



Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) Family Engagement with Schools Project

CASE STUDIES

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CONTENTS

Page

Project aims	2
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Participating Schools	
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1. Chandler Primary School invites parents into the classroom for Maths and Cooking	5
2. Coomoora Secondary College hosts community forum for Vietnamese parents	8
3. Collingwood Language Centre begins with interesting and informal gatherings	9
4. Carlton Primary School creates a talking newsletter in many languages	10
5. Broadmeadows Secondary College develops a welcoming kit	12
6. The Cuppa Club at Bethal Primary School	13
7. A Holistic Approach at Meadow Heights Primary School	14
8. Digital Information at North Geelong Secondary College	15
9. St Albans East Primary School supports Community Partnerships to develop Parenting Skills at Brimbank	16
10. AUSOM network (AUStralia SOMali network) at Haig Street Primary School and Olympic Village Primary School	19
11. Parents as Partners at St Bernadette's Primary School	20
12. Sunshine Christian School creates a mural	22
13. African Music and Drumming at St Albans Primary School	25
14. Braybrook College – Let's Listen and Learn from Each Other	27
15. Monmia Primary School—builds bridges between the school and parent community	29

Project Aims

Global aim:

to build resilience in children of families from culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds through strengthening family involvement in schools.

Specific aims of project:

- Share knowledge among schools
- Support the development of programs in consort with schools
- Trial programs in schools
- Develop case studies of a diverse range of approaches for involving CLD families in schooling

Project assumptions

- Families are critical to building resilience
- Resilience is critical to minimising drug misuse
- One parent engagement model will not suit all CLD communities

Background information

The latest National Drug Strategy Household Survey indicates that:

- (1) CLD families and their communities have a significant level of success in minimising harmful drug use. The survey reports that '3% of persons from a non-English speaking background drank alcohol at risky levels for long-term alcohol-related harm, and 7% drank at these levels for short-term harm'. The corresponding percentages were threefold higher for people from English speaking backgrounds. A similar pattern was evident for cannabis and amphetamine use.
- (2) Families are the most important factor in helping young people to develop resilience, which is in turn a key skill in protecting young people against developing a range of anti-social behaviours including drug misuse

In light of the findings of the National Drug Strategy Household Survey, it appears that cultural values and practices are a protective factor for young people. A key strategy in drug education for CLD families is supporting the inherent and protective strengths of these communities through building partnerships with schools. Schools will most effectively engage with CLD families by developing programs that are sensitive to their experiences and circumstances.

Key considerations for involving parents in drug education programs and student wellbeing:

1. Families are critical to building resilience in their children. A core aim of any school-based parent program seeking to build student resilience should be to bring families together.
2. Models of intervention need to be compatible with family structure and values. For instance, communities from countries with an oral tradition may be alienated by a lecture format and feel more comfortable with an interactive format that encourages discussion. Facilitators need to be aware of these differences and accommodate them in the development of program content and style.
3. Parents and guardians must be valued and actively encouraged to form partnerships with the school. Many parents do not establish links with schools, thinking they have nothing to contribute and have limited knowledge of how the educational system works.
4. Demonstrate that the school values the cultures that are represented in it by involving families. An appreciation of cultural diversity can be recognised in the curriculum by establishing processes to encourage parents to participate or assist in classes.
5. Involving students in strategies to involve parents encourages parents to attend and share educational experiences with them.
6. Programs should focus on capacity building. Providers should build their family programs on the basis of the strengths they have identified within communities and families and in doing so consider two key issues:
 - **Participation and recruitment**, for example, individual or family centred. Individual programs are developed by staff or students. Family centred programs give control of the process to the group; the organiser's role being to facilitate this. The family will help plan, recruit and participate in the program.
 - **Delivery and style**, for example, directive or affective. Directive programs provide information and activities for the purpose of educating parents and guardians. Affective programs engage with families and share information and beliefs.
7. Program facilitators gain the support of the school leadership to promote the importance of involving parents and to facilitate the provision of professional development to staff.
8. Facilitators set up two-way, comfortable channels of communication. They make personal contact and utilise interpreters or Multicultural Education Aides. They also create a welcoming and friendly atmosphere for parents at school.

