



# LET'S READ Newsletter

Issue 3, September 2010



**Welcome** to the third edition of the *Let's Read* Newsletter for 2010. This edition highlights *Let's Read* launches in South Australia, inspiring reading sessions from Queensland and community news updates from New South Wales, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia.



## ....Encouraging Positive Experiences with Books *Let's Read at Harmony Play Group, Brimbank - VIC*



*Book making session at Harmony Play Group*



Over the last six weeks the Learning for Life Worker at Brimbank has been rolling out *Let's Read* with the Harmony Playgroup. The group is mainly made up of Burmese participants who have little or no English. Participants in the group did not view books as fun and did not feel they had the skills to share books with their children.

children in making a shared story. It gave the worker time to get to know the group and gain trust. The books created were simple and were either picture books or books in their own language. The group enjoyed this so much that they decided to make a Burmese Noodle Cookbook. This book was completed and launched at the group with a celebration lunch of Burmese Noodles.

Reading was modelled to the group using the Noodle Cook Book that they had developed. As the book was read the worker demonstrated the technique of pointing to the words, following text from left to right and questioning.

After this the *Lets Read* Book 'Wheels on the Bus' was used to demonstrate reading a children's book. The worker did not read the book but told a story by using the pictures as the book was in English. The worker demonstrated how to tell the story using actions, noises and asking questions etc. A mother from the group who has received *Let's Read* Training and the facilitator joined in to encourage the group to participate.

### Initiative of:



After consultation with the facilitator and taking into consideration recommendations from the *Let's Read* Translation Project it was decided to undertake a series of sessions to encourage positive experiences with books. Each session would encourage and teach skills in sharing books with children 0-5 years old.

Over the last five weeks the group has been making books. This allowed them to use collage and involved their

*Jeanine Carter  
Learning for Life/  
Community Development Worker*



## Early Literacy and Book Making for Parents Group St Albans Primary, Brimbank - VIC



*Participants in the book making session at St Albans Primary*

On Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> of August The Smith Family Board visited Brimbank to see the work of the Communities for Children and the Learning for Life Programs in action.

Amongst the activities they saw were a parent information session on *Let's Read*, early literacy and book making. A group of 12 parents attended and heard about *Let's Read* in St Albans and the basic components that make up emergent literacy and how they can support literacy development in their young children in everyday life. The skills involved in reading a book were demonstrated with participants then making their own books.

*Jeanine Carter  
Learning for Life/  
Community Development Worker*

## Get Active with Let's Read City of Playford - SA

On Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> July the 'Get Active with *Let's Read*' event took place at the City of Playford Civic Centre Library. The event aimed to encourage the families and caregivers of pre-school children to learn healthy habits around physical activity, as well as take a proactive approach to early literacy development. With this as a focus children from four local primary schools and child parent centres enjoyed Zumba Dance, ball games, art and craft, Zig Zag circus and a library tour. The younger children and their parents participated in a *Let's Read* story time and Bilby Bus play time session.

The City of Playford Mayor, Martin Lindsell, opened the event whilst SANFL footballers Trent Goodrem (Delta Goodrem's brother) and Chad O'Sullivan were special guests at the 4-2-6 ball games station. The 2 hour event was made possible with the assistance of some



*Bilby Bus Play Time Session*

amazing partners including the City of Playford, The Elizabeth Civic Centre and Library, Anglicare, the 4-2-6 Program, OPAL, Active After-school Communities and Centacare. The event proved a great success with many of the parents and children asking for another one to be held.

*Sian Taylor  
Team Leader*



## Family Morning

### The Illawarra Let's Read - NSW

The Illawarra Let's Read project recently held a family morning at Warilla Library in Shellharbour.



*Family Morning at Warilla Library in Shellharbour*

Over 100 families attended the day that featured The Amazing Doogles free puppet show, storytelling, sausage sizzle, craft activities, outdoor playgroup, balloons and more.

The event was designed to encourage families to join the library and see what it has to offer children. The similar event is planned for Wollongong in November.

*Caitlin Marshall  
Local Facilitator*

*Families at Farmborough School Community Centre*

## Book Week Celebration

### Ravenswood - TAS



*Fireman reading "Dear Zoo"*

On Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> August, 100 children and their families met at the Launching into Learning room at Ravenswood Heights Primary School. Some friendly firemen arrived and took groups of children for turns sitting in the truck and with the fire hose. They then came in and read 'Dear Zoo' to the children. What an exciting way to start the day!

