

FROM CRADLE TO CAREER

Fossil Fuel
Industry
Presence in
Australian
Childhood
Settings.



June 2026



**comms
declare**

Australian children are encountering fossil fuel industry-funded programs in many of the institutions they trust and interact with every day.

This investigation identified **approximately 260+ publicly documented programs**,¹ partnerships, sponsorships and other initiatives through which major fossil fuel companies - including Woodside, Shell, Chevron, Santos, BHP and Glencore - as well as fossil fuel industry-funded education bodies, industry associations and partner organisations, engage with Australian children and young people.

These activities span schools, early childhood settings, museums, science centres, sporting clubs, teacher professional development, scholarships, STEM initiatives and career pathway programs.

Together, they create an invasive fossil fuel industry presence in environments that help shape children's learning, aspirations and understanding of the world.

260+

More than 260 publicly documented programs.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While comprehensive funding data remains unavailable, the scale of investment identified through publicly available sources is substantial.

Across **just six illustrative programs** and partnerships, fossil fuel companies have publicly disclosed more than \$54.5 million in funding directed towards schools, educational institutions and child-centred initiatives.²

BHP
2025-2028

\$12m

“\$12 million investment by BHP over four years to enhance education services and improve education outcomes in public schools in the Pilbara.”

SOURCE: [WA Government press release](#)

Chevron
2023-2025

\$1.1m

“The partnership will deliver an additional \$1.1million in funding to continue the initiative, extending Chevron Australia’s ongoing support for programs at Onslow School since 2009.”

SOURCE: [WA Government press release](#)

Glencore
2024

\$380k

“In 2024, Glencore Coal’s Junior Sports Development Program helped provide additional funding to 68 junior sports organisations and injected over \$380,000 into regional New South Wales and Queensland communities.”

SOURCE: [Glencore report](#)

Shell
2015-2025

\$10.25m

“Since 2015, Shell has contributed more than \$10.25 million to Queensland Museum, funding children’s education programs such as Fossil Finders, Water Matters, and Future Makers.”

SOURCE: [Queensland Museum website](#)

BHP
2022-2027

\$10.8m

BHP has paid \$10.8m toward STEM Together, a CSIRO-led project to create a more inclusive STEM ecosystem and workforce.

SOURCE: [BHP Foundation report](#)

Woodside
2025

\$20m

“The state government has contributed \$73 million in upgrades, with works beginning in 2023, and last year, an extra \$20 million was added by Woodside.”

SOURCE: [ABC News](#)

\$54.53m

\$54.53 million across just six programs.

This figure should be treated as a minimum estimate rather than a complete accounting³.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many sponsorship arrangements, educational partnerships and community programs provide little or no public information about funding levels, program reach, educational content or the extent of industry involvement.

This report does not argue that schools, teachers, museums, sporting clubs or community organisations are acting improperly by accepting support. Many of the institutions identified are operating under genuine financial pressure and are providing valuable services to children and families.

The investigation identified several recurring patterns.

Australia currently has:

- no dedicated oversight mechanism for industry partnerships in child-centred settings;
- no consistent transparency requirements for sponsorship arrangements involving schools, museums or youth programs; and
- limited visibility into the cumulative exposure children may experience across multiple institutions and programs.

These governance gaps make it difficult for parents, educators, policymakers and the public to assess the scale, nature and impact of fossil fuel industry engagement, or any corporate actor, with children and young people.

The report therefore recommends a ban on fossil fuel ads and sponsorships, and the establishment of a Parliamentary Inquiry into fossil fuel industry engagement in child-centred institutions and settings.

Instead, this report asks a different question:

What safeguards should exist when coal, oil and gas companies become embedded in institutions that children and young people are taught to trust?

1. Fossil fuel companies are engaging with children and young people across multiple stages of life, from early childhood through to workforce development and employment pathways.
2. Some educational programs and materials reviewed for this report presented climate impacts while giving limited attention to the role of fossil fuel production in driving those impacts. In several cases, climate change was framed primarily through adaptation, technological responses or individual behaviour, with comparatively less attention given to fossil fuel systems and emissions.
3. Many of these activities operate with limited transparency and oversight.

Such an inquiry could provide the first comprehensive national examination of:

- the scale and nature of fossil fuel industry engagement with children and young people;
- whether additional safeguards are required to protect educational integrity, institutional independence and the public interest, and
- Future economic pathways to ensure unbiased, science-based education.

This report should be understood as a starting point, not a final accounting.

The programs documented here are those that could be identified through publicly available information. They reveal a significant and largely unexamined area of public policy, one that warrants parliamentary scrutiny.

Australian children deserve institutions that are transparent, accountable and worthy of the trust placed in them. Parliament should determine whether existing arrangements meet that standard.

INTRODUCTION

Public concern about corporate influence has traditionally focused on lobbying, political donations, advertising and public communications.

This report examines a different and largely unexamined form of potential influence: fossil fuel industry engagement with children and young people through the institutions that help shape their lives.

Across Australia and the region, fossil fuel companies and industry-linked organisations support, sponsor or participate in programs operating within schools, museums, science centres, early childhood settings, sporting clubs, STEM initiatives, teacher professional development, scholarship programs and career pathways.

What these environments share is not simply proximity to children, but deep – and often hard-earned – institutional trust.

They are places associated with learning, care, aspiration, safety and belonging, where children develop social norms, build relationships with authority and expertise, and begin forming understandings about science, society and their future roles within community and economic life.

That trust is one of the most valuable assets any institution can possess. It is why parents send their children to schools, museums and sporting clubs with confidence. It is why young people look to teachers, educators and community leaders for guidance. And it is why influence within these settings carries particular significance.

Many of the organisations identified in this report provide valuable services to children and families. Many also operate under genuine financial pressure, particularly in regional communities where public funding may be limited and corporate partnerships can provide important support for educational programs, community infrastructure and youth services.

This report does not suggest that schools, teachers, museums, sporting clubs or community organisations are acting improperly in accepting that support.

It does, however, ask whether sufficient safeguards exist when industries whose commercial interests depend on continued fossil fuel production become embedded within institutions that children and young people are taught to trust.

Some of these programs involve visible branding and sponsorship. Others operate through educational resources, teacher training, museum partnerships, STEM initiatives and long-term institutional relationships. Collectively, they create opportunities for fossil fuel companies to build familiarity, legitimacy and influence through third party institutions.

The report identifies examples of industry involvement in educational materials, teacher professional development, community partnerships, sporting sponsorships and career pathway programs. It also identifies significant gaps in transparency, oversight and public accountability.

The central argument of this report is simple: when industries whose products are harming us become embedded within trusted child-centred institutions, that relationship warrants scrutiny.

Parliament should determine whether existing safeguards are sufficient, whether greater transparency is required, and whether the interests of children are being adequately protected within the institutions they are taught to trust.

That is why this report calls for a Parliamentary Inquiry into fossil fuel industry engagement in child-centred institutions.

WHY CHILDREN'S EXPOSURE REQUIRES SPECIAL CONSIDERATION



Children participating in an educational activity alongside a Glencore employee wearing company-branded workwear. The photograph prominently features Glencore branding and was published by the company on its Community webpage. Source: [Glencore Coal, Community webpage](#)

Australian governments, regulators and industry codes have long treated children as requiring additional protections from commercial influence. These safeguards reflect a broader recognition that children are not simply smaller adults. They are still developing the cognitive skills needed to recognise persuasive intent, evaluate information sources and identify conflicts of interest.

Research suggests that vulnerability to persuasive messaging extends throughout childhood. Research reviewed by the American Psychological Association found that children under approximately eight years of age typically lack the cognitive capacity to recognise and effectively defend themselves against commercial persuasion⁴, and that vulnerability to commercial influence may persist throughout childhood and adolescence. A study involving 594 Australian children found that while most children aged 11–12 could recognise that advertisements were intended to sell products, only around 40 per cent demonstrated an understanding of advertising's persuasive intent⁵. The researchers concluded that children's vulnerability to advertising may continue much longer than previously assumed.

Importantly, vulnerability changes as children grow older rather than disappearing altogether. While younger children may struggle to recognise persuasive intent, adolescents are navigating a period of identity formation in which they develop views about careers, community, authority, science and their future role in society. Research suggests that influence during this period often operates less through direct persuasion and more through the shaping of aspirations, social norms, values and perceptions of trusted institutions⁶.

