



'FAMILIES MATTER' – in Greater Shepparton

Edition 2
April 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Keeping Early Childhood on the Agenda	1
Name the Newsletter Competition – Winner	1
Agency Profile – Shepparton Adult and Community Education (ACE)	2
Raising Children Network	3
Fast Facts	3
Grants and Funding Opportunities	4
'Rainbow Kids' – Art for Small Hands	4
Conference, Workshops and Training Calendar	5 - 6
Keeping up to Date	7
Newsletter Information and Contacts	7
'Seasons for Growth' registration form	8



KEEPING EARLY CHILDHOOD ON THE AGENDA

Welcome to our 2nd edition of our newsletter. Congratulations to Ann Sexton whose suggestion for our name was accepted with a slight modification due to a competing journal with a similar name. A \$20 voucher is on its way and many thanks Ann.

So "Families Matter" is launched.

It is pleasing to see early childhood issues taking up so much space in the media at the moment with many articles appearing and much debate in the community. I am heartened that the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has, along with mental health, identified early childhood as a major priority. I am sure, as practitioners we welcome this realisation that investment in early childhood is critical in setting the foundations for the future strength of our community. We have known this for ages but now others are catching up.

Several weeks ago, along with some 1200 others I attended a conference at Telstra Dome where the keynote speaker was Dr Jack Shonkoff. The theme of his presentation, supported by media articles is that an investment in early childhood services has a multiplied return to the community. He states that \$1 spent now on early childhood programs pays back \$18 to the community in welfare savings, increase tax income and reduced crime. It is no wonder the bureaucrats in treasury both here and in the US are now showing an interest in this area. As he says "No society could make a better investment than preschool for high-risk kids". This is the message we, as advocates for young children must constantly keep in the forefront of this debate.

For those of you interested a copy of his presentation is available on the Office For children website or for more detailed analysis www.developingchild.net

I look forward to your comments and welcome feedback which we will happily print in our next edition.

Till then
Steve Dawkins

NAME THE NEWSLETTER COMPETITION – WE HAVE A WINNER!

Congratulations to Ann Sexton who put her thinking cap on and has come up with the winning new name for the newsletter – 'Family Matters'. Ann's creativity has earned her a \$20 voucher from Book City. We hope Ann enjoys browsing the book aisles looking for something interesting to read on us!



Shepparton Adult & Community Education

AGENCY PROFILE – SHEPPARTON ADULT & COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Shepparton Adult & Community Education is a community based, not for profit organisation, providing an exciting range of education opportunities for youth and adults in Greater Shepparton. We also work with industry, employment agencies, welfare agencies and secondary schools to meet our community's needs in education and training.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

To identify the need for adult literacy and basic education, and other complementary adult and community education requirements in the Greater Shepparton area, and to plan and deliver programs to meet these needs and requirements within resources available.

OUR VISION STATEMENT:

To be a significant provider of lifelong learning opportunities, emphasising adult literacy and basic education, such as that human dignity and educational and economic opportunity in the Greater Shepparton area enhanced.

A BRIEF HISTORY:

ALBE in Greater Shepparton began in 1996 in response to a request from coordinators of Community Houses to put in place a coordinated program to deliver adult education, especially 1:1 voluntary tutoring, within the City of Greater Shepparton. Thus the ALBE Cluster was born, auspice by the North Shepparton Community House, and coordinated by Carmel Kelly.

Within its first year, approximately 80 voluntary tutors were trained, and they, together with the voluntary tutors from the other three Community Houses became ALBE. As other learning needs within the community became apparent, ALBE extended and developed, a range of courses to address these needs eg. Computers, Certificates in General Education for Adults.

Continuing growth also involved achieving independence from North Shepparton Community House and becoming incorporated with a Committee of Management. By May 1997, ALBE had become a provider of adult education in its own right.

In keeping with the organisation's growth and expansion in service delivery, ALBE in Greater Shepparton was renamed Shepparton Adult & Community Education early in 2003 which aligned the organisation with numerous other ACE providers across the state.

After renting commercial premises for some years, 2004 saw Shepparton ACE relocate to the Shepparton Youth Club building, which is managed by the City of Greater Shepparton. A long lease was negotiated which will provide security for the future, and with the Youth Club's co-operation and Council's support, extensive renovations have been undertaken which will provide a modern, attractive learning centre for our community. Support has also been provided through the Capital Works program.

The Voluntary Tutors' Program, coordinated by Jan Phillips, continues to be a vital part Shepparton ACE, offering free, confidential 1:1 assistance with literacy and numeracy. A variety of other programs and accredited courses are available as per brochures and detailed course literature, and enquiries are welcomed.

