

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- **Anthony Semann provides his expert analysis on the role of leadership in Strengthening Communities**
- **Anna Perry gives us an insight into the Active Children and Families Program**

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EOFY is upon us again!



Well it's that time of year again. EOFYS, as one particular cable television company puts it and whilst there is nothing on sale at Communities for Children the "End of the Financial Year" is a significant period for C4C and its Community Partners.

Foremost is news from FaHCSIA that the Australian Government has launched the new Family Support Program with funding of \$490 million nationally over the next three years for Families and Children's services to provide more support to vulnerable families and reduce red tape for service providers. This has resulted in the repositioning of Communities for Children within the Family Support Program.

From January 1st 2011 the Communities for Children stream of the Family Support Program will deliver positive and sustainable outcomes

for children and families in disadvantaged communities throughout Australia. The primary focus will be children 0-12 years and their families. There are two principal activities that will be delivered under Communities for Children: The Communities for Children Facilitating Partner Model (which is the program that Mission Australia delivers); and Communities for Children Direct Services.

What this all means for C4C is that our contract has been extended until 2014 and in the up and coming months we will be revising our Community Strategy Plan and conducting a needs assessment to inform the future direction of the program. Most significantly, we have been able to extend our boundaries to all of the suburbs within CGD. This means that our Community Partners will no longer have to exclude some families from their programs, which is great news for all.

Ultimately, this means a lot of work for all of us as the financial year draws to a close. Our Community Partners have been busy, compiling progress reports and sustainability plans and their continued efforts and diligence in getting these reports submitted before the July 1st deadline has been

greatly appreciated.

Other news at C4C is as follows:

The CFC Team is happy to announce that we have a new Co-ordinator for the program. Suzanne McManus will be acting in Lauren's position for the next 12 months while Lauren takes a break well deserved. Suzanne has worked with a variety of community based programs and we look forward to welcoming her into our team.

In May we have funded the provision of transport for families to attend Playgroup Victoria's Werribee Zoo Play Day as part of the Small Grants Program.

That about wraps it up for this month. Once again, we would like to thank our Community partners for their hard work, support and passion for improving the outcomes of the community in Dandenong. Please take the time now and peruse this newsletter for other recent news at C4C.

If you would like detailed information about the new Family Support Program please visit:
<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/families/progserv/familysupport/Pages/default.aspx>

C4C Project Worker June Update Mission Australia



Our Community Partners have been working tirelessly on their sustainability plans and these are all in the final stages of development. The plans are being developed using a model agreed upon by partners following a training session held earlier this year with Professor Ros Hurworth from Melbourne University. These plans have a strong emphasis on identifying and developing networks, strategies

and systems within programs to ensure sustainable outcomes for families.

Our Mentoring Program is going ahead in leaps and bounds with our enthusiastic Mentoring Protégés well underway in achieving their individual goals. Each participant is working on an aspect of integrated service delivery that will enhance the support already provided to vulnerable families in our community. The participants are able to identify supports to strengthen their programs in order to meet the needs of their families.

By Kate Kent, C4C Project Worker

Dandenong Communities for Children has an ongoing Small Grant Activities Program. The Small Grant Activities Program provide short term and flexible funding to support the delivery of a single activity to meet new and emerging needs within Dandenong.

Expressions of Interest (EOI's) are invited from not for profit organisations and services. They may be eligible to receive funding up to \$5,000.

To apply for a Small Grant, please go online and download an *Application Form* along with *Funding Guidelines*. For further information, please call the Communities for Children Co-ordinator on :

03 9213 2500.

Active Children and Families



The South Eastern Region Migrant Resource Centre has been partnering with the Communities for Children Initiative for almost one year delivering the Active Children and Families Program.

The Active Children and Families Project runs as an After School Program partnering with 3 Primary Schools in Dandenong. The program engages families from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds through activities that promote active, healthy lifestyles. The program works with the partnering schools and other services, including sporting clubs to provide culturally appropriate support to the families with an aim of strengthening links and opportunities within the community.

The activities and sessions are



Trainers from Lifesaving Victoria run the 'Meet a Lifeguard' session at one of the partnering schools for the families

tailored to meet the needs and interested of the families, this allows the families to feel valued and is a way of ensuring that the activities are not only culturally appropriate, but that traditional activities are celebrated. Some of these that have been incorporated into the program sessions include kite making, and dance activities with traditional music provided by families.

Volunteer Facilitators have been recruited to assist the Project Worker with planning and delivering the sessions. The volunteers also provide bi-lingual support, and are a true asset to the program.

The Active Children and Families Program is continuing to grow and flourish within Dandenong. The Migrant Resource Centre says thank you to the partnering schools, local services, volunteers and families involved in the program!

