

Community Engagement: Building Transformational Partnerships Through Environmental Education

An Introduction to
*Community Engagement:
Guidelines for Excellence*



Session Purpose

- Become familiar with Community Engagement Guidelines and EE applications
- Explore “Key Characteristics” and tools to enhance our work
- Network and learn from each other





From Inspiration to Impact



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EPA

United States
Environmental Protection
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Five-Year Cooperative Agreement

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Community Engagement: Guidelines for Excellence...



Guidelines for Excellence
Community Engagement



...the newest
member of the
*Guidelines for
Excellence Series*

National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education



Collective Wisdom

Developed *Guidelines*
through a public
participatory process

Engaging educators in a
deep discussion about
quality environmental
education practice

Building EE as a
profession



These guidelines are all about...

Working with communities



Guidelines for Excellence
Community Engagement

They focus on:

- **environment**
- **sustainability**
- **resilience**
- **community well-being**



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Guidelines for Excellence
Community Engagement



Key Characteristics

Key Characteristic

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Collaborative and Inclusive

Environmental education works in collaborative and inclusive relationships, partnerships, and coalitions.

Guideline 3.1 Build coalitions and partnerships strategically

By working with diverse partners and coalitions who share your interests, concerns, and goals, environmental educators strengthen their connections with the community and the effectiveness of their efforts.

Indicators:

- Identify existing coalitions and partnerships and develop strategies to work with them.
- Identify potential partners with complementary concerns and goals to your environmental education aims.
- Work with partners to identify how the strengths, networks, and contributions of members could complement each other in working toward shared goals, while also accomplishing individual aims.
- When appropriate, jointly develop an agreement that defines the purpose and shared commitment of the partnership.
- Establish clear roles and responsibilities for partners.



Key Characteristics

- 1. Community Centered**
- 2. Based on Sound Environmental Education Principles**
- 3. Collaborative and Inclusive**
- 4. Oriented Toward Capacity Building and Civic Action**
- 5. A Long-Term Investment in Change**



Key Characteristics

1. Community Centered

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Anchoring environmental aims within the context of community interests, issues, and capacities, puts the community at the heart of environmental education.

2. Based on Sound EE Principles
3. Collaborative and Inclusive
4. Oriented Toward Capacity Building & Civic Action
5. A Long-Term Investment in Change



Key Characteristics

1. Community Centered

2. Based on Sound EE Principles

EE engages communities in ways that rely on established principles and proven practices of the field.

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3. Collaborative and Inclusive

4. Oriented Toward Capacity Building & Civic Action

5. A Long-Term Investment in Change



Key Characteristics

1. Community Centered
2. Based on Sound EE Principles

3. Collaborative and Inclusive

EE works in collaborative and inclusive relationships, partnerships, and coalitions.

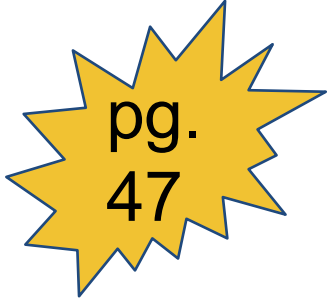
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4. Oriented Toward Capacity Building & Civic Action
5. A Long-Term Investment in Change



Key Characteristics

1. Community Centered
2. Based on Sound EE Principles
3. Collaborative and Inclusive
- 4. Oriented Toward Capacity Building & Civic Action**



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EE supports capacity building for ongoing civic engagement in community life, contributing to long-term community well-being, sustainability, and resilience.

5. A Long-Term Investment in Change



Key Characteristics

1. Community Centered
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- 5. A Long-Term Investment in Change**

Working in communities to create change is typically a long-term initiative, requiring a commitment to relationship building and in ongoing and evolving process of engagement.

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Supporting Resources



Resource #1

Community Well-Being, Sustainability and Resilience

Purpose: Provides insights into using systems-based concepts such as community well-being, sustainability, and resilience to align environmental education with broader community concerns, capacities, partners, and alliances.

Community wellbeing is about the happiness and health of the community in which we live. Our sense of wellbeing is affected by our physical and mental health, the relationships between us, the natural and built environments in which we live, the economy, and our ability to have a say in the decisions that matter to us.

Community wellbeing is about how all these things come together to support us to live happy, healthy and meaningful lives.

—City of Darwin, Community Wellbeing Plan⁶

Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. To pursue sustainability is to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations.

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Questions and Feedback





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