The group then set off for the walk around the community. They visited the Community Health Centre, had a story read to them and then continued on to the shopping centre where Tim the newsagent met them and read 'Going on a



*Book Week Celebration at Ravenswood*

'Bear Hunt'. They then went to the library for another story.

Finally, they walked to the Neighbourhood House. They ended the walk there with another story read by one of the brave mums. They had a sausage sizzle, enjoyed some fruit and best of all, every child received a book. Parents have since had to read this book over and over to their child and the day after the walk a family attended a playgroup with their books and wanted the teacher to read them.

*Wendy Armstrong  
Regional Programs Manager*



## National Literacy and Numeracy Week Celebration

*Mt Morgan Central State School Reading Expo - QLD*

Jane Ganter, *Let's Read* Project Officer, and Volunteer Joan Wilson participated in the Reading Expo' held by the school to celebrate National Literacy and Numeracy Week.



*A child illustrating the letter R for Rainbow Bird*

Children from Mount Morgan Central State School enjoyed illustrating their own version of an 'Australian Alphabet'. Bronwyn Bancroft's beautiful book 'Possum and Wattle' and other alphabet books were used as models for this activity. The children also enjoyed listening to a variety of stories being read, and using puppets during the stories.

*Jane Ganter  
Let's Read Project Officer*

## Let's Read Launch in Port Adelaide Enfield - SA

On Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2010 approximately 150 people, including 70 young children, attended the Launch of *Let's Read* in the Port Adelaide Enfield community. The launch was held at the Parks Community Centre and officially launched by the Hon Jay Weatherill MP (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development). A speech was also made by the Mayor of Port Adelaide Enfield, Gary Johanson.

This was a very successful and fun event with lots of games and activities available for the children, including face-painting, a clown making balloon animals, a children's circus teaching magic tricks, play-dough activities and craft.

Local sporting hero Gavin Wanganeen and an Adelaide Thunderbirds netballer, along with renowned children's author Phil Cummings all read with the children. There were stalls set up by various organisations that provided information about the services and programs available in the community.



*Little Amiti Lee is having fun with books*

These organisations ranged from The Smith Family, the Asthma Foundation, Active After-school Communities, the Police Force, libraries, and local Children's Centre's.

There are more than 10 sites on board to deliver *Let's Read*, including the 5 major libraries in this area and interest is continuing to grow.

*Sian Taylor  
Team Leader*



## Successful Launch of Let's Read in Whyalla - SA

The Civic Library was abuzz with 70 people enjoying the *Let's Read* program launch recently. They were mainly parents with their 0 to 5 year old children.

One Steel Whyalla, the Whyalla City Council and Nunyara Wellbeing Centre are all proud sponsors of the program. The agencies involved also include the Whyalla Hospital, Learning Together at Home, Family Day Care, Edward John Eyre High School, TAFESA Child Care and the University of South Australia. It is the joint collaboration between all these sites that is making our program a success.

The parents at the *Let's Read* launch were eager to talk to the representatives and ask questions about the program.

One of the main techniques is the 'Share and Show' technique where the children learn something once it is shown as well as explained.



*The Smith Family Learning for Life worker William Binnie spoke with parents about the importance of reading and teaching children from a young age.*



*Showing how important it is to read to infants was The Smith Family Team Leader Sian Taylor*

"We're very passionate about setting the foundation for the early years of children's lives," Mr Binnie said. "By initiating this program, we're hoping to show parents the importance of starting early in their children's lives. It's something that will stick with the children as they grow up and education is an important thing as a child grows and their mind develops."

As well as discussing the *Let's Read* program, there was face painting. The little ones enjoyed the work of children's face painter Simone Whiting. There were also many arts and crafts, as well as a clown making balloon animals, which parents and children alike enjoyed.

The Smith Family and the Whyalla Public Libraries were both excited at the success of the launch and enjoyed parent's keen interest in it.

"The whole aim was to encourage reading and this launch helped to establish that," Mr Binnie said.

*Sian Taylor  
Team Leader*



## Let's Read Launch at Elizabeth North - SA

Elizabeth North Primary School CPC launched the *Let's Read* program internally on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September. Assistant Principal Christine White opened the event with Graham Wood, the school Principal, officially cutting the ribbon to the *Let's Read* family reading corner.



*The school Principal of Elizabeth North Primary, Graham Wood, is preparing to cut the ribbon and officially launch Let's Read within their new Child Parent Centre.*

The launch attracted over 60 children with their parents who were all given the opportunity to enjoy the *Let's Read* resources in the family reading corner over a delicious morning tea.

