

# **Promoting & Celebrating Children's Literacy at a Community Level**



Committee for  
Geelong

LEADERS FOR GEELONG

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## Executive Summary

Access to and participation in early childhood education has consistently been linked to later achievement in education and better life outcomes (*Bennett 2008*). The idea that early intervention and educational opportunities is a key to individual life opportunities has been linked to several Government reform agendas such as the "every child every chance" and "every child every opportunity" campaigns in Victoria and internationally with "education, education, education" being indicated as the three national priorities in the United Kingdom and the "No Child Left Behind" campaign in the United States.

Reading to children is considered critical to realising best possible outcomes for children. Various studies indicate that as a *stand alone activity* reading aloud or shared reading is unlikely to ensure literacy success. There is a range of associated activities, in addition to reading aloud, which is likely to increase chances of children acquiring literary skills. Therefore events and initiatives that promote activities related to early literacy could have considerable benefits to children and the home learning environment.

Whilst a number of initiatives are in place across the Geelong region which target literacy activities to the pre school demographic, research still indicates below average literacy levels in certain postcodes.

A significant body of research coupled with local literacy indicators provide support to the idea of developing a **Community Literacy Festival**. The festival would have the aim of promoting **why** reading to children is so important and providing information regarding **access** to the various supports and services available that are related to enhancing early literacy.

The overarching aim of this project is to develop a community oriented mechanism to promote and celebrate children's literacy at a local level. The objective is to ensure that all activities are focused on literacy and home learning in order to encourage literacy development in the home environment.

The report provides an overview of the structure of such a literacy festival which has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders working in the area of early literacy. The report provides a framework for the development and implementation of a children's literacy festival and includes indicative session details, event template and budget.

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## 1. Project Overview

### 1.1 Participant Details

This project was developed as part of the 2007-09 Leaders for Geelong Program. The following Leaders for Geelong Program participants were involved in the development of this report.

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Julie Stefanoff	Executive Manager - Community Relations	Bethany Community Support

### 1.2 Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following organisations who contributed to this project:

- City of Greater Geelong
- Geelong Regional Library Corporation
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- Deakin University
- Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative
- Diversitat
- Department of Human Services
- Geelong Performing Arts Centre
- East Geelong Primary School
- Community Connections Victoria

## 2. Project Details

### 2.1 Introduction

Providing enhanced educational options for children is linked to better life outcomes. Research shows that early learning and life experiences are clearly linked to brain development. For example, if a child is struggling with literacy in grade prep then it is estimated with 0.88 probability that they will remain a poor reader at end of grade three. Further research indicates that children who experience early difficulties in learning to read are unlikely to catch up to their peers regardless of intervention.

### 2.2 The Local Perspective - Geelong

In discussions with various organisations working in the area of earlier intervention and support services it was evident that there were two key areas identified for improvement regarding early year's literacy in the Geelong Region:

- A requirement for a greater level of awareness at a community level regarding the importance of children's literacy; and
- The promotion of the existing services and programs already occurring in the field of children's literacy.

### 2.3 G21 Challenges

The G21 Region Plan (2007) highlights one of the main challenges facing the region is significant community social disadvantage and a large gap between rich and poor.

The employment opportunities, health, education and skill levels of young people in the G21 region are considerably lower than the Victorian average.

Under Policy 3.1 (Build Strong & Safe Communities) the plan indicates that whilst families are the most significant foundations for a child's health, learning and social development, current research also demonstrates the importance of the surrounding community in supporting children's development and well-being.

The plan recommends a renewed focus on the specific and unique needs of young children in the G21 region which must explore the potential for implementing existing programs as well as working towards the provision of high quality children's services and facilities across the region.

### 2.4 Methodology

The project methodology involved the following:

#### 2.4.1 Project Definition

- Extensive consultation with a variety of stakeholders working in various community and educational settings to identify current initiatives and gaps in the current provision of children's literacy in Geelong.

#### 2.4.2 Project Refinement

- Literature review regarding early year's literacy to establish current data and international, national and local best practice.

- Focus group with key stakeholders and service providers to affirm and refine the project idea. The focus group also helped to develop a sense of ownership amongst the sector regarding this initiative.
- Focus group with primary school age children to identify the elements required to attract this age group to the festival.

#### 2.4.3 Business Model

- Develop festival structure
- Identify target market
- Confirm costings
- Identify potential funding sources and sponsors
- Reconfirm with stakeholder group
- Identify and confirm auspice body

#### 2.4.4 Project Completion

- Present and handover to identified auspice body.

### **2.5 Aim and Objectives of this Project**

#### 2.5.1 Aim

To develop a community oriented mechanism to promote and celebrate children's literacy at a local level.

#### 2.5.2 Objectives

**Enabling** – to undertake a project that enabled pockets of disadvantage to access options and/or pathways out of disadvantage.

**Informed** - to use existing data to inform the process and seek and draw on the expertise of others.

**Sustaining** – to provide a program or product that promoted people accessing existing and ongoing support or programs. Individual and local ownership is considered critical.

**Community Building** – to focus on outcomes for children, young people and their families. To deliver a product with a focus at the grass roots level.

### 3. Literature Review and Research Findings

#### 3.1 Australian Literacy Standards

Nearly half (6.2 million) of Australians aged 17-74 years have literacy skills that have been described as "poor" or "very poor". Of this number, 28% were considered to have "poor" literacy skills and a further 20% were regarded as "very poor" and as a result could be expected to experience considerable difficulties in accessing everyday printed material (Oberklaid, 2005).

#### 3.2 Why reading aloud to Children is so Important

The value of reading aloud has been found consistently to foster language development and emergent literacy skills in preschool children. Needleman (2004, as cited in Oberklaid, 2005) found that there was a strong consensus supporting a causal connection between preschool exposure to reading aloud and subsequent reading ability.

*"Reading aloud is the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading"* (National Institute of Education 1985; International Reading Association 1998; National Association for the Education of Young Children 1998, as cited in Oberklaid, 2005).

Children who read early and have more exposure to books have consequent growth in numerous knowledge domains. In contrast, children who lag behind in their reading miss opportunities to develop and can acquire negative attitudes about reading.

A study of children 18 months and older, recorded significantly higher receptive and expressive vocabulary scores for children who were read to more frequently than children who were not. (High et al. 2000, as cited in Oberklaid, 2005)

However various studies indicate that as a *stand alone activity* reading aloud or shared reading accounts for far less variance than many earlier studies reported, as reading aloud alone is unlikely to ensure literacy success. (Oberklaid, 2005) There are a range of associated activities, in addition to reading aloud, which are likely to increase chances of children acquiring literary skills. This further supports the idea that events and initiatives that promote activities related to early literacy would have considerable benefits.

#### 3.3 Education and Poor Literacy

Research indicates that fewer years of completed education correspond with poorer literacy levels.

Nearly 70% of people who failed to complete secondary schooling had "poor" or "very poor" prose literacy skills. A relatively large proportion of people with tertiary degrees (44%) or postgraduate qualifications (54%) had "good" or "very good" prose literacy skills (Oberklaid, 2005).

As children move from year 3 to year 5, the disparity among those meeting literacy standards grows. Therefore, the challenge for schools is identifying and supporting children with reading difficulties in the early grades. However, if a child is struggling with literacy in grade prep then it is estimated that 0.88 probability that will remain a poor reader at end of grade three. (Juel, 1988, as cited in Oberklaid, 2005)

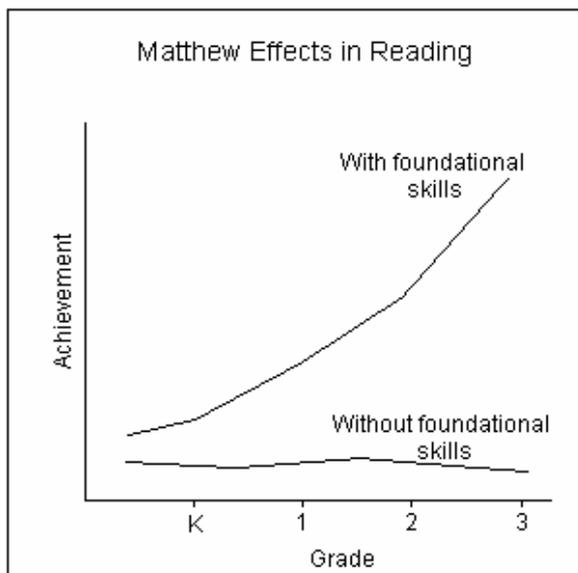
Alarming, children who experience early difficulties in learning to read are unlikely to catch up to their peers regardless of intervention (*Stanovich, 1986; Baydar et al., 1993; Tramontana et al., 1988, as cited in Oberklaid, 2005*).

Researchers have noted repeatedly that some children come to school somewhat "wealthier" than their peers when it comes to early reading skills. Those students who start out with some literacy advantages tend to thrive and grow academically, while their less fortunate peers tend to get left behind.