These findings are particularly relevant to the activities documented in this report because many do not present as advertising in any conventional sense.

Instead, they occur through schools, museums, science centres, sporting clubs, early childhood services, educational resources and youth programs — institutions that parents trust and children are taught to regard as authoritative sources of knowledge, care and guidance.

These are all places of trust, where advertising may not present like advertising at all.

This distinction matters. A child may recognise that a television commercial is trying to sell them something. They are far less likely to view information provided by a teacher, museum educator, sporting coach or educational institution through the same lens. Research suggests that when commercial messages are embedded within trusted content and environments, children may find them even more difficult to recognise and critically evaluate than traditional forms of advertising.

Any potential harm is therefore not limited to brand recognition. It includes the possibility that children develop an incomplete understanding of climate change, its causes and its solutions through institutions they have little reason to doubt. When commercial interests become embedded within trusted educational and developmental environments, children may be exposed to selective framing, omissions or industry-preferred narratives without recognising them as forms of influence.

This concern is particularly significant because today's children will live longest with the worsening consequences of climate change. Their understanding of the problem, its causes and its solutions should be shaped by independent, evidence-based education rather than by organisations with a commercial interest in the continued production and use of fossil fuels.



Children wearing Bravus-branded hats during a community activity. The image prominently features Bravus Mining and Resources branding and was published by the company on its Community Partnerships promotional webpage. Source: Bravus Mining and Resources, Community Partnerships, bravusmining.com.au

Historical Precedents: Why Children's Exposure Receives Special Scrutiny.

Australian public policy has long recognised that children and young people require additional protection from commercial influence.

Over time, governments have introduced restrictions on industries such as tobacco, gambling and alcohol where evidence showed that repeated exposure through advertising, sponsorship and trusted community settings could shape attitudes, behaviours and social norms. These reforms recognised that influence does not operate solely through direct advertising. It can also occur through sponsorships, partnerships and repeated association with activities that children value and trust.

The fossil fuel industry is not identical to these industries, and this report does not suggest that the same regulatory response should automatically apply. However, the principle remains relevant: where industries associated with significant public harm become embedded within child-centred institutions, governments have a responsibility to examine whether appropriate safeguards, transparency and oversight arrangements are in place.

Pathways of Influence.

For many children, particularly those growing up in regions connected to coal, oil or gas extraction, industry engagement may occur across multiple stages of life. A child may encounter a fossil fuel company through an early learning centre, a museum program, a sporting club, a classroom resource, a STEM activity or a scholarship opportunity. Later, they may encounter industry-linked careers education, workforce pathway programs and employment initiatives.

Viewed individually, many of these programs may appear limited in scope. Viewed collectively, they reveal an extensive industry presence across the environments in which children learn, play and grow. For marketers, they are what would be described as an "acquisition channel", creating favourability and consideration through multiple touch points.

This matters because the institutions involved are trusted. Schools, museums, sporting clubs and youth programs are not simply places where information is delivered. They are places where children develop relationships with authority, expertise and community, and where they begin forming ideas about society and their place within it.



Students wearing BHP-branded high-visibility clothing. The image prominently displays BHP branding and was published on the BHP Pilbara Education Partnership website in a promotional article showcasing student exposure to BHP operations and career pathways. Source: BHP Pilbara Education Partnership, "BHP Site Tour Inspires Success Students", 20 March 2023.

The Scale and Visibility of Fossil Fuel Industry Engagement in Australia today.

Based on publicly available material, approximately 260+ fossil fuel industry-linked programs and partnerships connected to children, schools, youth programs or educational settings were identified across Australia.

Importantly, this figure is not exhaustive. Throughout the investigation, several dozen additional programs, sponsorships and partnerships were identified where children and young people may also be exposed to fossil fuel industry branding, educational influence or institutional presence, but where insufficient publicly available information existed to confidently quantify funding levels, program reach or partnership arrangements. In these cases, the absence of comprehensive, publicly accessible documentation made it difficult to determine the scale of industry involvement, the number of children reached, the nature of educational content provided or the governance arrangements underpinning these relationships.

Besides these, there are undoubtedly many more programs – that our investigation was entirely unable to uncover.

The programs documented throughout this report cannot be understood not as a comprehensive national account of the problem. Instead, this should be thought of as a sample of a much broader ecosystem of fossil fuel industry engagement within child-centred settings.

Additionally, fossil fuel companies routinely publish images of their employees engaging with children in educational and community settings, often in branded merchandise, on their own websites and promotional materials. These images are a visible expression of fossil fuel companies' community engagement programs and their efforts to build social licence through those programs. This report includes images drawn from those company-published sources as direct evidence of that practice.



260+

More than 260 programs, partnerships, sponsorships and initiatives were identified through this investigation. Many of these activities span multiple states and territories, demonstrating the national reach of fossil fuel industry engagement with children, families and educational institutions. Programs are listed in every jurisdiction where they operate.

71

Santos

47

Woodside

22

Chevron

17

Shell

49

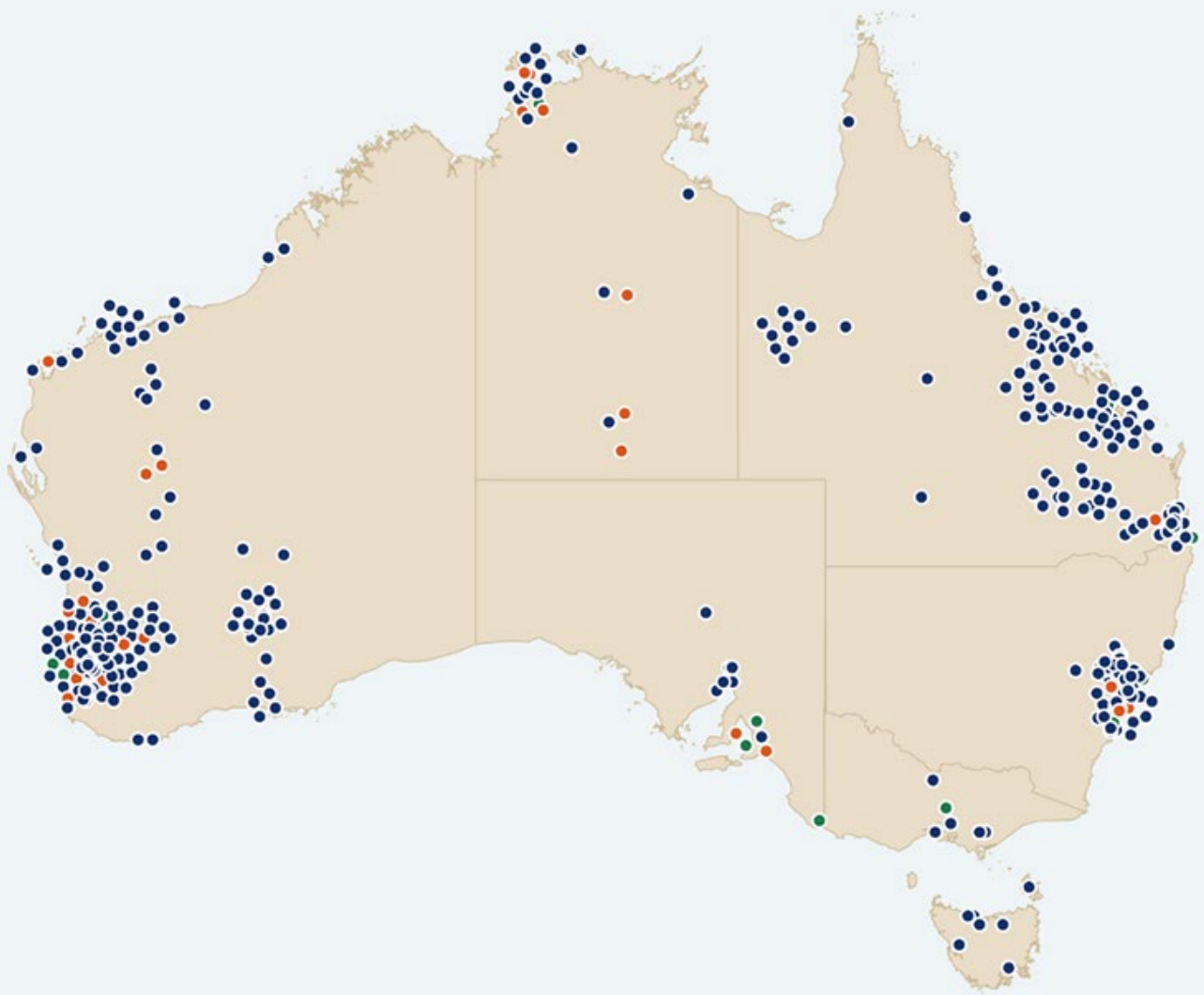
BHP

30

Glencore

53

Industry wide & multi-company



Marker type: ● School ● Event ● University or TAFE ● Venue

These programs are not spread evenly across the country. While some are national, fossil fuel industry engagement appears particularly concentrated within regions closely connected to extraction, processing and industrial operations, including the Pilbara, the Kimberley, Gladstone, the Western Downs, the Hunter, the Cooper Basin and parts of the Northern Territory.

