

Community Development Program in Children's Centres

Site Report: Lake Windemere B-7 School Children's Centre

Community Development Coordinator completing report: Caroline Goldstone

Yearly Report: 2019

Community Development Background

The Community Development Coordinator (CDC) started in October 2018 and works 0.9FTE at the Children's Centre from Monday to Friday.

Due to a Machinery of Government (MOG), the CDC role has moved from Education over to the Department of Human Services, as of July 1, 2019. CDC was involved in co-design workshops to develop the new sector. CDC's now sit under the Safer Family Services unit within the Community and Family Services sector of DHS. Three senior CDCs have been appointed in DHS Head Office to support CDCs at site level.

CDC transitioned from contract to Ongoing in the CDC role at Lake Windemere Children's Centre in November, 2019.

Abbreviations Used:

OT Occupational Therapist
SP Speech Pathologist
CDC Community Development Coordinator
FP Family Practitioner
LW Lake Windemere
CC Children's Centre
LWCC Lake Windemere Children's Centre
LWS Lake Windemere School

Aims for 2019

The aim of the Community Development program within Children's Centres is to coordinate services that enhance parenting and community capacity, and support children and families to achieve the best possible learning, health and wellbeing outcomes in a universal setting with targeted responses for children and families who may require additional support.

Community Development Coordinators apply their knowledge and understanding of community strengths, needs and aspirations to provide and coordinate flexible and locally tailored services that engage families.

The Community Development Coordinator provides community and individual supports to families with young children within the Salisbury North area and beyond.

Key roles within these services include:

- Connect families with other families, community activities and learning, and health and support services that best meet their needs
- Facilitate opportunities for families to increase their knowledge and skills around parenting and childhood development
- Support parents to develop personally and build their leadership skills
- Encourage families and staff to have a strong voice about the programs and services offered
- Capacity building the LWCC staff, wider community staff and caregivers to enhance children's developmental outcomes across the Children's Centre Outcomes Framework and the Early Years Learning Framework
- Develop and maintain ongoing partnerships with particular external agencies
- Offer a range of programs within the centre to meet the identified needs of the Lake Windemere community
- Work on the centre priority of Wellbeing for the whole centre

Community Development Coordinators work in partnership with other agencies to facilitate a range of programs and services including:

- Playgroups for parents and carers that include Aboriginal families, dads, step-parents, grandparents, foster carers, family day care educators, refugees and newly arrived families and children
- Parenting programs that include a focus on child development, early literacy, song time, music and movement, support groups and cooking
- Community events including family fun days, school holiday programs, cultural events, celebrations and barbeques
- Personal development to enhance literacy, career pathways, skill development, volunteering, TAFE and SACE studies
- Capacity building the Lake Windemere B-7 School Children's Centre staff, wider community staff, including the Orion Partnership and caregivers to enhance children's' developmental outcomes across the Children's Centre Outcomes Framework and the Early Years Learning Framework
- Develop and maintain ongoing partnerships with key services and agencies
- Offer a range of programs within the centre to meet the identified needs of the community

Aims identified by the CDC to focus on in 2020:

- Further development of relationships with Lake Windemere B-7 site staff, families and children, partners and local services
- Increase the Centre's inclusion, sense of belonging and cultural identity for Aboriginal children and families
- Support the implementation of sustainable practices across the Centre
- Increase avenues of sharing information on parenting and child development & LWCC itself with families and communities (eg through social media)
- To seek and apply for grant funding opportunities to support implementation of Children Centres Outcomes Framework principles
- Continue to prioritise Local Assessment of Needs (LAN) document outcomes identifying the needs of the community as the focus of future planning and development

2019 Outcomes

1. Children have optimal health, learning and development

Performance Outcomes

- Children's physical health & wellbeing, social & emotional development, language and communication skills and dispositions for learning are enhanced
- Children's health, developmental and learning concerns are identified early
- Child access high quality early learning and care programs
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children commence school equipped for success

Objectives (Goals) - What did we do?

- Develop CDC presence within the LW community
- Support children's healthy development with a focus on nutrition, physical activity, social competence & emotional wellbeing
- Support children's access to books to support increased literacy outcomes
- Support early detection, intervention & appropriate support for children with health, developmental and learning concerns
- Increase access to high quality programs for vulnerable families within the LW community
- Support access to high quality play, early learning experiences & environments
- Build, strengthen and maintain relationships with external agencies within the LW community
- Liaise with external agencies regarding individual children and families
- Capacity build education staff as well as wider community
- Improve connections with Aboriginal families and in partnership with them increase the sense of belonging and connection with the centre
- Provide increased access to a variety of community events, programs and workshops through advertisement in centre and via social media
- Support children's successful transition to pre-school by providing high quality transition program
- CDC attends events in the Community to build on knowledge of supports, agencies and services available to families.

