

The Importance of Early Childhood Earth Science Education: Understanding of the Planet That We Live On Is a Fundamental Step Toward Sustainability

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The Earth Sciences are so much a part of everyday life. So much that we use every day, and so many economies around the world are based on earth resources. But over the past few decades the earth science content in schools, especially in pre-Secondary, and even Secondary, are light on. This is the driving force behind a number of programs initiated by UNESCO's International Geosciences Program Projects IGCP493 and 587 working in cooperation with PrimeSCI! at Swinburne University of Technology and Monash University in Australia. These programs have involved a number of geoscientists around the globe as well as artists, documentary makers, and wide range of teachers and volunteers to generate in depth science experiences for youth, with an emphasis on primary and early secondary levels. These programs naturally also reach the general public – the Mums and Dads and Grandparents as well. It is critical for the future of our planet to encourage the curious mind, give confidence to young people to value their own ability to analyze data, to put them in direct and ongoing contact with the very researchers studying our planet. Exhibitions, publications, Family Science Nights, the LabRats, Curriculum Development by Researchers in Cooperation with Educators – and more – all make up the activities of PrimeSCI! and IGCP493/587. Such outreach education is universal from the outback of Australia to the sands of central Saudi Arabia and China, from the Melbourne to Tehran. Children from birth are curious, and their curiosity needs to be mentored from birth.

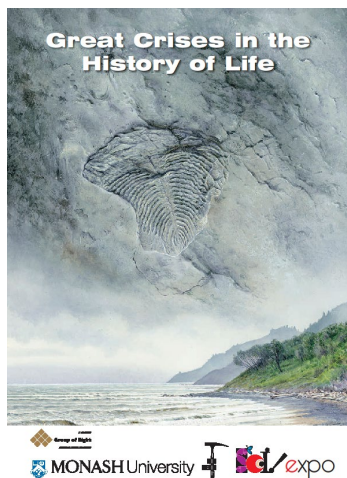


Figure 1. Brochure for travelling exhibition on Earth History.



Figure 2. Book in Chinese and Timorese Tetun on the geology of Timor, for primary.