### 3.4 Employment and Poor Literacy

30% of unemployed people had "very poor" literacy skills, compared to 12% of employed people. Over 50% of people unemployed for two years or more had "very poor" literacy skills, compared with about 25% of those who had been unemployed for less than one year. Some 63% of people with "very poor" prose literacy skills were in the two lowest income quintiles (*Oberklaid, 2005*).

Table 1 below illustrates the importance of children having good foundation skills when they reach early years education.



**Table 1 -Poor Literacy: Impacts and Contributing Factors**  
(*Oberklaid, 2005*)

The impacts of poor literacy are:

- Poor school performance, low self esteem and reduced adult life chances
- Generally lower employment and social outcomes
- Higher rates of welfare dependence, high risk behaviours and teenage parenting
- Poor health literacy and increased risk of poor health outcomes (e.g. physical health of subjects with low reading levels is poor compared with subjects with higher reading levels even after adjusting for confounding SES variables)

The possible factors contributing to poor literacy include:

- Language poor environment (stimulation)
- Poor vocabulary and language development
- Limited language and literacy activities (stimulation)

- Limited parental time to engage with children around language and literacy (engagement)
- Lack of available literacy materials in the home (access)

### **3.5 Earlier Intervention and the Home Learning Environment**

Children do not begin learning at five years of age when they are old enough to commence school. The building blocks for success in literacy are laid long before pre-school begins, long before instruction. Learning needs to commence in the early years, before a child begins formal schooling. Parents have a significant role to play in the early stages of children's education and development and are a child's first and most important 'teacher' (City of Greater Geelong, 2006).

The importance of the family environment in developing children and young people is critical. The home learning environment is consistently identified as playing a far more significant role than school (*Bennett, 2008*). Therefore, for parents and caregivers to understand the importance of early learning, specifically literacy, is critical in considering how to improve children's literacy standards.

Research indicates that socio-economic status (SES) influences children's literacy. For example, a typical middle class child enters first grade with 1,000 to 1,700 hours of one on one picture book reading, whereas a child from a low income family averages just 25 hours. (*Adams, 1990 as cited in Oberklaid, 2005*) Further, 47% of welfare dependent parents had no alphabet books in the home, compared to 3% of professional parents. (*McCormick & Mason, 1986, as cited in Oberklaid, 2005*)

Children from low SES environments lose significant ground in relation to literacy acquisition even before school entry, suggesting that early family interventions may be a key aspect of promoting literacy success in school. (*Arnold & Doctoroff, 2001, as cited in Oberklaid, 2005*)

Preschoolers who were read to more and participated in more solitary book activities at home, became better readers by Grade 2 compared with children with less frequent literacy home experiences (*Scarborough et al., 1991, as cited in Oberklaid, 2005*). Parents who began reading to their children at an earlier age had children with greater receptive language abilities (*DeBaryshe, 1993, as cited in Oberklaid, 2005*) and the value of shared reading and print exposure has been found consistently to foster vocabulary development in preschool children.

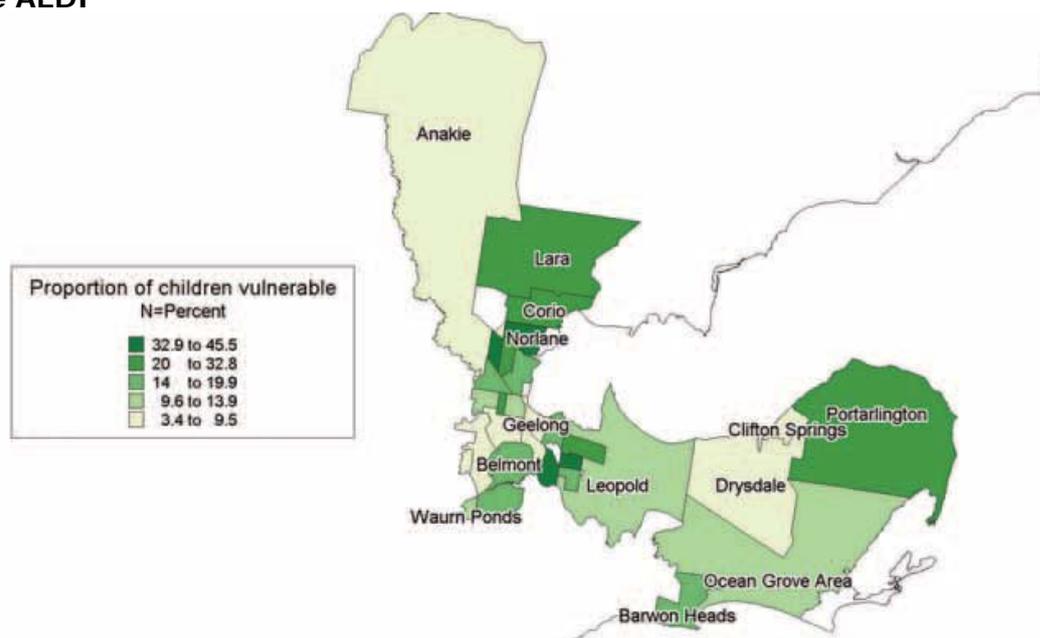
The City of Greater Geelong's Municipal Early Years Plan (2006) highlights how early story reading facilitates important interactions between parents and children, and also stimulates learning about stories, language and the surrounding world. In summary, the role of parents and primary caregivers is now recognised as most crucial in preparing a child for literacy acquisition.

### **3.6 Local Indicators – The Geelong Region**

In relation to local literacy levels, whilst the percentage of children achieving benchmark reading levels across Geelong in 2006 did not reflect any significant variation in comparison to Victorian state averages, this did not capture the various pockets of disadvantage across the region.

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) 2005 indicates that 4.9% of children throughout the Geelong region are considered developmentally vulnerable in relation to early language and cognitive skills. The highest proportions of vulnerable children are reported to be located in the local areas of Whittington, Portarlington, Norlane, Manifold Heights and Corio.

## Proportion of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains of the AEDI



Reading levels in local disadvantaged communities rate significantly below state and local averages and only 76.9% of local Indigenous children are reading at expected benchmark levels.

The following two tables indicate that reading levels in the 3214 postcode area (including suburbs of Corio, Norlane, North Shore) are significantly lower than other postcode areas throughout the City of Greater Geelong. This information is based on 2005 reading level assessments and provided by the Department of Education & Early Childhood Development (DEECD - Barwon South Western Region).

**Table 2: Percentage of Year 1 students reading at benchmark by Geelong School Network Area and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Students**

	Barwon South	Geelong Bellarine	Geelong North
<b>All Students</b>	94.3	94.4	85.8
<b>ATSI Students</b>	60.0	77.8	92.9

**Table 3: Average Number of Government school children who reached benchmark in Reading in 2005.**

Postcode	No. of schools in Postcode	Ave no. of children at benchmark
3212	2	90.4
3214	6	70.47
3215	3	84.26
3216	11	90.7
<i>Belmont</i>		90.85
<i>Highton</i>		94.81
<i>Grovedale</i>		88.08
3218	3	91.91
3219	4	85.54
3220	4	93.86
3221/4	4	96.11
3222	2	98.66
3223	2	86.21
3226/7	3	92.23

### 3.7 Summary

A large body of research demonstrates that reading aloud to children in their formative years fosters a higher level of language development and literacy skills. This in turn consistently translates to greater success as measured by the ability of school children to meet benchmark literacy standards.

Whilst a number of initiatives are in place across the Geelong region which target literacy activities to the pre-school demographic, research still indicates a lagging in certain postcodes.

There are a number of existing programs and services targeting early childhood literacy operating in the Geelong region, nationally and internationally. A number of those programs are detailed in attachment three. Research undertaken for this project was unable to identify a community based early year's literacy festival operating in Australia. A similarly targeted international event was identified in Bath in the UK and the structure of this festival has been used in develop the concept for the Geelong event. As such there is unique opportunity to develop an event that is unlike any other in Australia.

A significant body of research coupled with local literacy indicators further support the development of a **Community Literacy Festival**. In summary the concept of a community literary festival targeted specifically to the early childhood population and their parents/carers is considered a way of promoting **why** reading to children is so important and providing information regarding **access** to the various services available.

## 4. Children's Community Literacy Festival Framework

### 4.1 Aim

The overarching aim is to develop a community oriented mechanism to promote and celebrate children's literacy at a local level. The objective is to ensure that all activities are focused on literacy and home learning and children are able to participate in all sessions with their parents/carers.

### 4.2 Target Audience

The target audience is children aged 0 to 12 years and their parents/carers. There will be a particular focus on families in lower socio-economic areas, parents/carers with low literacy skills, Indigenous and multicultural groups.

