

Bankstown Community Resource Group Inc
would like to acknowledge the Darug people who
are the traditional owners of the land on which our
premises stand.

Front cover:

Children's Week 2009 was a great success!

BCRG staff promote "Bongo's Big Day Out" a literacy resource for children.

CONTENTS

Structure	p. 2
Bankstown Community Resource Group Objectives	p. 4
Minutes of BCRG Annual General Meeting 2009	p. 5
Management Committee Report	p. 8
Projects & Programmes:	
Executive Officer	p. 10
Community Development Project	p. 14
Speech Pathology Project	p. 20
Training in Interaction, Communication & Literacy (TICL)	p. 26
Supporting Children with Additional Needs (SCAN)	p. 32
Mobile Minders Project (CAMMS)	p. 34
Children's Services Community Development Project	p. 43
Occupational Therapy	p. 50
Treasurer's Report	p. 53
Funding Sources	p. 54
Audited Financial Statements	P. 55

STRUCTURE

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Jacqueline Karauria, President
Lilian Keyrouz, Secretary
Tim Carroll, Treasurer

Harry Allie, Vice President
Fran Glozier, Member
Val Steele, Member

STAFF

Rebecca Galea
Effi Vassiliadis
Denis Cala

- Executive Officer
- Administration Officer
- Book keeper

Rebecca Galea
Anna Certoma
Roberta Chavez
Natasha Williams

- Community Development Officer—Job Split
- Community Development Officer—Job Split
- Community Development Officer—(now resigned)
- Community Consultation Project Worker

Maria Marmarinos
Kathy Theofilopoulou

- Children's Services Community Development Officer – Job Split
- CS Community Development Officer—Job Split

Nicole Simon
Kanella Souris
Monique Hines

- Speech Pathology Co-ordinator
- Speech Pathologist
- Speech Pathologist, The TICL Program (short term position)

Louise Scarcella
Jeannette Eskaff

- Bankstown Mobile Minders Co-ordinator
- Mobile Minders Childcare Worker
- Pool of casual staff

Kathy Theofilopoulou

- SCAN Project Co-ordinator

Julie Bertram
Loretta Lett
Shareen Clayton

- Early Childhood Teacher, Parents Playing a Part Series
- Aboriginal Cultural Worker, Parents Playing a Part Series
- Aboriginal Cultural Worker (now resigned)

Madelin Burt
Alison Hammond
Caroline Mills

- Occupational Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Occupational Therapist

BANKSTOWN COMMUNITY RESOURCE GROUP INC.

OBJECTIVES

- a)** To identify the needs of residents both adult and children experiencing suffering and misfortune due to physical, social and economic disadvantage and assist them by providing direct care, specialist advice, support and resources.
- b)** To develop strategies and programs to provide residents marginalised as a result of their physical, social and economic disadvantage, the capacity to meet these needs;
- c)** To develop sustainable and collaborative partnerships with formal and informal community groups and provide the necessary support and resources to facilitate the successful implementation of their goals in delivering direct assistance to the targeted groups;
- d)** To pro-actively engage in community development activities to facilitate the implementation access and equity policies in the government and non government sector and increase opportunities for CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse); ATSI (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander), and people with disabilities;
- e)** To engage in community development approaches: including direct consultations with residents; involvement in social planning processes with Bankstown City Council and other government agencies; and conducting research and analysis of government policy to inform the advocacy work to assist in the establishment of targeted community services.
- f)** In consultation with interagencies, networks and forums, plan and conduct conferences, forums, exhibitions and community events to address information and other community needs and aspirations;
- g)** To identify training and resource needs in children's and other services and to plan and deliver accredited training and develop requisite resources;
- h)** To ensure the effective and efficient management of all BCRG resources and comply with all legal, financial and accountability requirements and the state's legislative and policy framework in a professional and timely manner;

Bankstown Community Resource Group Inc.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting Held 20 October, 2009 at Level 2, 23 Marion St, Bankstown

The Annual General Meeting opened at 10:25 am.

Harry Allie, Acting President, chaired the meeting. He welcomed all the members, staff and participants and thanked them for coming to the 22nd annual general meeting of BCRG. He explained the purpose of the AGM and the voting rights of members.

1. Apologies:

A list of apologies received for the AGM was read out.

Tim Carroll moved the motion to accept the apologies, and this was seconded by Sam Galea.

Motion 1/09 'That the apologies for 2009 be accepted' was carried.

2. Acceptance of Previous Minutes

There were no amendments to the Minutes.

Lakshmi Ramjas moved a motion to accept the minutes of the 2008 AGM and Sam Galea seconded.

Motion 2/09 'That the minutes of the 2008 Annual General Meeting contained in the 2009 Annual Report be accepted as a true and accurate record' was carried.

3. President's Report

Jacque Karauria took the floor and presented the Presidents Report to the members.

4. Treasurer's Report

Our Treasurer, Tim Carroll, presented the Financial Statement of Accounts, the Auditor's report and his report to the members. He emphasized the strong financial position of BCRG. A full report is reproduced in the annual report documentation.

5. Adoption of Audited Financial Statements

Tim Carroll moved a motion to accept the audited financial statements and Julie Bertram seconded.

Motion 3/09: 'That the audited financial reports for 2009 be accepted' was carried.

6. Adoption of 2009 Annual Report

Sam Galea moved a motion to accept the 2009 annual report and Val Steele seconded.

Motion 4/09: 'That the Annual Report for 2009 be accepted' was carried.

7. Appointment of Auditor for 2010

Mary Said moved a motion to appoint Benbow & Pike as 2010 Auditors and Lakshmi Ramjas seconded.

Motion 5/09: 'That Benbow & Pike be appointed Auditors for 2010' was carried.

8. Election of Management Committee

The returning officer, Tony Smith took the floor and declared all positions on the Management Committee vacant. He put forward the following nominations for consideration: Val Steele, Harry Allie, Jacqueline Karauria, Lilian Keyrouz, Robyn Kirkpatrick, Fran Glozier and Wafa El-Esh. As there were no objections to these nominations, Mary Said moved a motion that the nominations for the Management Committee be accepted, and Militsa Kaperanovic seconded.

Motion 6/09: 'That the nominations for BCRG's 2010 management committee be accepted' was carried.

9. Appointment of Public Officer

Effi Vassiliadis was nominated as Public Officer and as there were no objections, Sam Galea moved a motion to accept the nomination for Public Officer and Tim Carroll seconded.

Motion 7/09: 'That the appointment for public officer be accepted' was carried.

Nominations for Office bearer positions on the Management Committee will be taken at the first Management Meeting after the AGM, the date of which will be advised to nominees as soon as possible.

The Returning Officer vacated the chair.

The Acting President thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the 2009 Annual General Meeting closed.

Meeting closed: 11:40 am.

Attendance

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Caterina Luciano	Parent of client	Sam Galea	Maltese of Bankstown
Tony Smith	Bankstown City Council	Colin Williams	Koori Elders
Julie Bertram	Revesby Uniting Church P.S.	Harry Allie	FaHCSIA—Sydney ICC and BCRG MC
Jacquie Karauria	Early Years Supported Playgroups and BCRG MC	Natasha Williams	Bankstown City Council
Trena Clarke	Chester Hill NC	Rosa Georgious	DET
Val Steele	MTC Work Solutions and BCRG MC	Meni Tsambouniaris	Ethnic Child Care FCS
Paola Alvarez	Coolabaroo NC	Mary Naim	Ethnic Child Care FCS
Lakshmi Ramjas	KU ISA	Roba Elcadi	Creating Links Co-op
Margaret Gorham	KU Children's Services	Lilian Keyrouz	BCRG MC
Tim Carroll	BYDS and BCRG MC	Jane Rabie	BENSOC
Bushra Masri	Metro MRC	Catherine Bell	Koorana Child and Family Centre
Turkan Aksoy	Bankstown City Council	Milica Kapetanovic	St George TAFE
Saldra Silva	Coolabaroo NC	Mary Said	Maltese of Bakstown
Mika Kozamara	KU ISA		

Apologies

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Natalie Munroe	Uni of Sydney	Alan Ashton	Bankstown City Council
Margaret Southwell	Bankstown City Council	Melissa Bridges	Mobile Child Care
Tricia McCabe	Uni of Sydney	Tim Keegan	Mobile Child Care
Sarina Leotta	Families NSW	Jennie Smith	Koori Elders
Daryl Melham, MP		Margaret Williams	Koori Elders
Fran Glozier	BCRG MC	Tanya Mihailuk	Mayor, Bankstown City Council
Tony Stewart, MP		Garry Starr	Bankstown City Council
Lyn Cohen	DOCS	Jayne Mackellar	Community Independent support Service
Jason Clare, MP			

Management Committee Report

2009-2010

Bankstown Community Resource Group was established in 1987 with the aim of increasing funding for local services and providing coordinated and effective delivery of services to the Bankstown Community.

BCRG has evolved in its commitment to the Bankstown Community and now itself delivers a host of innovative and much needed services and projects to the families of Bankstown and surrounding areas.

Achievements of 2009 / 2010

It has been the greatest pleasure to oversee the operations of BCRG this financial year. The dedication and creativity of the BCRG team is outstanding. BCRG has worked incredibly hard this year with great achievements within the different services provided to the community. I encourage you to read each report outlining in detail the achievements of this year. As we take a quick look at the highlights of this year I wish to congratulate the team at BCRG on their continued dedication to provide quality services to families in Bankstown.

BCRG, this year has expanded its work within the Occupational Therapy and Speech Pathology disciplines.

BCRG was accepted onto the Autism Panel to provide therapy service to children with Autism and this has seen the expansion of the speech pathology and occupational therapy teams. BCRG welcomed Nicole Simon who moved into the speech pathology coordinator position while Nisrine focuses her attention on the TICL (Training in Interaction, Communication and Literacy) project. Caroline Mills also joined the team to roll out the "Pick Me" project.

Early Childhood Intervention Conference

Nisrine and Rebecca co-presented the TICL training project at the Early Childhood Intervention Conference (ECIA) held at the National Convention Centre, Canberra. The presentation was very well received and gathered much interest by ISA services around Australia.

Madelin Burt also presented the Communication Sensation project at the ECIA conference. This was an amazing opportunity to showcase the innovative initiatives undertaken at BCRG.

On another high note Nisrine was accepted to present at the '**International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatrics**' conference, in Athens, Greece. Nisrine presented on child outcome measures collected from her Masters Research.

Again I encourage you to read the various project reports in the Annual Report which detail all the achievements of the 2009/2010 financial year. We extend our gratitude to the organisations, services and individuals who have joined in partnership with BCRG this year and seek your continued support in the future.

We also gratefully acknowledge the contribution of Bankstown City Council, Canterbury Bulldogs Leagues Club and Revesby Workers Club. Our main funding agencies; NSW Community Services, Ageing Disability and Home Care, Illawarra Children's Services and Families NSW.

