



# Greater Shepparton Family & Children's Services Newsletter

**Edition 1  
February 2006**

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## COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY

Welcome to the first edition of the Greater Shepparton Family and Children's Services Newsletter. The aim of this publication is to inform local professionals working with children and families about current news, training opportunities, professional issues, agency developments and other relevant information.

It is to be a reformatting of the Best Start information bulletin that was previously distributed to agencies connected with the Best Start Project. Our aim with this newsletter is to have a wider distribution and broader focus.

Whilst the production will be coordinated via the Council Family and Children's Services department, the success will depend on you to provide us with news items, developments at your services and any other information you believe is important to circulate amongst the sector.

We aim to produce a bi-monthly electronic version and will rely on you to pass it on through your networks, either electronically or in hard copies. Please feel free to distribute as widely as possible.

I look forward to your support, feedback and contributions to ensure the success of this exciting project.

Steve Dawkins  
Manager Family and Children's Services  
Greater Shepparton City Council

## PUT THOSE THINKING CAPS ON – NAME THE NEWSLETTER COMPETITION

After a very busy Christmas and New Year, we in the Family and Children's Services department are still trying to get our brains into action. This may be evident in the title of the newsletter – Greater Shepparton Family and Children's Newsletter – pretty plain and boring at the moment.

Therefore we are calling on everyone out there to put your creative thinking caps on and send in your suggestions for the newsletter. Just to make it interesting we have a prize for the winner. Not only will you be able to include creative talents on your resume but you will receive a \$20 book voucher

Entries can be sent to Belinda Whitelaw by email [belinda.whitelaw@shepparton.vic.gov.au](mailto:belinda.whitelaw@shepparton.vic.gov.au) by 17 March in order for the new title to be launched with the April edition. All entries will be considered by a panel of 'experts' within the Family & Children's Services department and the winner will be contacted prior to the distribution of the April newsletter. Good luck!



## **AGENCY PROFILE – BERRY STREET VICTORIA**

Berry Street Victoria has been operating in Victoria since 1877 and commenced in Shepparton in September 1998. We exist to increase life chances and choices for children and young people who are at risk, or who have experienced the trauma of family violence, child abuse and neglect.

We deliver a diverse range of programs across Victoria, the Hume Region and in the City of Greater Shepparton. One such program is Integrated Home Based Care which provides care for children and young people in the City of Greater Shepparton, and the Shires of Moria, Strathbogie, Mitchell and Murrindindi.

- **General Foster Care:** is the temporary care of a child within the home environment. Volunteer families in the community care for children and adolescents who cannot live with their parents. It is always the aim of Foster Care to reunite the children with their families.
- **Adolescent Community Placement** is home-based care for adolescents and generally assists the young person to prepare for independent living.
- **Leaving Care:** provides planning and support for young people whilst in care, during the transition stage and post care, to facilitate future independence and broad social participation.
- **Kinship Care:** is usually the first placement option explored when a child is unable to reside with their family. This placement means living with other family or close friends and is less stressful option for children who need to leave the care of their biological parents.

Patrice Jackson is the Manager of the Integrated Home Based Care Program and she is assisted by 2 Team Leaders, 8 Home Based Care workers and a Training worker. **If you need further information about how Berry Street Victoria can assist you with placements please call Carol on 5821 0399 or if you are interested in becoming a carer contact Dennyse on 5821 0399.**



## **FROM BEST START TO MUNICIPAL EARLY YEARS PLAN**

In 2005 Greater Shepparton City Council adopted a Municipal Early Years Plan (MEYP). This plan was in reality a re-badge of the action plan developed for the Greater Shepparton Best Start Demonstration Project. Over the next 6 months the Partnership that has been guiding the work of the Best Start Project will be reviewing the MEYP. The aim is to develop a more coherent document that accurately reflects the priority areas that require ongoing support and resources over the next couple of years. A final copy of the MEYP is expected by July 2006.

It is anticipated that the Best Start Partnership will continue to support and guide the ongoing work of several key working groups that have been part of the Best Start Project, in particular the Breastfeeding Workgroup, Community Literacy Workgroup and Playgroup Network. The ongoing evaluation of the tasks undertaken by the working groups and the MEYP has been identified as a priority and will be one of the key ongoing roles as the MEYP develops.

