Project team for other schools to use.
- All pilot schools indicated that their KidsGrow program would continue beyond 2008.
- All schools had increased the level and quality of gardening activity in the school across a range of factors including learning, management and culture.
- The documentation, work samples and curriculum links will provide valuable examples to share with other schools wanting to initiate a gardening program and will be used in future KidsGrow training sessions.
- The process evaluation indicates the strong need for people-based delivery of the KidsGrow materials to ensure their use by busy teachers. In particular ongoing input from a garden educator with gardening skills, knowledge of the curriculum and of the KidsGrow kids-driven learning approach is essential.

KidsGrow 2007–08 Pilot Key Learnings Summary

Pilot School	School Gardening highlights/challenges/outcomes	Lesson for KidsGrow Team
Blackwood Primary SA	<u>Challenges:</u> 1. Being committed to 3 different garden initiatives (KidsGrow, Bot Gardens, Indig garden); 2. Senior and junior classes working together made curriculum planning difficult. <u>Outcomes:</u> KidsGrow provided focus for all gardening activities and led to stronger relationship with Botanic Garden neighbour. Buddy classes were a real plus in practical ways.	First briefing session vital to include all parties including outside mentors. Need upfront commitment to sign up to agreed milestones. Need commitment to student-driven process from Step 1. School would have liked paid relief time for KidsGrow briefing time.
Bridgewater Primary SA	Trying to establish a community garden in a meaningful way. Have an elaborate plan. Uses strong kids-focused learning and management approach. <u>Outcomes:</u> KidsGrow has given them a focus and practical way to get grand plan started. One teacher assigned for one day per week to work with several classes	Need to have more than one or two teachers on the KidsGrow team. Needs strong link to classroom learning. Retailer chosen had wrong stock type for indigenous plant garden selected. Schools often have strong links to preferred garden suppliers
Booloroo Centre District School SA	Initially planned a strong link with sustainability program but school priorities changed with staff changes/losses. <u>Outcome:</u> Garden effort not linked to Sustainability so opportunity lost. Only one teacher left from original group.	Need enthusiastic support of Principal and at least 3 participating teachers (not co-opted).

		Need upfront commitment to curriculum/school initiative links. Early guided session with KidsGrow consultant is essential in order to provide teachers with time to focus on the 10 Step Process, resources in the Toolkit and plan program.
Flaxmill Primary SA	<u>Challenges:</u> Large school, low socio-economic setting with vandalism and behaviour problems. Democratic learning processes. Adults had chosen garden site before starting. <u>Outcomes:</u> KidsGrow process led kids to map and choose a better site. KidsGrow now the centre of new Wellness initiative – school has appointed a Wellness Co-ordinator/ teacher one day per week. Positive involvement of retailer.	Need to find a way of helping schools resource their garden initiatives e.g. finding donations, sponsors, grants. Selection of enthusiastic garden retailer can be a real positive for outcome. Schools need flexibility to link KidsGrow with own school priorities. The KidsGrow process works when started at Step 1!
Panania Public School NSW	Planned to link with COGS from NSW curriculum. Buddy classes Yr 1 and Yr 5. Part of “beautification program”. <u>Outcomes:</u> Didn’t follow KidsGrow stepped process till quite late. Missed opportunity by not engaging with outside mentors. Good links with curriculum. Great student work samples.	Need to better focus teachers on the KidsGrow Stepped Process at the beginning e.g. milestone commitments, new resource. First meeting vital. Need to build in engagement of mentors as essential early milestone.
Balmain Public School NSW	<u>Challenges:</u> All asphalt playground with contaminated soil. Major staff changes meant that only the students knew what had gone on before! No continuity of gardening advice. <u>Outcomes:</u> Brilliant teacher had done the ground work so that the kids knew exactly where they were up to with process. Great documentation. A truly kids-driven process. Learnsapes mentor helped re-focus efforts through a workshop with range of stakeholders to help find solution to get their garden built.	The KidsGrow process works – even kids can follow it! The need for quality and committed gardening mentors vital.
Arcadia Public School NSW	<u>Challenges:</u> Veggie garden not in the best spot (shade and septic tanks). Buddy classes Year 2/3 and Yrs 4/5 <u>Outcomes:</u> Identified better spot for vegies after following process and mapping shade etc. Turned septic tank lids into art of 4 seasons. Great relationship with garden retailer who organised series of work station experiences in production nursery for whole school excursion! (every kid in the school said they wanted to be a nurseryman). Construction of sensory gardening using maths principles. Good relationship with local council.	Quality and enthusiastic mentors can strongly influence success of school garden project.
Karang Public School Coffs Harbour NSW	Whole school involvement. All 4 themed gardens. Initial focus on biodiversity and weeds, grounds improvement and environmental education. Linked to School Environmental Management Plan. <u>Outcomes:</u> Presented KidsGrow research at International River Health Conference in Canberra. Strong links to range of mentors. KidsGrow fostered cross curriculum learning and kids more responsible for their own learning and gardens. Excellent documentation of research.	Range of mentors can provide depth of experience for kids and vital skills input when planning and building the garden. Early guided session with KidsGrow consultant is essential in order to provide teachers with time to focus on the 10 Step Process, resources in the Toolkit and plan program.
St Joseph’s Primary Maclean NSW	<u>Challenge:</u> Staff changes (previous teacher didn’t leave documentation from previous years KidsGrow work) <u>Outcome:</u> Munch and Crunch garden has Art and Science focus	Need to provide strategy to ensure continuity if staff changes.
Lawnton State School QLD	Curriculum co-ordinator programmed whole KidsGrow gardening unit based on 10 steps before starting. <u>Challenge:</u> Didn’t complete Step 4 and now poor placement of garden - Vegies now sited in shade. Grounds person has different ideas about gardening and class had no other garden skills mentors to advise. <u>Outcomes:</u> Retailer belatedly came on side (having seen KidsGrow DVD at conference). Enthusiastic young horticulturalist is now kids hero.	Should have involved grounds person in early briefing sessions. The need for quality and committed gardening mentors vital. Enthusiastic young horticulturalists as role models for kids is powerful way of learning and developing a love of gardening.
Mt Petrie State School	Whole school involvement. <u>Challenge:</u> No gardening skills. Very poor soil. Poor communication between busy school principal and busy	Need to find a way to offer schools a soil testing service as pH testing will not pick up some soil issues.