I thank the members of the Management Committee for their time and commitment; Uncle Harry, Tim Carroll, Lilian Keyrouz and Fran Glozier. I extend a warm welcome to Mahesh Kayastha who recently joins the committee. On a sad note we farewell and thank Val Steele for her wonderful contribution to the committee and the organisation.

Jacqueline Karauria
Vice President



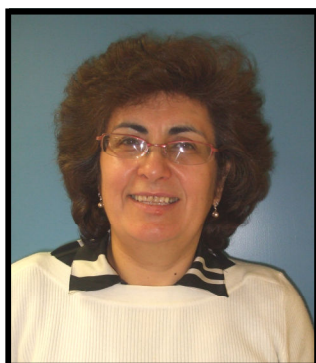
Jacqueline Karauria
President



Harry Allie
Vice President



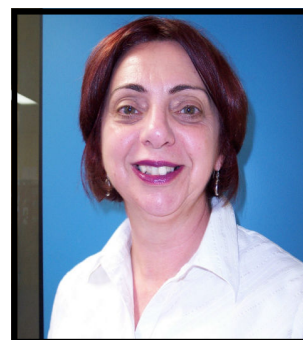
Tim Carroll
Treasurer



Lilian Keyrouz
Secretary



Fran Glozier
Member



Val Steele
Member

PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

Executive Officer

Project Staff: Rebecca Galea – Executive & Community Development Officer

Project Description:

The Executive Officer manages the day to day operation of the organisation and provides support and guidance to the BCRG project coordinators. In addition, the EO provides the Management Committee with background information to enable effective and efficient organisational decisions. It is also the role of the Executive Officer, in collaboration with staff and management, to design and implement a strategic planning process which ensures that the agreed future direction of the organisation is achieved through the aims and activities of each of its projects.

All BCRG project staff have completed detailed project summaries within this AGM report, consequently, I will focus on new and developing programs and models.

BCRG Marketing and Promotion

The BCRG staff and management team have been focussed on how to better promote and market the work of the organisation and have engaged a graphic designer to work on a new logo for the organisation that reflects who we are as an organisation, the work that we do now and into the future. It has been a long process and I would like to thank the staff and management for participating in the very consultative process. It is excellent to finally be in a position to launch the new BCRG logo for 2011.

Early Intervention Team

A great deal of work has been put into further developing and expanding our early intervention team during 2009/2010. These developments are in line with the organisational strategic plan. A recruitment process was undertaken in late 2009 to employ new speech and occupational therapists to accommodate these service expansions. In the later half of 2010, BCRG will trial the part time appointment of an early intervention team leader to oversee particularly the clinical supervision of the therapists and ensure that families accessing these services are well supported.

The BCRG Kids Clinic service was launched during the past year and we have seen a steady increase in the number of families accessing speech and occupational therapy from this program. Under this program children who have a chronic medical condition and complex care needs are referred to the BCRG Kids Clinic by a GP under an enhanced primary care plan. Special mention must be made to Effi for putting all the systems in place and especially Maddi and Kanella for taking on our first clients and establishing therapy rooms in the BCRG office. And a huge thanks to all the BCRG staff who have helped with cleaning up, archiving and moving furniture to make room for the BCRG Kids clinic.

Helping Children with Autism service

In October 2009 BCRG submitted a tender to the Commonwealth Department of Families Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to be apart of the Autism Early Intervention Service Provider Panel. Under the program, children aged 0-6 years that have been diagnosed with Autism, Asperger's/Syndrome, Rett's Disorder, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder or Pervasive Developmental Disorder are eligible for funding from FaHCSIA. Families can use this funding to purchase a range of both individual and group evidence based programs designed specifically for children with Autism. This program has been rolled out early in 2010 and has been taken up by local families at a great rate. For the past four years Nisrine, Kanella and Maddi have trialled and fine tuned various early intervention programs that formed the basis of this new service for BCRG. Thanks to their hard work we have been able to expand our early intervention team to 7 part time speech and occupational therapists. I would like to thank the early intervention team for their insight and experience in developing a good range of family centered practical services. I would also like to thank Effi once again for establishing all the systems that have been needed to streamline this project and enable its consistent implementation.

Parents Playing a Part

Guring Gang Playgroup

Since 2006, BCRG Inc has successfully implemented an Aboriginal Supported Playgroup funded through the Aboriginal Child Youth and Family Strategy funding stream from the Department of Community Services. Unfortunately, the Aboriginal playgroup co-facilitator Shareen Clayton had to leave unexpectedly from her position at BCRG due to family issues late in 2009. This meant that Julie Bertrum was implementing the playgroup on her own and I would like to thank Julie for her perseverance and patience during this period – while we undertook various recruitment processes. Early 2010, BCRG were so happy to take on Loretta Lett as the new Aboriginal playgroup facilitator. Loretta is a trainee undertaking her children's services cert III. I would like to formally welcome Loretta to the team acknowledge what an asset she is in building and fostering relationships with the local Aboriginal community.

Parenting Programs

In line with the recommendations of the Wood Royal Commission into Child Protection in NSW in 2008/9 the NSW government has released *Keep Them Safe: A shared approach to child wellbeing* - the NSW Government's five-year plan to fundamentally change the way children and families are supported and protected. Its aim is to improve the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all children and young people in New South Wales. As part of this new plan, Families NSW rolled out triple P training (positive parenting program) for community organisations working with children and families. As part of this initiative, both Louise and Kathy underwent the accredited Triple P training. Since accreditation, Louise and Kathy in partnership with Margaret Dunne from Greek Orthodox Community Centre, rolled out this training over several weeks of an evening. I would like to congratulate both Louise

and Kathy for undertaking this training and implementing the sessions and also acknowledge Anna and Maria for undertaking the 123 Magic and Kathy for completing The Incredible Years training. This allows BCRG to extend our skills and increase our capacity as an organisation to work with children and families.

Training in Interaction, Communication and Literacy (TICL)

The TICL program has been reported on in previous years. The Training in Interaction, Communication and Literacy (TICL) project aims to build the capacity of child care centre staff and parents in supporting and enhancing children's language and literacy. TICL is a DoCS funded WSAAS project being implemented in partnership with the University of Sydney (Speech Pathology).

Over the last 12 months Monique Hines joined Nisrine El- Choueifati to implement simultaneous child care centre block placements. Having a second speech pathologist on board has allowed testing of the TICL program to ensure its transferability to other speech pathologists in the future. Monique finished her time in the TICL program in December 2009 and I would like to thank her for all her work during her time in this program and wish her well in the future.

The TICL program is fast drawing to an end but not before some exciting new twists and turns have been explored. Nisrine and I co-presented at the Early Childhood Intervention Australia conference in Canberra in May 2010 and received very good feedback from those in the audience – from all over Australia. We then presented with our Sydney University partners to senior staff from the Office of Early Childhood Education and Child care in Canberra. Specifically, these staff were from the Early Childhood Development and Workforce Strategy Unit. The presentation was well received and there was particular interest in whether the TICL program could be rolled out in other states across Australia. Subsequently, we applied for Early Childhood Education and Childcare best practice and innovation project funding from DEEWR – to develop a train the trainer for the TICL program. We are yet to hear from the department but anxiously anticipate their response!

Canterbury Mobile Minders

BCRG worked tirelessly in 2009 to lobby for the pick up of this program from the Department of Community Services – Metro Central Region. Demand for the Canterbury Mobile Minders service had increased dramatically over the last 12 months and the service continued to achieve its goal of increasing access to community programs for families and to pre-school like experiences for children. The vital role that Canterbury Mobile Minders plays can only be understood when analysing the data collected since its inception in 2007. Almost all families are from CALD backgrounds and over 70% do not access any form of early childhood experience including playgroups and formal child care.

Unfortunately, Community Services were unable to pick up funding this project at this time due to their priority of growing licensed pre-school places. This was a very disappointing outcome but I would like to once again thank the efforts of the program coordinator Louise Scarcella and part-time mobile minder Jeanette Eskaff for all your efforts in implementing this program and preparing all the data for completion of

the report to DoCs. It should be noted that a fee for service program is still operating in the Canterbury LGA for a limited number of services.

Preschool Growth Program

In 2007, the Rudd government made a commitment to provide universal access to early childhood education in the year before school – this commitment was ratified by COAG. In 2008, Community Childcare Co-operative Ltd. (NSW) was successful in securing a tender with the Community Services agency of the NSW Department of Human Services, to deliver the third stage phase of the Preschool Investment and Reform Plan (PIRP). Community Childcare Co-operative has termed this the Preschool Growth Program. The Preschool Growth Program is responsible for identifying and assessing not for profit community based preschools located in NSW for growth potential and to develop new preschool services in areas where there are inadequate numbers of preschools.

BCRG has been working solidly for the past 12 months to assess the need and capacity to implement a BCRG Community Preschool within the Bankstown area. In this initiative, BCRG will partner with Bankstown West Public School to establish a 40 place preschool within the school grounds. A capital funding application was submitted to Community Childcare in September 2010 for funding to cover the building of the centre and to ensure the preschool will be compliant with Children’s Services Regulations 2004. If successful, the preschool establishment will occur in 2011 – so it will be a very busy year indeed.

The Bongo Roadshow

A very exciting project that BCRG facilitated last year was the Families NSW Early Literacy “Bongo’s Big Day Out” book. The project was developed to promote reading to children aged 0-2 years. A book known as “Bongo’s Big Day Out” was produced depicting Bongo at well known sites around Bankstown. This year much time has been spent developing Bongo’s Big Day Out into a road show that will visit various early childhood settings across Bankstown including child care centres and playgroups. Stay tuned for the outcomes of this very exciting project.

The past 12 months has been a very busy but productive time within BCRG. We have made significant in-roads in achieving the goals that were set out in our strategic plan in 2009. Overall, the BCRG team has been very successful in defining our specialities and expertise and consolidating our service delivery model. I would like to congratulate the entire BCRG team for embracing these new directions with such commitment and innovation

Last but absolutely not least, I would like to extend my gratitude to our Management Committee members. BCRG could not operate without our experienced and insightful management committee team. During 2009/10 BCRG was very fortunate to have Val Steele, Tim Carroll, Jacqui Karauria, Lilan Keyrouz, Harry Allie and Fran Glozier. We would like to formally welcome the new MC members to our board and thank them for their contribution to the running of BCRG throughout the last year.

Rebecca Galea
Executive Officer

Community Development Project

Funding Body: NSW Community Services

Project Staff: Rebecca Galea Community Development Officer
 Anna Certoma Community Development Officer

Project Description:

The focus of the community development project is to develop and implement community development activities that address identified local needs. The community development project works in collaboration with other government and non-government agencies in the area to advocate for activities that promote community interests and needs. This is achieved through agency network participation. Supporting and resourcing existing community groups and organisations is also a key activity of this project.