Over time, this repeated presence will contribute to forms of familiarity, legitimacy and reputational normalisation that existing governance systems are poorly equipped to recognise or assess.

EARLY CHILDHOOD, DEVELOPMENTAL TRUST AND INSTITUTIONAL EMBEDDING



Early childhood settings are commonly associated with care, development, safety and wellbeing during formative years.

Among the examples identified through this investigation are programs and activities associated with the fossil fuel industry that are directed towards, or designed for participation by, pre-school-aged children

These engagements occur through:

- Chilcare partnerships
- School readiness partnerships
- Parenting and family support programs
- Educator capacity building
- Early learning infrastructure

BHP, one of the world's largest mining companies, operates a Pilbara Education Partnership with a "cradle-to-career" model extending from early childhood through schooling and workforce pathways.⁷ Early childhood investments are linked not only to developmental outcomes, but also to workforce participation and employee retention within regional extraction communities. BHP's Pilbara operations mainly involve iron ore but the company mines metallurgical coal in Queensland.

Funding from Shell QGC, Shell's Queensland gas business, has supported childcare and community infrastructure in regions directly connected to gas operations, including street signage outside of kindergartens and family services.

Viewed collectively, these initiatives suggest that corporate engagement operates not simply through advertising, but through long-term integration into trusted developmental environments associated with children's wellbeing and community life.



CURRICULUM-ADJACENT EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS, INSTITUTIONAL TRUST AND SELECTIVE CLIMATE FRAMING



Our investigation identified numerous examples of Australian coal and gas producers and related organisations funding and participating in resources, programs and activities.

Across a number of the educational resources, some recurring themes and framing approaches were identified. These included the selective presentation of climate-related information; limited discussion of the contribution of fossil fuel extraction and combustion to climate change; a strong emphasis on adaptation, future technological solutions or individual actions; and the portrayal of fossil fuel companies as scientific educational partners. The significance and interpretation of these patterns may vary between programs and readers.



A 2020 peer-reviewed study published in *Environmental Education Research*⁸ examined fossil fuel industry-linked educational initiatives in Canada.

It found that many programs framed climate change primarily through individual behaviour, consumer responsibility, technological adaptation and incremental environmental management responses. At the same time, these programs minimised discussion of fossil fuel production systems, industry influence, structural transition requirements and the political dimensions of climate change.

The study argued that these forms of educational engagement may narrow how students understand climate solutions by encouraging young people to conceptualise climate change primarily through personal behavioural choices and technological optimisation rather than broader systems-level transformation.

Viewed alongside the Australian examples documented throughout this investigation, these findings suggest that curriculum-adjacent fossil fuel industry engagement may influence not only what children learn about climate change, but also how they are encouraged to understand responsibility, agency and possible responses to environmental crises.

The Queensland Museum–Shell QGC partnership provides an example.

Since 2015, Shell's QGC gas business has contributed more than \$10 million to Queensland Museum programs⁹ including children's educational initiatives and classroom resources distributed under the Museum's authority. QGC produces unconventional gas from Queensland's Surat and Bowen Basins for export through one of three liquefied gas terminals in Gladstone.

Importantly, the concern is not that Queensland Museum staff, educators or participating schools are acting improperly in using these materials. Rather, the partnership raises broader governance questions regarding sponsorship transparency, institutional independence, educational oversight, and whether sufficient safeguards currently exist where fossil fuel companies are involved in educational environments.

\$10m

Contributed to Queensland Museum programs



Community members protesting outside Queensland Museum - May 2026. Supplied.

Queensland Museum's Shell-sponsored Climate Content.

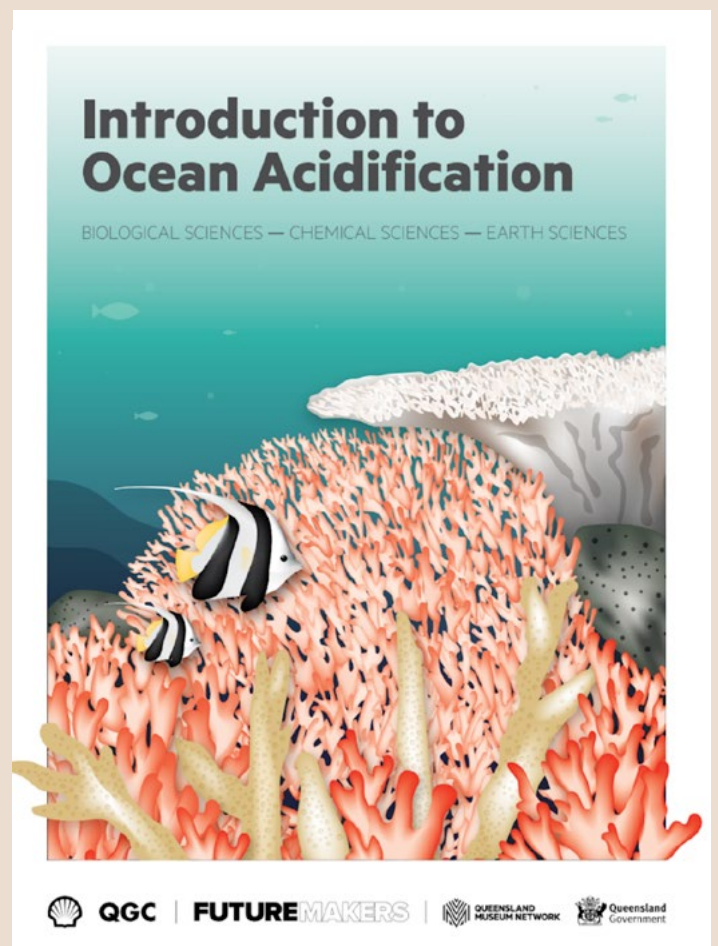
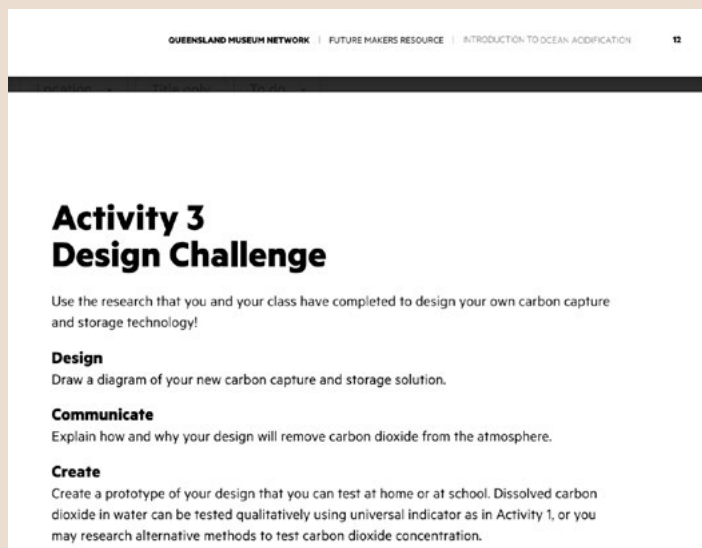
Across multiple Shell-branded Queensland Museum educational resources, students were introduced to important concepts relating to climate change and environmental systems. This included ocean acidification, biodiversity decline, extreme weather events, ecosystem disruption and broader climate impacts. Many of the materials were visually sophisticated, curriculum-aligned and framed through inquiry-based STEM learning approaches designed to engage children with contemporary environmental challenges.

