













were aware of his individual needs and had spoken to preschool teachers prior to beginning school” (Sarah, E/C worker TTBS, 2008)

- 19 of the 20 participants in Little Learners classes could read, write and recognise their name in print, could count to 20 independently, new conventions of print (left to right sweep) and mixed socially with others in play and structured learning experiences.
- Photographic evidence has provided evidence of children engaged in school, interacting comfortably with their environment (this has not been included for privacy reasons).

“I feel safe and secure leaving my child at school cause I know what my child is doing all day, who they are with and where they are.” (Mother participant)

Due to this program the following outcomes have been reached:

- New Parents and Citizens (P&C) group members have been recruited from the new Kindergarten parents.
- 3 mothers are trained to become parent helpers.
- 16 parents and/or grandparents enrol in an English as a Second Language TAFE course held at the school.
- 23 parents and/or grandparents enrol in TAFE Outreach computing studies program held on school premises.
- Two fathers complete volunteer projects around the school (electrical and sign writing).
- 124 Dads attend twice early Dads and Kids night held at the school.

Some comments from or about parents were:

“I know who my child’s teacher is. They are no longer just Mrs or Mr Jones.” Kindergarten parent

“More and more parents will say hello to me each morning in the playground!” Deputy Principal

“My class was ready to learn on the first day of school. We had very few criers.” Kindergarten teacher 2008.

## Policy analysis

While the general results available on the program are only for a 12-month period, the range of evidence on positive outcomes—from child observation, parent survey, teacher measurement of milestones, is consistent in confirming positive outcomes from this Practice with culturally diverse families.

Within the policy framework it is concluded that:

- the program is a good model for local schools especially those committed to kindergarten programs;
- the program of family sessions that has been developed within this project is sustainable as they can be used readily in other preschool to school transition programs; and
- the approach is successful with hard to reach and CALD families, through use of culturally inclusive engagement and retention strategies, enabling these families to be more actively involved in the school community.

At this stage, it is hard to tell the long-term impact of the program on children and parents, but it is expected that the increased parental knowledge and skills will empower them to be part of their child’s school community and to be confident in relating to their teachers and will continue to do so throughout their child’s schooling. The raised awareness on the importance of play and interacting with their child and the social connections made along the way will remain sustainable.

## Project evaluations

The project has not yet been externally evaluated. Internal evaluation data is being collected via service user survey and participant feedback.

## Project related publications

## References

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## Website

Not provided

## More information

More information on Our Family is Starting School Project and Promising Practice Profiles can be found on the PPP pages of the Communities and Families Clearinghouse of Australia website at <http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/ppp/ppp.html>.



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