## **GRANTS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Minor capital grants 2005/2006**

*A Fairer Victoria: Creating Opportunity and Addressing Disadvantage* includes \$4.2 million over four years for minor capital grants. The Department of Human Services invites applications for minor capital grants from eligible community-based not-for-profit child care centres, kindergartens and outside school hours care services in Victoria.

Successful applicants will receive grants of up to a maximum of \$5,000 to upgrade facilities to create safer, more pleasant environments in which children can play, learn and develop.

#### Timelines

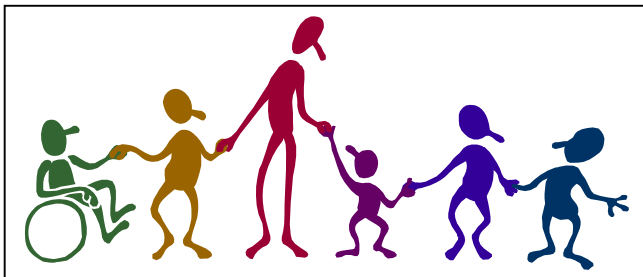
Closing date for applications:	17 March 2006
Notification to successful applicants:	May 2006
Grant funds allocated to successful applicants:	June 2006
Grant funds to be expended by:	August 2006
Acquittal forms returned by:	End September 2006

#### Application process

Application forms are available on the department website [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/earlychildhood](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/earlychildhood) or by contacting Bev Claudius, Early Years Services, by email [bev.claudius@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:bev.claudius@dhs.vic.gov.au). Applications will be accepted prior to the closing date and before the school calendar year finishes in December 2005. However, applications received after 17 March 2006 will be excluded from the selection process. Applications should be submitted to: Minor Capital Grants 2005-2006, Early Years Services, Office for Children, Department of Human Services, GPO Box 4057, MELBOURNE VIC 3001.

#### Further information

For further information contact Bev Claudius or Lorraine Williams, Early Years Services by email [bev.claudius@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:bev.claudius@dhs.vic.gov.au) or [lorraine.williams@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:lorraine.williams@dhs.vic.gov.au)



## **COGS AGED AND DISABILITY SERVICES – RESPITE SERVICE**

The Greater Shepparton City Council offers a flexible in or out of home respite service to families that care for children with a disability. This respite service can provide a small amount of hours each week to give carers a break and a chance to unwind or attend to tasks that can not normally be accomplished whilst caring for a child with a disability. Overnight respite with a care worker staying in the family home is also available.

Eligibility for assessment for the service is for any family with a child with a diagnosed disability, including physical, intellectual, behavioural and acquired disabilities. Referral to the service can be done directly over the phone, in person at the Council offices or on behalf of families by any associated health practitioner. Basic details will be collected during the referral, following which a Care Manager will visit the family in the home to assist in tailoring the right services for the family's needs.

The Care Manager can then also assist the family in negotiating what can be an extremely complex service system, allowing them to access additional services from multiple agencies that may be of assistance. Council respite may be utilised in conjunction with respite services provided by other agencies. For more information or to access this service, please ring Council's Aged and Disability Services on 5832 9755.

## **CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING CALENDAR**

The Office for Children, Department of Human Services and the Centre for Community Child Health are proud to present:

### ***Putting Children First: Their Future, Our Future***

**EARLY CHILDHOOD FORUM  
TELSTRA DOME, MELBOURNE  
FRIDAY 3 MARCH 2006  
9.00 – 4.30PM**

*(Registrations and welcome tea/coffee from 8.15am – program commences 9am)*

**Keynote Speaker** – Dr Jack P Shonkoff, M.D., one of the world's foremost experts on early childhood learning. Dr Shonkoff is internationally recognised for his expertise in early child experience and brain development, and for his research into the intersection of science, policy, and practice in advancing the healthy development of young children and their families.

This is a FREE event and is open to all professionals working across the early years sectors. Come, learn and be energised by the latest international research and thinking.

Registrations are essential to secure your attendance at the Forum. Click on this link to register on-line.  
<https://hnb.dhs.vic.gov.au/eForms/eForms.nsf/FormsForPreview/4765CA72E5CB9D0BCA2570DE000E592A?OpenDocument>

Registration closes on Monday 27 February 2006. Places are limited, so register early to avoid disappointment!