However, across the materials reviewed, climate change had been frequently presented in ways that gave little attention to the role that fossil fuel production and use plays in driving those impacts.

For example, a Shell-sponsored resource addressing ocean acidification explaining the chemistry of carbon dioxide absorption in marine environments omits the question of where that carbon dioxide came from. Other activities encouraged students to design industry-preferred technological responses such as carbon capture and storage systems. Less attention was given to fossil fuel phase-out pathways, emissions reduction strategies or the broader political and economic dimensions of energy transition¹⁰.

Viewed collectively, these materials may produce what could be described as a form of selective blindness to the climate crisis and its causes.

After the release of a Comms Declare report in December 2025¹¹, the educational materials discussed above were removed from the Queensland Museum website pending a review.



Shell QGC-branded FutureMakers materials previously hosted on the Queensland Museum website included an activity inviting students to 'design their own carbon capture and storage technology.'

Educational materials carrying Woodside branding.

A review of educational resources carrying Woodside branding identified examples in which climate change is discussed without clearly identifying fossil fuel combustion as the primary driver of contemporary warming.

For example, one Woodside educational resource explains that “while we often think that greenhouse gas emissions are only from industrial activities, we all contribute to the global carbon footprint,”¹² directing children at length to consider their contribution to warming by how they get to school. Despite this deep dive into the personal responsibility of minors in relation to the climate crisis, the same resource does not mention that the increase is primarily driven by the production and use of coal, oil and gas. The resource goes on to present carbon offsets – an approach that remains the subject of significant debate – as a key mechanism through which emissions can be compensated for or balanced.

These examples may be viewed differently when considered alongside the nature and scale of Woodside’s core business activities. Woodside has received approval to continue operating the North West Shelf gas export project until 2070. While the lesson ‘[The Carbon Cycle and You](#)’, presents a graph suggesting that average emissions from personal transport are approximately 170 grams CO₂-e per person, per kilometre¹³, Woodside’s North West Shelf extension has been estimated to generate around 90 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually.¹⁴

← Australian Earth Science Education



The carbon cycle represents the movement of carbon through the four spheres of the Earth – the biosphere, lithosphere, hydrosphere and atmosphere. This includes the movement of carbon dioxide (CO₂), which is an important contributor to the global greenhouse effect. Further information about the Greenhouse Effect can be found in the AusEarthEd video series: [Greenhouse Effect I](#), [II](#), [III](#).

We refer to the amount of carbon released into the atmosphere from various activities as their carbon footprint. While we often think that greenhouse gas emissions are only from industrial activities, we all contribute to the global carbon footprint.



An AusEarthEd educational resource [The Carbon Cycle and You](#), displaying Woodside branding alongside earth science and climate education content. Source - ausearthed.blogspot.com

TEACHING THE TEACHERS

Teacher Professional Development and Industry-Linked Educational Providers.

Teacher professional development occupies a uniquely influential position within education systems. Ideas, resources and framing introduced through teacher learning environments may subsequently reach thousands of students across multiple schools and classrooms over many years.

In some jurisdictions, teachers must participate in professional development. For example, teachers maintaining accreditation in New South Wales are required to complete 100 hours of professional development every five years¹⁵. Recognised professional development providers occupy a privileged position within the education system, with teachers required to regularly engage with approved external organisations as part of their professional obligations.

The involvement of industry-funded organisations in teacher professional development raises questions about transparency, governance and oversight arrangements.

For example, based on publicly available materials the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) recognised professional development provider declaration process appears to rely primarily on teacher education providers voluntarily self-declaring any external funds¹⁶.

The image shows a screenshot of the 'NESA recognised PD provider declaration' form. It includes the NSW Education Standards Authority logo and a 'Declaration' section with five numbered items, each with 'yes' and 'no' checkboxes. Below this is a section for 'Declaration made for:' with fields for provider name, HRO name, and HRO signature. At the bottom, it states 'After you have completed this declaration, email to pdproviders@nsw.gov.au to submit. You will receive an email confirming receipt of your declaration within 2 business days.' The page number 'Page 1 of 2' is visible at the bottom right.

This is a larger view of the 'Declaration' section of the form. It features a dark blue header with the word 'Declaration' in white. Below the header, it says 'As the HRO, I declare:'. There are five numbered items, each followed by 'yes' and 'no' checkboxes. The items are: 1. the provider will notify NESA of any change to the HRO. 2. the provider will notify NESA of any significant change to the legal entity or status of the organisation. 3. the provider will maintain current insurance cover to conduct PD activities, including, but not limited to Public Liability Insurance. 4. the provider will deliver at least one active course that aligns to The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to remain on the recognised PD provider list. 5. I have been convicted with an offence, including an offence in relation to children, dishonesty or violence. Below the list, it says 'If yes, please provide details of the offence:'. The form has a light blue background with white text and checkboxes.

[NESA recognised PD provider declaration](#)



Teacher Earth Science Education Programme (TESEP).

Teacher Earth Science Education Programme Ltd (TESEP) is a registered charity that delivers accredited teacher professional development, educational resources, classroom incursions and curriculum-linked earth and environmental science programs for schools across Australia. In some jurisdictions, including in New South Wales, TESEP courses contribute to recognised teacher professional learning requirements.

TESEP has publicly listed financial partnerships with major coal and energy companies such as Glencore Coal, Yancoal, Bengalla Mining Company, MACH Energy and EnergyAustralia, alongside a broader range of mining, exploration and geoscience organisations¹⁷.

In addition to delivering programs directly to students, TESEP's professional development programs provide a range of incentives for teacher participation.

Teacher Earth Science Education Programme

PD 3 – Greening Coal

This session examines Australia's power generation story and the role coal of all types presently plays. It also looks at:

- How are we tackling CO₂ emissions?
- What clean coal-fired power generation trials are underway (oxyfiring, gasification)?
- Carbon capture and storage (geosequestration)
 - the CO₂CRIC Onway trials,
 - what makes a good storage site,
 - storage projects around the world.

"IT'S THE CO₂ GREENHOUSE EMISSIONS BY A THIRD"

Teacher Earth Science Education Programme

How have we done?

PD workshops (Aug 2008 – July 2012):

- 1122 Teacher attendances
- All states other than Western Australia
- Capital & regional cities + remote locations
- 7 of 8 workshops so far

Field trips:

- 12 field trips
- 11 site/venue visits

Multippliers:

- Knowledge transfer to 2 – 4 others
- Average of 3 classes of 25
- => 250,000 to 420,000 one-off student impacts
- => 1.25million – 2.1million over 5 years

Jill Stevens received the PESA 2008 award for her TESEP work

Extracts from a 2012 TESEP publication 'Professional Development Workshops for Teachers' (promotional brochure)

Teachers will receive all posters, CDs, DVDs etc. free of charge [after paying the \$55 registration fee] BUT only if they attend the PDs. They also receive an ASTA Certificate of Attendance that they can use for proof of PD if needed.	
<p>What TESEP offers teachers FREE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PD hours are accredited by ASTA (a certificate will be issued) • run-through the topic, with experiments, demonstrations and activities • talks with industry geologists and half-day field trips • two nights accommodation for a three-day combined PD workshops • one nights accommodation for a two-day individual PD workshop • travel supported by \$100 petrol allowance • access to trained presenters and geology professionals • introduction to and guidance in Earth and Environmental Sciences 	<p>See tesep.org.au for topics in this series:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Riding the Climate Roller Coaster Round and Round with Rocks Our Place in Space Fossil Sunlight Powerful Stuff Greening Coal Wet Rocks Hot Rocks Plate Tectonics
<p>A non-refundable* \$55 registration fee applies.</p> <p>*The fee is transferable to another PD workshop or for another teacher to substitute.</p> <p>Approval by your school principal, prior to registration is recommended.</p>	

Excerpt from a TESEP teacher professional development workshop brochure outlining participant benefits, including accredited professional learning hours, accommodation, travel support, field trips and curriculum resources. Source: Teacher Earth Science Education Programme (TESEP), Professional Development Workshops for Teachers promotional brochure.

From its earliest years, TESEP explicitly described its work in terms of educational multipliers. A 2008 article published in PESA News, the magazine of the Petroleum Exploration Society of Australia, stated that TESEP aimed to train up to 500 teachers, producing a "flow-on effect" reaching tens of thousands of students over the following five years¹⁹.

