



Your Place - Your Pace

# The Learning Place: Learning about disasters



This article is available online at [www.education.qld.gov.au/learningplace](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/learningplace) email: [learningplace@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:learningplace@qed.qld.gov.au) Phone: (07) 3421 6656

## Focus on: Rallying after Cyclone Larry

Since Cyclone Larry smashed its way across North Queensland on Monday, March 20, life has changed for the staff and students of the schools in its path.

When the principal of the one-teacher school at Upper Barron, Chris Honan talked about the effect of the cyclone on his students and himself, he put the losses into perspective.

"We got off lightly," he said. "Just one building is uninhabitable. That's the library and second classroom which suffered structural and water damage when hit by two trees."

"And we lost fences. Many trees are gone while others are broken in half. Nearly 80 percent of the school area is barricaded off so it can't be used. But we're better off than lots of others."

The mobile phone was useful from day one. Upper Barron was closed for five days, waiting for power and water reconnection.

It was another week before the school had a reliable phone



Falling trees damage a building at Upper Barron State School.

service and internet access. While no technical activity was possible, Chris discovered something about the Learning Place and the education community.

"I've learned that it's not all about technology, the true value is support from people. The offers of help and real, physical, warm-blooded support came from everywhere. That re-

ally impressed me."

Chris shrugged off Upper Barron's problems when compared with those of other schools in the region devastated by Larry.

"It's places like Babinda, Innisfail, Bartle Frere and Silkwood that need looking after," he said, when asked how people could help out.

"A system-based response is best. The link on the Education Queensland website gives details. It's a great way to help."

Chris spoke about the amazing efforts of staff at hard-hit schools.

"Many of them had suffered personal losses in homes and farms," he said, "but they came into school as a first priority, some armed with chain saws."

In fact, Chris is well aware that the school has been made operational much faster than most of the homes in the local community. "We're very conscious here of how much has yet to be done," he said.

Visit the Cyclone Larry links: [www.education.qld.gov.au/](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/)



### Cyclone Larry Virtual Field Trip

On Monday, March 20 Cyclone Larry crossed the Queensland coast with wind speeds in excess of 280 kph.

156 schools were closed with many suffering significant amounts of damage. Flooded roads, no electricity and limited fresh water supplies were but a few of the problems to face the local schools and their communities.

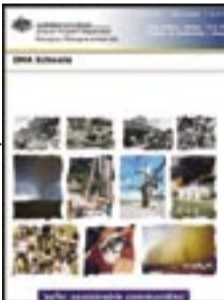
This Virtual Field Trip has been created to provide a space for those who wish to share their stories, images and experiences of Cyclone Larry and the impact it has had on the North Queensland region.

To share your stories, pictures, audio and video files join the Cyclone Larry Virtual Field Trip in the Collaborative Online Project area of the Learning Place.

The Curriculum Exchange resource centre has a feature, *Browse by topic*, which contains a large number of result sets for popular searches. From here, the topic *disasters* can be located by selecting "Curriculum topic". The search can then be refined by choosing from the list of resource types. Some examples:

### EduSites

EMA for kids  
Emergency Management Australia prepared this series of online pamphlets advising on safety measures in the event of natural disasters.



AlertNet: alerting humanitarians to emergencies, Reuters  
Reports on humanitarian crises world-wide.

### AusAid hot topics:

This website contains reports on recent events, ranging from natural disasters to armed conflict, that involve Australia's overseas aid program.

Earth Science in The Learning Web: earth hazards

This site explores volcanoes and earthquakes.



FEMA for kids home page: education, schools, disasters, games, teachers, art, hurricane

Preparing for disasters and crisis management is the subject of this

American site for parents, teachers and children.

Geoscience Australia. Earthquakes & natural hazards

Information about monitoring and assessing earth-surface processes threatening urban centres.

### Digital Resources



Darwin after Cyclone Tracy, 1975

A scene of devastation in Darwin shows damage to cars and a ruined building.

New cyclone-proof houses in Darwin, 1977

Notes accompanying this image describe elements of the post-disaster rebuilding program.

Bushfire destroys a house, Tasmania, 1967

Notes add context to this graphic black-and-white photograph.

### Learning Objects



Cyclones: how the weather pattern forms and where cyclones occur

Concisely labelled diagrams explain the significance of the Coriolis force in the formation of a cyclone in this learning object from the Agence France-Press website.

### Volcanoes

Direct a robot as it is lowered inside a volcano.

### TIPS

A number of TIPS (Teaching Ideas, Practices and Strategies) are available to support the topic "disasters".



Supporting children through the effects of the Indian Ocean tsunami: suggestions for teachers and parents

The material is relevant for all traumatic events.

### Mine rescue

This unit uses the learning object "Mine rescue", developed by The Learning Federation, as a focus. Students record their predictions, observations and explanations on the discussion board of a Blackboard course.

### Floods and bushfires

Three units investigate the topic - Fire. Each uses the subject matter of fire to teach a nominated genre.

Other TIPS include:

- Volcano and earthquake computer simulations
- Shake, rattle and roll: Exploring natural disasters
- Weather



### Earth Dialogues Brisbane 2006

From July 21-24, 2006, Brisbane Festival is proud to host Earth Dialogues Brisbane 2006, a major international forum chaired by Mikhail Gorbachev and Premier Peter Beattie. In support of this event the Earth Challenge course has been developed (Years 4-7 and Years 8-12) to allow students to investigate the crucial question - *What is sustainable development?* Join the course and you will be taken to Earth Challenge HQ where you can explore opportunities offered by the DEA Earth Dialogues Challenge program developed to support the forum. The course is free and open to all Queensland schools. Register now at [www.education.qld.gov.au/learningplace/html/earthchallenge.html](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/learningplace/html/earthchallenge.html)

### Case study - The Johnstone River, Far North Queensland

Join the *Case study - The Johnstone River, Far North Queensland* course. This environmental case study critically examines the Johnstone River, the potential frequency of flooding, the effect of flood mitigation strategies and possible associated costs. The unit examines the eight steps needed to make decisions about where and when floods might occur and what could be done to minimise the destruction. These steps may be used as the basis for other regional studies. Visit [www.education.qld.gov.au/learningplace/onlinelearning/courses/courses-csjr.html](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/learningplace/onlinelearning/courses/courses-csjr.html)

### WebQuests

Volcano discovery: a WebQuest for Years 3-7

Find under "Studies of Society and Environment WebQuests" on the Cur-

riculum Exchange at [www.education.qld.gov.au/tal/tips/webquest/](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/tal/tips/webquest/)

Find the above resources in the CX resource centre:

<http://learningplace.eq.edu.au/cx/resources>