Project Work Summary 2009-2010

C.B (Community Based) Partnerships

BCRG Inc, is a member of a local consortium made up of service providers located throughout the Bankstown LGA – including Bankstown City Council, Creating Links, Greenacre Area Neighbourhood Centre, Woodville Community Services and Coolaburoo Neighbourhood Centre. The aim of the consortium is to address community needs through working in partnership.

CB Partnership was successful in gaining further Council funding to essentially test the consortium model. During 2009/10 CB Partnerships has been working on developing and testing a community consultation tool. Consortium partners have been undertaking various forms of consultation mechanisms to test what consultation methods work best in the Bankstown community. The consultation program has also included testing the extent to which the internet, text messaging and social networking sites are being used and can be used in the future to inform Bankstown community members about community events, services and issues. The information gathered throughout this consultation program will be used to develop a consultation matrix, report and literature to inform social planning and community consultation processes within the Bankstown LGA in the future.

Aboriginal Supported Playgroup Program (Parents Playing a Part Series)

This program is funded by Community Services' Aboriginal Child Youth and Family Strategy.

After securing further funding, BCRG's Aboriginal supported playgroup- Guring Gang, recommenced in July 2009 with workers Julie Bertram and Shareen Clayton. In March 2010 Loretta Lett took up the position of Aboriginal Early Childhood Trainee. The CDO project has supported Loretta in her new role.

The Guring Gang program continued to provide opportunities for the participating families to further develop their skills in engaging with their children in new and positive ways. Parents were able to meet other Aboriginal families and Elders and further develop peer support networks.

A detailed account of the playgroup's activities has been provided in a separate report.

Early Literacy Programs

The Bongo Roadshow

This project has been funded by Bankstown City Council. It is a follow on from the Baby Steps to Literacy project completed in 2009. The children's story book, 'Bongo's Big Day Out' is being used as a foundation for this project. An extension literacy program has been developed. The Bongo Roadshow Program will be delivered to twelve early childhood settings in the Bankstown local government area, and it will include lead up literacy activities and take home activities for the children.

The early childhood settings include local libraries, playgroups and child care centres. The settings will be selected on the basis of suburbs in the Bankstown LGA that identified children as having developmental vulnerabilities according to the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) carried out in 2009. This project is due to be completed in 2010.

Professional Support Project

This project has been funded by Community Services' Aboriginal Child Youth and Family Strategy and has two components: Early Literacy Training and a Professional Support Forum.

In consultation with ACYFS committee members and professionals working with Aboriginal children under five years, it was decided the training would be based on the Early Words program. The Early Words training will be delivered in the second half of 2010 to approximately 40 people working with Aboriginal children from the South West Sydney region. In turn the professionals are expected to deliver the early literacy strategies and resources to their clients, i.e. Aboriginal families.

The Professional Support Forum commenced in November 2009 and takes place every three months. Professionals working with Aboriginal children come together with the aim of increasing participation and contribution of child and family service providers in the planning and delivery of best practice Aboriginal Children, Youth and Family Strategy in the region. The forum also aims to increase the access and engagement of Aboriginal families with local child and family services, and embed the principles of early intervention and prevention into service delivery.

Guest speakers have been organised for the Professional Support Forum including Maureen Silleri from Koori Early Learning Meetings (KELM) and Craig Edwards from the Family Action Centre (University of Newcastle) to discuss his varied work in the field of engaging Aboriginal dads.

Active Koori Kids

This project was funded by Bankstown City Council from their 2008 Community Grants program and commenced in July 2009. The aim of the project was to provide local Aboriginal families with children aged 0-5 with a 20 week sport and recreational program. This included structured activities, i.e. swimming lessons and Kinder gym sessions at the Bankstown YMCA.

Approximately nine children enthusiastically took part in the program and parents reported that their children showed improved gross motor and coordination skills since taking part in the program. The program was extended beyond the intended 20 weeks due to left over funds, and thus concluded in July 2010.

Guring Gang Cultural Expeditions

This project was funded by Bankstown City Council 's 2009 Community Grants Program. The project aims to provide Aboriginal children under five years and their families to engage in a structured cultural program. This includes outings with Aboriginal cultural content.

The first of these excursions was an outing to Flinders Slopes along the Georges River. Over 20 children and parents/carers participated in the event which included a picnic lunch, an Aboriginal painting workshop, and a visit to the Seven Peacekeepers – a landmark Aboriginal sculpture.

Three excursions will be planned for the latter part of 2010.

CDO Participation in Interagency Networks

The CDO project continued its interest and involvement in professional networks and community events including Bankstown Interagency Group (B.I.G.) funded by Families NSW and the Koori Interagency Meeting.

The CDO officer is also actively involved in the Bankstown Community Drug Action Team (CDAT), by NSW Health.

Through the CDAT network funding was secured from NSW Health for a project targeting families with young children who are accessing the methadone and drug and alcohol services within the Bankstown area. Funds were supplemented by Bankstown City Council for the 'Play, Nurture and Grow' playgroup. The project was widely promoted through a range of health worker professionals and community workers servicing the Bankstown area. Unfortunately participant numbers were insufficient to sustain the program.

The CDAT committee decided to redirect the funds into a recreational program targeting children and families who have a family member that is incarcerated. This program has been supported by the Shine for Kids organisation, which directly deals with this target group.

Greenacre Neighbourhood Centre

The CDO has continued supporting Greenacre Neighbourhood Centre (GANC) through Management Committee membership. The CDO has regularly liaised with the Executive Officer of GANC regarding staff members, investigating relocation of premises for the centre and planning a transitional development project review for the following financial year.

Maltese of Bankstown

The Maltese of Bankstown group continued their monthly meetings, activities and outings during 2009-2010 and were supported and resourced by the CDO project.

The CDO provided support by organising community guest speakers from Bankstown Hospital (physiotherapist and occupational therapist), NSW Police, the Diabetes Centre at Bankstown Hospital and Lawrence Dimach to discuss the Malta Convention.

The CDO had also assisted with the organisation of group outings by making contact with transport companies, visitor's information centres and restaurants and clubs. Across this financial year the group had outings to Bathurst, Mudgee and the Shoalhaven region.

The CDO project also prepared funding submissions to CDSE (Clubs Funding) and NSW Seniors Grants program.

The Maltese of Bankstown group continues to grow every year, attracting new members. Meetings and activities were well attended with an average of 35 people (and sometimes over 50) participating each month.

Aboriginal Elders and Nanghami Ngallia Aboriginal Corporation (NNAC)

The Aboriginal Elders of Bankstown have been provided with the use of BCRG venue/facilities for a number of their meetings throughout the year. The CDO has exchanged information with the Elders regarding community events and the Elders are invited and welcome to the Guring Gang playgroup sessions. BCRG supported the chairperson of Nanghami Ngallia Aboriginal Corporation with practical support in organising and running their Annual General Meeting.

Vision for 2009/2010

The CDO project envisages that in the 2009/2010 year the project will:

- Continue the Professional Support Forum and trial an Aboriginal Playgroup Facilitators' network.
- Continue to work closely with the Aboriginal community in South West Sydney in providing front line, evidence based services and programs for families with young children.

- Continue supporting the development and growth of Greenacre Area Neighbourhood Centre through membership on Management Committee.
- In collaboration with other BCRG staff, continue to raise the profile of BCRG as a local NGO delivering direct community services and programs.
- Continue to develop the knowledge base of BCRG projects through the development and implementation of evidence based programs.

Anna Certoma

Community Development Officer

Rebecca Galea

Community Development Officer

Aboriginal Supported Playgroup Program (parents Playing a Part)

Funding Body: Aboriginal Child Youth and Family Strategy, Community Services

Project Staff: Julie Bertram — Early Childhood Teacher
Loretta Lett — Aboriginal Cultural Worker

Project Description:

The Aboriginal supported playgroup “The Guring Gang” recommenced in July 2009 funded by DoCS Aboriginal, Child, Youth and Family strategy. The group was facilitated by Julie Bertram and Shareen Clayton (Aboriginal cultural worker) in 2009 and Julie and Loretta Lett in 2010.

The playgroup meets each Thursday between 10.30am -1.30 pm and provides a safe and supportive environment for parents and children to discover the joys of playing together. The program consists of a wide range of developmentally and culturally appropriate activities and ones that cater to the children’s individual interests. Activities are carefully chosen to develop fine motor, gross motor, cognitive, language, literacy, numeracy and social skills in a play setting. We incorporate culturally significant literature, art, craft and music where possible and the local elders often attend our days activities. Parents are encouraged to be involved in all activities and further develop their skills in engaging with their child in new and positive ways.

Throughout the year a number of activities have been made available to the families including swimming lessons and Kinder Gym. These activities were well supported and enjoyed by the children. We have also had an excursion to Flinders Slopes to view the sculpture “The Seven Peacemakers” an artwork depicting the dreamtime story. This was followed by art activities with a local Aboriginal artist. We have also attended Revesby Uniting Church for cooking days and a soft play centre for our Christmas Party.

Our group is also regularly attended by representatives from various Aboriginal organizations such as Aboriginal Health, Housing, and others that provide information on a wide range of services to the parents.

Throughout 2010 we have attended local forums for those working with Aboriginal children and have begun networking with other Aboriginal Playgroups in South Western Sydney. This has been a wonderful opportunity to share ideas and strategies and we look forward to developing this further in the coming year.

The year has been positive and enjoyable. The children are happy and confident, and the parents encouraged and assisted to continue to play an active part in this very important stage of their child’s development.

Julie Bertam

Early Childhood Teacher

Speech Pathology Project

Funding Body: NSW Ageing, Disability and Home Care

Project Staff: Locum Speech Pathology Coordinator - Nicole Simon
Speech Pathologist - Kanella Mendigorin

Project Description:

The BCRG Speech Pathology project has been funded by the NSW Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) since February 1999.

Our project continues to be funded to provide speech pathology services to children aged 0-6 years in the Bankstown LGA within their children's services. This year we continue to develop a service which facilitates communication and supports inclusion not only for child care centre staff but also for families of children identified with communication difficulties.

What services do we provide and who is eligible?

We continue to provide **two types** of assistance to children.

The first type of service received by all children referred to the service is an **initial assessment**. The second type of service provided by the BCRG Speech Pathology project is **therapy**. Following the initial assessment based on the presenting communication difficulties, child care centre staff and families are provided with a choice of suitable programs provided by BCRG or referrals are made.

Any child aged between 0-6 attending a child care service in the Bankstown Local Government Area is eligible for a free assessment after the family and child care centre fill out an application form and return it to BCRG.

Children who are eligible for a free speech pathology therapy service are:

- Children who have had a speech pathology assessment by BCRG Speech Pathology
- Children who's assessment has identified a moderate to severe language delay
- Children who are NOT receiving other speech therapy services

Children who have been assessed and are identified as having only stuttering, having only speech difficulties ie. difficulties with producing sound or having a mild language delay will NOT be eligible for free speech therapy services.