Between 2008 and 2012, TESEP reported having trained more than 1,100 teachers²⁰. TESEP later projected that its programs could have 420,000 one-off student impacts and reach up to 2.1 million Australian students over five years²¹. The 2.1 million students figure is based on TESEP's own estimates of downstream reach and should be understood as projections rather than measures of direct participation.

Educational materials produced by TESEP included content addressing the future of coal and emissions-reduction technologies. TESEP's Greening Coal materials appeared in both its teacher professional development program and its educational resources. The professional development session examined technologies including carbon capture and storage, coal gasification, oxy-fuel combustion and geosequestration²². A corresponding classroom resource stated that while "burning coal produces CO₂, a significant greenhouse gas", "carbon capture and storage technologies can reduce emissions and allow coal to provide power

Promotional materials reviewed for this investigation indicate that participation was either free or available for a nominal non-refundable registration fee (for example, \$55 for some workshops)¹⁸. Materials and approaches introduced through professional development may subsequently be used across multiple classrooms and student cohorts over time.

well into the future"²³. The resource further stated that technologies such as oxy-firing "reduce emissions as power is being produced". Elsewhere, the resource noted that "climate does change over time and life on Earth has ridden the ups and downs of climate change accordingly"²⁴.

This report does not seek to determine whether TESEP's educational programs or resources were educationally appropriate or inappropriate, nor does it make findings about the intentions, conduct or integrity of TESEP, its staff, participating educators, sponsors or partner organisations.

Rather, this case study documents the existence, reach, funding relationships and industry connections of the program as part of a broader investigation into fossil fuel industry involvement in child-centred settings. The focus of this report is on questions of transparency, disclosure, governance and oversight, including the extent to which industry participation in educational settings is visible to parents, students, educators and the wider public.

Determining whether existing safeguards, disclosure requirements and oversight arrangements are adequate, and whether any reforms are required, would benefit from detailed examination through a Senate Inquiry.

Australian Earth Science Education (AusEarthEd)/AESE.

Australian Earth Science Education (AESE), formerly Earth Science Western Australia (ESWA), is a not-for-profit organisation that has been working with schools across WA since 2005²⁵. In 2020, ESWA launched Australian Earth Science Education (AusEarthEd), expanding its activities into New South Wales and the Northern Territory and delivering earth science education programs nationally²⁶.

Publicly available information confirms AESE holds major sponsorship relationships with fossil companies Chevron²⁷, Santos²⁸ and Woodside²⁹.

A review of multiple AESE educational resources identified recurring themes in the presentation of climate-related issues.

For example, AESE's resource *Climate Change: Australia's Coasts at Risk*³⁰ provides students with a detailed overview of sea-level rise, coastal erosion and increasing threats to communities and infrastructure. The resource focuses primarily on the consequences of climate change and adaptation-related challenges. Comparatively less attention is devoted to fossil fuel production and use, emissions reduction pathways, or broader mitigation strategies.

A similar pattern was identified in AESE materials addressing ocean acidification³¹. These resources explain the chemistry of carbon dioxide absorption in seawater and the resulting impacts on marine ecosystems. While fossil fuel combustion is referenced, discussion of the sources of rising atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations and potential mitigation responses appears more limited.

In AESE's *Weather Disasters*³² resource, students are introduced to the physical processes associated with heatwaves, floods, storms and bushfires, together with discussion of the role of climate change in influencing these events. The resource places substantial emphasis on climate impacts and disaster processes. Comparatively less attention is given to the economic, industrial and energy systems contributing to greenhouse gas emissions, or to policy and technological pathways for reducing those emissions.

The observations above should not be read as a criticism of AESE, its educators, staff, volunteers or partner organisations, nor as a judgment on the educational value of its programs. The purpose of this case study is to document the existence of sponsorship relationships between AusEarthEd and fossil fuel companies, and to illustrate how climate-related topics are presented within selected educational resources.

These examples are included to help identify areas that may warrant further public examination, including the transparency of industry involvement in educational settings, the disclosure of sponsorship arrangements, and the governance frameworks that apply to such relationships. Whether existing arrangements are appropriate, sufficient or in need of reform is beyond the scope of this report and would be more appropriately examined through a Senate Inquiry.



Resource Industry Curriculum Integration and Industry-Linked STEM Education.

Industry-linked educational engagement extends beyond sponsorship and branded educational materials into direct participation in classroom-based science and STEM learning.

One example is Woodside's STEM in Schools program in Western Australia, which involves volunteers delivering classroom science activities relating to oil and gas exploration.

As reported by the ABC³³, one activity invited students aged eight and nine to model offshore drilling processes using bread, Vegemite and sprinkles while learning about oil exploration and extraction. Parents interviewed by the ABC expressed concerns about the program, including whether students were receiving sufficient information about the climate and emissions implications associated with fossil fuel production alongside the industry-focused educational content.³⁴



Primary school students participating in a Woodside-sponsored STEM activity demonstrating oil and gas exploration. The image was published by a school social media account promoting a Woodside-supported educational program and references a classroom activity developed with support from Woodside. Source: [Sorrento Primary School Room 8](#) (@SorrentoPS_5_6), X (formerly Twitter), 2 May 2019.



Woodside volunteer training session



This program is really quite unique, particularly in the breadth of it and the vast number of volunteers that are involved.

FROM CRADLE TO CAREER: INDUSTRY ACCESS THROUGHOUT CHILDHOOD



The BHP Pilbara Education Partnership is a long-running partnership between BHP and the Western Australian Government.³⁶

Operating since 2005, the Partnership spans early childhood programs, primary and secondary schooling, student support initiatives and career development activities across communities including Newman, Port Hedland and surrounding regions.³⁷ BHP reportedly contributed approximately \$30 million to the Partnership between 2010 and 2024 and committed a further \$12 million under a renewed agreement running from 2025 to 2028.^{38 39}

The Partnership is a “cradle-to-career” model, extending far beyond a conventional sponsorship or philanthropic donation. While the Partnership does not use this terminology, its activities span multiple stages of childhood and education, creating a continuous pathway linking early childhood engagement, schooling and career development between a mining company and children.

Despite being a longstanding partnership between a major mining company and a state government, this investigation was unable to identify publicly available governance documents outlining how the Partnership is governed, overseen or managed.⁴⁰ The community has limited visibility over how decisions are made, how corporate interests are managed within the Partnership, or what safeguards exist to protect educational independence. This matters because transparency is a prerequisite for accountability. Without access to governance arrangements, neither the public nor policymakers can independently assess how corporate influence is managed within the Partnership.

One Year of Public Subsidies, Fifteen Years of Presence in Children’s Institutions.

The role of industry funding in education also raises broader questions about public revenue, taxation and funding priorities. BHP has reportedly spent approximately \$42 million in the Partnership since 2010. By comparison, BHP entities reportedly received approximately \$622 million in fuel tax credits from Australian taxpayers in 2023–24 alone - more than fifteen times the value of the Partnership’s reported investment over the previous fifteen years.⁴¹

While fuel tax credits serve a different policy purpose, the comparison illustrates the scale of public financial support provided to the resources sector. It raises a broader question for policymakers: whether educational programs that currently rely on corporate sponsorship could instead be funded directly through public investment, reducing the need for commercial partnerships in schools and children’s institutions.

87%

PARENTS BACK PUBLIC FUNDING OVER FOSSIL FUEL SPONSORSHIP

Polling commissioned by Comms Declare found that 87 per cent of parents and grandparents believe educational programs should be funded by governments rather than fossil fuel companies. The nationally representative survey of 1,019 Australians was conducted between 14 and 22 April 2026.

58%

of parents and grandparents support fossil fuel advertising bans.⁴²

\$622m

Fuel tax credits approximately received by BHP entities from Australian taxpayers in 2023-24 alone.



\$30m

Approximate contribution to the partnership between BHP and the Western Australian Government.

SPONSORSHIP, COMMUNITY DEPENDENCE AND SOCIAL LICENCE



Many sponsorship arrangements reviewed throughout this investigation provide genuine and valuable support within under-resourced communities.

Schools, sporting clubs, museums and youth organisations frequently operate under conditions of significant financial pressure and may derive substantial benefit from corporate support, particularly in regional areas where alternative funding sources are limited and public investment may be insufficient to meet community needs.