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### ***Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare Inc.***

#### **2006 Training Calendar Semester One**

##### February

The Manager as Coach

##### March

Creating the Future  
Media Savvy 101  
Disrupted Connections

##### April

Working with Aboriginal Organisations  
Managing Toddler Behaviour  
Managing Behaviour in Pre-schoolers  
Effective Presentation Skills  
Risk Management for CSOs  
Choose with Care

##### May

Aboriginal Child Placement Principles  
Stress Management  
Dealing with Challenging Behaviours  
Single Session Approach to Counselling  
Leading Work Teams  
Working and Engaging Involuntary Families  
Resolving Team Conflict  
Leadership in Early Childhood

##### June

Developing Teams and Individuals  
Working in Partnerships – Rocket Science or Wicked Problem

#### **Registration and Course Information**

[www.cwav.asn.au/training/programs.html](http://www.cwav.asn.au/training/programs.html)

Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare Inc.

Phone: (03) 9614 1577

Email: [training@cwav.asn.au](mailto:training@cwav.asn.au)

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

### Women's Alcohol and Drug Service Training 2006

#### March

Drug and alcohol use during pregnancy

#### April

Parenting under pressure

#### May

Ouch: How to manage the pain with drug and alcohol issues

Who is looking out for number one? Health professionals, self care and the workplace.

#### June

Breastfeeding: is it safe with drug and alcohol use

For more information on training sessions go to [www.rwh.org.au/wads](http://www.rwh.org.au/wads)

#### **Bookings and contact details:**

There is no charge for the program including training material.

For all bookings and enquiries contact Tony on (03) 9344 3631 or fax (03) 9344 2719

Email: [women.ads@rwh.org.au](mailto:women.ads@rwh.org.au)

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### STEPFAMILY association of victoria inc

#### Repartnering with Children

*A Practical One Day Workshop for Practitioners*

**Date:** Friday 12 May 2006

**Time:** 9am to 4pm

**Venue:** Rooftop Function Room, Northcote Town Hall, 189 High Street, Northcote

**Cost:** \$125 (early bird by March 31), \$140 (after March 31) and \$70 students

For more information or to register STEPFAMILY association of victoria inc on (03) 9481 1500, email [info@stepfamily.org.au](mailto:info@stepfamily.org.au) or go to the website at [www.stepfamily.org.au](http://www.stepfamily.org.au)

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### Learning about Statewide Initiatives

Tuesday 14 March

1.30pm to 3pm

Alex Rigg Meeting Room

Greater Shepparton City Council, Welsford Street

Two senior DHS staff will be visiting Shepparton to discuss key initiatives with professionals working with families and children. Pam Muth heads the Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System and Michael White is involved with the development of the Statewide Plan for Victorian Children. If you would like to attend please RSVP to Steve Dawkins on 58 329 782 or Sandra Clough on 58 329 783.

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### Working with Families

*Responding to domestic violence when working with families*

**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March 2006

**Venue:** The Centre, 50 Barkly Street, Benalla (Room W4)

**Time:** 9.15am – 4.30pm

**Cost:** \$100

Contact Emma Fahey at Women's Health Goulburn North East on (03) 5722 3009 or email [e.fahey@whealth.com.au](mailto:e.fahey@whealth.com.au) for more information or to register.

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

**Australian Childhood Foundation**

### **CHANGING PLACES**

Online Self-paced Learning Program

A professional development program exploring the impact of homelessness on children's early years. Online Self-paced Learning Program. To access the online training, go to [www.childhood.org.au/changing/](http://www.childhood.org.au/changing/)

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**The Queen Elizabeth Centre**

*Nursing Child Assessment Satellite Training (NCAST) Certificate Training*

To be held in February and April. For more information contact the QEC on (03) 9549 2779 or email [theqec@qec.org.au](mailto:theqec@qec.org.au)

