

**Barwon Community Leadership
Program**

'Let's Learn' Project

**Phil Sanders, Ron Palmer Taona-Nyasha Muchochomi and
Jodie Ryschka**

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Barwon Community Leadership Program

Annabel Newnham – Program Co-ordinator, Barwon Community Leadership Program

Mrs Biggins – Principal, Northern Bay College, Peacock Avenue Campus

Deakin University

Committee for Geelong

Jean Paul – Program Director, Leaders for Geelong

A special thanks to Mr Frank Costa for planting the seed for "Leaders for Geelong".

TEAM MEMBERS

The Barwon Community Leaders project team involves 4 participants from the 2011 Barwon Community Leadership Program.



Mr Taona-Nyasha Muchochomi, Mr Phil Sanders, Miss Jodie Ryschka, Mr Ron Palmer

INTRODUCTION

“Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss it, you will land among the stars.” Les Brown

There are very strong links between literacy, school performance, self-esteem and life chances. Poor literacy skills can have a detrimental effect on students’ academic pathway and are associated with generally lower education attainment, earnings, health and social outcomes as well as being linked to higher rates of unemployment, welfare dependencies and teenage parenting. The central task of reading and writing provide the foundation for more advanced skills and knowledge and is essential for the development of human potential.¹

Some families find it difficult to assist their children with learning tasks at home due to parents having a language background other than English or they lack confidence themselves because of their own learning experiences.

At 30 June 2008, there was an estimated 5,313,823 people residing in Victoria. Of these, 595,545 were aged between 0 to 8 years, representing 11.2 per cent of Victoria's total population. Greater Geelong (C) was ranked 39 out of 79 Local Government Area’s in terms of the percentage of children aged 0 to 8 years in the population. A rank of 1 was assigned to the LGA with the highest percentage of children aged 0 to 8 years.

Measuring disadvantage

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) produces the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA). These indexes are derived from data collected in the Census of Population and Housing. SEIFA 2006 comprises four indexes that measure different aspects of socio-economic conditions by geographic areas.

The Index of Relative Socio Economic Disadvantage (IRSED) is one part of SEIFA. It allows users to identify geographic areas that are relatively disadvantaged.

IRSED is derived from Census attributes believed to reflect disadvantage, such as:

- Low income
- Low educational attainment
- High unemployment
- Proportion of work force in relatively unskilled occupations

The ABS standardises the IRSED scores for Census Collection Districts (CDs) so that the average IRSED score across Australia is 1000 and the middle two-thirds of IRSED scores will fall between 900 and 1100.

While a low IRSED score indicates that the LGA is more disadvantaged than another with a higher score, there is no particular score below which an area is classified as disadvantaged and above which it is classified as not disadvantaged.

The IRSED score for Greater Geelong (C) is 993.

¹ Early Childhood Community Profiles, City of Greater Geelong 2010.

RESEARCH DATA

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF FAMILIES IN GREATER GEELONG

The statistics and data below have been resourced from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development report “Early Childhood Community Profile – City of Greater Geelong 2010”

Families with children aged 0 to 8 in Greater Geelong (C) and Victoria where the parents highest school qualification was less than Year 12 or equivalent, 2006.

The highest school qualification of both parents is less than Year 12 or equivalent in 27.3 per cent of couple families with children aged 0-8 years in Greater Geelong (C). This is greater than the percentage of couple families with children in this age group in Victoria (21.2 per cent)

Greater Geelong (C) was ranked 46 out of 79 LGA's on the percentage of couple families where both parents have not completed Year 12 or equivalent. A rank of 1 was assigned to the LGA with the highest percentage of families.

The highest school qualification of the parent is less than Year 12 or equivalent in 62.7 per cent of one parent families with children aged 0-8 years in Greater Geelong (C). This is greater than the percentage of one parent families with children in this age group in Victoria (54.7 per cent)

Greater Geelong (C) was ranked 28 out of 79 LGA's on the percentage of one parent families where the parent had not completed Year 12 or equivalent. A rank of 1 was assigned to the LGA with the highest percentage of families.

Families with children aged 0-8 years in Greater Geelong (C) and Victoria where the parent(s) has a non-school qualification, 2006

Both parents have a non-school qualification in 16.2 per cent of couple families with children aged 0-8 years in greater Geelong (C). This is less than the percentage of couple families with children in this age group in Victoria (22.3 per cent)

Greater Geelong was ranked 26 out of 79 LGA's on the percentage of couple families where both parents have a non-school qualification. A rank of 1 was assigned to the LGA with the highest percentage of families.

Parents have a non-school qualification in 13.9 per cent of one parent families with children aged 0 to 8 years in Greater Geelong (C). This is less than the percentage of one parent families with children in this age group in Victoria.

Greater Geelong (C) was ranked 37 out of 77 LGA's on the percentage of one parent families where the parent has a one-school qualification. A rank of 1 was assigned to the LGA with the highest percentage of families.

In 2008, 83.3% of Prep children enrolled in government schools in Greater Geelong (C) achieved a reading accuracy score of 90% or more on Level 5 text. This was less than the percentage in the Barwon South West region (84.3per cent) and greater than the percentage of Prep students enrolled in government schools reading Level 5 texts with 90% accuracy or higher in Victoria (81.3%).

In 2008, Greater Geelong (C) was ranked 28 out of 79 LGA's on the percentage of Prep students reading Level 5 texts with a reading accuracy score of 90% or higher. A rank of 1 was assigned to the LGA with the highest percentage of Prep students achieving 90% accuracy score or higher.