However, viewed collectively, these arrangements may also generate forms of reciprocity, institutional dependence and reputational alignment. It is important for governments to manage this, particularly in the context of children and young people. These arrangements may function as a form of “gift economy”, in which financial support generates reciprocal obligations, goodwill and institutional relationships that benefit fossil fuel companies socially and politically.⁴³

Importantly, sponsorship does not operate solely through funding. It may also operate through branding, visibility and repeated association with trusted community institutions and positive childhood experiences. Across Australia, fossil fuel company names and logos often appear within children’s sporting programs, educational initiatives, community events and youth activities. In some cases, fossil fuel companies acquire naming rights over child-centred programs themselves, embedding corporate identities within activities associated with safety, belonging, recreation and community participation.

The significance of these arrangements is not necessarily that they communicate specific messages about climate change or energy policy. Rather, they may contribute to the normalisation of fossil fuel companies as trusted community partners and socially beneficial institutions. Through repeated exposure across trusted settings, children and families encounter fossil fuel companies not primarily as contributors to climate change, but as sponsors, benefactors and supporters of community life.

For example, application materials for Santos community funding programs explicitly request that supported organisations demonstrate how funded activities will generate “awareness”, “positivity”, “goodwill” and reputational benefit for Santos and the oil and gas industry more broadly.⁴⁴

This suggests that sponsorships are not operating solely as philanthropic arrangements but rather as structured forms of social licence generation and long-term reputational management.

Such arrangements frequently emerge within regions already economically and socially shaped by fossil fuel extraction and industrial development. Over time, this may contribute to forms of institutional dependence and reputational insulation in which fossil fuel companies become embedded within trusted civic environments and community identity itself.



Participants in a regional basketball program supported through Santos’ partnership. Source: Santos, 2024.

Papua New Guinea and Santos.

Papua New Guinea, one of Australia's closest neighbours, is among the countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Climate and security assessments warn that climate change is already increasing vulnerability, environmental degradation and insecurity across the country, with significant implications for communities, livelihoods and future development.⁴⁵

Against this backdrop, Santos identifies health and education as priority areas for community investment in PNG and states that its foundation plays "a key role in achieving the objectives of Santos' community investment framework in PNG".^{46,47} It also has naming rights to the national sports stadium and sponsors sports teams.

The issue is not whether children should receive literacy programs and educational support. They should. The question is why educational opportunities for children in one of the world's most climate-vulnerable countries should depend on programs funded by a fossil fuel company whose commercial activities contribute to the climate risks those communities face. Rather than addressing the structural drivers of vulnerability, such arrangements risk positioning corporate philanthropy as the solution to problems that fossil fuel development itself helps to intensify.

This dynamic risks deepening dependence while simultaneously strengthening the social legitimacy and community integration of industries associated with significant environmental harm.





Woodside Nippers. Courtesy: [Dump Wooside](#).

Woodside Nippers.

In 2019, Surf Life Saving Western Australia (SLSWA) and Woodside Energy announced a \$5 million five-year naming rights partnership. Under this SLSWA's long-running Nippers junior surf lifesaving program became known as *Woodside Nippers*.⁴⁸ The program operates at 31 surf life saving clubs throughout Western Australia and involves children aged 5–12 years.⁴⁹ Woodside stated that the partnership would support more than 7,500 participating children annually. This funding arrangement was renewed in 2024.

Promotional materials describe Woodside Nippers as a community-based activity designed to help children make friends, develop surf skills and build a lifelong connection to surf lifesaving. Participating children receive uniforms, hats, caps and equipment displaying Woodside branding, while the company name forms part of the program's official title. This means that today, each child participating in the program is required to wear the logo of this gas giant on their high-vis vests and swim caps.⁵⁰

\$5m

Price of 2019 naming rights partnership between Surf Life Saving Western Australia (SLSWA) and Woodside Energy

31

Surf life saving clubs in the program

7,500

Children participating annually.

Critics of the sponsorship have argued that the arrangement effectively transforms children into highly visible carriers of gas branding. Community campaigns opposing the partnership have described participating children as "walking billboards" for a gas company and questioned whether industries whose future profitability depends upon continued gas expansion should hold naming rights over children's sporting and developmental programs.⁵¹ Parents involved in the campaign have expressed concern that children are required to wear company branding while participating in activities intended to teach respect for beaches, oceans and coastal environments.⁵²

Marketing and behavioural research has long recognised that repeated exposure to brands within positive and emotionally significant settings can influence attitudes and perceptions, even in the absence of explicit persuasive messaging.^{53 54 55} Within this context, sponsorship arrangements involving children may contribute to the broader normalisation of fossil fuel companies as socially beneficial.

GOVERNANCE GAPS



The programs and partnerships identified throughout this report raise broader questions about whether existing transparency, oversight and accountability mechanisms are sufficient to enable public scrutiny of corporate involvement in child-centred institutions and activities.

This investigation suggests they are not.

The 2020 review of school banking programs by the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) found that young children are “vulnerable consumers” being exposed to “sophisticated advertising and marketing tactics” with the strategic objective of “customer acquisition”.⁵⁶

The ruling resulted in some banking programs being removed from schools, however other industries’ influence remains unchecked and the Report’s concerns about commercial transparency and marketing to children in schools have not been systematically addressed.

There is currently no comprehensive mechanism for knowing:

1. How many children are exposed to industry-linked programs;
2. The commercial benefits corporations hope to derive from children-focussed activities;
3. The cumulative effect on children’s understanding of science and climate change and career opportunities from multiple corporate interventions;
4. The benefits and incentives being given to institutions that accept fossil fuel sponsorships.

In many cases, publicly promoted programs provide little information about funding levels, governance arrangements, educational content or the extent of sponsor involvement. In other cases, the existence of partnerships was publicly acknowledged while key details remained inaccessible.

These challenges highlight a broader problem. Existing governance frameworks were largely designed to address conventional forms of advertising and promotion. They are less equipped to address influence operating through educational partnerships, teacher professional development, sponsorship arrangements, workforce pathway programs and long-term institutional relationships.

Significant gaps currently exist in relation to:

- transparency requirements;
- disclosure of sponsorship arrangements;
- independent review of curriculum-adjacent educational materials;
- conflict-of-interest safeguards; and
- oversight of industry involvement within trusted child-centred institutions.

The issue is not simply whether individual programs are appropriate. It is whether governments, parents, educators and communities have sufficient visibility to assess how these relationships operate and whether existing safeguards are adequate.

Despite the scale of fossil fuel industry engagement identified throughout this report, there is currently no nationally coordinated framework capable of providing that assurance.

That governance gap warrants parliamentary examination.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1

Establish a Parliamentary Inquiry into fossil fuel industry engagement in child-centred settings

Establish a Parliamentary Inquiry into corporate influence, sponsorship, educational partnerships and governance safeguards within Australian child-centred institutions and settings. The Inquiry should include, but not be limited to, examination of:

- the scale and nature of industry engagement across schools, museums, sporting organisations, early childhood settings and youth programs;
- the commercial benefits corporations aim to derive from children-focussed activities;
- The mental health and learning impacts on children, and their understanding of climate science and career opportunities after cumulative exposure to multiple corporate interventions;
- the benefits and incentives being given to institutions that accept fossil fuel sponsorships aimed at children
- the suitability of curriculum-adjacent educational materials distributed outside formal curriculum approval systems;
- the adequacy of existing regulatory and transparency frameworks; and
- alternative funding models, commercial arrangements and transition pathways that would enable schools, community organisations and child-centred institutions to strengthen and diversify sponsorship and partnership arrangements over time.

The Inquiry should be empowered to compel production of documents and hear evidence from:

- fossil fuel companies and industry bodies;
- educational providers;
- museums and scientific institutions;
- schools, parent and teacher organisations;
- academics and researchers;
- community organisations;
- and government agencies across all jurisdictions.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Establish restrictions on fossil fuel advertising and sponsorship involving children (a national ‘Fossil Ad Ban’)

Legislate national restrictions on fossil fuel advertising, sponsorship and branded partnerships connected to children and young people as part of a broader public health and climate governance response, Australia-wide. This may include:

- fossil fuel sponsorship within schools and educational settings;
- youth sport sponsorship arrangements;
- branding associated with child-centred community infrastructure, and
- partnerships involving publicly trusted institutions operating within developmental environments.