### 4.3 Festival Details

*The following details are a suggested framework which may be adopted for the development and implementation of a Children's Literacy Festival. These suggestions have been developed in consultation with key stakeholders working in the area of early literacy and via focus groups with school children.*

#### 4.3.1 Name

The name of the festival should excite and entice children and their parents/carers to attend and participate in the festival. In consultation with stakeholders and school children it became evident that using the word 'literacy' in the title may discourage some target groups from participating, particularly in areas where there is low literacy levels.

It is therefore suggested that the name for the festival be:

*"Telling Tales and Reading Rhymes! The Geelong Festival of Storytelling"*

#### 4.3.2 Location

It is proposed that a venue such as Johnston Park be utilised, due to its central location and being a natural amphitheatre. This venue has benefit of being part of the Cultural precinct and has the potential to use the existing infrastructure of the Geelong Library, Art Gallery and the Geelong Performing Arts Centre (GPAC). The festival may then use the existing infrastructure. The location is also central and is close to public transport, having the benefit of the train station, public bus services and parking. The location also allows for contingency plans in the event of wet weather (including use of library and GPAC) and is accessible from across the Geelong community.

#### 4.3.3 Time/Date

It is proposed that the festival initially consist of one day of activities and occur on a Sunday. Sunday is the preferred day as is it anticipated that many families are already engaged in pre planned activities on a Saturday such as sporting commitments. It is intended the event will be held from 10am to 3pm.

It is important to note that holding an event on a Sunday will mean it is essential that issues of transport are addressed, as public transport is less available on those days.

Prior to the event, it will be important to engage the support of schools, kindergartens, mothers groups and service providers to ensure the event is well promoted. Given the proposed timing of the event on a weekend it will be less likely those organisations will

arrange for groups to attend and the onus will be on individual parents/carers to attend. The timing of event may depend on other events scheduled in Geelong each year however we recommend that the festival be incorporated into a week that has a focus on children and/or literacy. For example, the festival could occur in Children's Week or in National Literacy and Numeracy Week. The inclusion of the festival in a week which is already promoted and has other events and activities is likely to help in its promotion. In selecting an appropriate week it is important to ensure that the festival is complementary to other activities planned for that week and does not result in competition from other activities which may reduce attendances.

In the future, the possibility exists for the festival to expand to a two day event which may include a weekday where schools, kindergartens, mothers groups and other community groups may directly participate.

#### **4.4 Structure**

The festival will include various events on a main stage aimed at all children and parents/carers in attendance, as well as sessions aimed at children of different ages and their parents/carers, each with a focus on children's literacy. It is intended there will be a precinct for each age group, in which events targeting that age group are to be held. For example all events for 0-4 year olds might be held at the library. Stalls and displays, providing an option to local service providers to promote their services and distribute information should also be included. The provision of information related to services and resources available from the community and education sectors, including adult literacy, is considered a critical element in ensuring the festival is both sustained and integrated into the home learning environments. The displays and information sessions may also include local business and book sellers.

It is intended that the festival commence at 10am with an event to attract all participants to the main stage, such as the Wathaurong dancers telling story of Bunjill. This would be followed by individual sessions in each of the precincts aimed at different ages. At least 3 sessions will be aimed at each age group which may include reading books and storytelling, library tours, as well as interactive sessions which may include drawing illustrations of books, craft and games related stories and creative storytelling sessions. The festival should have a circus like atmosphere with a range of entertaining and vibrant performers mixing with the general public. The Festival will engage people on a variety of levels – individual, small and large groups. Please refer to attachment two for a sample event plan.

##### 4.4.1 Options for Sessions

The following sessions provide a number of options for each age group. The people and characters referred to are included by way of example only.

#### **0-12 months of age & their parents**

*Have you ever wondered when to introduce your baby to a book?  
The answer is probably sooner than you think!*

##### Session Aims

- Parents have the opportunity to see how the professionals read to this age group and what books are great to introduce to babies. The session will help parents understand the benefits of reading to children within this age bracket.

## Session Details

- Participants are able to bring their babies into a relaxed environment.
- Teaching parents/caregivers story telling techniques through the use of picture books, texture and sound.
- An author demonstrating storytelling to children - picture book only and story telling without written words.
- Information sessions providing parents confidence and knowledge on opportunities available for them with their young child.
- Learn techniques on how to engage your children at this early age.
- Participate through interactive workshops.
- Singing Lullabies.
- Introduction to the library and the wonderful facilities available to parents and children.
- Sessions for parents and babies to enjoy together.

## Suggested Sessions

- *Baby Bookworms*  
The youngest of babies can enjoy exploring texture, shape and sound in this interactive workshop. It is a perfect session for parents and babies to enjoy together.
- *Rhymetime*  
Come along and join in the Rhymetime session for babies and toddlers. Sing your favourite nursery rhymes and songs and join in the actions with the Book Reading Bear.

## **1-3 years of age & their parents**

*Have you ever wondered how you could offer more development opportunities for your children? Come along and learn further techniques to support your child's development and explore fun ways to play together.*

## Session Aims

- Stimulating creativity/ideas for your young children.
- Further enhancing and reinforcing the importance of parental involvement in the formative years of your children's literacy development.
- Story telling and reading is fun.

## Session Details

- Puppet show based on a book.
- Craft/making finger puppets.
- Indigenous dance.
- Well known children's character, such as Dorothy the dinosaur, reading to children.
- Various story tellers.
- Sharing with parents what books are available and how to use them.

- An author demonstrating storytelling to children - picture book only and story telling without written words.
- Children acting out stories

#### Suggested Sessions

- *Fun with Rhymes*  
Filled with fun and rhymes galore, move your bottoms from the floor. Talk and sing or whisper and shout, wave your hands and arms about. Join the storyteller for a lively look at some well known rhymes.
- *Puppet Show*  
Hop along to a charming interactive puppet show, and don't miss a special appearance from the festival ambassador.
- *Dance with Dorothy*  
Dorothy loves to dance with all her friends. Come and join in the fun! The author will lead a storytelling session from one of Dorothy's classics, inspiring a fun make-and-do session. An illustrator will interact with children and parents where children can make their own dancing creatures to spin and twirl just like Dorothy!
- *Bob the builder storytelling*  
An interactive session with the children contributing to the storyline and helping to construct a building from a predetermined theme of the story. Use your hands become creative! Giveaways galore!

#### **4-8 years of age and their parents**

*Have you ever wondered what is "age appropriate" in terms of your child's literacy development? Come along and gain insights into this wonderful age bracket of development and how you and your children can have fun!*

#### Session Aims

- Enjoyment and fun gained from story telling and book engagement.
- Encouraging a curious mind.
- Developing early reading skills.
- More reading is never enough.

#### Sessions Details

- Dress up as your favourite character
- Craft – making characters from story books
- Workshops illustrating books
- Various story tellers.
- Interactive storytelling with children participating in the creation of the story
- Children acting out stories

#### Suggested Sessions

- *Animal farmyard theme*  
This will be a farmyard friend's workshop! Children will have the chance to

make their own funky farmyard scenes using felt, sequins and buttons, inspired by a well known children's book.

- *Star Wars - illustrator workshop*  
An illustrative workshop for the budding artist or just for fun. This will be an interactive session with children taking their drawings home.
- *Calling All Princesses!*  
All young princesses are invited along to meet the author of a best selling book all about being a princess. There'll be a little bit of storytelling, a little bit of dressing up and a little bit of fairy tale. Little Princesses welcome and there will be a prize for the best costume!
- *One for all and all for one!*  
Pick up your swords and shields! This workshop has a definite knights theme and there will be a prize for the best dressed knight!

### **8+ years of age and their parents**

#### Session Aims

*Have you ever wondered how to keep your children interested in reading and writing? Come along and see how? Interaction designed to tempt further imagination and reading.*

#### Session Details

- Children as authors – writing your own story.
- Workshops illustrating books.
- Various story tellers.
- Interactive storytelling with children participating in the creation of the story.

#### Suggested Sessions

- *Indigenous Stories*  
Including the local Indigenous community is a key aspect of the event. This will enable both the Indigenous and Non - Indigenous communities to share stories and culture with children of all ages.

It is important that the local Indigenous community are consulted and partnered with at the early stages of development of the festival to ensure the cultural learning opportunities are embedded in the program format and that cultural sensitivities are adhered to.

Children of all ages and parents should have the opportunity to come and join representatives from our local Indigenous community to explore stories relating to Indigenous history and the Australian land. Learn about dance, song and music as ways to share stories.

- *World Stories*  
To reflect Geelong's broad Multicultural community and to give voice to the many of the immigrant stories relating to "*homeland and journey travelled*". It will be critical to partner with Diversitat and its broad range of multicultural groups to provide a diverse range of elements and workshops available.

Music and cultural life story telling will be on display for all to see and participate in.