WHERE DO STUDENTS GO AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

The below data has been sourced from Deakin University Geelong, and shows actual figures of how many students may enrol in university after attending high school, and live within the 3214 postcode. This data does not clearly define if student have moved to the 3214 from other areas, but the figures for enrolments under the age of 20 are very low from 3214.

Number of current student enrolments in 2011 with a home postcode of 3214.
Interim data as at 30 October 2011

Campus attending or studying off campus	Number of students
Melbourne Burwood campus	4
Geelong Waurm Ponds campus	91
Geelong Waterfront campus	38
Warrnambool campus	3
Off campus	46
Grand Total	182

Faculty/ type of course	Number of students
Arts and Education	63
Business and Law	31
Health	47
Science and Technology	41
Grand Total	182

Age Group	Number of students
Under 20	48
20-24	78
25-29	22
30-39	19
40-49	10
50-59	5
Grand Total	182

Gender	Number of students
Female	124
Male	58
Grand Total	182

PROJECT OUTLINE

It was important for our group to decide on a project of which we were passionate, there was a need for and would make a difference to our community. It was decided to do a project to establish an after school hours learning support program at the Peacock Avenue campus of Northern Bay P-12 College. Evidence of this was provided through discussions with principal, Mrs Biggins, who confirmed there were existing issues with students who had difficulty keeping up in class.

It was decided that a program involving appropriately trained and accredited adults could support children needing assistance to further develop their education levels so they are able to complete school with a reasonable level of education. The program could take place on the school premises immediately after school, for one hour. A healthy afternoon snack could be supplied by the school.

OUTCOMES

It is expected that this project will:

- Improve student learning outcomes by assisting with school work
- Build additional links between school and home
- Give children confidence to move onto higher or further education
- Link local community with school
- Highlight local heroes
- Involve parents with student learning

METHODOLOGY

The Let's Learn program will run two nights per week from 3.15pm – 4.15pm, so students are able to attend as soon as the last class is finished. A ratio of one support person to five students is recommended to allow students one on one time with support person. Deakin have been scoped to provide a majority of pre service teachers to volunteer their time to attend the 'Let's Learn' program. A volunteer data base will be established which will be monitored and updated by the Peacock Avenue campus. There will also be a data base of local role models from community area's such as policemen, nurses and firemen who agree to volunteer their time to come and talk with the children during each program for up to ten minutes to talk about what they do in their job, and their career pathway. There will be no payment for tutors assisting; this will be volunteer time only. The referral process will be from the teachers within the school, or a parent referral.

The 'Let's Learn' group has a moral duty of care to help protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. This duty includes taking all reasonable steps to prevent emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Our group's intention is to maintain a safe environment for all participants, including children, staff and volunteers.

RISKS

There is always variable risks involved in projects in regard to what might go wrong, how will we know and what will we do about it. Our project team has rated risk in a table below and will have a basic strategy to deal with each risk.

Risk	How	Strategy	Rating
Children not attending program	Numbers	More promotion through school network, more referrals from teachers or parents	4
Working with Children Checks	Volunteers not having WWCC	All volunteers to have a current WWCC	4
Number of volunteers	Not enough volunteers to cover children	Monitor referrals so more volunteers are available if needed	7

RESOURCES

- Mrs Biggins – Principal Northern Bay College, Peacock Avenue Campus
- Parents, teachers and community in 3214
- Deakin University – scope for tutors and research data
- Various role models that may attend after school
- Leaders for Geelong, Committee for Geelong mentor list
- Facility: school gym or space at school

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Information and research has been sourced from various organisations and communities. The information sourced supports the need for extra assistance with children's learning within the school environment. This program will allow the extra support some students need within their schooling years to assist them to be confident and knowledgeable amongst their peers.

Mrs Biggins has played a major role with information, and as the principal of the Peacock Avenue campus is excited to be involved with such a positive project within the community. Mrs Biggins will liaise with teachers, community, parents and children to discuss and talk about the Let's Learn Program.

Statistics also show in the Department of Early Education and Childhood Development (DEECD) data that extra assistance is needed within schools to maintain children's learning at a reasonable level. This project could also be shown to DEECD, to pilot in other schools within the community if successful.

Community organisations will play a large role with the Let's Learn project to attract potential tutors, advertise for volunteers and assist with afterschool snacks. Information will also be distributed throughout the Leaders for Geelong and Barwon Community Leadership Program network lists; this will also assist in distributing information to suitable volunteers.

There have been several discussions with Deakin University around support for tutors. This has also been positive and the Let's Learn Program has the ability to advertise for tutors through the Deakin networks also.

HANDOVER AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

This project will be handed to the principal of Northern Bay College, Peacock Avenue campus to pilot within the school early next year. Networks have proved to be working and several volunteers have already come forward to assist with the program. All administration will be done by the Peacock Avenue campus with the volunteer time of the BCLP project participants also.

It is hoped that the Let's Learn program will go for 12 months with the potential to be ongoing if successful outcomes are achieved. The Let's Learn program has been designed to run from a volunteers base so the project is more sustainable in the future.

If funding is received for the Let's Learn program then it could be used to support volunteers to attend the program or a reasonable gift for their contributions at the end of the school year.

Review

Power point presentation to BCLP, also school council meetings. Mrs Biggins will advise if any meetings necessary.

CONTACT PERSON

Phil Sanders, 2011 Barwon Community Leadership Program
Ph: 5278 9785