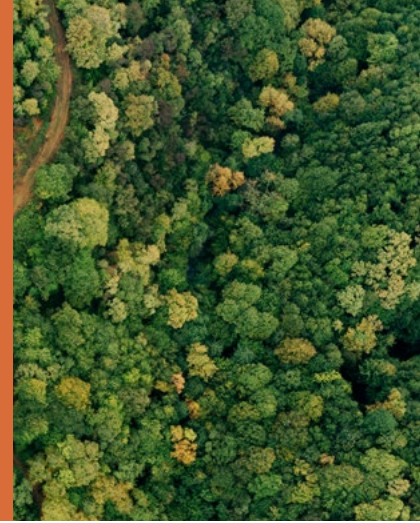
Any future reforms should be informed by evidence regarding cumulative exposure and institutional influence, lessons from previous regulation of tobacco sponsorship and advertising, public health expertise, child development research, and principles of educational independence and institutional integrity.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS



1700+

Evidence findings drawn from primary source materials, including company publications, downloaded program documents, grant guidelines, educational resources, partner organisation materials and archived webpages.



This report presents the findings of a preliminary investigation into publicly documented relationships between fossil fuel companies, related groups and child-centred institutions, programs and educational settings.

The investigation draws on publicly available sources including company reports, sponsorship announcements, annual reports, educational resources, funding disclosures, media releases, parliamentary materials, Freedom of Information releases, publicly accessible websites and archived web content. This review considered more than 1,700 evidence findings drawn from primary source materials, including company publications, downloaded program documents, grant guidelines, educational resources, partner organisation materials and archived webpages. The investigation also examined selected activities undertaken through industry associations and representative bodies where these involved educational, community or child-facing programs.

TRANSPARENCY, EVIDENCE GAPS AND THE LIMITS OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

Based on publicly available material, the investigation identified more than 280 fossil fuel industry-linked programs, partnerships, sponsorships and initiatives connected to children, schools, youth programs, educational institutions or other child-centred settings across Australia.

This figure should not be understood as a comprehensive national count.

Throughout the investigation, researchers encountered significant limitations arising from the fragmented and often incomplete nature of publicly available information. As a result, many programs could only be partially documented. Some information may be incomplete, outdated or subject to change. Relationships identified during the investigation may have evolved since the source material was published. As with any large-scale review of publicly available information, there remains the possibility of omissions, ambiguities, misclassifications or factual errors despite reasonable efforts to verify the evidence. This work is ongoing.

The investigation applied a broadly consistent methodology to identify and categorise programs, partnerships, sponsorships and initiatives based on publicly available evidence. In some cases, the way activities were grouped,

counted or classified for the purposes of this report may differ from how individual companies, institutions or program operators describe or organise those activities internally. Where organisations operated multiple programs, efforts were made to attribute those programs to a single organisation. Similarly, where organisations had changed names, restructured or expanded their operations over time, programs were attributed to the current organisation where continuity could be reasonably established. However, given the complexity and limited transparency of some arrangements, the possibility of inadvertent duplication or misattribution cannot be entirely excluded.

The figures presented throughout this report should therefore be understood as investigative estimates rather than official counts reported by participating organisations.

These limitations are not merely methodological constraints; they are also relevant findings of the investigation itself.

The difficulty of determining the scale, reach and nature of industry engagement with children and young people reflects broader limitations in existing transparency and oversight arrangements. Parents, policymakers, researchers and the wider public currently have limited means of identifying, monitoring or evaluating these relationships in a systematic way.

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYTICAL JUDGEMENTS

The investigation utilised AI-assisted analysis to an extent in order to support the review and categorisation of large volumes of source material. These tools were used to assist researchers in identifying relevant content, organising evidence and extracting information from primary sources. Findings and conclusions remained subject to human review and verification.

This report contains both factual findings and analytical assessments. Discussion of concepts such as social licence, reputation-building, normalisation, educational framing, institutional presence and influence reflects the authors' interpretation of the available evidence.

AUTHORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Author

Lisa Wills, Campaigns Director, Comms Declare

Editor

Tim Baxter, Naru Research

Project Oversight and Editorial Review

Belinda Noble, CEO, Comms Declare

Research Support

This report was supported by volunteer researchers whose contributions substantially expanded the evidence base underpinning this investigation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Comms Declare acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands, waters and skies on which this work was undertaken and on which this report is read. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We recognise that First Nations peoples have cared for Country for tens of thousands of years and hold deep knowledge of the lands, waters, climate systems and ecosystems that sustain life. We acknowledge their enduring connection to Country and their leadership in caring for future generations.

As Australia confronts the impacts of climate change, we recognise the importance of listening to and learning from First Nations knowledge, leadership and perspectives in shaping a safer and more just future for children and young people.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Comms Declare acknowledges the many researchers, educators, advocates, parents, community members and organisations whose work has helped bring attention to the influence of industries associated with significant public harm within educational, cultural and child-centred settings.

We extend our deepest thanks to the volunteers whose extraordinary commitment, care and diligence made this investigation possible. Collectively, volunteers reviewed hundreds of programs and primary source documents, helping to identify and verify evidence from company websites and reports, educational materials, grant programs, partnership announcements and archived records. Their contribution substantially expanded the scope and depth of this report.

We also thank those who contributed information, research, expertise and lived experience to this project, as well as those who continue to ask important questions about the role of fossil fuel companies in institutions trusted by children and young people.

- ¹ b/l For the purposes of this report, the term “program” is used broadly to include educational programs, partnerships, sponsorships, grants, scholarships and other organised initiatives through which fossil fuel companies engage with children and young people, or with institutions that serve them.
- ² See table of Page 3
- ³ \$214.1 million in disclosed funding was identified on a conservative basis across 22 programs. Funding figures were located for 50 programs in total, but only 22 contained sufficiently detailed and attributable expenditure data to be included in this estimate. More than 300 identified programs published no funding information, meaning expenditure data was available for fewer than 7% of all programs identified
- ⁴ American Psychological Association. [Report of the APA Task Force on Advertising and Children \(American Psychological Association, 2004\)](#), 5–7.
- ⁵ Oates C, Blades M, Gunter B and Don J. ‘Children’s Understanding of Television Advertising: A Qualitative Approach’ (2003) 22(1) Journal of Marketing Communications 59–71.
- ⁶ Livingstone S and Helsper EJ. ‘Advertising Literacy, Young People’s Advertising Exposure and Their Perceived Ability to Cope with Advertising’ (2006) 9(4) Information, Communication & Society 560–584.
- ⁷ BHP Pilbara Education Partnership. Home <https://bhppilbaraeducationpartnership.wa.edu.au/> accessed 2 June 2026.
- ⁸ Eaton, E. M., & Day, N. A. (2020). Petro-pedagogy: fossil fuel interests and the obstruction of climate justice in public education. *Environmental Education Research*, 26(4), 457–473. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504622.2019.1650164>
- ⁹ Graham Readfearn. ‘Queensland Museum Accused of Misleading Teachers and Children About the Cause of Climate Change’. The Guardian (online, 8 December 2025) <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/dec/08/queensland-museum-accused-of-misleading-teachers-and-children-about-the-cause-of-climate-change>.
- ¹⁰ Comms Declare. Queensland Museum Learning Resources: Climate Accuracy and Sponsorship Concerns (Report, 2 December 2025) https://commsdeclare.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/QMreport_Comms_Declare_021225.pdf.
- ¹¹ ibid
- ¹² AusEarthEd. ‘The Carbon Cycle and You’. 20 October 2021. <https://ausearthed.blogspot.com/2021/10/the-carbon-cycle-and-you.html>.
- ¹³ The Australia Institute. [North West Shelf final approval a climate, economic and energy security disaster](#), September 12, 2025.
- ¹⁴ AusEarthEd. ‘The Carbon Cycle and You’. YouTube video, 20 October 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3eNMDoJ-CE&list=PPSV>
- ¹⁵ NSW Education Standards Authority, Professional Development Requirements ([Web Page](#)) . accessed 11 June 2026.
- ¹⁶ NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). Recognised PD Provider Declaration (May 2024), available at: [NESA Recognised PD Provider Declaration](#) (accessed 29 May 2026).
- ¹⁷ Mining Beacon. Australian Earth Science Education (Web Page) <https://miningbeacon.com/company/australian-earth-science-education>, accessed 11 June 2026.
- ²¹ Document downloadable [here](#).
- ²² Document downloadable [here](#).
- ²³ Teacher Earth Science Education Programme (TESEP). ‘Our Partners’ <https://tesep.org.au/partners/our-partners> accessed 2 June 2026.
- ²⁴ Teacher Earth Science Education Programme (TESEP). TESEP for IGC (2012) https://web.archive.org/web/20260529050806/https://tesep.org.au/media/attachments/2025/03/03/tesep_for_igc_2012.pdf, accessed 11 June 2026.
- ²⁵ Australian Earth Science Education (AusEarthEd). About, accessed 17 June 2026. <https://ausearthed.com.au/about/>
- ²⁶ Australian Earth Science Education (AusEarthEd). Free Earth Science Lessons for Kalgoorlie High School Students (Media Release, 3 June 2022), funded by the Minerals Research Institute of Western Australia (MRIWA), https://www.mriwa.wa.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/220607-20220613_AusEarthEd_Media-Release_Kalgoorlie.pdf
- ²⁷ Australian Earth Science Education (AusEarthEd). Supporters (Web Page), <https://ausearthed.com.au/supporters/> (accessed 11 June 2026). The page lists a range of corporate and institutional supporters, including Woodside Energy and other mining, energy and geoscience organisations.
- ²⁸ Santos. ‘Santos is Proud to Support the Primary Australian Literacy Mathematics & Science (PALMS) Program Run by Australian Earth Science Education’ (Facebook post, 25 October 2019) <https://www.facebook.com/SantosAustraliaLimited/posts/2702888263175605/>. The post states that Santos supported the PALMS program delivered by Australian Earth Science Education.
- ²⁹ Woodside Energy. ‘STEM Education’, <https://www.woodside.com/what-we-do/innovation/stem-education>, accessed 2 June 2026. The page states that Woodside’s STEM program works with Energy Club WA, Australian Earth Science Education (AESE) and Re-engineer Australia to deliver curriculum-linked STEM activities in schools.
- ³⁰ Australian Earth Science Education. ‘Climate Change: Australia’s Coasts at Risk’ (Educational Resource, 4 August 2020) <https://ausearthed.blogspot.com/2020/08/climate-change-australias-coasts-at-risk.html>.
- ³¹ Australian Earth Science Education. ‘Ocean Acidification’ (Educational Resource, 7 July 2020) <https://ausearthed.blogspot.com/2020/07/ocean-acidification.html>.
- ³² Australian Earth Science Education. ‘Weather Disasters’ (Educational Resource, 22 March 2021) <https://ausearthed.blogspot.com/2021/03/weather-disasters.html>