These children will be referred to other local speech pathology services including our own BCRG Kids Clinic (a fee for service speech pathology clinic). Families will be provided with recommendations and child care staff may be provided with a report about the results of the assessment.

1. **Assessment:**

Assessments are held at BCRG with the child and family. These visits typically involve observation, formal assessment and screening of the child's communication skills.

The implementation of the individual family service plan is often carried out as it continues to be at the core of service planning and goal-setting in partnership with families. This plan is developed in consultation with families, children service staff and relevant agencies and therapy services. It identifies the families' goals for their child and how each service can support the child and family in achieving these goals.

2. **Referral and Therapy:**

BCRG model of service delivery was reviewed at the commencement of 2010. Changes were implemented and continue to be reviewed.

- **6 session therapy**

Following an initial assessment, if a child is identified as having a *moderate-severe language delay* they will be eligible for 6 session blocks of therapy within their children's service or on-site at BCRG with their family. Children are eligible for 2 blocks of therapy a year. Therapy usually occurs in a group setting and parent training is a focus of therapy.

- **School readiness group**

Following an initial assessment, if a child is *going to school in 2010* and is identified as having a *moderate-severe language delay and/or mild developmental delay*; they are eligible for the school readiness group, which takes place on-site at BCRG with the family.

Between 2009 and 2010 the school readiness group ran three times, with four Sydney University students, for 9 sessions. Both groups were able to engage attendance from 16 families. The families were from a diverse range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds including Vietnamese and Arabic.

The school readiness group consists of:

1. Individual language screening assessment
2. 6 group therapy sessions
3. 1 parent discussion session
4. Individual language screening assessment to check progress
5. Progress report and support to families with Transition to School Process

The school readiness group was designed to provide children and their families a classroom- like setting and:

- Develop attention and listening in small groups.
- Develop talking and learning new words.
- Develop social communication and confidence to make friends.
- Develop early literacy and sounding out skills.

The outcomes for the children and families have been extremely positive. In a discussion group with families following the groups, carers identified key themes that supported them in working with their child to prepare them for school including:

- All of the language skills of the children improved by the end of the group.
- Worked collaboratively with other agencies involved with the child.
- The benefit of being able to observe and be involved with activities to support their child's language and literacy.
- Families further developed their skills in stimulating their child's language.
- Their child's interest in the activities from the group would lead them to ask for similar activities at home.
- Observing their child's social interaction with other peer's benefited families and supported them to make better decisions about whether or not to send them to school.
- The communication between the parents and child care centre was also reported by the parents to have improved.

- **Communication – Sensation**

A very common theme that resounds when working with families with developmental delay and Autism is the amount of services they require to assist their child's overall development. Families have discussed that they may need to access a range of sites to receive the services of occupational therapy and speech therapy. Data gathered from the BCRG occupational therapy project piloted in 2006 indicated that 70% of the children requiring occupational therapy services also required support with communication development.

In responding to the needs of families and children the speech pathology project has worked together with Occupational therapist (OT), Madelin Burt to develop a trans-disciplinary model of providing services to children and families. The OT and SP work together to be trained in relevant cross discipline areas and have planned the program and goals together to provide a seamless service for families and children with developmental delays and Autism. The program has not only supported the children and families but has been successful in developing the skills of therapists and building their ability to provide support to new therapists and students in the team. *Please refer to the Occupational Therapy report* to get further information about the program design and outcomes.

Between August and December 2009 Madelin Burt (OT) and Nisrine El-Chouiefati (SP) conducted one 'communication sensation' programme with four families. This group was supported by two occupational therapy students from the University of Western Sydney. The group consisted of families of children with Autism, developmental delays and physical disabilities. During this time, the team focused on researching a range of outcome measurement tools. As a result the Parent Stress Index is now used as one of the pre and post measures of group outcomes, as well the Goal Attainment Scale (GAS).

At the beginning of 2010 Madelin Burt (OT), Alison Hammond (OT) and Nicole Simon (SP) commenced the first round of weekly group sessions. The sessions usually run for 2 hours each. Trans-disciplinary support and development was beginning to be extended to Nicole and Alison who will be working with Madelin (OT). This is so the transfer of skills can occur throughout the team. Nicole also received training in the Hanen program, 'It Takes Two to talk'. Communication Sensation will also be run again in the 2nd half of 2010.

Conference presentation

Madelin Burt (OT) and Nisrine El-Choueifati (SP) presented on the outcomes from this group in May 2010 at the Early Childhood Australia Conference in Canberra in a paper titled "*Communication Sensation: Relationships Shaping Communication and Sensation*"

Extension of services

A vision for the early intervention team is to continue consultations with stake holders – families, child care centres and funding bodies to identify needs and improve access and build capacity. The year 2010 led the organisation to respond to government initiatives and the needs of the families to extend the services available to families.

- **Kids clinic**

The Kids clinic service allows families to utilise funds by the *Medicare Enhanced Primary Care Plan*, to access both Speech Pathology Services and Occupational Therapy services. Between October 2009 and July 2010 the program has seen the recruitment of Madelin Burt (OT), Caroline Mills (OT), Kanella Mendigorin (SP) and Sarah Bradshaw (SP) to provide services to families in the Kids Clinic service. Preliminary referrals to Kids Clinic appear to be addressing the gaps in services for Occupational Therapy and school age Speech Pathology services. There are also families wanting to utilise their Medicare funding under the 'Helping Children with Autism Package'.

- **Helping Children with Autism Package, FACSIA funded services**

In December 2009 Monique Hines, Rebecca Galea, Madelin Burt, Kanella Souris and Nisrine El-Choueifati completed an application process to provide evidence based services under the 'Helping Children with Autism Package' funded by FACSIA. In June 2010 we were notified that we were successful in extending our services to families and children with Autism. We have a number of group and individual programs provided by a multidisciplinary team. The underpinnings of the programs include relationship and developmental approaches that take place with the important people in the child's life and are flexible to work in naturalistic and meaningful environments. A full description of the programs provided under this initiative can be found at:

<http://www.bcrq.org.au/helping-children-with-autism-package.htm>

Child care centre staff support and training

- **Service Provision**

In 2008- 2009, the Speech Pathology Project provided speech pathology services to the children's services within the Bankstown LGA. These children's services included:

New Alma Road CCC
Calvary Chapel Preschool
Coolamon Children's Centre
Dove Cottage Children's Centre
Padstow Play 'n' Learn CCC
Just Little Kidz LDCC
Jenday Kindergarten
Kids Kindy
Kids Kubby Kindy
Love N Cuddles CCC
Bankstown Montessori
Bankstown Multicultural Child Care Centre

Baba Kyrillos
Maria Long Day Care
Revesby Heights Kindy
Bankstown Family Day Care
Sunshine Kindy
Revesby Uniting Church CCC
Sefton Academy
Sefton CCC
Stay, Play and Learn
Teddy Tammy's CCC
KU Yagoona
KU Playford Park

Peachtree Kindergarten
Picnic Point CCC
Picnic Point Preschool
Bankstown South's Infants Preschool
Bass Hill CCC

KU Greenacre CCC
KU Lions Yagoona Preschool
Rosie and Roger Rabbit
Playtime Preschool

Professional networks and partnerships

Clinical supervision of Speech Pathology Students

BCRG Speech Pathologists have developed their skills and capacity to provide clinical supervision to Speech Pathology students from the University of Sydney. The supervision of Speech Pathology students has been an asset to our professional development in the ability to clearly define and communicate our skills in working with children and families. The students have been involved in assessment and the group therapy program, the 'School Readiness Group'.

Providing clinical placements to students adds resources to the programs and builds our capacity to implement group based programs with the right amount of professional support. It supports a culture of continual learning and reflection in the relationship between students and their supervisor.

We have received very positive feedback and reflections from Speech Pathology students attending placements at BCRG. They have discussed that they were able to understand their role as a Speech Pathologist in a true community context. On these placements students have refined their skills in working in group settings, involving and developing communication skills with families from CALD backgrounds and developing skills in community education.

South Western Sydney Translations Working Party

The BCRG Speech Pathology Project continued its involvement in the South Western Sydney Translation Working Party. This working party aims to develop Speech Pathology resources for translation in various community languages. BCRG supported the preparation of a translated pamphlet about the use of visual systems to support communication. We currently maintain involvement through emails.

Visions for 2010 -2011

Documenting and streamlining prioritisation, intake and eligibility of clients into the BCRG early intervention services.

With the addition and extension of services to children and families through 'Kids clinic' and services under the 'Helping Children with Autism Package' funded by FACSIA, the early intervention will determine and continue to review clear guidelines for intake and eligibility into services. The service funded through ADHC will be coordinated to support families to access the right services in a timely manner.

Promotion of services and enhance communication with stakeholders

- Promote the current specialised services the BCRG Speech Pathology service provides to families, child care centres and early childhood agencies.
- To improve access and referrals to the service using pamphlets, conference presentation, community forums.

Designing evidenced based programs and informing professional networks

- To continue to research multi-layered outcome measurement tools in order to observe and report on the changes our programs have on children, families and communities.
- To continue to present about our unique services and inform the profession by submitting to relevant conferences and networks.

Improved data collection systems

- To develop systems for improving key performance indicators and obtaining more specific data about characteristics of clients and their families to identify trends which will support the development of programs which reflect the needs identified in the community.

Thank you

This year has seen the extension of early intervention services at BCRG. The services that have been extended have been informed by research, clinical reasoning, families and partnership with services and funding bodies. The early intervention team is buzzing and will definitely extend on the skills and experiences of the team.

We would like to thank all the amazing and skilled BCRG staff who have supported this team including Rebecca Galea, Effi Vassiliadis, Monique Hines, Kanella Mendigorin, and Madelin Burt. We would also like to welcome the new staff Sarah Bradshaw (SP), Alison Hammond (OT), Caroline Mills (OT). We would also like to thank all the professional partners from the 'Brighter Futures' program and all the child care centre staff and families.

Nisrine El-Choueifati
Early Intervention Team Leader

Nicole Simon
Speech Pathology Project Co-ordinator

Training in Interaction, Communication & Literacy (T.I.C.L)

Funding Body: Western Sydney Area Assistance Scheme - NSW Community Services

Project Staff: Nisrine El-Choueifati, Monique Hines, Rebecca Galea

Project Description:

In 2006, Bankstown Community Resource Group Inc. (BCRG) was funded through the Western Sydney Area Assistance Scheme (WSAAS) from the Department of Community Services to develop and trial a new and innovative model of communication and literacy enhancement. This model is now known as the Training in Interaction, Communication and Literacy or TICL for short.

The TICL program is an action research project that involves the development of competency based communication training for child care workers which is delivered by a BCRG speech pathologist based within a child care centre.