- *Writing Children's Stories*  
Are you the next J. K. Rowling? This workshop will provide insight and inspiration for both writers and children's book lovers everywhere, make sure you don't miss this highly entertaining and informative event!
- *We are going on a word hunt*  
Prepare to be enthralled by the wonderful world of words! Get the gift of the gab and pack a punch with words that wow - with rhyming riddles and rambunctious raps. An unmissable event for all young budding writers!

See sample Festival Event Plan at Attachment One for further details.

Acknowledgement: Aspects to the program have been drawn from other resources such as a Bath Children's Festival.

#### 4.4.2 Potential Authors

Please refer the list of "*Local Authors*" in Attachment Four who may be used for various sessions. These are only suggested resources and many more are available. It is recommended that authors also be included from Indigenous and multicultural communities.

#### 4.4.3 Other sessions/Information

##### Information from Local Providers

Local providers of literacy related services may have their own marquees around Johnston Park displaying their services, providing information and activities if they chose to do so. This will have the benefit of increasing of awareness of local services which are already available, and link parents/carers with local providers to assist with sustainability. This includes a key link with maternal child health centres *key age and stage visits* where children will receive a free book at certain visits as detailed in the Young Readers Program in Attachment Three.

Please refer to Attachment Three for an outline of some of the local agencies involved in area of early literacy.

##### Adult Literacy

It is proposed that information be available regarding adult literacy for parents/carers attending. This is viewed as an essential component given that key sections of the target groups may need assistance with literacy issues, particularly to help them develop and support their own children's literacy skills. There should be information and support available at the festival, along with the option for parents/carers to access these support services after the festival in a more discrete manner.

##### Online Literacy

Another option available may be to leverage off an online presence. This may include undertaking preparation work online with authors and illustrators then meeting them in person at the festival to further the experience and learning.

An example of an Online Literary Festival exists in Queensland. Words, music and images come together at the Online Literature Festival as renowned Australian authors, illustrators and songwriters give Queensland students a taste of our literary culture.

Students from Prep to Year 12 have the opportunity to interact with special online guests through a variety of web tools including text based chat and collaborative project spaces.

See the following website for more details:

<http://www.learningplace.com.au/deliver/content.asp?pid=40351>

#### **4.5. Event Ambassadors**

It is proposed that an ambassador be selected for the entire event, preferably someone who is known at a national level. The target audience may be more attracted to a sporting or television personality. It is critical that children, as well as their parents/carers can relate to this person.

An ambassador should be appointed for each precinct, and include some local sporting identities. Due to the demographic of our target audience it is important to select ambassadors for each precinct who will be of interest to the children of that age, and also for their parents/carers. Options for ambassadors might include:

- Aged 0-4 years - Captain Feathersword or Dora the Explorer.
- Aged 4-8 years – A superhero or Disney personality.
- Aged 8 years plus - sportsperson - a footballer/netballer or television celebrity who has young child may be appointed to read a story to the children.

#### **4.6 Competitions**

It is suggested that competitions and games be held both at the overall event and in individual sessions. This will also provide the opportunity to access details of the general public to incorporate into a feedback and evaluation process.

As part of the promotion of the overall festival, competitions may be considered such as a story writing competition and an illustrating competition. These competitions could be promoted in schools prior to the Festival and could involve the schools showcasing their work at the event. Kindergartens are also an integral part of gaining *"buy in"* from parents of younger age groups. Strategies to ensure that they are also included would be beneficial to the overall outcome.

The games and competitions in individual sessions may include: for the younger children, dress up as character from the book, drawing illustrations and prizes for contributions to sessions/input to stories.

#### **4.7 Evaluation**

To ensure the festival is achieving its aims and attracting target groups a formal evaluation would enable the auspice body to develop the program of events in future years and support any applications for further or new funding.

A mechanism to conduct the evaluation could be via staging a competition during the festival for a major prize. To enter the competition, parents/carers would need to complete an entry form that could also be used to obtain information regarding current reading levels within the home environment. Contact details should also be obtained which would enable follow up contact to occur on a sample of entrants several weeks following the festival. Questions in the follow up should ascertain if any change in reading in the home learning environment has occurred since the festival.

#### **4.8 Transport and Access**

To ensure that the target audience are able to attend it is essential that the issue of transport be addressed, to ensure all interested families may easily access the festival. Free shuttle buses leaving from local schools and community centres are essential. These buses could leave at intervals to allow people to come and go from the festival.

Transport should be free of charge to ensuring that the event is accessible. One way of providing this may be to target use of community buses available from various organisations.

Whilst the venue has parking nearby, it will need to be considered whether parking is free on the day.

The festival should be free to all to view the events on the main stage and participate in various sessions. For some workshops, where there is the use materials and the ability to take something home there may need to be a consideration of a gold coin donation. It is preferable that all sessions are free to ensure that all participants can join in, without financial restraints.

#### **4.9 Other Elements of the Festival**

Other key logistical requirements include:

- Refreshment (food & drinks) - local rotary clubs and business may be willing to supply food.
- St John's Ambulance.
- Information booth.
- Security.

In addition a Risk Assessment will need to be completed prior to the festival.

See sample Festival Event Plan at Attachment One for further details

#### **4.10 Promotion/Marketing**

Prior to the festival, significant promotion and marketing will need to occur. A detailed marketing plan should be completed. This should include:

- Distribution of information packs to schools which include: flyers, stickers to go in children's school diaries on the date of the festival, armbands and information for school newsletters.
- Posters to be displayed throughout the city.
- Development of a website – consider developing a web page and using mediums such as Facebook and Myspace.
- Local Media - Geelong News & Echo, The Geelong Independent, Geelong Advertiser, local radio and television.
- Promotional information also to be distributed to the following:
  - neighbourhood/community centres,
  - maternal child health nurse
  - child care
  - play centres

- play groups
- book shops
- libraries
- schools
- day care centres
- mothers groups

In promoting the event, activities may also be organised through schools to encourage children & families to attend the festival. These may include:

- A colouring competition - colour in picture from a story book in newspaper and bring it along to enter.
- A story writing competition which encourages children to be authors.
- Show bags (including bookmark, flyers, pencil etc).
- Giveaways including books and promotional CD containing stories.

#### **4.11 Budget**

An indicative budget has been prepared (please refer to Attachment Two). It includes:

- Cost of marquees
- Costs of set up/clean up/closing off road etc
- Cost of obtaining authors to attend
- Cost of Audio Equipment
- Insurance
- Hiring GPAC and any other venues required
- Transport costs
- Other costs associated with hosting the festival

It should be noted that costs have been generously allocated within the indicative budget and have been costed according to precincts. As such the costs can be easily manipulated to fit within available funding by reducing the amount of infrastructure and/or activities within precincts.

#### **4.12 Sponsors**

It will be necessary to obtain partners and sponsors to support the development of the festival. It is suggested that applications for funding through trusts and grant programs be submitted for major funding. Three to four key partners/sponsors should also be considered. A list of possible trusts and grants available are set out in Attachment 5.

In addition, there should be a focus on stage or precinct sponsors, for example:

- Major brands for age groups.
- Publishers.
- Booksellers.

Sponsors could also be obtained for individual events, such as:

- A hardware store for Bob the Builder sessions.
- Art Suppliers/Office works etc providing material for workshops.

Media Partners:

- Radio promotion.
- Local Newspapers.
- Printing sponsor.

A promotional DVD has been developed as part of this project which may be utilised to promote the festival to potential sponsors. This DVD may be edited by the auspice body at a later date to include further details of the festival and tailor to specific audiences when seeking sponsorship and funding.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

National and international research clearly highlights the importance of early childhood literacy and particularly the critical nature of the home learning environment.

Whilst a significant amount of support services and programs relating to children's literacy are currently occurring in the Geelong region, consultations as part of this project identified the need to promote and celebrate children's literacy in the Geelong region and particularly target the areas of disadvantage.

The festival proposed in this report is a unique concept in Australia and has the potential to not only ensure parents and carers understand the importance of reading to their children, but also to promote and connect families with existing services.

## References/Consultation

### References

Bath Festival of Children's Literature (2008), <http://www.bathkidslitfest.co.uk/>

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City of Greater Geelong (2006) 'Municipal Early Years Plan: Creating Communities for Children', Victoria.

City of Greater Geelong (2005) 'Australian Early Development Index - Building Better Communities for Children', Victoria.

Department of Education & Early Childhood Development (2005) Reading level assessments - Barwon South Western Region.

G21 (2007), Geelong Region Plan: A sustainable growth strategy, Geelong Region Alliance, Victoria.

Oberklaid, F (2005) 'Why Read Aloud to Children?', Paper presented at You Can Read Aloud Summit.