(1) Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2005, 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey, First Results AIHW cat. No PHE 57.
Canberra: AIHW (Drug Statistics Series Number 13)

(2) See: REDI - Resilience Education and Drug Information

This website provides a comprehensive good practice bibliographic database of policies, programs and curriculum resource materials currently available in resilience drug education. www.redi.gov.au/



Chandler Primary School invites parents into the classroom for Maths and Cooking

Program Description

The aim of the program was to engage parents from CLD backgrounds in classroom programs and the broader school curriculum. In doing so the school hoped to:

- Increase participation by culturally and linguistically diverse parents in school life
- Improve opportunities for communication between parents and teachers

Getting started

The school conducted a survey to find out:

- What was working well?
- Why it was working?
- What else they could do to encourage parent participation?

As a result of the survey, the school decided to introduce two new ideas:

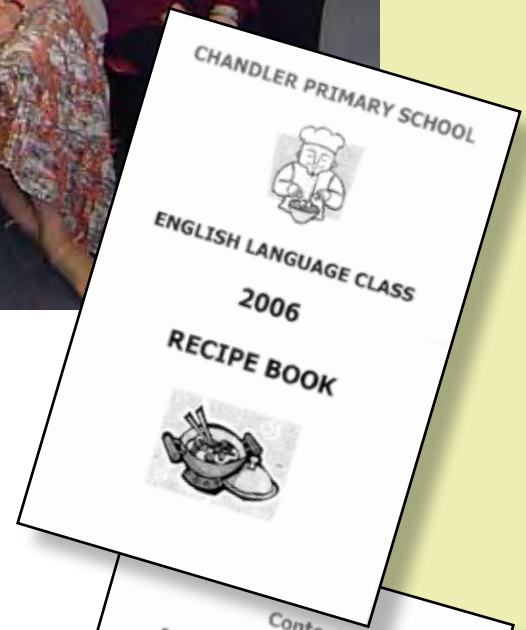
- A fun maths day (term 2)
- A multi-cultural cook book (terms three and four)

Outcomes

Maths day

The Multi-Cultural Aide contacted CLD families to encourage them to be involved in the maths day. This contact was supported by sending home personal invitations with the children. The children were asked to explain the invitations and encourage their parents to participate. The school also employed interpreters to help.

The fun maths day was well attended by parents. Many of those who could not attend supported the day by completing newsletter, puzzles and sending along mathematical lunches with their children which ranged from sandwiches cut into many shapes to numbers on biscuits. To increase the fun there were lots of prizes and competitions leading up to the day.



Cook book

The cook book compiled recipes contributed by families. A series of cookery sessions were conducted in term four, using families as the facilitators. The cook book was then photocopied and distributed to all families.

Critical success factors

- We already had successful program operating on which we could build.
- The new projects were part of our school's strategic plan.
- We had a team focused on the project.

Highlights

The level of fun and the confidence of parents and teachers growing together

Future

We are planning a garden project where we will grow vegetables for recipes in our cookbook.

Recipe	Country	Page
Beef Soup	Vietnam	2
Cambodian Banana Cake	Cambodia	2
Cassava Cake	Vietnam	3
Chicken Potting	Vietnam	4
Chicken Chow Mein	Canada	5
Chicken Soup	Vietnam	6
Chow Mein	Vietnam	7
Egg Custard Tart	East Timor	8
Fish Stucco	Vietnam	9
Fried Butterfly Prawns	East Timor	10
Fried Fish	Cambodia	11
Fried Rice	China	12
Lemon Chicken	China	13
Steamed Fish	China	14
Sukiyaki	Japan	15
Vietnamese Spring Rolls	Vietnam	16
		17

Ideas for dressing up:

- Footy jumper
- Patterns
- Shapes
- Playing cards
- Clocks
- Fractions
- Dominoes

These are just a few ideas. Try and think of something different!!!

Ideas for

- 100s and Fractions
- Shape for sandwich
- Pattern stripe
- Be o eve

Maths Day

**Wednesday
10th May**

11.30– 3.15

Parents are welcome anytime during the day. Please come along and join in the fun!!!

As part of our celebrations for Education Week, Chandler Primary School will be holding a Maths Day.

The children will be participating in a lot of exciting activities. We would like to encourage as many parents as possible to come to school on this day. Come and experience what maths at Chandler Primary School is like.