BCRG was funded to implement the TICL program in 10 Bankstown Child Care Centres over 4 years. By end June 2010, Nisrine El-Choueifati and Monique Hines implemented TICL in a total of 8 centres: Fairy Kingdom Child Care Centre, Angel Faces Long Day Care Centre, Peachtree Kindergarten, Bankstown Multicultural Children's Centre, Teddy Tammy's, Stay Play and Learn and Playtime Preschool.

What is the T.I.C.L program?

A Partnership

The TICL program is a partnership project between BCRG and the University of Sydney Speech Pathology, Faculty of Health Sciences. BCRG and the University of Sydney work in collaboration with child care centre staff to establish language and literacy rich experiences for all participating children by building on child care workers' existing skills.

Onsite Workplace Training

The TICL program sees a speech pathologist being based within the child care centre for two days a week for ten weeks. Throughout this time the TICL speech pathologist implements training modules designed to build the skills of child care centre staff in enhancing children's communication and pre-literacy skills.

The TICL speech pathologist works with child care workers as a professional partner and starts with existing skills and strengths of child care staff. The TICL speech pathologist assists staff to become conscious and reflective on their current practice.

Research Design

The effectiveness of the TICL program is evaluated at each child care centre. Results from these evaluations are used to inform the implementation of the TICL program in the future.

The research questions we want to answer include:

- Can the TICL program improve the skills of childcare centre staff in promoting language as a pre-cursor to literacy?
- Can child care workers transfer these skills to the parents of children attending the childcare centre and in turn increase family involvement in engaging in language and literacy at home?
- Do children’s language and literacy skills change over the course of the TICL program?

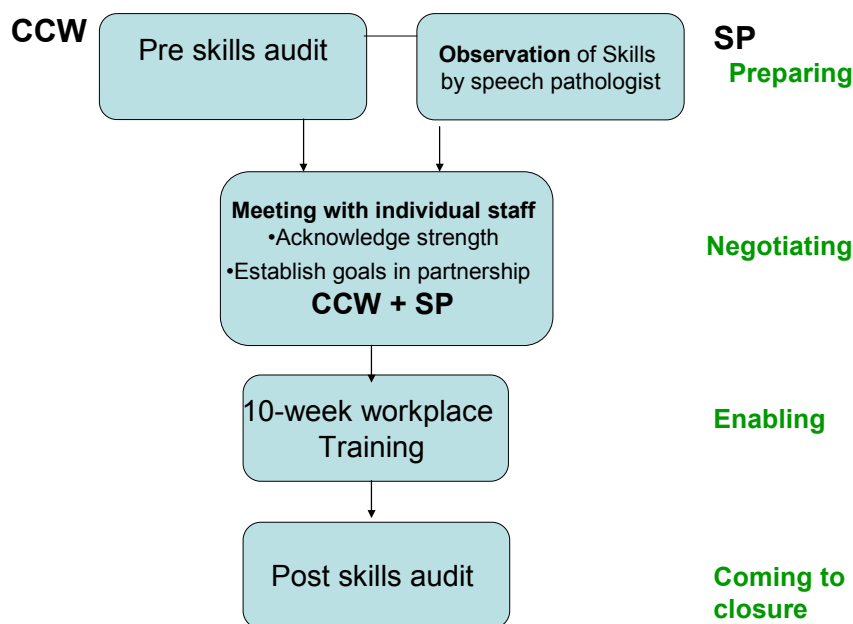
Measurement of these outcomes and changes:

- **Change in workers’ skills:** using the skills audit
- **Change in children’s skills:** pre- and post-program assessments
- **Change in family’s involvement:** focus group and parent interview

TICL uses a **PARTNERSHIP AND MENTORING** approach with the following elements:

A Partnership and Mentoring approach

(Zachary, 2000)



Outcomes to Date:

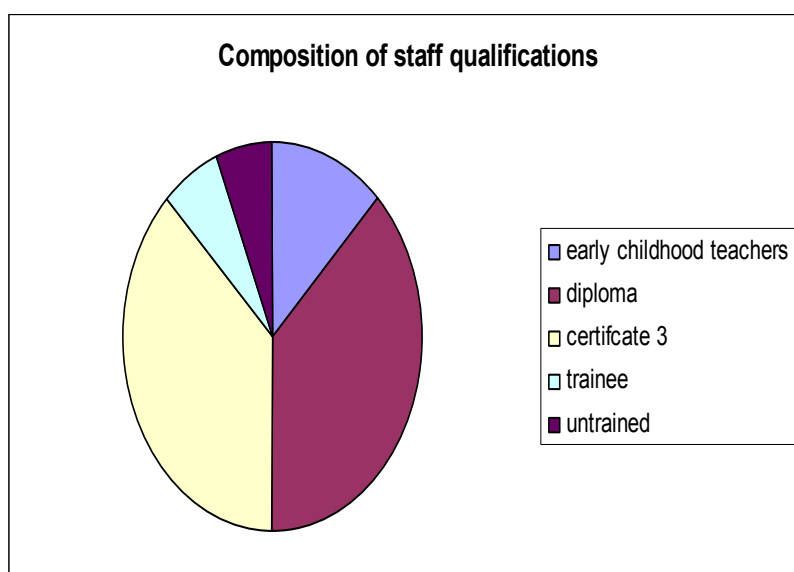
Outcome 1. *To build the capacity of Bankstown LGA child care centre staff and parents in supporting children’s communication development through the establishment of optimal language learning environments.*

a) Implementation of the training program

BCRG was funded to implement the TICL program in 10 Bankstown Child Care Centres over 4 years. By the end of June 2010, TICL had been implemented in 7 centres:

- Fairy Kingdom Child Care Centre,
- Angel Faces Long Day Care Centre,
- Peachtree Kindergarten,
- Bankstown Multicultural Children’s Centre,
- Teddy Tammy’s,
- Stay Play and Learn and
- Playtime Preschool.

The TICL training program has included 33 early childhood professionals with a range of qualifications



b) Staff evaluations of the training program in building skills and interprofessional collaboration

The strategies embedded in the on-site training and engaging the whole team has led to changes in the skills of childcare workers and better collaboration and recognition of these skills in a team.

The skills of child care workers have led to

- Enhanced and sustained language and literacy interactions with all children including quiet children, children with English as a second language and children with developmental and language delays.
- Feeling empowered to extend on their skills to embed literacy and language experiences in everyday routines.

c) Enhancing relationships, communication and involvement of families in the early childhood centre

The training program has enhanced the partnerships with families which has been a continual need identified by centre staff. The TICL program has provided a vehicle to brain storm how families can get involved. We have worked with child care centres to engage families through the use of the Federal Government’s early learning resource project – this is a very practical way that families can be involved

in their child's learning in the home environment. The TICL program has allowed childcare professionals to critically reflect on their existing strategies and barriers for involving and communicating with families. In addition we have held family evenings and morning teas for families where childcare workers provide work samples, photographs and opportunities for brainstorming with groups of families to share their skills and continue to enhance the language and literacy of children in their homes.

d) Learning's about the role of leadership and management in readiness and sustainability of the TICL program

Cycles 2-6 in particular have highlighted the importance of management in the readiness for centre staff to participate in the TICL program – especially in Bankstown where most of the child care centres are privately owned and in those centres where the owner does not participate in the day to day child activities run in the centre – this dynamic can make the implementation of logistical changes problematic.

The role of management in sustaining the program led to developing a staff training manual which provides planning tools and specific examples that can be used by managers to continue the reflection process with existing staff and as a way of orientating new staff. This manual has been used in partnership with managers with a new staff member hired in the course of TICL and has proved to be useful.

Outcome 2. To test a new model of communication intervention through action research

- **Masters research project – exploring the outcomes of childcare workers, children and families following the training program**

Nisrine El-Chouefati is completing master's research with the University of Sydney. Cycle 2 and 3 were approved by the university of Sydney ethics committee to test whether the training of childcare workers would have an impact on the language and literacy outcomes of children and families. Children were assessed before and after the training program using standardised measures as well as teacher and family rating scales.

Preliminary statistical analysis on the data from cycles 2 and 3 showed significant positive changes in the skills of children following the training. The measures were statistically more significant when families were involved in the training. The results will be presented at the 28th World Congress of the International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatrics, Athens, Greece August 2010

- **Honours research project – exploring the 6 – month child outcomes on language and literacy following the training program.**

Rosemary Hodges a 4th year speech pathology Honours student with the University of Sydney undertook 6 monthly assessments of the language and literacy skills of children involved in TICL in cycles 2 & 3 to see if strategies learnt in the TICL program have been sustained since the completion of the block placement.

- **On –going follow-up**

A 6 monthly follow up was undertaken on centres 2 & 3 to identify if any of the techniques taught in the TICL program were still being used in the centre and if the action plan developed by the centre staff in partnership with the speech pathologist had been implemented. We are finding in the implementation of the last few centres that further activities and information is being added to the training materials. Staff seem to need further time to practice and implement new skills – and it is becoming difficult to cover all the material in the 10 week placement . The project management team has been discussing if we need to extend the block placement to a 14 week program.

Outcome 3. *To promote a new communication intervention model and wind down the project*

a) On-going Consultations and lobbying with government and professional bodies to support funding the project

- **Partnerships with Speech Pathology Australia**

On the 15th February, 2010 a teleconference with Gail Mulcair CEO from Speech Pathology Australia was held with all members of the TICL team to provide a detailed background to the TICL program and our alignment with the federal governments early childhood reform agenda.

- **Partnerships with Federal Government and DEEWR**

On the 21st of May 2010, all members from the TICL project team from BCRG and the University of Sydney met at the head office of DEEWR with Robyn Calder the Branch Manager from the Early Childhood Development and Workforce Strategy team. This meeting was an opportunity to promote the project and align the project with the Federal Governments' workforce strategy to raise the qualifications of the early childhood workforce. DEEWR were very impressed by the program and wanted to know if the program could be transferred to other areas and other states such as Victoria and Queensland. DEEWR encouraged the project management team to apply for the *Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Best Practice and Innovation Project* to test the transferability of **The TICL project between trainers and between states.**

b) Conference presentations

- **Early Childhood Intervention Conference, Canberra**

In May 2010, Nisrine El-Chouefati and Rebecca Galea presented a paper at the Early Childhood Intervention Conference in Canberra titled: *An Insight into Onsite Child Care Worker Training: Collaborative Training Models to Target Children's Language and Emergent Literacy Skills.*

- **Speech Pathology Australia Conference, Melbourne**

In May 2010, Rosemary Hodges an Honours student from the University of Sydney, presented a paper at the Speech Pathology Australia conference in Melbourne titled: *The Long Term Effectiveness of a Child Care Centre Based Language and Pre-literacy Training Program*. This presentation has led to a Queensland Bush Health Service asking to purchase the program and deliver it in their area Mount Isa in far north Queensland.