QLD	retailer. <u>Outcomes:</u> Process stalled because soil is so poor. Great documentation of research planning and design phase. Strong cross-curriculum linking.	The need for ongoing, quality and committed gardening mentors vital.
St Anthony's Primary QLD	One teacher enthusiastic – strong democratic teaching approach. <u>Challenge:</u> Main teacher dropped out and no second teacher appointed to take on KidsGrow. Principal lacked commitment to KidsGrow project. <u>Outcomes:</u> One teacher has done a great job. Strong cross-curriculum links	Need enthusiastic support of Principal and 3 teachers One champion teacher within a school is not enough to ensure the longevity of a gardening program. Schools need flexibility to link KidsGrow with own school priorities.
School of Total Education, Warwick QLD	Timing in the year difficult because of other curriculum priorities. Could only start in Term 3. <u>Outcomes:</u> Strong cross curriculum links. Fully focused on KidsGrow planning.	Need to start process in previous year in order for schools to build KidsGrow activity into their program plans. Need more than one teacher in the school
Footscray West Primary VIC	<u>Challenge:</u> Strong parent-run garden club but no linking back to mainstream curriculum. Involvement of 7 classes across a single grade (Yr1/2). Large site chosen for garden at the front of the school. <u>Outcomes:</u> Minibeasts unit and links to VELs. Used a professional landscape designer to draw up plans based on kids' research and wish list. Breadth of stimulus gardening experiences led to rich research and planning phase.	Wide range of mentors, experts and gardening stimulus experiences enriched kids research and learning. Involvement of Principal essential to ensure longevity of gardening project.
Woolum Bellum P -12 Koorie, Morewell VIC	Whole school involvement. Indigenous perspective – narrative enquiry approach. <u>Outcomes:</u> Have programmed Friday as KidsGrow Day. Buddy classes (programme for older kids). Whole school too much so have separated primary and secondary. Strong cross-curriculum learning and practical hands-on learning. Strong literacy, numeracy and art focus	First briefing session vital to include all teachers and mentors and to emphasise the 10 step process. Early guided session with KidsGrow consultant is essential in order to provide teachers with time to focus on the resources in the Toolkit and plan program. The need for quality and committed gardening mentors vital.