### Interviews

Frank Giggins, City of Greater Geelong. July 2008

Patti Manollis & Susan Hall, Geelong Regional Library Corporation. July 2008

Annie O'Loughlin, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Sept 2008

Karen Stagnetti, Deakin University. August 2008

Claire Jennings, Community Connections. August 2008

Kathy Travis, Wathaurong September 2008

Christine Ferguson, Manager Neighbour Renewal, Department of Human Services. Sept 2008

Jill Smith, GPAC October 2008

Michael White, Director of MW Group Consulting December 2008

### Focus Group Participants – 26 November 2008

Frank Giggins, City of Greater Geelong

Patti Manollis & Susan Hall, Geelong Regional Library Corporation

Karen Stagnetti, Deakin University

Kathy Travis, Wathaurong

Barb Hayes, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Karen Moore, Department of Human Services

Carmel Carroll, Diversitat

Focus Group Participants – 8 December 2008

Robert Lundie, Principal, East Geelong Primary School

12 students from East Geelong Primary School

Focus Group Participants – 8 April 2009

Frank Giggins, City of Greater Geelong

Patti Manollis & Susan Hall, Geelong Regional Library Corporation

Karen Stagnetti, Deakin University

Annie O'Loughlin, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Karen Moore, Department of Human Services

Sheena Knowles, Diversitat

Jean Paul, Committee for Geelong

## Attachment One - Festival Event Plan

The following event plan is an example plan only.

# EXAMPLE

### MAIN STAGE

Start Time	Finish Time	Event	Who	Requirements	Location
10.00am	10.15am	Opening ceremony to include Welcome to Country brief outline of festival activities	MC , Festival Ambassador , Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative representative, Major stakeholder representatives MC	Staging, P/A system,	Central Stage adjacent to Rotunda Fenwick St end
10.30am	11.00am	Story of Bunjill told in dance and story	Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative storytellers and dancers , MC	Staging P/A Equipment	Central stage
11.30am	12noon	Dance with Dorothy	Author of Dorothy books and Dorothy MC	Staging, P/A equipment	Central stage
12.30pm	1.00pm	Contemporary Puppet show	Polyglot puppet theatre - latest show MC		
2. 15pm	2.45Pm	Listen to me! Winners of the short story writing competitions are invited to read their stories to general audience followed by final wrap perhaps and Indigenous story	Competition for each age group winner - 3 in total , MC, Indigenous representative	Staging p/a equipment	Central stage

### 0-12 MONTHS

Start Time	Finish Time	Event	Who	Requirements	Location
10.15 am	10.45am	Introduce your baby to books	Professional storyteller	Books, soft furnishings, bean bags	Geelong library , Children's section
11.15am	11.45am	Music, touch and sound	Professional storyteller	texture books, music, sound system	Geelong library
12.15 pm	12.45pm	Where do I start? Tour of library facilities and explanation of resources available	Library workers	Library personnel	Geelong library

# EXAMPLE

## 1-3 YEARS

Start time	Finish Time	Event	Who	Requirements	Location
10.30am	11.00am	Fun with Rhymes, interactive session. Talk, sing or whisper and shout. Join a storyteller for a lively look at some well known rhymes	Storyteller	Staging microphone , music	Johnston Park
12 noon	12.30pm	Bob the Builder, an interactive session with children helping 'build the storyline'	BOB the builder and his companion	Staging, P/A system	Johnston Park
1.30pm	2.00pm	Puppets , puppets , puppets - workshop for children and parents to make their own puppets and develop their own story	Polyglot puppet theatre	tables and chairs , items for making puppets	Johnston Park

## 4-8 YEARS

Start time	Finish Time	Event	Who	Requirements	Location
10.30am	11.30am	Animal farm - children have the chance to make their own farmyard animals inspired by well-known children book	Storyteller	Tables, chairs	4-8 years precinct
12 noon	12.30pm	Star wars - illustrative workshop for budding artists, interactive session	Illustrator	Tables, chairs, equipment	4-8 years precinct
1.00pm	2.00pm	All for one and one for all - pick up your swords and shields includes judging of the best dressed knight	Illustrator and storyteller	Chairs, staging and microphone	4-8 years precinct
2.30pm	3.00pm	Perfect little Princesses - meet the author and illustrator of a storybook about princesses , wear you favourite princess costume or make your own on the day	Illustrator and Author	Chairs, tables microphone	4-8 years precinct

# EXAMPLE

8+

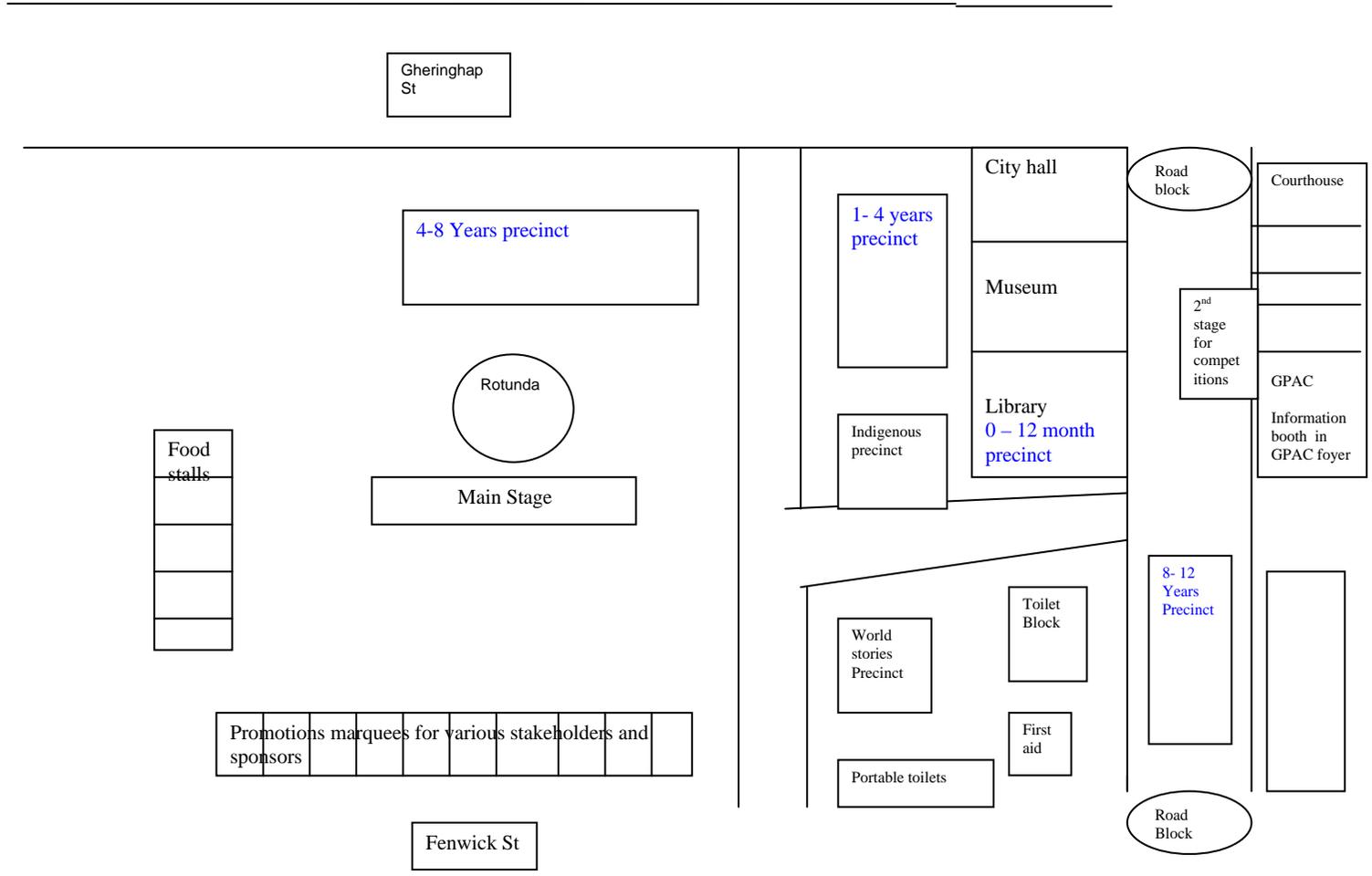
Start Time	Finish Time	Event	Who	Requirements	Requirements
10.30am	11.30am	Are you the next JK Rowling? Writing stories workshop	Author	Tables chairs microphone	8+ precinct
12noon	1.00pm	Words, Words and More Words - Get the gift of the GAB and pack a punch with words that WOW	Writer or Author or Storyteller	Microphone, chairs	8+ precinct
1.45pm	2.30pm	Here is my Song! Songs often tell stories, sing along in an impromptu choir of songs from around the world led by a community choir master	Community Choir teacher		8+

## WORLD STORIES

It is recommended that an area be included focusing on the multicultural community to be developed in consultation with Diversitat. This section could include telling the stories of various multicultural groups, as well as activities tailored to participants who have English as a second language.

## INDIGENOUS PRECINCT

It is recommended that an area be included focusing on the Indigenous community to be developed in conjunction with the Indigenous community. This section could include telling the stories of Indigenous culture.



