



Speaking 4 the Planet

Evaluation Report

2019

Contents

History

- Speaking 4 the Planet

SP4 in Practice

- Key Elements
- Program Example

Events

- Australia
- New Zealand
- Thailand

Evaluation

- Participant Feedback

Sponsors



supported by

**Sutherland Shire
Environment Centre**



History

Speaking 4 the Planet

Speaking for the Planet is an Arts-based competition for high school students. These events have World Environment Day themes and the Sustainability Development Goals as their focus. The competition categories are speaking, drama, art, video-making and writing. Kids 4 the Planet is the primary school equivalent.

Speaking 4 the Planet encourages participants to think differently. If we are to achieve sustainable communities, we will need people to be able to think creatively - often away from the mainstream - and express and support novel ideas in public arenas. We will need people who can persuade decision-makers and community members to choose sustainability options and directions. Speaking 4 the Planet provides opportunities for students to offer quirky solutions and build skills in communication, advocacy and change.

The inaugural S4P event, supported by Sutherland Shire Environment Centre (SSEC), was held at The Jannali High School on 5 June 2013. Seven schools and 35 students participated in that first S4P competition. Since then there have been over 30 Speaking 4 the Planet Events with over 1000 student participants.



Speaking 4 the Planet in Practice



A competition - Speaking 4 the Planet is a competition with several categories: prepared and impromptu speaking, impromptu drama, art, video and writing. The focus is the World Environment Day theme and the Sustainability Development Goals. Events are registered on the UN's website.

A full day event - Events take much of a school day. They are normally held in schools or council chambers. The program includes welcome addresses from the hosts and sponsors, a video with information on the specific topic of the event, and prize-giving. Students are given about an hour to prepare for the impromptu categories. On some occasions, the art is also impromptu and students are given approximately three hours.

Teacher support - A Student and Teacher Resource Pack is provided to help students prepare for the competition. It also has some teaching and learning activities related to the topic. The package includes the judging criteria, which are linked to curriculum requirements for speaking and drama. Teachers welcome the package: "Everything I needed to know was provided" said Angelina Bea, a teacher from Liverpool Boys HS

Judges - Judging panels have included representatives from sponsoring organisations and businesses including Paddy Pallin and Bunnings, Toastmasters groups, Sutherland Shire Environment Centre, and local councils.

After the event - The winners of the prepared and impromptu speech sections are invited to repeat their performances at the local Council and local Toastmasters groups. The Sutherland Shire Environment Centre invites winners to speak and perform at its AGMs.

Funding - Funding and in-kind support come from a variety of sources, including local councils, SSEC, Catholic Schools Office (Armidale), Paddy Pallin, and Bunnings.

Evaluation - Evaluations are conducted on the day and through follow-up emails to the teachers. After the event, all participants are invited via email to provide comments and suggestions for improvement.



Example Program

An example of a running program from The Hills Shire Council, Thursday 30 May 2019

- 9.00** - Event opening and Welcome from The Hills Shire Council
- 9.30** - Talk by Anthony, Rouse Hill HS, Winner Prepared Speaking 2018
- 9.35** - Introduction of Judges; explanation of how the day will run
- 9.45** - Setting the scene: talk by Ricky, Hills Grammar & video on food waste
- 9.55** - Prepared Speeches
- 10.40** - Morning tea and preparation for impromptu sections
- 11.40** - Impromptu speeches and drama
- 1.00** - Lunch. Impromptu writing collected and judged
- 1.30** - Announcement of winners. Awards and gifts
- 2.15** - Close



Events

Eight events took place in 2019. These include **metropolitan** and **regional** competitions and, for the first time, an **international event**.

Australia

The **City of Parramatta** supported an inaugural Speaking 4 the Planet event at Maronite College of the Holy Family on **2 April**. Students from the school produced artworks on the theme of Beat Plastic Pollution. Almost **20 artworks** and a **music group** from the school made this first event a fun afternoon.



On **30 May**, approximately 30 students from 6 schools participated in the competition held in **The Hills Shire**. They spoke, performed, and presented their written pieces in the council chambers. The theme was Think. Eat. Save. Students focused on the challenges and opportunities for food waste and equitable distribution.



On **3 June**, seven schools competed at **St John Bosco College**, Engadine. This **Sutherland Shire** event attracted 42 students to participate in speaking, drama, video and art (impromptu) about the problem of air pollution. Their performances and artworks addressed strategies to Beat Air Pollution.