We will be having a dress up assembly, maths trail, special 'mathematical lunch' and fun maths activities in the afternoon.

Parents will be able to come along and join in the day. As a reward raffle tickets will be handed out to parents who attend any part of the day. The prizes will be drawn out at 3.10pm.

Coomoora Secondary College hosts community forum for Vietnamese parents

Program description

Coomoora Secondary College formed a partnership with the Springvale Indo Chinese Mutual Assistance Association, South Eastern Alcohol and Drug Services (SEADS) and Gambler's Help to conduct a forum for parents of Vietnamese background. Over 300 parents attended.

Getting started

The partnership succeeded in promoting the evening through SBS radio, #ZZZ radio, the Cambodian Association of Victoria, the three Cambodian Temples in the Springvale area, South East Alcohol and Drug Service (SEADS), the *Age*, the *Herald Sun*, local newspapers, the City of Greater Dandenong, Southern Health, ethnic language schools at Westall, Heatherhill and Springvale, and personal invitations to parents at Coomoora Secondary College and Primary School.

A bus was provided to take families to and from the venue. All sessions were in Khmer and translators were available. Meals and child minding facilities were also provided.

Outcome

Community Forum

The organisers were overwhelmed by the number of people (317) who attended the forum. Providing enough seats and food was a challenge. To begin the evening a blessing dance was performed by the students before the presenters provided information about drugs, the services available to help families and some advice about parenting issues. Many of the sessions went overtime and the audience generally found the evening interesting and informative.

Critical success factors

- Developing a partnership between Coomoora Secondary College, Coomoora Primary School and a range of community organisations.
- Providing lots of publicity for the event
- Involving the Vietnamese community in planning and presentation
- Providing transport, meals and child care

Highlights

Many people attended, confirming vast possibilities for developing school-family relationships and support at Coomoora Secondary College.

Future

The parents are hoping for more events covering a range of issues relating to their children.

Collingwood Language Centre begins with interesting and informal gatherings

Program description

The aim was to provide interesting and informal opportunities for parents to meet teachers and participate in school activities. In doing so, the project managed to gain feedback from parents about their needs.

Getting started

A project organiser was released from teaching duties for one day per week. This allowed time for organising and attending events, and reviewing the program.

Outcomes

City Bus Tours

The City Bus Tours proved very popular. For many parents, it was their first opportunity to see many of the sights of Melbourne, including the beach. Photographic displays of the tour attracted parents back to the school after the tour. Providing lunch with the bus tour and information sessions, improved the level of communication between parents, and parents and staff. The informal gatherings also helped parents to feel more relaxed about coming into the school. They were then more inclined to attend parent information interviews and sessions.

Critical success factors

- Providing informal opportunities to develop relationships with parents
- Being flexible
- Running small focus groups to gain feedback from parents

Highlights

- The excitement of the children when their parents participated at the Centre
- Sharing food and conversation after events
- Developing links with CLD community groups

Future

Continue building on the program, including a greater use of small focus groups with an aim to gaining a better understanding of the needs of parents. The school will also continue to reinforce links with CLD community groups such as Foundation House and African Holistic Settlement Services.

Carlton Primary School creates a talking newsletter in many languages

Program description

The project created a talking newsletter. It began with the school's beautiful song performed by the children and provided information about the school in many languages. The school sourced translators from the local community.

Getting started

We purchased the equipment for creating the compact discs. We also located interpreters from our local community.

Outcome

The Talking Newsletter

This project has been a great success. We have uncovered some excellent resources. As well as putting information onto compact discs which are provided to each family, we have also been able to record the information onto our school website.

Our first CD-Rom contained the school Annual Report in Somali and English. The report included data from student and parent surveys, major school events and important background information.

After the Annual Report, we progressed to providing school newsletters on CD-Rom, once again in Somali and English.

Critical success factors

- Using professional translators as they are more accountable
- Ensuring plenty of lead time
- Making the recordings a length that do not take too long to burn

Highlights

- Providing accessible information to parents
- Involving students and hearing them recorded in the talking newsletters

Future

Getting feedback from parents about the value of the information provided.

Looking for other ways to connect with and inform parents.

Carlton Primary School talking newsletter



Broadmeadows Secondary College develops a welcoming kit

Program description

The aims of the project were to work with parents to:

- Build an understanding of the education system
- Improve CLD parent connectedness to the school.