## Attachment Two: Budget

**EXAMPLE**

*The following budget is an example only*

<b>Location - Johnson Park (Geelong)</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Estimated Aggregate Total</b>
<b>Venue</b>		\$ 1,500
Johnson Park (Geelong)	\$ -	
GPAC Ford Theatre rental fee - 1 day @ \$1,200/day plus technicians	\$ 1,500	
<b>Security/Safety</b>		\$ 3,000
Insurance - Public Liability	\$ 1,000	
2 plain-clothes officers @ \$50/hour for 8 hours	\$ 800	
Fire Services	\$ 500	
Toilets x 6	\$ 450	
St John Ambulance	\$ 250	
<b>Entertainment - Various</b>		\$ 22,500
Dorothy The Dinosaur - 1 Hr	\$ 6,500	
Polygot Theatre Company - 2 Performances	\$ 5,000	
1 Key Note Author	\$ 5,000	
5 Local Authors	\$ 5,000	
Indigenous 4 Dancers	\$ 1,000	
<b>Main Stage</b>		\$ 5,950
Stage cost and erection (6 metres)	\$ 2,500	
P/a system	\$ 2,250	
Marquee 4 x 4 metre (coverage for equipment)	\$ 400	
Tables and chairs - 80	\$ 300	
Generator/leads	\$ 250	
Technician 1 staff	\$ 250	
<b>1- 4 years precinct - Facilities &amp; Services</b>		\$ 2,850
Stage cost and erection (3 metres)	\$ 1,500	
Marquee 6 x 12 metre - 72sq/m, 100 people standing	\$ 600	
Generator/leads	\$ 250	
Technician 1 staff	\$ 250	
P/a system	\$ 150	
Tables and chairs - 20	\$ 100	

# EXAMPLE

<b>4-8 Years precinct - Facilities &amp; Services</b>		\$	2,850
Stage cost and erection (3 metres)	\$	1,500	
Marquee 6 x 12 metre - 72sq/m, 100 people standing	\$	600	
Generator/leads	\$	250	
Technician 1 staff	\$	250	
P/a system	\$	150	
Tables and chairs - 20	\$	100	
<b>8- 12 years precinct - Facilities &amp; Services</b>		\$	2,850
Stage cost and erection (3 metres)	\$	1,500	
Marquee 6 x 12 metre - 72sq/m, 100 people standing	\$	600	
Generator/leads	\$	250	
Technician 1 staff	\$	250	
P/a system	\$	150	
Tables and chairs - 20	\$	100	
<b>Indigenous precinct - Facilities &amp; Services</b>		\$	2,850
Stage cost and erection (3 metres)	\$	1,500	
Marquee 6 x 12 metre - 72sq/m, 100 people standing	\$	600	
Generator/leads	\$	250	
Technician 1 staff	\$	250	
P/a system	\$	150	
Tables and chairs - 20	\$	100	
<b>World stories precinct - Facilities &amp; Services</b>		\$	2,850
Stage cost and erection (3 metres)	\$	1,500	
Marquee 6 x 12 metre - 72sq/m, 100 people standing	\$	600	
Generator/leads	\$	250	
Technician 1 staff	\$	250	
P/a system	\$	150	
Tables and chairs - 20	\$	100	
<b>Parking/Transportation</b>		\$	6,500
Parking road closure (COGG fee)	\$	5,000	
Courtesy buses for guests - 6 buses @ \$250/each	\$	1,500	
<b>Printed Materials</b>		\$	7,850
Brochures - 10,000 pieces (\$400 per 1,000)	\$	4,000	
Banners x 10 (incl design & print )	\$	2,500	

# EXAMPLE

Design Cost Brochures  
Postage

\$ 750  
\$ 600

## Publicity/Marketing

\$ 4,000

K Rock 5 days 2 per day peak

\$ 5,000

Geelong Advertiser Half Page (1 month lead up)

\$ 4,000

Independant Half Page (1 month lead up)

\$ 3,000

Geelong News Half Page (1 month lead up)

\$ 2,000

## Catering & Beverage

\$ 1,000

Free Coffee/Water

\$ 1,000

## Miscellaneous Contingency

\$ 7,655

10% of total cost

\$ 7,655

For e.g. Show Bags/Giveaways (To be sourced)

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**\$ 84,205**

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## Attachment Three: Literacy Supports and Services

**Existing services and supports offered across the Geelong Region include, but are not limited to:**

### Geelong Regional Library Corporation

The Geelong Regional Library Corporation activities include:

- Preschool story time sessions are currently being conducted at 12 libraries across the Geelong area, with a total of 16 sessions enjoyed by children and their parents.
- The introduction of baby *Rhymetime* during 2009.
- School holiday programs developed around a theme to appeal to a broad age group, includes the inauguration of a creative writing competition for children aged 7 to 15 years old.
- The Geelong Regional Library is a regional venue from the Melbourne Writers Festival, which is aimed at 10-14 year olds.

### Let's Read Children's Early Literacy Project

The Let's Read Project commenced in Corio in 2005 and is an initiative specifically designed to support the development of early literacy in children between the ages of 0-5 years.

Let's Read is a comprehensive early literacy program that promotes the importance of reading with young children from birth to five years of age, and has been specifically designed to address the needs of disadvantaged communities.

The key components of Let's Read include:

- **Training community based professionals** - so they can show and support parents to have fun reading with their child and develop their child's early literacy skills.
- **Resources to give to families** - These resources are age specific (including books, DVD, tip sheets, reading lists). Messages about how to read with a young child needs to be given to a parent on more than one occasion. Let's Read is designed to be delivered at four points during a child's development, these being from 4 months, 12 months, 18 months and 3½ years. through visits to Maternal and Child Health as well as other early childhood service providers such as playgroups, kindergartens, and family support agencies.
- **A community approach** - to promote the importance of literacy through existing services and systems, to reach as many families as possible and sustain the program for the long term. Let's Read provides a Community Facilitator and a Community Guide to support the planning and implementation of the program in each community. Simple community messages have been developed to support the promotion of literacy.

These components are designed to complement each other so that they will have the greatest potential to support children to develop the skills that will enable them to learn to read when they start school.

Lets Read is supported by The Smith Family in partnership with the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Centre for Community Child Health, Shell Australia, and the City of Greater Geelong.

Lets Read in Greater Geelong has now expanded to include three sites in Corio, Portarlington and Whittington.

<http://www.letsread.com.au/pages/index.php>

### Victorian Young Readers Program

The Young Readers Program is a partnership between the State Library of Victoria, the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Municipal Association of Victoria.

Part of a A\$2.1 million Victorian Government initiative to encourage Victorian families and care givers to read to their children, this program brings together maternal and child health nurses, early childhood workers and Victorian children's public librarians to promote the pleasure of reading with children.

The Young Readers Program is designed to:

- Promote the importance of reading to young children.
- Provide professional development for Victorian Maternal & Child Health services workers, early childhood workers and children's public librarians.
- Promote family involvement in young children's literacy development through reading with their children.
- Promote the involvement of community support in helping families and care givers value literacy and reading for pleasure.
- Increase access to books for families and care givers with young children.
- Improve literacy outcomes in Victorian children.
- Support Australian children's literature.

The Young Readers Program provides:

- A "*rhyme time*" booklet and DVD to every four-month-old child - they are given a gift voucher when they visit their Maternal and Child Health centre, which is redeemed at their local public library.
- An Australian picture book to every child in Victoria at their two-year-old Maternal and Child Health visit.
- Professional development across regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne for early-literacy professionals working with young children.
- Early-literacy materials, links and information.
- Information about how to support adult literacy.

In addition to the free book, families will receive information about local libraries, including children's story time sessions at public libraries, and training for librarians to work with families and promote children's literacy.

The Young Readers Program will run from March 2008 to April 2011.

### Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery has a strong tradition of success with the lowest-achieving children and operates in most Victorian government primary schools. Developed in New Zealand, Reading Recovery now also operates in all states in Australia, the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

The goal of Reading Recovery is to reduce the number of Year 1 students having difficulties learning to read and write. Students receive a series of individual, 30-minute Reading Recovery lessons daily from a specially trained teacher.

Reading Recovery operates at several levels of the education system, as students, teachers and schools work together to reduce reading and writing problems. Reading Recovery has achieved remarkable international success, but the degree of success in each context is dependent upon how well the intervention is implemented according to its proven model.

Professional development is an essential part of Reading Recovery, utilising a three-tiered approach that includes teachers, tutors, and trainers. Professional development for all Reading Recovery professionals begins with a year of professional development and continues in subsequent years. With the support of the tutor, Reading Recovery teachers develop observational skills and a repertoire of intervention procedures tailored to meet the individual needs of at-risk students.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development monitors the progress of students in Reading Recovery. Victorian Government schools operating Reading Recovery enter student data onto the Online Database. This data is then collated to record school and student trend data.