- ³³ ABC News, "[Oil and gas giant's sponsorship of primary school science lesson sparks debate among parents](#)", 20 August 2021.
- ³⁴ ABC News, "[Oil and gas giant's sponsorship of primary school science lesson sparks debate among parents](#)", 20 August 2021.
- ³⁵ Woodside Energy, STEM in Schools (YouTube video, archived by the Internet Archive Wayback Machine, capture date 11 December 2020) <https://web.archive.org/web/20201211124725/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eU1xuOJ7i8&gl=US&hl=en>, accessed 11 June 2026.
- ³⁶ BHP Pilbara Education Partnership, Home <https://bhppilbaraeducationpartnership.wa.edu.au/> accessed 2 June 2026.
- ³⁷ BHP Pilbara Education Partnership, Pilbara Education Partnership, stating that the Partnership was established in 2005, spans Newman, Port Hedland and surrounding communities, and that BHP has invested approximately \$40 million in education since 2010, accessed 3 June 2026. <https://bhppilbaraeducationpartnership.wa.edu.au/>
- ³⁸ BHP, Brighter futures for Pilbara students, media release, 5 February 2025, stating that BHP had contributed approximately \$30 million to the Pilbara Education Partnership since 2010.
- ³⁹ Government of Western Australia, Multi-million-dollar boost to extend BHP education partnership in the Pilbara, media release, 5 February 2025, announcing a further \$12 million commitment and extension of the Partnership to 2028.
- ⁴⁰ Investigations conducted for this report were unable to identify publicly available governance documents, including memoranda of understanding, steering committee terms of reference, content approval processes or conflict-of-interest frameworks.
- ⁴¹ BHP Group, Results for the Year Ended 30 June 2025 (Annual Results, 2025), reporting FY2025 revenue of US\$51.3 billion. At an exchange rate of approximately US\$0.65 to A\$1 in June 2026, this equates to approximately A\$78.9 billion. Available at: https://www.bhp.com/-/media/documents/media/reports-and-presentations/2025/250819_bhpresultsfortheyearended30june2025.pdf (accessed 18 June 2026).
- ⁴² For the purposes of this report, social licence is defined as the ongoing acceptance, legitimacy and public trust that enables a company or industry to operate with community support and reduced opposition.
- ⁴³ Emma Rowe and Eve Mayes, 'Fossil Fuel Gift Economies as Petro-Pedagogies in Public Schools' (2025) 52(6) The Australian Educational Researcher 1. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-025-00909-2>.
- ⁴⁴ Royce Kurlmelovs, 'Australian Oil and Gas Company Santos Offered Communities Help in Exchange for Good PR', Drilled, 11 May 2026. <https://drilled.media/news/santos-flood>
- ⁴⁵ Royce Kurlmelovs, 'Australian Oil and Gas Company Santos Offered Communities Help in Exchange for Good PR', Drilled, 11 May 2026. <https://drilled.media/news/santos-flood>
- ⁴⁶ adelphi, Asian Development Bank and United Nations Development Programme, Climate, Peace and Security Assessment: Papua New Guinea (2024). https://weatheringrisk.org/sites/default/files/document/Papua_New_Guinea_Assessment.pdf.
- ⁴⁷ Santos Limited, Sustainability Report 2022 (2023), <https://www.santos.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Sustainability-Report-2022-2.pdf>. Through the Foundation, Santos supports literacy programs, libraries, scholarships and other education initiatives for children and young people.
- ⁴⁸ Surf Life Saving Western Australia, New Nippers partnership announced (10 June 2019).
- ⁴⁹ PureProfile (n=1,019), April 2026
- ⁵⁰ Woodside Nippers, Nipper Age Groups, accessed 17 June 2026. <https://www.nipperswa.com.au/what-is-woodside-nippers/nipper-age-groups/>.
- ⁵¹ Dump Woodside, Free the Nippers campaign website, accessed 29 May 2026. <https://www.dumpwoodside.com/>.
- ⁵² Dump Woodside, Free the Nippers campaign, accessed 29 May 2026. <https://www.dumpwoodside.com/>; Greenpeace Australia Pacific, Free the Nippers, accessed 29 May 2026.
- ⁵³ Dump Woodside, Free the Nippers campaign website, accessed 29 May 2026. <https://www.dumpwoodside.com/>; see also Natasha May, "Parents campaign to end Woodside sponsorship of WA children's surf lifesaving program", The Guardian, 2 September 2023.
- ⁵⁴ Robert B Zajonc, 'Attitudinal Effects of Mere Exposure' (1968) 9(2) Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 1.
- ⁵⁵ Stephen Pettigrew et al, 'Game On: Do Children Absorb Sports Sponsorship Messages?' (2013) 13(6) BMC Public Health 553. The study found that children develop implicit associations between sports and sponsoring brands, demonstrating the influence of sponsorship exposure in positive recreational settings.
- ⁵⁶ Robert J Donovan and Nadia J Henley, 'Sponsorship: Impact on Brand Awareness and Brand Attitudes' (2003) Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics. The authors conclude that sponsorship can influence both brand awareness and brand attitudes through association with sponsored activities and events.
- ⁵⁷ Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), 20-324MR: ASIC Releases Review of School Banking Programs (Media Release, 15 December 2020) <https://www.asic.gov.au/about-asic/news-centre/find-a-media-release/2020-releases/20-324mr-asic-releases-review-of-school-banking-programs/>

comms declare



CHANGING THE INFORMATION CLIMATE

Comms Declare promotes sustainable communication, and is dedicated to shifting the narrative around climate action. We exist to reduce the social licence of climate polluters and champion those that integrate sustainability into their communications practice.

At our core is our unwavering belief in the power of communications to create cultural change and shape a safer, healthier future for each of us and our planet.

We represent dozens of communications agencies and hundreds more professionals across the influence industries.

Comms Declare is a registered charity and member of CANA.