Strategies - How did we do it?

- CDC has supported the numerous services and agencies accessing the Children's Centre to bring in support for families and create referral pathways for staff
- CDC continues to support outside services and programs accessing the centre, with the view of further supporting and coordinating these programs and more going forward
- Learning Together program running in the Children's Centre and continues to offer 2 x playgroups, a Music and Movement program and Bringing up Great Kids program for children and families each term. This will continue in 2019
- Anglicare's ACORN Parent and Infant Attachment program continues to operate in the centre on Wednesdays and will be ongoing in 2019 on a semester basis
- Continued information sharing across the Children's Centre through Multi D and Leadership meetings to identify and support children and families requiring additional support
- CDC works closely with FP to ensure appropriate support and programs are provided within the LW community

- CDC attends team and planning meetings, including Multi D planning meetings to contribute to the planning and coordination of programs centre wide and to provide information and referrals to best support families and children
- Continue to support the access and delivery of The Little Big Book Club and Let's Read packs for children and families, as was previously organised
- Attend professional development opportunities and external meetings to further develop skills and understanding of various developmental areas and support available to families, such as Berry Street trauma training
- Food continues to be supplied from Kick Start for Kids (KSFK) for the children and families in the centre, and CDC arranged for Christmas presents for children from vulnerable families through KSFK
- CDC connected with Aboriginal Elders with the future view of supporting cultural inclusivity and competency of the Centre
- CDC and OT assisted in the transition to preschool process by developing and facilitating the 'Pre-Kindy Fun' four-week program with the aim to support children's' successful transition to Kindergarten in 2020 by offering a condensed Kindy program where children could engage in and practice skills, develop friendships, and build a sense of security within the Children's Centre space
- CDC has supported the re-introduction of the Grow Free Cart in the Children's Centre foyer to enable families to supply and access fresh fruit, vegetables, plant cuttings and seeds
- Maintenance of 'Community Corner' information hub containing relevant community events, training and development, upcoming workshops and timetables of other Children's Centres



- CDC attends Learning Together playgroups in order to build rapport with families and workers
- Distribution of information on relevant community events, training and development opportunities, upcoming workshops and school holiday events via the LW Facebook page
- Partnership with Backpacks for Kids to support the needs of the school community facing homelessness, financial stress and vulnerabilities
- CDC attended the Healthy Living Expo facilitated by the Australian Refugee Association (ARA) on April 16, which highlighted a number of organisations and services that can support families within the community in a range of health needs

- CDC attended the Anglicare (Better Places Stronger Communities - BPSC) Services Expo and Family Fun Day on April 17 – linking with Elizabeth Grove and Kaurua Plains Children’s Centres to hold an information stall. This allowed CDC to advertise LWCC timetable and services, as well as networking with other services and agencies to build stronger links

2. Parents provide strong foundations for their children’s healthy development and wellbeing

Performance Outcomes

- Parents are confident to support their children’s health, education & wellbeing
- Children & families have stable relationships & are safe from harm
- Parents have opportunities for learning
- Family wellbeing is enhanced

Objectives (Goals) - What did we do?

- Provide individual or group information sessions to parents on a wide range of topic areas eg Parent Pamper night; Pre-Kindy fun; Healthy Bellies, Happy Hearts
- Empower community members to increase their skills and build their capacity including volunteering and seeking employment and/or training opportunities
- Provide a safe space for caregivers to attend to share their strengths and struggles
- Provide targeted support to vulnerable families including liaising with external agencies
- Respond to factors that impact on parenting eg isolation, poverty, ethnicity and language barriers, DV, unemployment, homelessness, adult literacy etc
- Provide written and visual information about child development to families
- Improve connections with Aboriginal families and, in partnership with them, increase the sense of belonging and connection with the centre
- Support families of children with a disability

Strategies - How did we do it?