The excellent progress made by students participating in Reading Recovery demonstrates that high percentages of at-risk students can achieve success.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/readingrecovery/>

### HIPPY & PLAY Programs

Glastonbury Child & Family Services deliver the following early literacy programs with vulnerable families in the Corio/Norlane and Whittington areas.

HIPPY = **H**ome **I**nteraction **P**rogram for **P**arents and **Y**oungsters.

The HIPPY program is an international program which is offered to children in their kindergarten year and for the first year of school. The aim is to empower parents as the child's first teachers and foster parent involvement in school and community life to maximise the chances of successful early school experiences. This program is a licensed product. The program is offered in nine areas across Australia, three of which are in the Barwon South Western region being: Colac, Geelong and Winchelsea.

The program involves training home tutors in the delivery of HIPPY. Home Tutors are usually local members of the community whose children have already gone through the HIPPY Program. Home tutors then provide books and other activities to families who they regularly visit. This usually occurs over two years, with the tutor visiting once a week for the first 6 weeks and then once a fortnight. On the alternate weeks there is a group meeting at a local community centre where parents can attend with other parents whose children are participating in the program.

The aim of the HIPPY Program is to provide a model to parents, helping them to assist with their children's development. It provides modelling to parents showing them the questions they should ask children when they are reading, as well as giving them work sheets to complete throughout the week, which include comprehension activities. The parents then work with their children on the activities for 10 to 15 minutes each day, five days a week for 30 weeks of the year.

The basis of the HIPPY Program is that it is more than just developing literacy skills, it also helps with bonding and includes physical and other activities, however all activities are based on the books.

HIPPY commenced in the Corio/Norlane area in June 2000, expanding to Newcomb/Whittington in 2003 and then to Portarlington in 2006.

The PLAY Program = **P**arents **L**earning **A**ctively with **Y**oungsters.

PLAY involves a similar model to the HIPPY Program, however is focused on children aged 6 months to 4 years with greater flexibility. This program involves various games and activities suitable for young children to focus on the key areas of cognitive, physical, emotional and social development. Once again, there is a weekly set of activities for parents to do with their children with the assistance of qualified staff or PLAY mentors.

Both programs are adaptable for children with special needs. Most of the people taking up the opportunities of these programs are based on self referral and some come through the Maternal Child Health Nurses and Kindergartens.

#### Student2Student

The Smith Family has a project where a younger student between grades 3 and year 8, who is behind in their reading, is matched with an older student (at least 2 years older) who is their mentor. They then communicate by telephone with the younger child reading to their mentor over the phone. They usually talk 2 to 3 times per week for at least 20 minutes. This program operates in all geographical areas and might result in children in one area telephoning children in another area

#### Froth & Bubble Literary Festival

This festival is organised by the Adam Lindsay Gordon Commemorative Committee Incorporate and will be held on 20 and 21 June 2009 in Torquay. This festival has various events, with the majority focused on adults, however it also involves children through poetry competitions and school music programs.

#### GREAT - Geelong Refugee Education Assistance Team

This program is offered through Diversitat and provides free homework and English language support to refugee children.

#### Tute Group - The Bethany Shell Homework Club

This early intervention program supports disadvantaged and refugee children to complete their homework. Weekly clubs provide a structured and fun learning environment where sessions are tailored to the specific needs and educational requirements of each child.

**Outside of the Geelong Region, the programs/initiatives currently operating include:**

*Reading Discovery*

In summary, the Reading Discovery program is a family literacy program for parents of children from 0 to 5 years, targeting vulnerable families. The program is underpinned by three key skills of engaged listening, sustained concentration and curiosity which are vital for learning at any stage of the life spectrum.

The program operates in Warrnambool reports to have had particular success with indigenous play groups in the South West of Victoria.

*Neighbourhood story telling*

This occurs in local parks in Wodonga each Tuesday during school terms where families can attend for free for reading, singing and other literacy related activities.

*Story Time Whisperer*

This program operating in Wodonga involves children finding a story book, reading it and then passing it on to others. The children are able to log onto the internet and detail where they found the book and answer some questions about it. There is approximately 100 books in circulation and via the children logging on to the internet, we can track where the books have gone.

*Melbourne Writers Festival*

This festival was conducted from 23 to 31 August 2008. There are sessions for Grade 5 students through to Year 11 students. The school program is held from 25 to 27 August. The festival includes Word Play at Art Play, which is a program of literacy events, workshops and creative games for children aged 7 to 12. There are also sessions where students write about art at the National Gallery of Victoria and a Write Across Victoria competition.

*Toddler Story Time*

Toddler Story Time is conducted at various libraries around the Shepparton area. These are one hour sessions which include several related stories being read followed by discussion time and a craft activity and or rhymes for the children. Benefits of attending at these sessions, include introduction to literature and stimulation of new ideas for children, as well as parents/carers being a role model to children and familiarising themselves with literature appropriate to the children's age.

*Summer Reading*

Summer Reading is organised by the Mildura City Council library service where children aged between 5 and 13 years are encouraged to join the program and read books throughout December and January. Certificates are awarded to all participants and prizes were awarded to ten participants. The aim of the program is to promote reading and literacy for children in the area.

### Children's Charity Network

Children's Charity Network is a Victorian based not-for-profit organization, which acts as an umbrella for different programs/initiatives. Its main aim is to build, foster and nurture confidence and self-esteem in all children.

The Australian Children's Literary Board holds an annual "*Young Australian Writers Awards*" however, new programs and activities including "*Bright Kids*" program for children with Learning Difficulties, has been introduced.

"*Oz Kids In Print*" is a magazine distributed on a national basis to schools, public libraries, etc, and publish online through their website. Its purpose is to promote and support on a national basis children's literary talent and to provide a vehicle for children to appreciate and develop their literary skills and encourage them to continue in the art of writing, especially when they see their work published in our magazine and on our website [www.ozkids.com.au](http://www.ozkids.com.au).

<http://www.childrenscharity.com.au/help.php?id=18>

### International Children's Festival

Sydney hosts the International Children's Festival which includes a "*Reading Rocks*" section where there is lots of books for the children to look at and read. They are also able to listen to stories presented by the authors, illustrators and characters of their favourite books.

### Schools as Community Centres

Across New South Wales 47 schools as community centre projects operate which target communities supporting families and young children and are aimed to assist young children from birth to 8 years of age. The aim of the project is to respond to the need of local families for children by providing a range of activities, such as supported play groups, transition to school, early literacy programs, health and nutrition initiatives and parenting programs.

### Early Words program

This program operating in Western Sydney provides resources for parents, carers, child care workers and children to help children develop literacy in their first 5 years. The resources are designed to give parents an understanding and practical advice to help their children on the road to literacy. They receive the resources progressively from pregnancy until the children start school at 5 years of age. The resources including brochures, tip sheets, DVD, posters, book kit, rhyming time kit and specific aboriginal resources.

### The Norman Lindsay Festival of Children's Literature 2009

The 9th annual Norman Lindsay Festival of Children's Literature is on 28th and 29th March 2009. The festival is held within the grounds of the home of "*The Magic Pudding*", the Norman Lindsay Gallery in Faulconbridge.

Events include hearing different speakers talk about writing and illustrating for children via workshops and talks, meeting the speakers during book signing sessions, enjoying the entertainment roving throughout the grounds or leisurely browse the stalls.

Dymocks are the major sponsor of the event and will have a bookstall on site throughout the festival.

<http://www.normanlindsay.com.au/events/festival-childrens-literature.php>  
*Brisbane Writers Festival*

Brisbane hosts the Writers Festival each year. This incorporates Word Play sessions which are directed at children aged from Grade 6 to 12, where they have an opportunity to meet with their favourite authors and illustrators.

### **Other Activities Throughout Australia**

#### *Children's Week*

Children's Week is a national event recognizing the talents, skills, achievements and rights of young people. It is based on the articles expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child, highlighting play, wellbeing and protection. Celebrated in October each year, the Department of Education & Early Childhood Development maintains a calendar of events. This an annual festival is celebrated during the month of October and includes universal children's day which is always held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of October. During this week schools, kindergartens and child care and maternal health centres are invited to host activities that focus on the talent, skills, achievements and rights of young people.

The City of Greater Geelong creates a local calendar of events each year. Geelong Library are proposing "*Literary Explosion*" during children's week in 2009 with well known author Mem Fox

#### *National Simultaneous Story Time*

The Australian Library and Information Association organises National Simultaneous Storytime in May every year. The aim is to:

- Promote the value of reading and literacy.
- Promote the value of books.
- Promote an Australian writer and publisher: and
- Promote storytime activities in public libraries and communities around the country.

#### *Children's Book Week*

Children's Book Council of Australia Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) is a volunteer run, not for profit, organisation comprised of individual members who are passionate about children's and young adult literature. The CBCA celebrates Australian children's literature and its creators, and seeks to engage the community with literature for young Australians. Children's Book Week is held in August each year.