The current age range of clients at Shepparton ACE is 15 – 94. Our youth programs have a life coaching component, we employ a support worker three days per week, who is available to speak with students, and to support those who may be experiencing difficult circumstances which may limit their progress. Our courses include basic literacy, computers, slumped glass, Information Technology, Vocational Preparation and Community Services Support Work. We also offer customized training to business and job network providers eg Introduction and Refresher computer training. We welcome both enquiries and also suggestions for new courses/programs.

RAISING CHILDREN NETWORK WEBSITE

The Family & Community Services Minister Senator Kay Patterson recently announced that the Raising Children Network has been appointed to develop and manage a national parenting information website, under the Stronger Families & Communities 'Invest to Grow' initiative. The Raising Children Network is a consortium comprised of Smart Population Foundation, the Victorian Parenting Centre and the Centre for Community Child Health, part of the Murdoch Research Institute at Melbourne's Royal Children's Hospital.

The need for a national parenting information website grew out of research into what parents, carers and practitioners working with parents require (from the national Parenting Information Project). The research showed that parents complain of information overload and simultaneously an inability to find trustworthy information in one place. The Australian Government will contribute \$4 million over four years as part of its commitment to ensure every Australian child has the best possible start in life by supporting parents in their most important role.

The Raising Children Network website will seek the collective wisdom of experts and industry bodies from all over Australia and the feedback of parents and practitioners. To that end, an interim page has been established at www.raisingchildren.net.au to capture parents' and practitioners' recommendations during the developmental process.

The content for the website, which must pass the scrutiny of an editorial committee of Australian experts, will cover a broad range of developmental information, tools and resources for pregnancy through school transition, tailored for parents of all different backgrounds and circumstances.

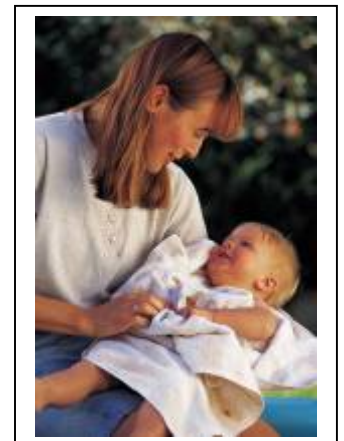
The Raising Children Network website will be a single, reliable, user-friendly resource for parents. It will give them control over valuable information to empower them to answer their own questions about safety and care in the privacy of their own homes. Those without access to the internet will be able to benefit indirectly through nurses, GPs and support services who use the website for research and parenting tools. The website will be expert accredited, quality assured and will filter out judgmental advice, instead making the basics and the science truly accessible, engaging parents with informed choice.

Raising Children Network is an initiative of Smart Population Foundation, Victorian Parenting Centre and Centre for Community Child Health – telephone contact 02 8356 1340.

FAST FACTS

1. The years 0-8 are the most important stage of determining a child's future success
2. 680,000 or 18% of Australian children live in jobless households
3. Low income families have just \$11 a week to spend on their children's education compared to \$51 for high income couples.
4. 50,000 Australian youth leave school without completing Year 12 and never go on to gain further training or education
5. Young people who don't complete high school are twice as likely to be unemployed than youth who complete high school
6. The estimated cost to Australia of young people not completing Year 12 is \$2.6 billion annually
7. If young males completed Year 12, the reduction in break, enter and steal annually would be 15%
8. 13% of Australians live on half the national average income
9. Nine out of 10 Australians donate more than \$420 a year to charities
10. Every dollar spent on disadvantaged children in preschool years generates a 17% annual return to the child and society

Taken from The Smith Family 'The Enterprising Family' newsletter, March 2006



GRANTS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Womens Community Leadership Grants

The Office of Women's Policy invites you to consider applying for the Women's Community Leadership Grant's (WCLG's). The 2006-07 grants were launched on International Women's Day, Wednesday 8 March and reflect the commitment of the Victorian Government to provide support to women and organisations advancing leadership projects for women at a local level.

You may apply for a grant under one of the following six target streams:

Rural and Regional
Family Violence
Health and Wellbeing
Emergency Management
Education, Work and Economic Independence; and General

Within these streams specific grant funds have been allocated for grants to women with disabilities, Indigenous women, culturally and linguistically diverse women, older women and young women.

Funding of up to \$2,000 is available for individuals and up to \$5,000 for groups or organisations.

Applications close 1 May 2006.

The Guidelines and Application forms are available on the DVC website <http://www.grants.dvc.vic.gov.au>

I encourage you to consider this opportunity and look forward to receiving your application. If you would like further information, please call the Grants Information line on 1300 366 56.