- Liaise with external agencies and maintain partnerships that ensure relevant programs are available to the community. Maintaining Partnership Agreements and Facilities Agreements, and coordinate room bookings
- Create displays in the centre and develop handouts that deliver messages to support child development (e.g. play, nature-based learning, reading, school holiday activities)
- Increase use of social media to promote child development information and programs occurring within the centre
- CDC has supported families to access support services that include English-speaking lessons, parenting support, employment and training. Continual feedback from families on the needs of the community helps to determine what services are beneficial for the Community
- The following programs continue to operate within the Children’s Centre on an ongoing basis and will continue to do so in 2019 - Kids Blokes and Dad Jokes men’s program; Family by Family; ACORN Parent and Infant Attachment Program; Learning Together playgroups; Mi-DBT
- Provide a space for Department of Child Protection Family Access visits to take place

- CDC, OT and SP Coordinated a Parent Pamper Night in Week 6, Term 1, and Week 9, Term 3. The program promoted self-care for parents/carers (including massages and foot spas) and provided information on child development topics. The sessions focussed on the importance of self-care and parent wellbeing, strength based parenting, acknowledging the hard work that parents and carers do, celebrating the importance of their role, and included an OT and SP presentation educating parents about the art of mindfulness (term 1) and learning through play (term 3)
- CDC and OT collaborated in Term 4 to provide the “Pre-Kindy FUN!” program to support children and their families transitioning to Preschool in 2020. The program aims to assist in developing friendships, becoming familiar with the environment and learning new routines. Families expressed that it was a good idea to get children used to the centre, meet new friends and have some fun
- CDC facilitated Baby Playgroup throughout the year, in response to community need and requests, and also based on the outcomes of the Local Assessment of Needs data highlighting the need for programs for families with babies, as well as the high number of children under the age of two years
- CDC & FP attended a meeting with Melissa Ruthen from RASA to ascertain programs what could be run at the centre to support families. On August 30, ‘Healthy Bellies, Happy Hearts’ was offered– a fun, free and interactive workshop to learn how to make a delicious lunchbox and talk about ways to make the mornings less stressful; covering great tasting healthy choices, positive communication techniques, and how to set up morning routines. Every participant received a sample lunch box to take home. 6 families attended
- CDC attended the National Child Protection Week Q&A Morning on September 6. The session focused on Putting Children First: Changing the way we frame parenting to improve child wellbeing in Australia
- CDC provided information on Trauma statistics for staff development on October 28 for pupil free day powerpoint presentation. This highlighted the statistical data Nationwide, as well as local to LWCC to emphasise
- CDC has supported the Mother Infant Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (Mi-DBT) group and crèche throughout the year. Mi-DBT supports mothers with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) in the perinatal period
- In the absence of the FP (as the role is currently vacant) the CDC supports families to access supports, provides emergency assistance, supports outbound referrals to external agencies and liaises with the Senior FP as necessary for advice and referral information



3. Communities are child and family friendly

Performance Outcomes

- Children’s Centres encourage, respect & respond to the voice of children
- Children & families have a strong sense of belonging to their community and community wellbeing is enhanced

- Communities provide physical and social environments that support children's development & family wellbeing
- Children's Centres are a friendly, trusted source of advice, information & support for families
- Parents are active partners in the design & implementation of Children's Centre programs & services
- Increase opportunities for parents to engage with and contribute to their community

Objectives (Goals) - What did we do?

- Build and maintain relationships with families who access the centre
- Link families in with the centre who may not already be accessing the centre
- Liaise with external agencies and increase service access
- Increase connections with and between families, the CC, service providers and the broader community
- Increase service access and engagement of vulnerable families
- Increase opportunities for parents to engage with & contribute to their community
- Increase service coordination, integration & responsiveness in active partnership with parents

Strategies - How did we do it?

- Information display boards in the foyer are regularly updated for optimal interest and visibility; maintaining up-to-date information in newly developed Community Corner, community display boards for dissemination to the community of local services, programs and relevant events
- Promotion of centre events on LWCC Facebook page including centre promotion (playgroup reminders etc), information on relevant services, programs and events that are local and family friendly
- Promote a warm and friendly space for families who access the centre by rearranging the reception foyer and making the Community Corner space more accessible for all who access the centre
- Promotion of centre activities to the community through a number of avenues, including flyers, centre timetables, Facebook, email distribution and networking
- CDC has provided information to individual families from EALD backgrounds, on available English classes and education sessions. A display has also been added to the Community Corner for accessibility by the wider LW community
- CDC presence within the preschool and reception area at drop off and pick up times to build rapport with families
- CDC participated in Partnership Group meeting, Northern Cluster CDC meetings, and local Salisbury CDC meetings with Parafield Gardens Children's Centre and Ingle Farm Children's Centre, as well as other Northern Children's Centres, including John Hartley, Elizabeth Grove and Mark Oliphant College.
- Community Recycling Day continues to be implemented within the Centre in terms 2 and 4, with a great influx of support from families within the community. CDC planned and prepared for the Term 4 Community Recycling Day on November 21. Many families participated in the day, and due to the amount of donations received, the Community Recycling Day was extended a further day or 2. The remaining surplus items were donated to Backpack 4 SA Kids, the