Throughout the morning TSF staff and volunteers delivered *Let's Read* packs to the families and highlighted the importance of early literacy with an emphasis on parent/child interaction. It was also a great opportunity to share all of our program information with the families and school staff to further strengthen our relationship with the local community. *Let's Read* will now be a feature program at Elizabeth North CPC!

*Sian Taylor  
Team Leader*

## Literacy Links Project - WA

The Literacy Links Project is a Community for Children (C4C) Mirrabooka initiative, delivered by Ngala (Community Partner). At the heart of the Literacy Links Project is *Let's Read*. Ngala has actively promoted *Let's Read* through local service providers including the Early Learning Centre, Special Education Unit and Family Day Care. Ngala has also partnered with community projects such as the Community Parks Project and Multicultural playgroup, to deliver *Let's Read* to local families in the C4C Mirrabooka area.

An active recruitment process was recently undertaken to extend the delivery points for *Let's Read* in the local community. Through this process, Literacy Links has established a more diverse and robust group of trusted

community members / professionals to deliver the *Let's Read* program.

Ngala hosted a training session on 31 August 2010 for the new recruits. The heavy rain and a 'road weather alert' caused a late start to the training session but did not dampen the spirits of the group. 21 community members courageously stepped out in the extreme wet weather conditions to participate in the *Let's Read* training including representatives from the Parent Link Program, HIPPI Home Tutoring, local libraries, child care centres, Primary Schools and the Teen Family Centre. This commitment demonstrates the passion for supporting early literacy development in the Mirrabooka community.

*Sue Fielding  
C4C Project Manager*



## Let's Read News - WA



*Theresa Hillhouse & Katie Geddes from the Smith Family*

The Smith Family in WA has recently appointed a WA *Let's Read* Coordinator which is very exciting. Jessica Sharp has been supporting the delivery of *Let's Read* in the Smith Family communities. Midland, Collie, Port Hedland and Karratha are all embarking on a literacy focus in their local communities, with *Let's Read* being the central focus.

In Karratha, children celebrated National Book and Literacy week on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August. The event aimed to encourage

families to use the library and promote pre-literacy development. The children were treated to readings by the Pilbara poet Elise Batchelor. The Smith Family staff set up a stall providing information about *Let's Read*. The event was extremely successful, with many families excited about the delivery of *Let's Read* in their community.

*Jessica Sharp  
Let's Read Coordinator*

## Let's Read Bundaberg - QLD

*Let's Read* in Bundaberg will hold Rainbow Day on the 10th of September. Rainbow Day is an event for children under 5 and coincides with Child Protection Week. On the 24th of September *Let's Read* will be attending the Teddy Bear's Picnic in the Botanic Gardens and will be having story time and fun with books and puppets. *Let's Read* will also have a presence to support reading with children at the Bundaberg South Indigenous Playgroup on a regular basis. Many dual language books have been delivered to the multi-cultural group at the local Neighbourhood Centre and demand is high for these books. The regular Read Aloud sessions at the local shopping centres are proving very popular with families.

*Susan Scarr  
Let's Read Project Officer*



## An Inspiring Reading Session Story

### Rasmussen State School – QLD

In Queensland, the Reading to Children *Let's Read* communities have an additional element to the program, whereby volunteers read to children aged 0-5, in various locations throughout the community. As part of this, Robyn Campbell conducts a regular storytime session in the library at Rasmussen school in Townsville. Sessions are held at 8:30am on Wednesdays and most of the parents / caregivers, who attend with their young children, do so after 'dropping off' an older sibling/s at the school.

This is Robyn's account of part of a recent session: "Undoubtedly the special highlight of today's session occurred during our singing of 'Brown Bear'. We began our singing focussing initially on the babies, (although everyone joined in). In keeping with the theme of today's book, we sang 'Brown bear', using

actions also. I modelled the actions with my teddy bear (my 21 year old daughter being *just* a little too old for this!!!) to guide the parents.

During the singing, one of the mothers spontaneously burst into tears in response to her baby's engagement and absolute joy in the activity. She excitedly exclaimed her amazement at her baby's focussing on the picture and giggling during the singing. She thought that she needed to be apologetic to the group for her emotions, but was reassured by everyone that her response was totally natural and that shared experiences such as these provided further opportunity to strengthen the bond between caregiver and child. Most of the other mothers wiped away their tears in seeing her pure joyousness.

*Fiona McCarthy*  
*Let's Read Project Officer*

## 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 December 2010. Contact us at [community@letsread.com.au](mailto:community@letsread.com.au)

