



LET'S READ

Newsletter

Reading 'Rocks' at Bribie Island State School



Bribie Island State School - Prep Let's Read Presentation

Once again reading has 'rocked' at Bribie Island State School in 2011. Students have participated in numerous activities with their classes, families and the wider community. We started the year with the Prep *Let's Read* presentation on day one, where every Prep child and their parent/s received their *Let's Read* pack to take home to share with their family.

We rapidly moved on to classroom reading under the guidance of our Literacy Coach with a range of exciting new books to delve into. On Anzac Day the local clubs presented us with books to help commemorate the day and cherish the memory of service personnel who were lost in wars.

The children built bridges and travelled around the world for Book Week and had a big win of "big" books in a State wide competition.

The kids travelled to the local retirement village, visited the local library and staged a reading display at the new museum, but most of all have continued to enjoy reading and sharing our love of a good book or two!!

*Kathy Donovan - QLD
Bribie Island State School*

Initiative Of:

Murdoch Childrens
Research Institute
Healthier Kids. Healthier Future.

The **Royal Children's**
Hospital Melbourne
Centre for Community Child Health



everyone's family

XMAS & New Year Break

Let's Read National Office (Vic) will be closed for Xmas & New Year break from 23rd December 2011 to 3rd January 2012 and our Distribution Centre will be closed from 22nd December 2011 to 10th January 2012. Orders can be placed during this period, and will be dispatched after 19th January 2012.

Let's Read Inspires...

On a visit to the Girrawheen Food Bank, I was approached by a Somali mother who remembered me from my previous visit when I had delivered *Let's Read* packages. She revealed that the 3 books she had received on this visit were the first books her children and the entire family, had ever owned. The same was true for her neighbour who had also received the *Let's Read* packs for her two children.

The mother disclosed that since then both women save \$3 out of their fortnight Centerlink payments and use the money to buy children's books once every month, which they swap and share. In this way they have started their own 'library'.

Kim Wedge
Project Officer/Ngala - WA

Baby Bag Program Success in Dubbo, NSW (thanks to Let's Read)

Macquarie Regional Library in Dubbo has been successfully delivering a Baby Bag program to all new parents in Dubbo for over 4 years. The program was funded through the Communities for Children initiative supported by the Australian Federal Government. The Baby Bag program is an outcome of a number of organizations working together to improve literacy for many, especially Indigenous families. The Baby Bags are coordinated by the library service and delivered by the Child and Family Health Nurses on their first home visit. The library develops the baby bags with the wonderful resources made available by *Let's Read* and provides training to the Child and Family Health Nurses, so they can deliver the message of the importance of early literacy in a baby's life.

Evaluation forms are included in the bags, and if parents return the form, they receive another free book from the *Let's Read* range. Some of the comments from parents:

"This is a fantastic initiative! Well done."

"A lovely gift for new parents! Thank you."

"Loved the free books, great choices, thank you ." (from a teacher)

"The baby bags are a great idea with info for new parents."

"I look forward to reading to my son, and I hope he grows to enjoy reading as much as me."

Lindy Allan
Macquarie Regional Library

McKay Let's Read - QLD

On November 8th the McKay Steering Committee met to discuss plans for next year and have come up with schedule for the year 2012. *Let's Read* Mackay now has 4 volunteers who will continue to have reading session at various childcare centres in Mackay over the Christmas period.



Let's Read Christmas Party

Wendy Hone
Project Officer, Let's Read

Let's Read Collie - WA



Mrs Janet Gemignani reading with children



Kristina Ugle with children

To expand on the great success of the *Let's Read* program in Collie, the Collie "Read with Me" group in partnership with The Smith Family and Collie Library, held a community book reading session for children and parents from Koolbardi Kindergarten at the Collie Aboriginal Baarnimarr Park.

The event was well received with 12 students and 11 parents attending. Koolbardi teacher Mrs Janet Gemignani read the "Caterpillar and Butterfly" book which captivated the children with the use of the Lava and Caterpillar puppets. After the book reading session, the Koolbardi students had a tour of the park followed by morning tea at the Collie Library.

Once morning tea was finished, local Noongar Kristina Ugle read her book that she wrote in Noongar language "Naatj Noonook Djinanj" ("What did you see"). They also learnt from Kristina Ugle that "Baarimarr" means

'Happy' in Noongar and that was the traditional name of her Grandfather.

The Collie Library also spoke to parents about the Better Beginnings program which reiterates the message from *Let's Read* that children need reading as a quality activity time spent with their family. The book pack included an alphabet book so that parents can share letter sounds with their children, as hearing the sounds of letters is an important beginning to learning to read for 4-5 year old children. The families who attended received this beautiful book pack on the day to take home to read to their children. Families also were invited to join the local library, with two new families joining on the day.

Sereena Pas
Learning for Life Worker | The Smith Family

Doveton Let's Read - VIC

The Doveton Family Resource Centre held a First Birthday Party for children who will be turning one. *Let's Read* has become a large part of the celebration. Towards the end of the party, a *Let's Read* pack was handed to every child and parent and discussions about reading with children occurred for each parent. A staff member then read 'Dear Zoo', with parents reading along with their child. They put the animals from the book in a box for the children to open and play with. The parents commented on the different approach which was used to interact with the book.



A mum reading along with her 1 year old

Sherree Geronimo | Doveton Early Childhood/Family Support Worker

Salisbury Let's Read - SA

On October 26th the Salisbury North Learning for Life Worker collaborated with the City of Salisbury Library Len Beadell Campus to hold a story time session for children aged 2-5 years.