7. IMPLICATIONS FOR INDUSTRY

The standout learning from the program evaluation is that people-based delivery of the program is essential if the industry is to achieve its aim of getting kids gardening for the longer term. In today's busy schools, teachers need help in focusing their attention and the right introduction from a knowledgeable mentor to the KidsGrow program makes all the difference to the uptake and use of the material.

In order to achieve this, and to have a hope of reaching the 7000 primary schools Australia-wide, KidsGrow must partner with like-minded providers (whether individuals or organisations) who share the same approach to garden-based learning and who have an appropriate means to engage with schools in introducing the KidsGrow materials. The task for the next phase of the KidsGrow Project is to train-the-trainer and to pilot this delivery strategy of making the KidsGrow materials available through a workshop with ongoing gardening skills support from a local accredited provider.

Other important learnings from the pilot indicate that the KidsGrow strategy to date is sound: teachers love the practical resources and the ten step approach in the KidsGrow toolkit; teachers like to learn from each other (thus the importance of collecting case studies and samples of work to share); the enthusiastic support of the Principal and at least 2 or 3 teachers in the school is vital for success.

One key area of concern to be further explored is that many teachers have little or no gardening experience and need a local gardening skills mentor on their team. The pilot study has suggested that local garden retailers are not necessarily the best choice for this kind of support. Links between pilot schools and their appointed local garden retailer has had mixed success - only 6 of the 15 schools indicated a strongly positive experience. Other means must be found to either mobilise the industry to stand up and be counted or to link schools with other local people with gardening skills who are prepared to give some time to passing on their passion, skills and knowledge.

8. CONCLUSION

For KidsGrow to be a sustainable and accepted education program which trains teachers to use the garden to achieve their curriculum objectives and its overall aim, the industry needs to make a commitment to a long-term plan that grows new gardeners and encourages students to think of the nursery industry as a future career path. This commitment to the program will also encourage sponsorship and funding opportunities from both the government and corporate sectors.

Ensuring the next generation of gardeners and garden industry leaders and workers is imperative to the future growth of the nursery and garden industry. School-based gardening initiatives which are linked to the curriculum provide the best chance of reaching this generation of young people who, more than any generation before, have less exposure to natural and cultivated places

A NGIA KidsGrow Strategic Plan (Appendix 21) has been developed to outline the vision for the national roll-out of KidsGrow Schools Project over the next 5 years, which is based on the procurement of sponsorship and support from government, corporate sponsorship and industry supporters.

9. FINANCIAL REVIEW

Activity Number	Activity Description	Actual Expenditure to December 31, 2007	Budget (\$)
1	Sponsorship Compilation of funding opportunities: development of Sponsorship Strategy	1,800	2,500
2	Industry Development Travel; development of presentation materials	3,000	3,700
3	Schools Program Consultancy fees; travel; school materials; development & design of materials; attendance at events; collaboration; communication expenses	154,460	115,500
4	KidsGrow@Home Development & Design of materials	12,500	15,000
5.	Project Evaluation Travel; communications; development of reporting materials	8,000	8,000
	TOTALS	179,760	140,700

Funding	Paid	Due
VC Matchable NGiA	\$72, 560	
Milestone	\$40,000	
<u>Final Report Payment Due:</u>		<u>\$28, 140</u>

10. APPENDICES

The following attachments relate to the outcomes of the project:

1. KidsGrow Sustainable Gardening Principles
2. Sample of KidsGrow updates sent to State CEOs
3. Industry Media Coverage
4. Final KidsGrow DVD
5. Bi-weekly email updates in 2008 to KidsGrow Pilot Schools
6. New components for the schools version of the KidsGrow toolkit and Schools resource page to explain the KidsGrow 10 step process
7. Draft of new themed garden “The Harmony Gardens” and new page design to improve readability of Themed Gardens
8. Recording sheets for curriculum linking
9. Mentor sign up sheet
10. Letters of Agreement
11. Sample communications with schools
12. School “Certificates of Achievement and Recognition” for final stage
13. Student KidsGrow Awards
14. KidsGrow@Home Activity sheets
15. KidsGrow@Home poster
16. Draft outline for Industry Information Booklet
17. Data collection tools
18. Process evaluation tools including phone record sheets, visit reports, input records, and staged evaluation questionnaires
19. KidsGrow Garden Kit samples – Stickers, KidsGrow Aprons, KidsGrow Garden gloves
20. Documentation from 15 pilot schools including samples of photos, class journals, student work samples, curriculum link charts
21. NGIA KidsGrow 2008-2013 Strategic Plan