



Newsletter

Let's Read prepares children so they are ready to learn to read in the formal sense when they get to school...



Naomi Mansons & Tyzak enjoying a STORY

The wonderful folks at the Catherine McAuley School invited the Smith Family to deliver the *Let's Read* program on May 9th. It was fantastic to see so many children sitting with their parents and enjoying the bright and colourful books from their packs. After the session parents were encouraged to visit their local library and borrow books from the *Let's Read* suggestion lists. One parent commented "Everyone thinks reading starts at school but it doesn't. The *Let's Read* program gets kids reading early and really prepares them for school. It's also a great time to sit with your little one and enjoy one another's company!"

*Daniel Arnold
Learning for Life Worker/The Smith Family SA*

Initiative Of:



Let's Read Community Annual Reports



The *Let's Read* Community Annual Report 2010 template was e-mailed to all *Let's Read* communities (except those sites in Tasmania and Queensland that are government funded) at the end of January 2011. Forty *Let's Read* communities submitted their 2010 Annual Reports.

Let's Read would like to thank all the community-based professionals and service providers for their commitment and enthusiasm in delivering *Let's Read* to families. Thanks too for finding creative ways to engage care givers and young children in emergent literacy activities and collecting data to compile annual reports.

The data you provide is very useful in further developing the *Let's Read* program. It also means information and ideas can be shared with other *Let's Read* communities around the country. The 'Let's Read Community Annual Reports Summary 2010' is available on the *Let's Read* website at:

<http://www.letsread.com.au/pages/communitymembers.php>



everyone's family

Why the same book over and over is a wonderful thing!

It may be boring for parents – but reading the same book over and over again to children is one of the best ways to support vocabulary development ...

“How repetition helps a child's vocabulary”

FROM: *The Independent (UK Newspaper)*
 By Richard Garner, Education Editor
 Monday, 21 February 2011

Let's Read Inspires...

‘ The Smith Family visited the Second Story Youth Health Service to speak to young mums about the importance of early childhood literacy. The young mums (aged 15-17) were excited to receive their book and loved the helpful hints about how they can successfully read with their child. One young mum commented: “We don't really know about lots of kid stuff because we're new at this. Everything is a little overwhelming and scary. When we can teach our kid that's great. The *Let's Read* Program helps us help our kids.”

Daniel Arnold
Learning for Life Worker /The Smith Family SA



Number of Let's Read Communities In Australia

66

NSW	14
QLD	20
SA	5
TAS	4
VIC	13
WA	10



**Children reached
 by Let's Read
 last year**

47,341

**Community professionals
 trained by Let's Read
 last year**

515

**Books delivered by
 Let's Read last year**

55,000

Let's Read Launch in Roebourne - WA



Daphne & Carol from TSF help children make their own interactive books



Parents & Children Enjoying Story Time

The *Let's Read* Program was launched in Roebourne on Tuesday May 17th at the WA Pilbara community Roebourne, which has an Aboriginal population of about 90%. The launch was a great success with many of the local children and families enjoying the activities of making their own interactive books, as well as hearing stories, learning about the *Let's Read* initiative and then eating kangaroo stew and damper.

The Smith Family Learning for Life Team Leader, Daphne Trevurza said the program was a "unique opportunity for the community...to make an investment in their children's future. Our children will have the chance to be part of a new generation who are better placed to learn to read when they reach school".

Elders in the community who attended the *Let's Read* training said that this was new for many families that they need to start reading to children before school and it will take more than one discussion for this message to be ingrained in the community. But one of the elders said, "this is a great program for our kids, and will hopefully help to keep our kids in school".

*Jessica Sharp
Let's Read Co-ordinator*

Let's Read News Mornington Peninsula Shire Council - VIC

Let's Read is now being delivered in Rosebud West and Tootgarook through a co-ordinated community partnership. The community partners include Family Day Carers, Child Care professionals, kindergarten teachers, family support workers, Enhanced Maternal and Child Health and community volunteers who have undertaken training.

Let's Read is being incorporated into the suite of programs provided to families seeking support and interventions. A facilitator commented that it was nice to have something enjoyable to offer a family at

the end of a session that can support them in being more involved with their children. The Rosebud West Community Initiatives Steering Group welcomes the ongoing support and involvement of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute's Centre for Community Child Health and in particular the *Let's Read* Project Officer, Erica Gardner, in guiding and supporting the next phase of *Let's Read* in their community.

*Karen McFarland
Early Years community Facilitator*

...Fun with Sounds Play Morning *Beach Side Family Centre - NSW*

Beachside Family Centre ran a "Fun with Sounds Play Morning" based on the sound 'M'. Children came with or dressed as something starting with 'M'. The children made the shape of 'M' using their bodies. They wrote 'M' in the air with their magic pens and sang and acted out 'Five Silly Monkeys Jumping On The Bed'. They enjoyed three crafts activities to do with mice, dancing monkeys and a head band with pictures starting with 'M' stapled to it.

Many parents didn't realise how important it is to sound the



Community Volunteer reads 'm' story to kids

letters instead of naming them . This helps children develop their reading skills. We didn't specifically use the *Let's Read* books for this workshop; we will

do a 'Z' in the future and use *Za Za's Baby Brother* and *Dear Zoo*. We had 25 children aged 3 - 5 in attendance and also promoted *Let's Read* Borrowing Library at the same time.