#### *Library and Information Week*

The Australian Library and Information Association organises Library and Information Week in May every year. Libraries throughout Australia showcase their many and varied resources and services through different programs and events targeted to a cross section of the community.

#### *Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge*

An annual event, now in its fifth year, the Challenge encourages Victorian students enrolled in Prep to Year 10 to read more frequently and more broadly. In 2008 over 117,000 Victorian students registered to participate in the Challenge.

The Challenge aims to promote a love of reading. It is not a competition, but a challenge to each student. It is held over three terms, during which students read a number of books to reach set targets.

Students in Years 3 to 10 are challenged to read 15 books, while students in Prep to Year 2 are challenged to read or "experience" 30 books by the end of term three. Parents are encouraged to participate and assist their children to "experience" books by reading to or with them and talking about the story, words and pictures.

As well as the intrinsic rewards of reading, each student who completes the Challenge receives a certificate from the Victorian Premier.

Challenge booklists are provided to provide a diverse range of reading materials for children to select from including fiction, non-fiction, plays, poetry, short stories and graphic novels. Among the very wide range of books there are titles to cater for children who enjoy reading adventure books, fantasies, stories about sport, myths and legends, science fiction, humour or suspense novels.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/prc/default.htm>

#### National Literacy and Numeracy Week

The aim of the week is to showcase the hard work school communities are undertaking to improve literacy and numeracy skills, raise community awareness about the importance of all Australian students developing affectively literacy and numeracy skills and build on national initiatives to improve literacy and numeracy standards of young Australian's. The key activities for the week include Reach for the Stars (a national numeracy activity aimed at pre school to junior secondary school students), National Reading Day (a mass participation literacy event for primary and secondary school students) and the Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards.

#### MS Readathon

This fundraiser for the MS Society and children are able to raise money for MS for each of the books they read during this month.

#### Scholastic Book Fairs

These are events that allow the purchase of books while raising funds from schools and can be held anywhere throughout Australia by contacting the Scholastic Group.

### **International Literacy Events include:**

#### Bath Festival of Children's Literature

The Bath festival of Children's literature is one of the largest literary festivals in the UK and is a major tourist attraction for Bath. It is Festival is staged by a not for profit limited company and is run entirely by volunteers. The aim is to "stage the biggest and best celebration of children's books as possible" and to "offer something that will appear to readers of all abilities and hope to excite and encourage non readers too".

There are many sponsors of the Festival with the title sponsor being the paper, Daily Telegraph. The headline sponsor is book seller Waterstones. The Festival also has a number of local media partners and many other sponsors, including publishers.

The Festival is set out over 10 days and a free guide is produced which sets out all the events which are on. The events include:

- Authors reading their books to children;
- Illustrators work shops;

- Poets reading their poetry;
- Authors talking about their books and work;
- Actors who have acted in movies or on stage reading books;
- Games, activities and stories based around children's books;
- Learning how to draw favourite characters;
- Interactive work shops;
- Puppet shows based on books; and
- Sessions where children come dressed as characters from the books while hearing the story books read.

The Festival is aimed at children up to age 16 and their families, with some events aimed solely at adults. Each session is categorised as to the age groups which range from 3 to 13 (and 13+). There is also one session for babies aged 3 to 9 months of age.

Each session is individually priced and the prices of the sessions appear to vary between £4 and £7, however young children must be accompanied by an adult and children and the adults that accompany them must also pay for entry.

The events are held at various venues and are held a few blocks from the others. The venues include the Bath Central Library, Guildhall, Bath Forum (Bath City Church), Mission Theatre and Water Stones Book Sellers.

The event includes a number of competitions such as dress up competitions and games within individual sessions. There is also a Young Story Teller Competition. The prize for that competition includes a trip for two to New York, £1000 library for the child's school and one day story telling workshop for the child's school.

## Attachment Four: List of Local Authors

In choosing sessions as suggested it may be useful to draw on the experience and expertise of local authors who include:

- **Michael Panckridge** (sport & fiction) enjoys talking to children, parents and teachers about reading and writing — and especially boys about reading. Michael is a teacher at Geelong College and has been working there for 12 years.
- **Josh Wright** doesn't write sweet, cute, colourful and healthy tales for impressionable young minds. He is the master of mayhem for young readers. His first two titles, *Plotless*, *Pointless*, *Pathetic* and *Hapless*, *Hopeless*, *Horrible* featuring the popular Sir Glame and Bill have been embraced by kids for their wild action and comic hi-jinks.
- **Bernadette Hellard** Bernadette is a primary school teacher who has particular interests in literacy and physical education. She has co-written the bestselling Netball series
- **Margaret Clark** she writes for ages four years to sixteen years. Her first book *Pugwall* was published in 1987 and subsequently made into a TV series, followed by *Pugwall's Summer* in 1989. Her books for young children include *A Wee Walk* and *Galumph*, as well as the EGG picture books. Her most well-known books for primary school children are the *Mango Street* series, *The Chickabee* series, the *Shorts* series and six *Aussie Bites*, *Snap!*, *Crackle!*, *Pop!*, *S.N.A.G the Sensitive New Age Gladiator*, *Silent Knight*, *Mummy's Boy Willie Tell (Or Won't He?)* Joan of Art and out in 2005 *The Worst Nurse*.
- **Nan Bodsworth** children's author and illustrator, balances her creative written and illustrative work with her puppetry. In school and library sessions, she is comfortable in presenting both lectures and workshops. Her lectures walk students through the process of taking an idea through to publication. Her workshops encourage students to explore their imaginations as they build a story around a single incident. With younger students, Nan's presentations involve more entertainment – she has a puppet presentation of *A Nice Walk in the Jungle* which she enjoys sharing with young audiences.
- **Robert Ingpen** has written and/or-illustrated more than 100 published books. These include children's picture books and fictional stories for all ages. His nonfiction books mostly relate to history, conservation, environment and health issues. Ingpen has designed many postage stamps for Australia and created a number of public murals in Geelong, Melbourne, Canberra and the Gold Coast in Queensland. He also has designed bronze statues, which include the 'Poppykettle Fountain' in Geelong's Steam Packet Gardens. In 1982 Ingpen designed the Dromkeen Medal for the Governors of the Courtney Oldmeadow Children's Literature Foundation. This medal is awarded annually to Australians in recognition of contributions to children's literature. He was awarded the medal in 1989 for his own work in the field.

Other children's authors who may be attractive to children participating in the festival include:

- **Andy Griffiths** has become the first Australian author to win six children's choice reading awards in one year, smashing his previous record of four children's choice awards for the highly controversial *The Bad Book* in 2005. Andy Griffiths said, "*As a child I loved the rambunctious anarchic humour of Lewis Carroll, Dr Seuss*

*and the Cole's Funny Picture Books and with the help of Terry Denton's demented doodling I am thrilled to have been able to transmit this humour to a whole new generation through the Just series."*

- **Paul Jennings** is a best-selling Australian children's book writer. His books mainly feature short stories that lead the reader through an unusual series of events that end with a twist. Paul was the first writer to sell a million books in Australia. He has been honored with an Order of Australia in 1995.
- **Mem Fox** has published books on literacy aimed at children, their parents and teachers and educators. Since her retirement from teaching, Fox travels around the world visiting many countries conducting presentations and speaking on children's books and literacy issues.

## Attachment Five: Possible Funding Sources

*The following is a list of possible trusts and grants which are available in 2009 and may be considered when attempting to source funding for this festival. This list is not exhaustive and provides suggestions as to possible funding sources which are interested in literacy related initiatives.*

<b>Trust Name</b>	<b>Amount (max)</b>
Howard Glover Perpetual Charitable Trust	Various
ANZ Staff Foundation	\$5,000
The Ian Potter Foundation	\$50,000
Percy Baxter Charitable Trust	\$50,000
Charitable Purposes in Victoria (ANZ Trustees)	Various
Geelong Community Foundation	\$48,000
Jack Brockhoff Foundation	\$50,000
Ian Potter Foundation	\$50,000
Charles Robert Ogg Trust	Various
The Alfred Felton Bequest	Various
The William Buckland Foundation	\$75,000
Freemasons Charitable Foundation	\$5,000
Comic Relief	\$50,000
The Foundation of Early Childhood Studies	\$10,000
Mary Potter Trust Foundation	\$15,000
The Helen Macpherson Smith Trust	\$20,000
Foster's Foundation	\$40,000
Pierce Armstrong Foundation	\$10,000
Equity Trustees Foundation	\$20,000
Trust Co Ltd	\$20,000
St George Foundation	\$50,000
Annie Danks Trust	Various
Danks Trust	Various
Tattersall's George Adams Foundation	\$50,000
United Way Geelong	\$30,000
Collier Charitable Fund	\$20,000
Besen Family Foundation	\$10,000
Sabemo Trust	
Grosvenor Foundation	\$20,000