The strategies employed included forming links with those already working with the Arabic community, developing a welcoming kit for newly arrived CLD parents, running information sessions and holding a cultural diversity day and cultural diversity program in Harmony Week.

Getting started

The school appointed a staff member who was responsible for bringing the project together. They also involved community workers, students and parents in different aspects of planning and implementation. Having back-up plans in place helped to overcome unforeseen events and staff changes.

Outcome

Welcome Kit

The 'Welcome Kit' consisted of photographs of staff, a map of the school, instructions about how to make an appointment, translations into community languages, subject information including pathways, sports days and extra-curricula activities, key dates, parent teacher night information and a guide to understanding school reports. This was supported by the parent information nights and the involvement of community workers who facilitated basic skills training for parents in information technology.

Critical success factors

- Keeping a tight but realistic time line
- Ensuring support of school leadership
- Timetabling a meeting schedule
- Including students in parent forums

Highlights

An unexpected highlight was the collegiality among staff, and the supportive relationships between teachers and students as they worked together to support parents. Students developed greater empathy for newly arrived parents, who were in turn very appreciative of the students. Seeing the school community come together to celebrate diversity in a fun way on Harmony Day was also uplifting.

Future

The school aims to continue to build relationships and connecting closely with all parents.

The Cuppa Club at Bethal Primary School

Program description

The aim of the project was to involve parents in the school. Bethal did this by having a Cuppa Club in the staff room once a month. Tea, coffee, food, child minding and interpreters were provided. Staff members were present and guest speakers sometimes attended depending on the topic for discussion. The school updated their parent handbook and ran a number of informal sessions to help prepare both new students and parents for their first year of school.

Outcomes

Cuppa Club

Initially the discussion topics were decided by staff, but then parents began to make suggestions. We continually modified our goals to align them with the interests of parents. For instance, at first, many of the parents were reluctant to share a cuppa and food. Then the multi-cultural aid provided a more traditional Turkish/Arabic morning tea. As a result, the parents began to share and participate.

Prep Orientation Program

A number of prep orientation sessions were held for parents, which provided information on 'preparing your child for school' and 'how to assist your child during their prep year' and an opportunity to meet with the Principal and other senior staff members. The school emphasized the importance of singing rhymes and songs and reading books in English or their mother tongue, learning colours, shapes and numbers to 10. Each family received a take home package with educational materials and games to assist them to support education activities at home.

Critical success factors

- Keep club informal
- Personalise and translate invitations
- Provide positive feedback
- Provide food that is culturally appropriate
- Tailoring goals to meet the needs and interests of parents

Highlights

- Teachers developed more relaxed relationships with parents that encouraged conversations at other times.
- Parents formed friendships with other parents.

Future

Next year the school will provide Cuppa Club dates at the beginning of the year and endeavor to have interpreters present at Cuppa Club meetings.

A Holistic Approach at Meadow Heights Primary School

Program Description

The central aim of the project was to develop stronger connections between the school and CLD families. The school implemented a range of improvements around communication and access. These included translating school information, encouraging involvement in classrooms, parent information sessions, parent coffee mornings, excursions, personal invitations to parents from their children, working bees and the availability of multi-cultural aids for the first 30 minutes of each school day.

Getting started

Prep teachers met and greeted students and parents when they arrived at school each day. They welcomed them into the classroom to have a look around and see their child's work. Parents were assured they were welcome to assist in the classroom with tasks like changing home readers and hearing children read. Parents were invited to attend informal coffee meetings which were held once a month.

Outcomes

Enhanced parent involvement

The school benefited from the project by gaining more parent assistance with school activities. Some parents became regular classroom helpers and the number of parents attending events and activities increased. The closer relationships between staff and parents helped teachers become more aware of the needs of parents and children. Support networks developed among parents and children received more assistance at home.

Critical success factors

- Consistently welcoming parents and being sensitive to their feelings and needs.
- Providing a welcoming space with multi-cultural aids.

Highlights

- Learning more about parents
- Building more effective lines of communication
- Being responsive to the needs of parents

Future

The school will be more methodical in the way they encourage communication at meetings. As parents feel more comfortable speaking in their own language, the school plans to form parents into language groups and provide an interpreter. It will explore ways of giving parents greater ownership for getting involved by supporting networking and being responsive to their ideas.