28th World Congress of the International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatics, Athens, Greece

In April 2010, Nisrine El-Choueifati received confirmation of acceptance to present a paper titled: *TICL - The Triad of Success Leading to Positive Outcomes in Language and Pre-literacy for Children*, at the 28th World Congress of the International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatics, Athens. The presentation will report on the significant positive outcomes of the children following TICL training.

c) The development of a promotional DVD

Nisrine El-Choueifati and Rebecca Galea have worked with Sophia Le and Anuja Limaye, speech and hearing students from the University of Sydney to develop a promotional DVD. This DVD is being developed to help in promoting the training program to families and child care centres – so that prospective centres can visualise how the program will be delivered and the benefits of the program - in terms of best practice.

Future TICL Program Directions

This year has provided many more opportunities for promotion of the project and a chance to align our learning's with the Federal Governments early childhood reform agenda.

We would like to thank all the early childhood professionals, families and professional partners who have contributed to the learning's and outcomes. The priorities for the TICL program over the next 12 months will include the accreditation of the training as well as considering opportunities for further funding . Stay tuned for further TICL program developments.

Rebecca Galea
Executive Officer

Supporting Children with Additional Needs (SCAN)

Funding Body: Illawarra Children's Services

Project Staff: Co-ordinator - Kathy Theofilopoulou

Project Description:

Initially the SCAN project was aimed at supporting State funded children's services to better meet the needs of children with additional needs such as children with a disability, children from Cultural & Linguistic Diverse Backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children with challenging behaviour by taking on a consultative role which included;

- Organising training and other professional inservicing opportunities based on the needs of staff in supporting children with additional needs and their families.
- Supporting services with daily and individual programs/routines
- Supporting children's services with funding applications to Illawarra Children's Services
- Empowering staff and parents to confidently work within a family-centered framework to ensure the best possible outcomes for children with additional needs
- Resourcing, supporting, informing and advising Children's Services on general sector development and models of inclusive practices for children with additional needs and support for their families.

The SCAN project worker provided support to the following Children's Services in Bankstown LGA

- Calvery Chapel Preschool
- Greenacre Church of Christ
- Revesby YMCA Preschool
- Bankstown Montessori Preschool
- Bankstown Occasional Care

Other Tasks Undertaken

- Continued to maintain and extend BCRG resource kits for SCAN funded children's services to enhance programming and routines
- Continued to increase the profile of the SCAN project in the local area through active participation in the Bankstown Children Services Forum and its affiliated working parties which include the Bankstown Early Childhood Intervention Committee, Bankstown Child Protection Interest Group and Authorised Supervisors Link Up.
- Promoted and encouraged accessibility to various local parent and staff training opportunities based on the survey conducted last year with SCAN centres. These information sessions and workshops related to various topics that promoted inclusive practices of children with additional needs, children from Cultural & Linguistic Diverse Backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children with challenging behaviour. Professional information sessions relating to significant early childhood education and care sector developments that were in with the National Early Childhood Reform Agenda and Child Protection were also provided.

- Provided ongoing casework, follow up visits and support to SCAN funded centers regarding transition to school for children with additional needs, behaviour, speech and occupational intervention.

Visions for 2010-2011

The Supporting Children with Additional Needs (SCAN) program has undergone significant changes as a result of the new Preschool Investment Reform Plan funding model. The aim of these changes are in line with the national agenda of universal access to preschool services, ensuring that quality early childhood services are affordable, accessible and sustainable for families and their children. The SCAN target group has been amended following the inclusion of per child funding for ATSI and CALD children through the new preschool funding model. Under the new SCAN funding model the target group includes: challenging behaviours, delayed developmental or diagnosed disabilities, severe chronic health conditions and moderate to severe language delays.

Due to these changes Illawarra Children's Services have had to alter from a partnership model to a more direct service approach of implementing the SCAN funding Scheme with children's services across the Southern and Metro South West. This change had unfortunately resulted in the defunding of many partnering agencies such as BCRG coming into effect as of January 2010.

Despite these changes the aim is to continue to maintain the relationship and sustain support for the SCAN funded centres through the Bankstown Children's Services Forum and its affiliated working parties which include: Bankstown Early Childhood Intervention Committee, Bankstown Child Protection Interest Group and the Authorised Supervisors Link Up (ASLU).

Kathy Theofilopoulou

Project Co-ordinator

Mobile Minders Project

Funding Body: **Bankstown:** Community Services
 Canterbury: Canterbury Bulldogs CDSE Funding - Dec 2009

Project Staff: Louise Scarcella - Canterbury/Bankstown Mobile Co-ordinator
 Jeannette Eskaff - Permanent part time Childcare worker

Casual Mobile Minder Staff:

Menal Ahmed	Imma Di Cesare	Maria Tamplin
Randa Bou-Ghosn	Sue Glynatsis	Thi Ngo
Beatrice Chalhoub	Mirianthe Martineos	Leanne Jundi
Alice Cheung	Linh Phan	

Program Description:

BCRG has operated a Mobile Minders program in the Bankstown Local Government area (LGA) since 1996. This program is funded by NSW Community Services, Children's Services Program - Early Childhood. In 2006, BCRG was approached by the Canterbury Child and Family Interagency (CC&FI) to implement mobile minders in the Canterbury LGA. The CC&FI (a network of organisations working with families and young children in the Canterbury LGA), approached BCRG after access to mobile childcare was identified as a high priority for family services in the Canterbury LGA in the 2006 "key issues arising from community consultations" document.

As a result, BCRG Inc in partnership with the CC&FI successfully applied for funding through the Canterbury Community Development Support Expenditure (CDSE) scheme to pilot a Canterbury Mobile Minders program over 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09.

The Mobile Minders program provides mobile childcare sessions to agencies working with parents/carers of children 0-5 years. Mobile Minders enables agencies to offer community development and capacity building programs such as parenting courses, to parents/carers while their children attend on-site childcare. The childcare is undertaken in the *immediate vicinity* to the parents, this can offer parents peace of mind as it is sometimes the child's first experience away from them.

The type of agencies that engage Mobile Minders include family support services, foster care support networks, neighbourhood centres, community health and culturally specific community organisations. The types of group activities include English classes, parenting skill programs, challenging behaviour workshops, domestic violence support groups, health programs and groups supporting emerging communities.

A co-ordinated approach to providing services with professional childcare allows agencies to service vulnerable and isolated families, including the parents of young children. Many of those benefiting from this service are parents who would otherwise be unable to attend any of these programs. This could be due to a lack of childcare availability, affordability and a general lack of resources. Without such access to childcare, this can lead to the further social isolation of these families. Social isolation can be a factor in the development of postnatal depression, marital breakdown, domestic violence and child abuse.

Mobile Minders works in partnership with the agency to achieve enhanced outcomes for children and their families. Many of the agencies deliver programs that centre around fostering positive child and parent interactions. The Mobile Minders program further builds these skills through the modelling of best practice of carer/child interaction through play based activities and therein reinforces the information being provided to parents within the workshop. Most of the mobile minder childcare staff are bilingual and speak a variety of community languages enabling parents / carers from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (CALD) to communicate with staff in their home language.

Bankstown Mobile Minders aims to provide an educational program that focuses on the individual child's strengths and abilities while creating a safe, happy and nurturing environment for children, promoting the development of the child's self esteem.

Mobile Children's Services are a cost effective service delivery strategy designed to address the needs of vulnerable and isolated families. The existence of Mobile Minders ensures the participation of socially, culturally and economically isolated families/carers to participate in programs by outreaching to these families who would otherwise be unable to attend due to a lack of available and affordable childcare. Mobile Child Care Services, provide innovative, responsive and flexible forms of child care that families/carers may need, in locations and at times where they need it.

Bankstown Service Provision June 2009 - July 2010:

During June 2009 and July 2010 the Bankstown Mobile Minders project undertook 307 sessions and provided child care services to 507 families and 657 individual children within the Bankstown LGA, 72.9% of children do not attend any form of childcare including playgroups, 99% of children who attend the project are from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Background. Below is a list of the services and groups the mobile minders undertook during this time:

Term 3 2009	Organisations:	Groups:
	Arab Council Australia (ACA)	Exercise Group
	Bankstown Area Multicultural Network (BAMN)	Vietnamese Parenting Program Safety Workshops for Women English Classes
	Bankstown Community Health	Triple P Young Arabic Mothers Group
	Catholic Care Bankstown	123 Magic for Adoptive Parents
	Creating Links	Prepare Your Child for School Vietnamese Young Mums Group Just 4 Dads Together We Grow Vietnamese Support group Creative Cooking Club Money Matters (Budgets) Child Protection Workshop Triple P
	Greenacre N.C	English Class for Beginners
	Punchbowl SACC	English Class for Beginners Arabic Parenting Program
	Punchbowl SACC / Metro MRC	Homework Help
	Revesby Uniting Church	Parent Support Group - Parent Time
Term 4 2009		
	BAMN	Child Safety Parenting Program (Mandarin)
	Bankstown Community Health Service	Vietnamese Parent's Group for Children under 18months Arabic Young Mums
	Creating Links	Educational Workshops Together We Grow Vietnamese Parents Support Creative Cooking Club Vietnamese Support Group Crafty Mums Just 4 Dads Vietnamese Young Mums Group
	Metro MRC	Sewing Group - Greenacre
	Punchbowl SACC	English Class for Beginners Exercise Group Arabic Parenting Program
	Punchbowl SACC / Metro MRC	Homework Help
	Revesby Uniting Church	Parent Support Group - Parent Time

Term 1 2010	Organisations:	Groups:
	Arab Council	International Women's Day Parenting
	BAMN	TAFE Outreach - English Classes Child Safety Child Safety (Chinese)
	Bankstown City Council	International Women's Day Breakfast
	Bankstown Community Health	Post-natal support group Arabic Young Mums
	Catholic Care Bankstown	123 Magic
	Creating Links Co-op	Vietnamese Young Mums Group Together We Grow Vietnamese Support Group Just 4 Dads Creative Cooking Vietnamese Parent Support group Family Matters Cultural Connections Educational Workshop
	Koorana	My Time
	Punchbowl SACC	Vietnamese Parenting Computer Class
	Punchbowl SACC / Metro MRC	Nutrition & Cooking
	Revesby Uniting Church	Reconnect - Parent Support
Term 2 2010		
	Arab Council	Parenting Group
	Bankstown City Council	Bankstown Future Forums
	Bankstown Community Health	Arabic Young Mums Group
	Creating Links	Vietnamese Young Mum's Just 4 Dads Vietnamese Triple P Budget Cooking Mums Arabic Support Group From Parent to Teacher Families Matter
	Koorana	My Time
	Punchbowl SACC	Parent Group Computer Classes Playgroup Pampering day
	Punchbowl SACC / Metro MRC	Nutrition & Cooking
	Revesby Uniting Church	Reconnect - Parent Support

Canterbury Mobile Minders:

Fortunately in August 2009 the Canterbury Bulldogs assisted the Canterbury Mobile Minders with \$20,000 in CDSE funding. This allowed the project to continue to provide a limited service up until December 2009 to service users in the Canterbury LGA. Throughout this time we attempted to source other possible funding options (see funding submissions), however this was unsuccessful. Commencing 2010 we no longer received funding for the Canterbury Mobile Minders project, in order to maintain links with the Canterbury clients and meet consistent demand for the program we continue to provide a service to those organisations that can pay a fee for service.