By Anna Perry, Active Children and Families Project Worker

Learning to Lead in Order to Strengthen Communities

By Anthony Semann

Leadership is a learnt behavior, and if enacted effectively can produce positive outcomes. Despite popular discourse espousing that individuals are born leaders, the reality is that individuals must invest time in building their leadership capacity in order to become effective leaders. Much has been written in the literature on the role of leadership and leader impact, over the last several decades. There is also much to be said about the intentionality of leadership i.e. what am I trying to create as a result of my leadership?

Within the community sector one of the most common intentions of leadership is to create positive change for community members. As such, aspiring and existing leaders must take time out to reflect on the ways in which their leadership can bring this desire to fruition. Whilst there are many leadership models by which leaders can work from, the servant leadership model may be an attractive proposition given its focus on serving communities. Developed by Greenleaf (1970), the main thesis of this leadership model is that leaders must aspire to serve their followers through a culture of care and in turn make conscious decisions about the impact of their leadership on individuals. The following questions may be a useful starting point to assess servant leadership:

- Do those served grow as persons?
- Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?
- What is the effect on the least privileged in society?
- Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived?

Given the risk in attending to the needs of others, serving our community and its members can be complex. These risks may include misreading the needs of others, creating a culture of dependency between leaders and followers and finally providing advice and solutions without building capacity in followers. Now, whilst solutions to the above mentioned risks may not be easily overcome, there are a number of reflective questions which may minimize these challenges. These include:

- Have I asked those who I am serving what their expectations are about my leadership?
- Do I as leader, and them as follower, share the same desires?
- Am I finding solutions for those I am serving without providing them with the skills and tools to become less reliant on me as a leader?
- Do the language and actions I use position me as the 'know-it-all' and the follower as the 'unknowing-dependent'.

Servant, or Community, leaders build a solid foundation of shared goals by listening deeply to understand the needs and concerns of others and working thoughtfully to build a creative consensus.

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About the Author:

For the past 15 years Anthony has worked as an educator, innovator and advocate with a broad range of government, non-government and private organisations.

His skills and expertise have seen him work with organisations across Australia and overseas including Columbia University, New York.

His achievements have been publicly recognised by his peers and the broader community and he has been awarded the Young Manager of the Year Award and the Early Childhood Australia Inaugural Advocate of the Year Award.

Anthony is currently completing a PhD with a research focus on leadership and courage.

Finally, Anthony has provided professional development for C4C and Service Providers in Dandenong.





Mission Australia



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Communities for Children Greater Dandenong -Victoria

The Dandenong Communities for Children program is facilitating the implementation of prevention and early intervention programs for families with children up to 12 years of age, who are at risk of disadvantage and who remain disconnected from childhood and community services in the City of Greater Dandenong.

Through the Dandenong Children and Families Partnership we work to develop and facilitate a whole of community approach to build on community strengths and the existing infrastructure of organisations, networks and resources.

Dandenong Communities for Children is an Australian Government Initiative for the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) as part of the Family Support Program. For further information go to www.fahcsia.gov.au

The Mission Australia Website:
www.missionaustralia.com.au

Learning to Lead in Order to Strengthen Communities Continued

The focus of servant leadership must therefore be enacted through

- Sharing information,
- Building a common vision,
- Self-management,
- High levels of interdependence,
- Learning from mistakes,
- Encouraging creative input from every team member, and
- Questioning present assumptions and mental models

Leadership is a complex phenomenon that often raises questions about the best ways to work with the community to face challenges and maximize opportunities. As existing and potential leaders it is imperative that, in order to bring the best results to the communities and individuals you are serving, time is provided to allow you to reflect on both your leadership desires and intentions.

Anthony's company, Semann & Slattery act as pathfinders to assist organisations and people identify and apply the most appropriate strategies and skills to enhance both performance and productivity.

For information on services and events:
www.semansslattery.com

Closing Words

Well folks that's all for this month. We hope you found some time out to read this newsletter.

Let spend some of our final words to you and remind you of the Dandenong Kids website as a great portal for you and your clients in accessing information about family services in the City of Greater Dandenong. The website has been commissioned by the Children and Family Partnership under the supervision of Callie Miratana.

The website not only provides parenting information, health and safety advice, highlights upcoming events for young children and their families, but also includes links to local support services within the community. The URL is: www.dandenongkids.com.au.

As always, we look forward to seeing you guys out there and invite you to send us any ideas, letters or articles of your own for the next C4C newsletter.

The C4C team thanks you for your hard work and dedication to a worthy cause.

Melinda Chapman
Child & Family Services Manager