Digital Information at North Geelong Secondary College

Program Description

The school produced information about school uniforms and Athletics Day on DVD in English and Arabic. This was a manageable way of preparing new arrivals at the school to expand into the production of digital stories. The school sees the use of technology as a way of building understanding between itself and newly arrived families.

Getting Started

Producing information about practical issues such as school uniform and Athletics Day was considered to be a useful starting point for the project. The DVDs were then used at information gatherings.

Outcomes

Digital Information

The digital information about the school was simple and helped the school to solve many of the potential hiccups before expanding the program into personal stories. Presenting information digitally has also helped us to realise how limited and, at times, how incomprehensible many communication strategies can be. When we showed the digital information to our students we heard many comments such as, 'So that's why...' and 'So that's what a sleeper (earring) is...' We have also been utilising digital technology as an aid for newly arrived students with their school work.

Critical success factors

- Start small
- Dedicated computer and a dedicated space
- Being prepared In some instances to visit family homes
- Scheduling to involve parents

Highlights

- Realising the potential of digital communication to convey information to parents, and to learn more about families.
- The joy of the children and parents who participated.

Future

The school will extend the project by:

- Developing digital stories for new arrivals that come to our school
- Building on the findings of a small research project with CLD families



St Albans East Primary School supports Community Partnerships to develop Parenting Skills at Brimbank

Program description

The project consisted of 6 sessions for Vietnamese parents. The sessions included:

- Guiding your children into a successful and happy life
- Helping your children with VCE and their future
- Setting up discipline for children at home
- Have you been helping your children to fully develop themselves?
- Coping with changing attitudes; physical, emotional and social development in teenagers
- Communication between parents and children

A range of respected specialists from the Vietnamese community delivered the presentations

Getting started

The project had a community focus and was part of a broader plan aimed to identify service gaps, build networks and strengthen families across the Brimbank area. In this sense, the project had a unique focus. Rather than directly involving parents in the school, the school was participating in, and contributing to, the development of the local community.

Critical success factors

- Short projects where parents do not have to over commit
- Aims were responsive to the needs of parents
- Parents involved in the planning and implementation
- Presenters need to be respected in the community and knowledgeable in their fields
- Project needs a coordinator
- Sessions conducted in first language
- Child care facilities provided

Highlights

A highlight of the project was the quality of the links established with external agencies. The value placed on the project by these agencies and the presenters were very significant for the project organisers.

Future

The school will continue to work towards a broader community strategy for the benefits of students and their families. A range of activities are being planned to support this strategy.





AUSOM network (AUStralia SOMali network) at Haig St and Olympic Village Primary Schools

Program description

The longer term aim of the project was to build friendships between families by having regular meetings, a homework club, transition program, International Food Day and lunchtime sports activities. Parents were encouraged to participate in all of these activities.

Getting started

Leading up to the project, Haig St Primary School celebrated its 80th anniversary. The Multi-Cultural Aide at the time, Yusuf Omar, generated a great deal of enthusiasm within the Somali community. Representatives and parents from the Somali community supported the event with an inspirational verbal presentation at the official ceremony and by providing a morning tea for over 70 guests.

Having a successful event helped to create links with the Somali community on which to build. We identified areas where improvements could be made. It was decided to extend and create avenues of support. Olympic Village joined Haig St Primary School with a view to engaging and improving relationships with the Somali community.

Outcomes

Sports and Celebrations!

Mission Australia joined with the schools and local community to begin an after school soccer tournament. Over 100 students participated in the program which was featured on SBS television. A girl's basketball tournament was organised in conjunction with the soccer tournament, generating an equal level of enjoyment.

On the International Food Day, 15 Somali parents participated by preparing food and performing a traditional Somali dance.

Other events included marching at the Banyule festival, a Pancake Day, parent sessions for supporting parents during school transitions, Ramadan Celebration Festival, establishment of a Homework Centre, Parent Information sessions to promote an understanding of the Australian schooling system, Olympic Village 50th birthday celebrations and the establishment of a Somali Women's Group.

Critical success factors

- Enthusiasm
- Engage families in their own time
- Engage families in ways that make them feel comfortable and special

Highlights

Seeing mothers who get out very little, smiling and enjoying the sights.