World Environment Day, **5 June**, was the inaugural Speaking 4 the Planet event in the **Georges River Council** local government area. St George Girls High School hosted sixty students from 4 local high schools. The focus was the WED theme of **Beat Plastic Pollution**, and students responded to the plastic problem through art, speeches, drama and video. (A separate report is available on this event.)



Two days later on **7 June**, 10 schools from three local government areas come together at Mt Annan to show how to Beat Air Pollution. Almost 40 students from **Camden Council, Liverpool City Council** and **Campbelltown City Council** spoke, performed, and discussed artworks.



Fifty students, parents, teachers and community members filled the **Armidale Regional Council** chambers on **20 June**. There, students used speech, drama, art and writing to Beat Air Pollution. The **impromptu writing** category attracted a dozen students, some working alone, others in pairs, to put together 30 words on the theme. Here are the two top submissions:

Coughing, bandannas 'protect' us from the plastic panic in our air. But hope too is in the air, promoting a healthier world. Don't let toxic people tell you about toxicity.
-Josie, Armidale Secondary College.

Spattering, we hack to attentive activists. We're too late... The political leaders are victorious. They prioritise propaganda labelled 'solutions', silencing our desperate pleas to save beloved Mother Earth.
- Bella, Holy Trinity, Inverell.



The final event for the year was held at **Lakemba Public School** with the support of **Canterbury Bankstown Council**. The school's hall was filled with over 60 students and decorated with **artworks** from all classes at Lakemba Public School. Competing students from 5 schools focused on the WED theme of Many Species. **One Planet. One Future**. Drama, art, speeches and videos considered problems and solutions for humans living on Earth with many, many millions of other species. An additional STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) activity had students developing strategies to protect an endangered frog species.



New Zealand

The first Speaking 4 the Planet

Christchurch was held on **June 7th** in our fabulous new central library, Tūrangā with **12 schools** sending representatives along to compete in the prepared, impromptu and spoken word sections of the speech competition. Many of those schools also sent in entries to the art competition. All the speeches were filmed and can be viewed online here:

<https://sustainablechristchurch.org.nz/speaking-4-the-planet-speeches-online/>

click & play!



The students who gained places in their divisions returned with their families for the evening prize giving, with great prizes donated by local businesses and a tertiary institution. Feedback from participants, their families and teachers was really positive with many **expressing keenness to participate again in 2020.**



Thailand



Speaking 4 the Planet worked with the Faculty of the Environment at Kasetsart University in Thailand and **GLOBE** (Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment) to run a **Youth Camp** in the lead-up to the 2019 World Environmental Education Congress in Bangkok. One student was selected to represent the 50 students from six countries to deliver a 5minute speech at the Opening Ceremony of WEEC. The speech was received very warmly by the Congress organisers and delegates. Conversations are already underway about how a similar thing can be done in for the 2021 WEEC in Prague.



Program Overview

Date	Time	Program	Location
3 Nov 2019	12.00-16.00	Registration	Casean
	13.00-16.00	Asia Environment Network Workshop	
	13.00-17.00	Registration for WEEC2019	Bhiraj Hall 1
	17.00-18.00	Speaking 4 the Planet - GLOBE Workshop	
	07.00-17.00	Registration	Bhiraj Hall 1
	09.00-18.00	Exhibition	

An extract from the WEEC 2019 Youth Speech at the Opening Ceremony, Monday 4 November 2019; Connected Youth: Connected Futures.

"It is an honour to have the chance to present the views of young people to this Congress. I want to thank you all for the work you have done and the work you are doing in environment and education to make the world better. It is not young people Vs old people. The Earth is one country and we humans are its citizens. We are in this together and we youth want to help heal and protect the Earth."
- Phansa Duangtip



Evaluation

Every Speaking 4 the Planet event is evaluated. For the 2019 evaluation process, students, teachers and, on this occasion, parents were given a sheet of paper and asked to respond to one question:

What would you say to students/teachers/parents about participating in Speaking 4 the Planet competitions?

(Note: students were writing to other students, teachers to other teachers, and parents to other parents.)

These pieces of writing were collected and transcribed. Here is a sample of those comments.



Kids 4 the Planet



"Thank you very much Phil for providing our students with this valuable learning experience since 2017. Students have enjoyed participating in the **Kids 4 the Planet** event as it allows them to express their ideas about sustainability in creative ways such as through drama, public speaking, art and video. Students were encouraged to think critically and creatively and were provided with the opportunity to collaborate with other students within their school as well as other local schools to learn about biodiversity and think of different ways we can all work together to look after our planet."