*Debbie Notara
Facilitator - Beachside Family Centre*

Books for Special Needs Children

Let's Read Rockhampton – QLD



Staff at Autism Preschool enjoy new books

The **Autism Queensland** Preschool at Rockhampton provides a wonderful educational facility for children from 3 to 5 years old, with special needs. The program includes small group work, individual activities and specialist help. Books are an important part of the teaching program. Picture stories, rhymes, songs and informational texts are all popular choices. *Let's Read* shared a variety of books that will be a valuable resource for staff, students and parents.

*Jane Ganter
Let's Read Project Officer*

Early Years Literacy Event

Let's Read - Elizabeth Vale – SA

On April 8th, Burton Preschool held a family event focused on the importance of emergent literacy skills. The Smith Family was invited to attend the event to promote *Let's Read* and collect interest from families with regard to who would like to experience *Let's Read* delivery. There was an overwhelming response from the families, with one mother saying "my son loves books, although they're so expensive I can't afford to buy many", she continued to say she was interested in finding out more about the program.

A follow up morning tea at the Preschool has been scheduled and will be a starting point for the staff at the preschool to begin delivering the packs to families as well.

*Tracey Middleton
Learning for Life Worker | The Smith Family*

McReadie Literacy Program Launch in Airds

Let's Read Claymore- NSW

It was one of the coldest days in Campbelltown yet the sound of beautiful music and the buzzing activities were too much to resist for the families in Claymore/Airds communities. The Smith Family took part in the launch of McReadie Literacy program on May 25th at Airds Bradbury Central. McReadie is an early year's literacy program, focusing on 0-5 years. TSF's *Let's Read* was promoted in the launch with at least 60 people and children in attendance. It was a hub of activity with other agencies working in early years



McReadie Launch

participating in the launch. There were parents and carers with their little ones enjoying the day

and at the same time understanding why reading at an early age was critical. Participants thoroughly enjoyed the morning and actively participated in play with their children. It was great to see parents and children from all playgroups and preschools socially interact with each other and feel completely at ease. The program highlight was the performance of the McReadie BookWorms.

*Warunee Nuij
Team Leader | The Smith Family*

...Having fun with words and language

Let's Read Mirrabooka/Ngala - WA

In the Mirrabooka Communities for Children the *Let's Read* Program is part of a community literacy strategy. Earlier this year, students and their carers at Westminster Junior Primary School participated in "Meet the Author workshops".



Parents and Children having fun & play with words

Four groups of families and children listened as the author, Erica Bentel, read her book "Does a Book Have a Spine?" This book encourages readers to have fun

and play with language. There were 81 children, 50 adults and 9 staff in attendance including 16 fathers and grandfathers.

Evaluations were collected from families and all responded positively to the opportunity to hear reading to children demonstrated and having fun with language. Children drew stories about their experience.

The school Principal reported interest and positive feedback from parents from different ethnic groups.

*Sue Fielding
C4C Project Manager/The Smith Family*

Let's Read Bundaberg/Wide Bay - QLD

The Bundaberg Project Officer gave a presentation to health promotion students and professionals at CQ University Bundaberg Campus. The presentation was focused on key elements of the *Let's Read* program and its aims and purpose. It was well received and has generated interest and support from other health promotion professionals and organisations.

Read Aloud sessions in the local shopping centres continue to be popular in the Bundaberg region and visits to playgroups are increasing each month. At Sugarland Shoppingtown, *Let's Read* is part of their Kid's Club and this helps to generate a lot of interest in the district.



*Susan Scarr
Let's Read Project Officer*

Finding new ways to repeat the message of Let's Read... and

Let's Read *Brimbank - VIC*

The *Let's Read* program has been in the Brimbank community since 2009, and they are finding new ways to repeat the messages of "*Let's Read*" and re-energise the delivery.

Recently the local coordinator of *Lets Read* has reinvigorated one of the steering group partners, Brimbank Libraries, by developing new ways to implement *Let's Read* activities into existing library programs. The first activity was a special "*Let's Read*" story time. Clowns developed a musical skit where "*Let's Read*" books were incorporated into their performance, tip sheets and books



Two Clowns reading 'Time for Bed'

were shared with parents as part of the day and the local press covered the event. As one clown read Mem Fox's "Time for Bed" the other stole food and drink. There was lots of interaction from the audience as the children tried to warn the clown that

their food was being taken... but the clown was very engrossed in the book!

The activity was well received and all Library staff were engaged with the process and wanted to know more about "*Let's Read*". Other strategies to give opportunities for library staff to promote "*Let's Read*" are now planned to be undertaken throughout the year.

*Jeanine Carter
Learning for Life/Community Development
Worker | The Smith Family*

Dads Night at Morphett Vale Kindy - SA

Dads Night at Morphett Vale Kindy has proved to be a highlight again this year with 27 Dads attending with their children, all the children received a reading mat made by VIEW ladies in the South of Adelaide and the ABC book from the 4 month Lets Read packs. They received the ABC book so that they can use it to learn to play Eye Spy with their Dads when they are out and about together. This activity was followed by Lets Read delivery from the Kindy staff and feedback has been very positive, showing an increase in fathers reading to their child.



Dads Night

*Leeann Koesters
Learning for Life Worker | The Smith Family*

Feedback

Have you had a wonderful idea? Developed a great new resource? Overcome a challenge? We'd love to hear about it. Help other *Let's Read* communities to thrive by sending us stories and photos to share in our next newsletter due out in September 2011. Contact us at community@letsread.com.au