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**Kiwanis House Special Needs Centre Inc**

proudly presents

Professor Margot Prior, PhD, FAPS  
and  
Melinda Schambre, MSPA, MPSRP

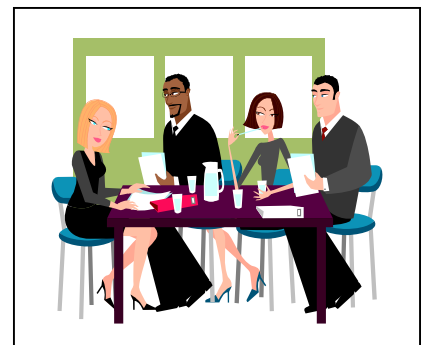
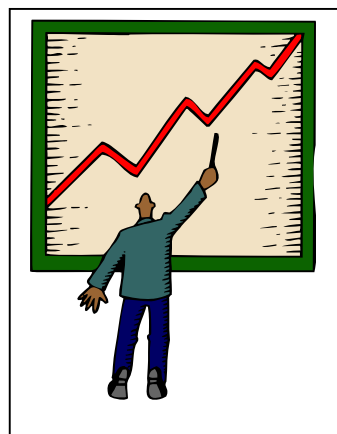
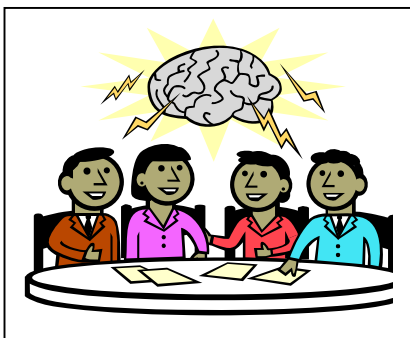
***'Learning Difficulties in Children'***

**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March  
9.30am to 3pm (9am registration)  
RSL, Wyndham Street, Shepparton**

Professionals - \$50  
Parents & Integration Aides - \$30  
Includes tea/coffee and lunch

*Bookings essential as seating is limited*

A highly recommended workshop for all professionals and parents/carers working with children who are experiencing difficulties learning. For bookings please contact Kiwanis House Special Needs Centre Inc on 5822 1230 or email [gvsntl@inet.net.au](mailto:gvsntl@inet.net.au).



## USEFUL WEBSITES

If you happen to find time during your busy day why not check out some of the websites listed below or add them to your 'favourites' to visit at a later time.

[www.vicparenting.com.au](http://www.vicparenting.com.au) - Victorian Parenting Centre – Provides a readily accessible resource to help parents deal with children's difficult behaviour, and to help prevent these behaviours in the future.

[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) – Better Health Channel – Health and medical information for consumers.

[www.ecconnections.com.au](http://www.ecconnections.com.au) – Early Childhood Connections – Information for parents of young children.

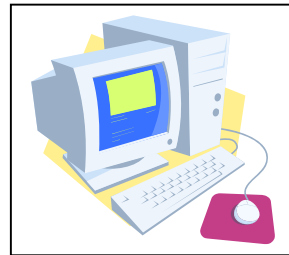
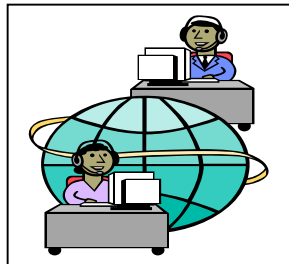
[www.healthychildhood.org](http://www.healthychildhood.org) – Healthy Childhood Research Group, includes newsletter for professionals.

[www.healthinsite.gov.au](http://www.healthinsite.gov.au) – Quality health information for Australians.

[www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au](http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au) – Linking you to multilingual health information.

[www.rch.org.au/ccch](http://www.rch.org.au/ccch) - Centre for Community Child Health

If anyone uses a website they find particularly valuable please let us know so we can include it in the next newsletter.



## PEPP

First-time parents of newborn babies in the Shepparton area and three other Victorian regions, representing both urban and rural communities, will soon be invited to participate in a University of Melbourne research trial testing the effects of an innovative program for first-time mothers, fathers and newborns to promote optimal family functioning in the first postpartum year. The trial is funded by the Government of Australia through the Department of Family and Community Services' Invest to Grow initiative.

In order to compare whether the program contributes to standard care, participants will be recruited at the first home visit by a local maternal and child health nurse and divided into two groups. In both groups, mothers and fathers will be asked to complete separate telephone interviews when their baby is less than one month old. One group will attend a one-day meeting, and then both groups will complete another telephone interview when their babies are six months old. The findings of this study will be used to create a resource package for health care professionals.

For more information on the project please contact Lauren Matheson, Research Co-ordinator, on 8344 7350 or [l.matheson@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:l.matheson@unimelb.edu.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](mailto:belinda.whitelaw@shepparton.vic.gov.au)

Next edition due – April 2006

Due date for articles – 17 March 2006