



Some Advisory Group Members and the Coordinator from the HIPPY project

part of their course they have to run a major fundraiser for an Indigenous program and they decided to work with HIPPY. We have had several meetings discussing what HIPPY is all about. They held a concert at the University in October and all proceeds will go to HIPPY.

HIPPY has also been working with Liz Orr from the Stronger Families Learning Exchange (SFLEX) on our evaluation. Parents, staff and teachers have been interviewed and we are in the process of interviewing the HIPPY children both past and present. We are looking at two ways of presenting our evaluation: first, a powerpoint presentation that is easy to understand; then a report type document that can be presented to officials (especially when applying for funding).

The SFLEX Training and Support team from the Australian Institute of Family Studies have been great. We have found them easy to work with and very supportive. This has made a big difference for us as we feel comfortable talking with the team, and we trust their approach and work with us in the writing up of the evaluation.

Who is working on the project? What are your roles?

Sherri Longbottom is the HIPPY La Perouse Coordinator. Vicki Simon and Tracy Kelly are Home Tutors, and we have just employed Vicki Doyle as an additional home tutor to work with four children at the local preschool, Gujaga.

We have 23 families with age four children (17 Indigenous) and 11 families with age five children (9 Indigenous). We have an Advisory Committee

which consists of 12 Community people (including HIPPY staff).

The coordinator is also involved in a lot of interagency committees and always gives input about HIPPY La Perouse.

What have you learned in the last six months that may be of interest and value to other projects?

Your project needs to be *flexible* to work with the community you are in. You have to find ways of getting to know the needs and wants of your community and have people from the community working on the project. Have patience and respect for the people you work with, especially the families. Don't judge people – give them a chance.

How has the community responded to the project?

It has taken two and a half years but people are talking about HIPPY. A lot of people in the community and outside the community know about the program and what we are doing. We have lots of enquiries from other Aboriginal communities wanting to start up similar projects and we hope one day to be able to have the resources to share our knowledge and skills to assist them to do so.

Red Ochre Links, Dubbo

What has the project been doing since the last Bulletin report?

Red Ochre Links in Dubbo, New South Wales, was introduced in the fifth edition of the Stronger Families Learning Exchange Bulletin (see SFLEX Bulletin No.5 for more information). Since then, the project has been working to develop a Community Action Plan with members of the working party. A strategy day was held to develop the vision, function and strategies for the next twelve months. So far the local Aboriginal communities have responded positively with the projects progress. We have received a lot of interesting feedback from many individuals and families living in this area. The working party came together on 22 October to revisit and revise the Community Action Plan at its present stage.



Luke Ah See from the Red Ochre Project

What has been learned since the last report that may be of interest or value to other developing projects?

I believe that the project has had an influence within the Dubbo Aboriginal Community. Government departments today are asking working party members for information and requesting members to nominate community members to be on project or involved with community development groups. Hence the Aboriginal community and others have become more involved in meetings about

issues that affect them and they are having their say about the way services are and should be delivered.

This is evident as members of the local Aboriginal community become more involved in the issues that affect them. The working party encourage the exchange of dialogue between all parties to encourage "yarning" over a barbeque with service providers – an idea that has been taken up by other groups to achieve positive outcomes.

How has the community responded to the projects so far?

Our strategies are to finish the Action Plan by December. This may be ambitious, but members of the working party are committed to getting service providers involved and developing Memorandums of Understanding and Service Agreements with them. From there it will be a matter of the community monitoring the agreements and ensuring that they are being effective.