Future

Embedding all of the CLD initiatives that have been created in 2006.

Parents as Partners at St Bernadette's Primary School

Program description

The idea of the project was to involve as many CLD parents as possible in the schools' reading program. However, this caused them to evaluate many different aspects of the school program, and led to the development of many other initiatives around communication, welcoming, parent sessions, the Market Fresh Program and resilience building.

Getting started

Initially the school established a 'sign in' register for parents helping to change readers in the morning, and listening to readers in the afternoon. Some parents were threatened by the register, and so the school moved to a more face to face and informal process. This involved a greater commitment of staff time. From this point, the school could encourage parents to come into the classroom and observe their children. They also began to provide refreshments for those parents who assisted with the program.

Outcomes

Communication

The reading program led the school to evaluate how it communicates with parents. We are increasing our use of interpreters and translators, especially at critical times like enrolment, parent interviews and information sessions. Whilst all newsletters are translated into Vietnamese, the school is increasingly attempting to use visual means of communication.

The way we welcome parents is an important stepping stone to building relationships and having meaningful communication. One initiative has been to appoint and train students as ambassadors and tour leaders. One of their roles is to welcome parents of prep students at the November prep transition program. A power point presentation demonstrating parent involvement is shown to parents at the transition program.

Critical success factors

- Always have a staff member available to meet and greet parents
- Making time to chat to parents and acting on issues they raise

Highlights

- Meeting parents and breaking down barriers
- Learning more about children and their parents; other interests, needs and concerns

Future

- Publishing a list of parent as partners programs at the beginning of the year
- Encouraging parents to make suggestions about what they would like to do

Commonwealth Games



Commonwealth Games



Classroom activities



Classroom activities



Neighbourhood Watch awards



Preps First Day



Sunshine Christian School creates a mural

Program description

The staff, children and their parents have worked together to create a mural that celebrates the cultural and linguistic diversity of the school. Parents became actively involved and the project complemented other school activities, especially the resiliency project and the whole school focus on ESL.

Getting started

The children produced artwork and stories about cultural activities and family occasions. These were transferred onto the mural panels for each of the main cultural groups.

The Mural

After the initial planning stage, the project has been reasonably easy to implement. We have been fortunate to have a very good artist and teacher with whom the parents and children enjoy working. Even on some cold days in winter. Through working together, communication between staff and parents has increased, as well as communication between the parents of different cultures and languages. The mural is linked together with hands joining between the panels. This is symbolic for the unifying effect the mural has had on staff, parents and children.

Critical success factors

- Be flexible. Some parents will participate more in the planning stage, others will fall away, and others will join in. Appreciate and celebrate everybody's involvement.
- Spend time keeping everybody informed about progress.
- Be mindful of language levels. Sometimes people pretend they know what is being said.

Highlights

- The happy and sad stories
- Feeling part of the school community
- The beauty of the mural

Future

- We will hold a celebration with food, music and dance when we officially unveil the mural.
- We will also create a book using the panels of the mural.



Our murals are held together by linking hands to show that although we have different cultures we can all be friends





African Music and Drumming at St Albans Primary School

Program description

All years 3 and 4 children participated in the drumming project building their understanding of African music and chants as well as culture.

Getting started

Prior to this project, Foundation House had worked with elders from the Sudanese community to identify areas for community action. This included a full weekend consultation and workshop where education was identified as an important issue. St Albans Primary School was approached to conduct a four week program to share information about the Australian school system, encouraging parents to become involved in their child's education. The school discussed school structure and organisation, the curriculum, discipline etc. The parents also visited classes in action and were encouraged parents to join in activities. One of the outcomes of these sessions was the appointment of a member of the South Sudanese community to the school council.

From there, a range of initiatives have been developed, with the Music and Drumming program being one of these. Foundation House are publishing a booklet titled: *Engaging Refugee Parents in School Communities* which is about this program. The school has also been running parent networks and targeting groups within the school community such as the African Women's Network and Vietnamese parents. The school consults families about their and have consequently run sessions on healthy eating, child behaviour management, children's language development and women's health. The school offers child minding, afternoon tea and interpreters to encourage attendance.

The project was easy to organize since it was embedded as part of the school's curriculum. The School employed the services of a trained African drumming teacher who coordinated the purchase of the drums and instruments.