Aboriginal Education Staff in Para Hills Education Office (who provide items for Aboriginal students to wear to graduations, formals and job interviews) and Elizabeth Mission

- CDC and FP attended Reconciliation in the North morning tea on May 23 to further connect with Aboriginal community members, Elders and other agencies
- CDC attended and had a stall at the 'Connection with Culture – Children's Day Event' at Parafield Gardens Recreation Centre on 2nd August, to promote the Centre and build connections within the community



- CDC linked with Pastoral Care worker at the LW school and Salisbury Lutheran Church to organise and support 'Purple Picnic Day'. Event was held on September 21, to support Autism Awareness
- CDC linked with Pastoral Care Worker to support vulnerable families throughout the year, including provision of Christmas hampers
- CDC partnered with Backpacks 4 SA Kids, who provided the LWCC community and families with Backpacks, Christmas presents and other support throughout the year in order to support vulnerable and disadvantaged families in their time of need
- CDC will be attending Backpacks 4 SA Kids networking and relationship building event on December 18
- CDC connects with other Children's Centres, community centres and external agencies to provide information and support to families, assisting them to make connections with available services within the community
- CDC and FP arranged and attended meetings at the local preschools within the Orion Partnership to promote programs at the centre and provide directors with the Local Services Directory developed within the Centre

4. Aboriginal children are safe, healthy, culturally strong and confident.

Performance Outcomes

- Aboriginal children & families have a strong sense of cultural pride & identity, & are valued contributors to their community
- Aboriginal families and communities' wellness and healing are enhanced

- Aboriginal children start school healthy and having regularly participated in a quality early learning program

Objectives (Goals) - What did we do?

- Build and maintain relationships with Aboriginal families who access the centre
- Increase Aboriginal children's and their families regular attendance & engagement in early childhood services and programs
- Consult with Aboriginal communities, families and children in the development of programs and the environment within the centre
- Improve connections with Aboriginal families and, in partnership with them, increase the sense of belonging and connection within the centre

Strategies - How did we do it?

- CDC supports families by attending morning drop-off in the foyer and pre-school, and talking with families, discussing possible ideas for upcoming programs and support ideas
- CDC advertises many Aboriginal-specific events, supports and playgroups in the local community, within the Children's Centre foyer and Community Corner. This provides Aboriginal families the opportunity to link in with further supports and networking opportunities for their children
- CDC continued relationship with the Gully Winds Aboriginal Elders cultural group to discuss future potential for Elders to visit centre, participate in Kindy program, consult on future directions for centre policy, cultural events and further cultural inclusivity in the Centre
- CDC has discussed future collaborations with the Lake Windemere School cultural inclusion group going forward into 2020. Discussions to commence in Term 1, 2020
- CDC and FP attended Reconciliation in the North morning tea on May 23 to further connect with Aboriginal community members, Elders and other agencies
- CDC attended and had a stall at the 'Connection with Culture – Children's Day Event' at Parafield Gardens Recreation Centre on 2nd August, to promote the Centre and build connections within the community



2020 Goals

CDC priorities for 2020 include:

- Strengthening knowledge and understanding of needs, issues and vulnerabilities affecting LWCC families and surrounding community

- Further develop relationship with CAFHS in order to increasing their presence within the Children's Centre which will increase the visibility of the centre to families with young babies. CDC to continue providing the LWCC timetable to CAFHS contacts for distribution amongst families and Early Parenting Groups
- Promotion of Aboriginal health and wellbeing, connectedness and belonging within the LWCC, LWB-7 School and local community including collaborative partnership with local Community Centre's and Council
- Improve connections with Aboriginal families and, in partnership with them, increase the sense of belonging and connection within the centre
- Develop further relationships with local agencies and families to increase volunteer engagement within the Children's Centre
- Community wellbeing including: parent pamper nights, community breakfast within the Children's Centre; sustainability within the Centre & local community; parent information and education sessions etc
- Enquire into funding opportunities and collaborations that have been developed through previous CDCs, including sustainability within the centre, cultural partnerships with the school and external agencies
- Follow through with improvements to front garden area of Children's Centre to provide an alternate space for families to congregate at drop-off and pick-up time. This space will endeavour to be a sensory garden to help calm children, and provide a space with less noise and stimulation