Year of Operation	Number of Organisations	Number of Sessions	Number of Chn	Number of Families	% of children who do not attend childcare	% of CALD backgrounds
2009/2010	12	143	251	213	75.6%	99%

Since the commencement of the Canterbury Mobile Minders Pilot Project in 2007 until 2009, 1165 children have attended mobile childcare in the Canterbury LGA. Additionally of these, 78% of children have not attended any form of early childhood programs including playgroups and formal childcare. Considering the majority of children accessing mobile minders were between the ages of 3-5 years, mobile minders is often the child's first preschool like experience until they start school. This also highlights the importance of a mobile service as providing an opportunity for early identification of child protection and developmental issues that may otherwise be missed until the child reaches school.

The pertinence of this point becomes evident when it is recognised that the Canterbury Local Government Area is the third most disadvantaged LGA in Sydney after Fairfield and Auburn according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census of Population and Housing data 2006.

Anecdotally staff also report that parents/carers may initially feel anxious about leaving their children, but over time they become more comfortable and confident in the process. Staff report that within a short 3-6 week timeframe children display significant improvements in separating from their parent /carer and show progress in a number of developmental areas, particularly functional play within a play based framework. Research clearly shows the importance of quality transition to school and pre-school like experiences having a direct effect on the child's overall development, particularly when starting school.

This is critical evidence when acknowledging that "50% of a child's educational performance is determined before that child even enters the formal school system". (Maxine McKew – speech to parliament mid February, 2008) This statistical and anecdotal evidence supports our continued effort to obtain recurrent sustainable funding that will enable the Canterbury Mobile Minders Project to thrive.

Tasks undertaken:

Development and updating of mobile minder forms, resource, information and we continue to improve our current resource toy library, maintaining and updated the toys and equipment we provide within our service.

On-going communication with our service users regarding general running issues such as, venues, child:staff ratios and fee structures. Throughout the year we have continued to implement structures that improve the standard of venues where childcare is undertaken.

Throughout the last year as a Co-ordinator I have increased the level of staff supervision at groups in order to gain insight into where staff may be experiencing difficulties as well as their skills and interests. This allows the identification of training needs and possibilities for the co-ordinator to support the staff on a practical level.

In September 2009 both myself and a BCRG colleague were successful in applying to attend the Families NSW accredited practitioners Triple P training, consisting of a four day training program and an accreditation day. The aim of this Triple P training roll out is to expand the delivery of the program to families throughout NSW. In partnership with the Greek Orthodox Community Welfare Centre we delivered the Triple P Seminars on the 21st April, 28th April and 5th May 2010 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm, on average the number of attendees was between 17 and 35. The attendance numbers were very positive and may be attributed to the fact that the training was offered in the evening for working parents and we were also able to offer childcare (just a one-off) to those families that did not have other childcare options.

The Group Triple P ran for a total of 8 weeks the first group session commenced on the 26th May until 23 June 2010 following this we undertook 3 phone consultations – one per week and the final session 16th July 2010 was a reunion where participants had the opportunity to feedback what they got out of attending the Group Triple P. We had 12 participants attend the group Triple P. This was my first experience in delivering the Triple P Seminars and Group Triple P and it has been a positive learning experience. It was a real benefit to facilitate the Triple P with a colleague and have someone to discuss issues and learning with. The whole process did take time to plan and prepare for and there was quite a lot of administrative processes. We have passed on most of the participant information to Community Services. Overall I enjoyed delivering the triple P seminars and group. It was a great opportunity to get to know our local families and what their parenting needs are. We were able to share the challenges parents face as well as the success stories.

On June 22nd 2010 mobile minder staff attended a staff training day held at BCRG.

The topics discussed were:

- ⇒ General MM / CAMMS information
- ⇒ History and Outcomes of the Canterbury Pilot Project
- ⇒ Cost differences between Bankstown and Canterbury
- ⇒ Future challenges for MM
- ⇒ Plan of action / Quality Improvement / Professionalism
- ⇒ Child Development
- ⇒ Stimulating Environments for Children
- ⇒ Early Childhood Educators role
- ⇒ Working with Parents
- ⇒ Separation Anxiety

Overall the day went well it was a challenge trying to cover a number of topics in a short period of time, but the training day was a great opportunity to have everyone together and discuss relevant changes and future goals for mobile minders.

We continue to distribute the parents/carers survey at the end of each term gaining information about changes to children's behaviour, for example; separation from parents at the commencement of a group and any changes after attending for an extended period (6 weeks) also turn taking skills, interactions with other children and new skills acquired in their time at mobile minders. This information is useful in identifying expectations of parent/carers and areas we can improve in. This assists in the development of an evidenced based practice model highlighting how important a mobile service is to children and families, particularly in regards to school readiness and separation from parents. Many of the children who attend the mobile minders program do not attend any other form of childcare including playgroups. This highlights the importance of staff expertise and the need for continued quality improvement.

Throughout the year we have continued to implement structures that improve the standard of venues where childcare is undertaken.

Professional Networks:

The Bankstown Mobile Minders continued its involvement with the Mobile Children's Services Association of NSW (MCSA) and has over the years maintained a close working relationship with similar mobile service providers. The Sydney region was responsible for the planning and implementation of the Mobile Meet 2009. The Mobile Meet was held on the 7th September until the 10th September 2009 the theme was Reuse, Recycle and Rejuvenate. Overall the conference was a great success, an opportunity to network and discuss issues with similar services as well as develop a new understanding of the challenges other services encounter particularly the country services.

Funding submissions:

In March 2009 a written proposal was sent to the NSW Community Services, Metro Central Region for the Continuation of the Canterbury Mobile Minders Program and the Community Services Minister and Member for Canterbury the Hr Linda Burney. Throughout 2009 I liaised with Lynn Cohen Community Development Officer from Community Services who is a representative at the CC&FI meetings regarding the Community Services proposal we had submitted for the continuation of the CMM program (March). Unfortunately Community Services were not in a position to fund such a service due to priority of funds being given to preschool places and the CMM being viewed as a *softer childcare option* compared with preschool. Both Canterbury and Bankstown are identified by Community Services and Community Childcare as priority LGA's for preschool places.

The CDSE final report for Canterbury Mobile Minders was submitted in April along with the new CDSE funding request for the Canterbury Mobile Minders. We were informed that we had received \$20 000 from the CDSE – Canterbury Bulldogs, although this level of funding was considerably less than what we requested it has allowed us to continue to provide a limited service to services in the Canterbury LGA up until December 2009.

Through the 2009/2010 financial year we were fortunate to receive Council funds through the community Grants program to run a full days training delivered by Sue Larkey an expert in the field of ASD. The aim is to increase the capacity of Bankstown community service staff to work with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families. Another part of the funding is to build the capacity of BCRG staff in order to become a recognised Autism Panel Service Provider in the Bankstown area through the *More than Words* Training for 3 BCRG speech pathology staff.

In November 2009 we submitted a proposal for funding to the Department of Employment & Workplace Relations (DEEWR) - Get Communities Working Project. As well as other proposed projects this was an opportunity to seek future funding for the Canterbury Mobile Minders Project as it directly related to the aims and objectives of the submission. After discussions with the Canterbury, Bankstown and South Western Sydney Get Communities Working Project Co-ordinator it was identified that there was a shortage of childcare workers in Bankstown and a real need to create jobs in this area.

Putting the submission together was a team effort with Monique Hines, Rebecca Galea and I working on the written ideas and content and Denis and Effi putting together costings and budgets. We also included approximately eight letters of support from Canterbury Service users and the Canterbury Mayor – Hr Robert Furolo in support of maintaining the CMM program in the Canterbury LGA. The proposal was submitted early December 2009. Part of the funding agreement was that the DEEWR funding would only be provided up until June 2011 and after this time the program would need to be self sufficient and not rely on future funding from DEEWR. Unfortunately in late March 2010 we were notified that we were unsuccessful for round two of the Jobs Fund. The feedback received indicated that BCRG did meet the five essential assessment criteria and did not fail in any of the areas. Overall the submission was viewed as strong and positive. The feedback indicated that the idea or concept for the C.A.M had real merit particularly the assistance that would be provided to newly arrived and cultural groups, also mentioned was the comprehensive cash flow projections. Although the model created a number of jobs more detail could have been provided regarding the outcomes of these in terms of the pathways to long term employment.

Staff Changes:

We have not had many staff changes this year, with a reliable team of casual staff still with us after a number of years.

Mobile Minders vision for 2010 / 2011:

We continue to seek possible funding opportunities for the successful operation of a Canterbury Mobile Minder Program within the Canterbury LGA. We will continue lobbying for re-current, sustainable funding to carry on this worthwhile program. We will also consider other opportunities for expansion and growth of the Mobile service generally.

As service providers funded by Human Services - Community Services through the CSP Early Childhood Program we are working on an implementation plan that focuses on outcomes, key performance measures and the specific data set by

Community Services - care education and parent support, information and advice, group or individual developmental programming, linkages to services and the community. Throughout 2010 and 2011 we will work on documentation methods for the above performance measures. These performance measures will form the basis of our future goals within the Mobile Minders Project.

The Mobile Minders Project faces different challenges compared to a licensed childcare service, one of the ongoing challenges is devising an appropriate programming and planning format for the staff and the children who attend our service. It is often challenging as we may not see children regularly or have the time to develop the relationships necessary to plan meaningful experiences for them. Our ongoing aim is to develop an appropriate programming and planning format and relevant strategies for a mobile service. In order to achieve this we will refer to the Early Years Learning Framework Belonging, Being and Becoming.

Staff have shown a real interest in developing further knowledge about Creative Play & Stimulating Environments for children, one of the ongoing challenges Mobile Minders faces is the difficulty in creating a stimulating environment when visiting a variety of non purpose built venues. In the future we hope to look at relevant training opportunities and establish some strategies to achieve our goals of more creative play opportunities and creating stimulating aesthetically pleasing environments for children within existing constraints.

In collaboration with other BCRG staff / projects, continue to raise the profile of BCRG as a local NGO. Enhance the profile of the mobile minders program with new community and government services.

Strengthen staff knowledge in the areas of early intervention and working with families from vulnerable backgrounds. To develop relevant training packages that can facilitate this process and continue to investigate affordable training opportunities for staff.

Continue to obtain feedback and evaluation regarding our service delivery with a strong focus on overall quality improvement.

A big Thank you to all the Mobile Minder Staff for all their hard work, all my BCRG colleagues and the Management Committee who give their time and skills.