At the beginning of the session, the Salisbury North Learning for Life Worker talked about The Smith Family, and in more detail about the *Let's Read* program. There was a very positive response from the 15 families who attended the session and each parent and child received a *Let's Read* pack. During the session, a library staff member read a series of books focused on forestry as this year is



Children's 3D creation of a forest

activity was a 3D creation of a forest, using leaves and twigs and felt and paper teddy bears to add to the picture. The children created magnificent pictures and really enjoyed the session!

Tracey Middleton
Learning for Life Worker | The Smith Family

the International Year of Forests. She also read the *Let's Read* story 'Where's my teddy?' which was followed by a craft activity for the children. Following the forestry theme and inspired by the 'Where's my teddy?' book, the craft

Port Adelaide Enfield - SA



Let's Read launch at Hendon Preschool

An internal launch of *Let's Read* was held at Hendon Preschool in the Port Adelaide Enfield community recently. A local LFL worker conducted an informal presentation stressing reading with the child from an early age and the importance of parents having fun reading with their child. Five staff members from this site had been recently trained to deliver *Let's Read* and were able to demonstrate. At the launch, the staff sat down with the families over a 'coffee n chat' model and delivered the packs to the excited parents/carers, whilst the children created and decorated their own *Let's Read* bookmark. In total, 30 packs were delivered, and the site also encouraged families to borrow their literacy activity packs, which are an appropriate link with *Let's Read*.

Travis Barty
Team Leader | The Smith Family

The City of Onkaparinga - SA



Playgroup in the Park Event

On October 21, *Let's Read* was delivered at the launch of the City of Onkaparinga's National Children's Week by having a Playgroup in the Park Event at Christie Downs Community House. The event included face painting, a jungle castle, Animal Capers and craft activities. Also the library had a reading area and activities specifically for children with disabilities. Approximately 24 families received *Let's Read* packs, the youngest child being 8 weeks old. Another child had received *Let's Read* previously and had every book that we had in our packs; it was great to see that he knew the books well and *Let's Read* books are being utilized at home.

Travis Barty
Team Leader | The Smith Family

Port Stephens Let's Read - NSW



Children's Literacy Event - 'Stories in the Town'

During National Literacy and Numeracy Week, Port Stephens Council Library Services, in partnership with The Smith Family's Communities for Children Program, organized a fantastic Children's Literacy Event - "Stories in the Town" at Raymond Terrace, encouraging parents and carers to read and count with their children.

Representatives from local businesses donated vouchers and prizes for children or were guest

storytellers. Local identity 'Willy Dew Drop' from 'Ship of fools' was a highlight as guest storyteller and entertainer. Raymond Terrace Library & Children's Literacy staff dressed as characters from children's books and entertained the audience with stories, songs and rhymes.

Each family received a free *Let's Read* Book and all children received a free literacy and numeracy activity bag

including *Let's Read* suggested book lists and parent information sheets. 127 books and 175 activity bags were distributed. The event was a huge success with lots of families in attendance and all children and adults participating in activities throughout the morning.

*Kris Abbot
Port Stephens Library*

Port Adelaide Enfield - SA

There are several new *Let's Read* sites in the Port Adelaide Enfield community, such as Woodville Garden's Children's Centre and Hendon Preschool. *Let's Read* has now been in this community for just over 1 year.

A recent steering committee meeting highlighted the success it has had in this time. The existing sites shared their experiences with the program, and it was beneficial for the new sites to gain an understanding of how different sites launch, deliver and promote *Let's Read*.

In celebration of Children's Week, a *Playgroup in the Park* event was held recently at the Semaphore Foreshore. In excess of 4000



Delivery of Let's Read messages to parents

young children and their families enjoyed a day of fun, free activities and entertainment. Several volunteers from The Smith Family helped (including two Learning Club tutors who were dressed as fairies having their photo in a local newspaper) and Port Power Football Club ran modified 'Aussie Rules' activities,

whilst SA radio opened the event and gave a very positive mention on 5AA. There was also a TSF stall which focused primarily on *Let's Read* promotion and delivery, providing craft activities and a reading corner for the young children. This event was highly successful in engaging with and supporting local services and families.

*Travis Barty
Team Leader | The Smith Family*

Brimbank Let's Read - VIC



Filipino Let's Read

New Volunteer Support: Brimbank now has a new volunteer, Maria Washer who has taken charge of the book ordering and checking of orders. She will be organising a working bee to collate the 1200 *Lets Read* pack for the New Year. In early 2012 we will be distributing another 1200 *Let's Read* Bags at the 12 month old Maternal Child Health Checks.

First Mums Talks: We have continued to add value to our delivery of *Let's Read* with short talks at Maternal Child Health first mums groups. These are an informal talk which introduces the concept of reading to children from 4 months onwards. As all people attending the groups are first mums it is an ideal opportunity to make contact. The talk is presented jointly with the maternal child health

nurse talking about the 'child's vision and neck muscle' to support the messages. Other key point discussed include what babies respond to at this age and what books to look for at the book shop or library. We also promote the baby bounce sessions at the library. First mums are given 4 month and 12 month book lists and tip sheets. Work was undertaken with the Filipino and Young mums group over term 3 this year and we undertook a cooking session.

Jeanine Carter
Learning for Life/Community Development 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 March 2012. Contact us at community@letsread.com.au

From the Let's Read Team



"Season's Greetings & Best Wishes for the New Year!"

We look forward to working with you in 2012