Music and drumming

CLD families became more connected to the school through having recognition of their values and culture through the curriculum. In this sense, the school was sending a message about mutual value and respect. In 2007, the links with the African community will be extended through the Artists in Schools Program when we are running a whole school performance based on African music and culture. We are also aiming to involve parents in the program.

Critical success factors

- Involving people with expertise (drumming teacher)
- Embedding within the school curriculum

Highlights

- The level of enthusiasm
- The smiling faces of parents during performances

Future

- The school would like to extend the project across all year levels
- Regular participation of parents and community in the drumming sessions



Braybrook College – Let’s listen and learn from each other

Program description

The aim of the project was to run a parent forum as a first step in opening up the lines of communication with the school’s Vietnamese parent community. A training program was developed for students to run the forum in the first language of Vietnamese families. Many of the activities from the *Creating Conversations* resource were utilised for the forum.

Getting started

The school ensured it had a wide support-base to sustain the project. The school’s administration supported the event and spoke at the beginning of the evening. Two social work students became involved in training the students, outside agencies came on-board and a group of school personnel, including staff who spoke Vietnamese supported the project from beginning to end.

Outcomes

The forum

The students were trained in harm minimisation, drug awareness, healthy choices and communication. The Student Welfare Coordinator first trained the students in English and then the Vietnamese teacher rehearsed the activities with the students in Vietnamese. Many of the activities from the *Creating Conversations* resource needed to be changed. For instance, the continuum activity was dropped, and the role plays were simplified.

On the night of the event, the students facilitated the activities. Parents volunteered to participate. Representatives from the Australian Vietnamese Women’s Welfare association attended on the night to lend their support. Brochures providing information about drugs were distributed and everybody had supper together.

Critical success factors

- A person who speaks the first language (e.g., Vietnamese). This person needs to be very involved in the project.
- Identifying strengths of the student group early on so that full advantage is gained from their skills. For example, it is important to establish which students can read and write in the first language, make props, greet the invitees and so on.
- Using a team approach that recognises all contributions.
- Personal invitations by students and phone calls the day before to confirm attendance and other details like starting times.



Highlights

- Being part of a team that involved staff, students and the community
- Feeling the enthusiasm for the project grow
- Everything coming together on the night
- Celebrating success together

Future

The school is planning other events that will help to build on the confidence, pride and fun the students gained from the event to empower them. This will also take the school further along the path to greater connectedness with their CLD families.



Monmia Primary School – Builds bridges between the school and parent community

Program description

The aim of the project was to establish a community liaison team involving parents and teachers to examine ways of supporting Monmia's parent community. This team consists of a parent, an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher, the Principal and other interested staff. The team also coordinates all culturally and linguistically diverse activities at Monmia Primary School.

Monmia Primary School initiated a partnership with the Victorian Parenting Centre (VPC) to implement the Ausparenting program. This program provides practical information and support to parents. The school has hosted several sessions facilitated by the VPC. The topics that have been covered include: The First Year at School, Going Back to Work With Your Child at School, How the School Supports You, and Advice and Tips for Parents with School Aged Children. All sessions were well attended.

Outcomes

The promotion of the English as a Second Language (ESL) afternoon teas and the Ausparenting program was successful in attracting the parent community to the school. Through surveys the VPC obtained data about parents – their demographics and attitudes towards the school and parenting, in order to strengthen the home-school partnership.

The VPC conducted information sessions for parents and provided professional development for staff about working more effectively with parents, particularly parents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Monmia Primary School is utilising the expertise of the VPC to provide advice and support to all parents. This assists parents to build their understanding of their children's transitions through the stages of schooling and to strengthen the home-school partnership.

Getting started

The Community Liaison Team sets goals and determined strategies to meet the needs of CLD parents.

Critical success factors

- The commitment from the Community Liaison Team that inspired the all the school staff.
- Seeking partnerships with community organisations

Highlights

The ESL afternoon teas continue to grow and are well attended and parents are being matched into cultural groups. These parents are starting to share their thoughts with the school.

Future

The Community Liaison Team continues to plan and examine other ways to bring the CLD parents in contact with the school. The Ausparenting program will continue until the end of 2008 and more parenting sessions are being planned.