'RAINBOW KIDS' – ART FOR SMALL HANDS

For those providers working with families with pre-school aged children here is a program they may be interested in attending. Shepparton Art Gallery and Relationships Australia are offering a program for pre-school children and their parents. We want parents to bring along their pre-schooler(s) so they can participate in creative art activities together. This has been organised six Tuesday mornings between 10.30 and 11.30 and there will be time to have a cuppa and a chat afterwards. Dates are from May 2 until June 6 (inclusive).

The first aim of this program is, of course, for the children to enjoy themselves. More than that, we would like to encourage parents to be a bit more knowledgeable and comfortable in providing creative things for their children to do at home. A 'show bag' of materials to practise with at home will be given to each parent at the end of the program. These Tuesday morning activity groups will also give parents an opportunity to get to know one another in an informal, relaxed atmosphere.

The program will be conducted by Angie Russi, the Gallery's Education Officer. Angie is a very well-known and respected community artist, with tons of experience working with both children and adults.

This is a program funded by Relationships Australia and there is no cost to participants.

Numbers for this program are limited and bookings can be made by phoning the Shepparton Art Gallery on 5832 9861.

CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING CALENDAR

SEASONS FOR GROWTH

2006 Training For Adults Wishing To Train As Companions In The Seasons For Growth Programs

The Program:

In an Atmosphere of Peer Support "Seasons for Growth"

- supports (companions) adults and young people in understanding and coming to terms with the reality of loss;
- encourages exploring grief experiences;
- assists in processing grief; and
- provides an opportunity to explore ways of adjusting.

Companioning:

Expressions of Interest are invited for suitable persons who wish to 'companion' young people (ages 6 – 18 years) and/or adults in a Seasons for Growth Peer Support Program, to train as Seasons For Growth Companions.

It is expected that companions would possibly have experience of grief as a result of a significant loss of a loved one through death, separation or divorce; know others who have experienced such grief; have thought about helping those who are grieving; and have a connection to an organisation e.g. school, church, agency or other.

Young People's Companion Trainings 2006:

2 Day Training Requirement - Training Times: 9.00 am – 4.00 pm

Dates: Monday 29th & Tuesday 30th May 2005
Venue: St Mel's Parish Meeting Room, Hamilton Street, Shepparton
Contact: Valda Clarke Tel. 5443 9577
Email: seasons@centacare-sandhurst.org.au

Companions for Adults Trainings 2006:

2 Day Training Requirement - Training Times: 9.00 am – 4.00 pm

Dates: Friday 14th & Friday 21st July 2006
Venue: Catholic Education Resource Centre, 118 Hargreaves Street, Bendigo

Dates: Thursday 5th & Thursday 12th October 2006
Venue: TBA, Benalla
Contact: Helen McIntyre Tel. 0409 212 009
Email: hmcintyr@ceo.sand.catholic.edu.au

Cost of two day Adult & Young People training is \$150. (GST exempt)
Sandhurst Diocese Participants are subsidised by CEO. Cost \$50 (GST exempt)

Registration form is attached to the newsletter.

QEC 4th NATIONAL CONFERENCE Early Childhood: Evidence into Practice

Rethinking Current Interventions and Strategies
23 & 24 November 2006

Call for Abstracts
Deadline Friday 28 April 2006

For further information please go to www.qec.org.au

CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING CALENDAR CONTINUED.....

HEALTH PROMOTION AND PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

What Does It Really Mean?

ADVANCE NOTICE - TUESDAY 6TH JUNE 2006

Organised by Women's Health West, Westbay Alliance and Moonee Valley Melbourne PCP and supported by VicHealth.

Come and hear from Kim Webster (VicHealth), Michael Flood (Australian National University & La Trobe University) and The Body Shop plus many other engaging presentations and workshops.

More information will be provided closer to the date.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

This is the conference for people with an interest in the latest on post-compulsory education, pathways and transition support.

Sunday May 7th to Monday 8th 2006
Rich River Golf Club, Moama, NSW

Themes for the conference are:

Teaching and Learning
Pathways and Transitions
Engagement and Wellbeing

Enquires: Conference Organiser – John Blair, phone 5480 1984 or email jbpc@iprimus.com.au

Registrations close 12th April 2006. Registration <http://www.ospreyconsulting.com.au/backtothefuture.htm>

RESPONSIBLE GAMING NETWORK FORUM

Tuesday, 2nd May 2006

9.30am to 11.30am

Mooroopna Education & Activity Centre, Alexandra Street, Mooroopna.