Rasha, Lakemba Public School



Speaking 4 the Planet

"As a student, I would recommend this event to others as it acts as a wake-up call to the crisis we are currently in. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn how we can help save our planet. They inspire you to make a difference."

- Melinda, Student.

"It is not through posters or infographics where people want to take a stand to help sustain the environment, **it is through art, because that's what really touches people**, the colour, the tone, the texture, the message behind it, that's what makes people really want to change their ways for the greater good of the environment." -Joy Sleiman (Year 9 student)



Students

"It is important to link art to the environment and sustainability so people can see how pollution is ruining our world visually and see how we can stop it"

-Melody Sleiman (Year 7 student)

South West Sydney Students

It's amazing. You won't regret it!

Try your hardest and you won't fail. You will succeed.

It's worth doing, even if you get embarrassed. Remember, it's for a good cause.

It's a great, fun day whilst also being educated about our Earth and what our actions can do to it.

When you are watching and listening to others speak and perform, you learn a lot about our planet.

Great way to learn about the environment. Save our planet!

It's a great place to learn more about protecting our Earth.

It's fun and gives us a chance to learn from others.

If you have an opportunity to compete in the Speaking 4 the Planet, do it! You will love it and definitely learn something new.

Participate and do your best .

Do it. It's fun.



"The event is an amazing opportunity that boosts teenagers' awareness of environmental issues and also instils in them the confidence to have a creative opinion and be able to voice that opinion. It's a fantastic day! Thank you!"

- Bella, Student.



Teachers

"I would say to other teachers that S4P is a great day for students to engage with real-world environmental issues using their creativity. It was great to see a variety of arts used to share such an important message."

- Rachel McKendrick, Teacher

"In order for humanity to fully understand the environmental plight of our world, our eyes and mind must be open. Art is key to engaging audiences where words alone may fail; art has the capacity to act as a catalyst for change."

- Karina, Teacher



Schools



A great opportunity to see students shine!

Teachers, get involved in saving our environment. If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem. Get your students involved.

Speaking 4 the Planet provides an insight into the opinions of youth.

An **exchanging, insightful** experience offering multiple perspectives.

Great opportunity to celebrate environmental issues.

This is a **great opportunity** to see young people engage critically with issues affecting our world and the people in it.

S4P is an enabling environment for **creativity**; it **builds student confidence** and gives them a voice for change. Brilliant and inspiring day. Thank you.

Speaking 4 the Planet is a fantastic opportunity for students to be the voice of action. We will be back again next year!

Councils

"Do it! Participate in a positive, powerful day that celebrates innovation, sustainability and collaboration. Everyone has a ball." - Liverpool City Council.

"Councils, be inspired, be supportive, be involved in Speaking 4 the Planet!"
- Camden Council.

Fantastic to be involved and meet so many passionate young people."
-Armidale Regional Council



Organisations


"Speaking 4 the Planet helps students understand the relationships between personal choices & global issues. This program helps students learn to become advocates for sustainability."

- Jenni Gormley,
Sutherland Shire Environment Centre



Conclusion

This year's events were a **great success**, and we were able to hold our first **international events** in New Zealand and support a speaker at the *World Environmental Education Congress* in **Thailand**. In the evaluations, students, teachers and parents commented very favourably on the competition. The **new category** for this year, **impromptu writing**, was received positively. Interest remains high for conducting Speaking 4 the Planet and Kids 4 the Planet events in 2020.



"Speaking 4 the Planet is a great experience for all - students, teachers, parents, organisers and volunteers."



Click & play!



VIDEO LINKS

Speaking 4 the Planet Competition

St George Girls High School, June 2019

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15slyuotlzXUFxsnZ2mxGTjkaEbuwPU7p?usp=sharing>

Kids 4 the Planet Competition

Lakemba Public School 2018

<https://youtu.be/NrApURTY8xo>

South West Sydney

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KTxMkx_LteYweYWwYap4LNlDxG_qWCHI/view

For any enquiries please don't hesitate to

CONTACT

Phil Smith - Director



phil@speaking4theplanet.org.au



+61 412 338 687



@speaking4theplanet



Sponsors

A huge and heartfelt thank you to all Speaking 4 the Planet and Kids 4 the Planet sponsors throughout our 2019 events.



The Australian
BOTANIC GARDEN
Mount Annan



THE HILLS
Sydney's Garden Shire



ARMIDALE
Regional Council



BUNNINGS
warehouse



LIVERPOOL
CITY
COUNCIL





Artwork by **Zahid**, Lakemba Public School



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