Morning Tea provided. Ample free parking

An initiative of Goulburn Valley Community Health and Gambler's Help

This forum aims to:

- Gather together interested people who feel they have something to say about gambling in the Goulburn Valley
- Involve key stakeholders from the community, council, gaming industry and welfare systems
- To make sure our community has a voice when it comes to gambling issues in the Goulburn Valley
- Provide some education and information to those participating in the forum so that they have the knowledge to make informed comments regarding gambling.
- Establish an ongoing network which addresses issues regarding gambling in Victoria, which provides a local community perspective

If you would like to be apart of this network or to just attend the forum to find out more, please contact the Gambler's Help team on 5823 3200 or ghteam@gvchs.com.au

KEEPING UP TO DATE - NEWSLETTERS AND REPORTS

Regain Control Newsletter

Gambler's Help newsletter - all 2006 editions will be available on Goulburn Valley Community Health's web page <http://www.gvchs.com.au/programs.php> Look under **Gambler's Help Newsletters**

Goulburn Valley PCP Newsletter

Updates on the Goulburn Valley PCP initiatives and projects, health information and articles, training and conferences and lots more. Go to www.gvpcp.org.au and select the Newsletter link.

Our Community Matters Newsletter

The capacity building newsletter that helps to build stronger community and not-for-profit groups and schools - brought to you with the support of the Municipal Association of Victoria and your local council. Sign up for free membership and the Our Community Matters newsletter at www.ourcommunity.com.au

YOUR HEALTH: A report on the health of Victorians 2005

The Chronic Disease Surveillance and Epidemiology Unit of the Public Health Division in the Department of Human Services announces the availability of the first publication of Your health: A report on the health of Victorians 2005 . The report includes up to date information on general health status (for example, life expectancy, avoidable mortality, ambulatory care sensitive conditions and burden of disease), health-related behaviours (for example, smoking and physical activity), health priority areas (for example, cardiovascular disease), environmental and social health (for example, air quality), and health inequalities (such as Indigenous health).

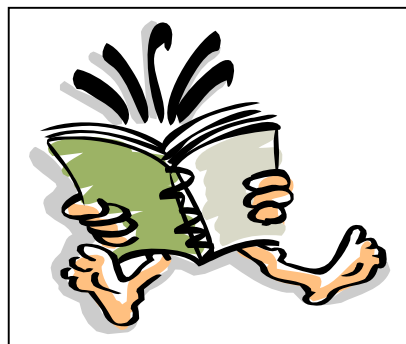
The report can be viewed at <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/healthstatus/>

Please note The Chronic Disease Surveillance and Epidemiology Unit was formerly the Health Surveillance and Evaluation Section. The new address for the Chronic Disease Surveillance and Epidemiology Unit (effective from March 14th) will be:

Level 15, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

General inquiries about Your health 2005 should be directed to:

Kaye Brown, Victorian Health Information Surveillance System (VHISS), telephone: 9096-5750, fax: 9096-9165, email: kaye.brown@dhs.vic.gov.au



NEWSLETTER INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

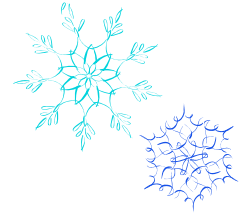
Do you have information to contribute to the Greater Shepparton Family & Children's Services Newsletter? It could be an upcoming conference, staff movements, funding opportunity or anything to do with family and children's services. If so please send it through to the contact person listed below. Every edition of the newsletter will include a cut off date for information to be included in the next edition.

Contact person – Belinda Whitelaw, Best Start Service Development & Resource Officer
58 329 790 or email belinda.whitelaw@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Next edition due – June 2006
Due date for articles – 19 May 2006

Seasons for Growth



REGISTRATION



Name:

School/Organisation:

Tel: Email:

Please Indicate Below Which Training Session And Venue You Are Interested In Attending:

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMPANION TRAINING

VENUE: Shepparton

* * *

COMPANIONS FOR ADULTS TRAINING

VENUE: Bendigo Benalla

* * *

Registration is upon receipt of Application and Endorsement Forms which must be received 2 weeks prior to training.

**Cost of two day Adult & Young People training is \$150. (GST exempt)
Sandhurst Diocese Participants are subsidised by CEO. Cost \$50 (GST exempt)**

Please forward payment with Registration, Application & Endorsement Forms to:

*Seasons for Growth
c/- Catholic Education Office
181 McCrae Street
Bendigo 3550*

Cheques should be made payable to:
Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Sandhurst.

ABN 94 493 967 364

For further particulars, please contact:

Valda Clarke, Centacare - Ph 5443 9577
Email: seasons@centacare-sandhurst.org.au

Or

Helen McIntyre - Ph: 5442 6108 / 0409 212 009

Email: hmcintyr@ceo.sand.catholic.edu.au