Thank you

Louise Scarcella

Mobile Minders Co-ordinator

Children's Services Community Development Project

Funding Body: NSW Community Services

Project Staff: Maria Marmarinos, Kathy Theofilopoulou
(Bankstown Children's Services
Community Development Officers)

Project Description

The primary role of this project is to support the ongoing development of children's services in being connected, flexible and responsive in empowering children and their families in reaching their potential within the Bankstown LGA. This is achieved by;

- Providing information on children's services, referral pathways and supports available to the community.
- Promoting and delivering training & information opportunities for parents and professionals from a range of child and family services.
- Planning, developing and supporting a range of community development projects within and across sectors to enhance referral pathways that increase access to services for children and families.
- Leading and convening local child and family networks; Authorised Supervisors Link Up (childcare sector), Bankstown Children's Services Forum and its associated working groups including Bankstown Child Protection Interest Group and Bankstown Early Childhood Intervention Committee

A major part of the CSCDO project is to increase connectedness of service networks who focus on child and family issues. With this in mind it has over the years built relationships between its own networks, Families NSW- Bankstown Interagency Group (BIG) & Bankstown Council to cross reference the direction of community development that focus on the wellbeing of local children and families and to address gaps and issues in a holistic way.

These networks continue to provide a strong platform for services to engage around issues that are at the forefront of their place in the community. Through collaboration and partnerships a range of community development strategies have been implemented that enhance the capacity of services to cater for the needs of children & their families at the local level. This year this has included the provision of information, the co-ordination of events, the delivery of training and the development of new resources. The project has also remained connected to the political agenda in particular to the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care & the Early Years Learning Framework, and Keep Them Safe.

Networks convened by the CSCDO Project & Activities

Bankstown Children's Services Forum (BCSF)

The Bankstown Children's Services Forum was established in 1990 originally as the first local child and family network in the Bankstown LGA. Today it operates to support a number of networks which have formed to focus on specific issues relating to children ages 0-14 years and their families. These include the Bankstown Child Protection Interest Group, the Bankstown Early Childhood Intervention Committee, and the Authorised Supervisors Link Up (Child Care Sector).

Mini Seminar Days

The BCSF Mini Seminar Days are an opportunity for local workers to explore topics of common interest as they come through the local child & family networks. “The Early Years: A Nation’s Priority becomes a Bankstown Agenda” was a key topic explored this year and was held on the 18th August at BCRG. The seminar day focused on factors that influence children’s development at the local level & explored collaborative & reflective practices that drive better outcomes for families & children within the community. The seminar also focused on helping participants develop strategies on how to use new local & national resources with families accessing their services. Resource packages were developed for each participant with references to initiatives proposed by the Federal Government regarding The Early Years.

Speakers and key topics explored included:

Dr Rebekah Grace *Macquarie University Post Doctorial Research Fellow, Guest Lecturer Institute of Early Childhood Post Grad & Undergrad levels*. Discussion was centred on families as a context for children. Discussion took on the importance of professionals working collaboratively in an integrated model to ensure positive outcomes for children & families in the early years and clarifying parents are key players and family experiences linked to community.

Kelera Mar *Children’s Services Central*. The Early Years Learning Framework was discussed as an important tool to help professionals and parents achieve the best learning and developmental outcomes for children. It described the principles & practices which enhance young children’s learning from birth to 5 years of age, as well as their transition to school.

On behalf of Karen Ferrante *DET NSW AEDI* we delivered information on AEDI. The AEDI (Australian Early Development Index) is a population measure of young children’s development completed by all kindergarten teachers. Discussions highlighted the opportunities that this measure provides communities to help understand what seems to be working well and what may need to change in the community and in our services to better support families.

Our colleague & executive officers Nisrine El-Chouefati & Rebecca Galea also showcased the TICL project and discussed how every day practice examples can ensure positive outcomes for children, parents and childcare workers. This session in particular explored how existing resources such as the Early Childhood Learning Resources Project (Literacy & Numeracy cards distributed to centres by the government) & BONGO’s Big Day Out book can be used to expand on literacy outcomes within local early childhood settings.

Bankstown Children’s Week Dance Party & Parent & Kids EXPO

The Bankstown Children Services Forum provides an annual activity to co-incide with Children’s Week which is a national event that allows an opportunity to celebrate the diversity of children’s skills, abilities, interests and talents and to reinforce their rights to fundamental services that support their health & wellbeing. From a community development perspective it provides Bankstown a local platform for services to engage directly with parents to increase parenting capacity and community connectedness. As with previous years this event was once again held in the Bankstown Town Hall and was made possible through Bankstown City Council’s Community Grants Program.

Our aim this year was that we would commence transition from an open age event to a more targeted event that corresponds with the government directions in early childhood. As a result 2 events were offered on the same day (30th October) including a Parent & Kids EXPO which was held in the morning from 9.30am till 11.30 prior to the Dance Party which was held in the afternoon. The Parent and Kids EXPO was specifically targeted for children 0-5years and their parents as a targeted approach in delivering various key messages in the importance of the early years in line with the national agenda. This additional component was highly successful with over 200 attendees actively involved in the planned activities & entertainment with feedback confirming that this target group made the most use of the resources offered to them on the day.

The Dance Party, now in it's sixth year, was also very successful with overall attendance of 350 and over 20 stall holders involved. As in previous years there was a "no table rule" but services continued to be placed near play activity stations allowing them opportunities to engage with parents directly and were provided with colourful display boards enabling them to visually promote their projects. We thank all stall holders who participated this year especially those who went the extra mile and did both the morning and afternoon session. This event was a credit to all involved.

Planning Children's Week is always a mammoth task usually beginning mid year. We would especially like to thank the working party members who worked so hard to make it all possible and to deliver another great event. They consist of representatives from Bankstown City Council, Peachtree Kindergarten, Greenacre Neighbourhood Centre, and Creating Links . In 2010 we are keen to engage with TAFE once again to implement a strong focus on the importance on the early years and the role of early childhood education & care especially as our focus will be the 0-5 years.

Links to Bankstown Interagency Group Families NSW (BIG)

Families NSW Bankstown Interagency Group (BIG) was established in 2007 based on state government initiatives for a holistic government in working towards "children, families and communities are healthier, safer and more resilient". Since then BCSF and its affiliated working parties have played a complimentary role in supporting the aims of this interagency. This is done through mini seminar days which focus on issues of concern to both the BIG & BCSF networks. The CSCDO continues to support the Families NSW objectives by being directly involved in the BIG network and participates in it's projects. One of the main projects to date that the CSCDO is involved in is the Transition to School Working Party. The aim of this working party is to raise community awareness & to deliver strategies that support and prepare children & families with the transition to school process. As part of this working party's activities a Transition to School Professional Forum was organised and held on the 31st July 2009 at Bankstown Town Hall with over 60 participants attending on the day. The overall focus of this forum was providing a community perspective in the Transition to School that included a key note speaker Professor Bob Perry and a panel of representatives form Benevolent Society, Department of Education and Training, Association of Independent Schools, Lady Gowrie and parents who have undergone the transition to school process. Further partnerships have been strengthened with BIG as the Families NSW facilitation project officer also joined the ASLU as co- convener with BCRG and Bankstown Council.

Bankstown Child Protection Interest Group (BCPIG)

This is a local Child Protection network working in partnership to increase awareness & promote an understanding of child wellbeing within the community. It aims to keep services connected & informed around issues and abreast of legislative changes in the field. BCPIG has 2-3 meetings annually and has a major role in organising the local Child Protection Week community stall.

2009 saw many changes emerging in child protection and 2010 continues to be a year of informing and reviewing how these changes are affecting services and mapping out implementation and common issues. Partnerships were extended this year between networks and across regions as BCPIG played a role in informing other networks i.e. ASLU & BECIC on these changes especially in regards to training around the changes to mandatory reporting “significant harm” and service referrals. Planning has also started on delivering workshops across regions eg, information for Bankstown & Fairfield child care workers on responding & reporting child sexual assault.

Angela White & Libby Gallagher, key note speakers from Community Services (formally DOCS) led discussions at our first meeting on Keep Them Safe – A shared approach to child wellbeing. This meeting explored our new role as mandatory reporters, any issues services have already experienced with the new structure and how we all work together to support children & families especially those who don't reach the reportable threshold. With the reforms in child protection we are in a new culture requiring services to take on case management regardless of which service they are from to ensure families are supported effectively to their needs. Meetings thus focussed on exploring supports available to services and how they can be accessed. Key note speaker Zoe Petridis from HSNET “white pages website for community services” shared the new tools available for services to access when case managing families who fall below the reporting threshold of “significant harm”.

Given the changes and current climate in the child protection sector BCPIG members have requested additional meetings in 2011 to support their knowledge and networking opportunities.

Child Protection Week Stall

The Bankstown Child Protection Week Stall was held on the 7th of September 2009 at Bankstown Centro. This event is a platform to engage the community around child wellbeing issues and has become an annual event representing many services in BCPIG. Key messages of creating child friendly communities are promoted in a fun and inviting display with information and activities. An animal farm has been a main attraction for the stall by adding a strong visual strategy modeling caring and gentle interactions along with enticing community interest to the stall. This event is funded by Bankstown City Council through community grants and includes the printed Child Protection balloons & Bankstown Child Protection wristbands which proved very popular on the day.

Bankstown Child Protection Agency Show Case

The Child Protection Week Agency Showcase was held on the 4th August 09 at Bankstown Town Hall. This event included a key note speaker Suzana Tanevski

(Acting Manager, Client Services Bankstown DOCS) to discuss the key findings of the Woods's report and how it has shaped the NSW government proposal regarding child protection as outlined in the "Keeping them Safe: A shared approach to child well being. The show case focused on how the Wood's report will shape services in the local area. Overall there were approximately 40 participants who registered for this event and evaluation feedback was positive.

Staying Safe—Anti Bullying Project

This project aims to investigate the effects of bullying on children and to give strategies back to children, parents, teachers, services and the wider community which reflect the issues raised by local children. The project is driven via a reference committee from BCPIG which has engaged the support of Psychlinx (contracted to BCRG) to implement the project and roll out workshops to consult students in year 2 and 5 on issues around bullying and role play strategies they can use. The workshops distributed the anti bullying message cards to children developed by BCPIG. The data collected via the consultations is being used to produce a strategy driven resource for parents, teachers and other professionals which will be available on the BCRG website. A bullying type expo will be offered in early 2011 to present the findings of the project to teachers, parents and professionals in the local area.

Funding for this project was made possible through the Bankstown Council Community Safety Grants Program. Special thanks to the reference group members including representatives from Benevolent Society, DET, Bankstown Women's Health and Bankstown Council as well as the Psychlinx team.

Celebrating Your Children Parent Booklet /Triple P Program.

Through Bankstown City Council Safety Grants 2008 we were able to reproduce a parent version of the of the BCPIG resource "Celebrating Our Children-Parent Information Booklet which was initially intended to support workers with positive parenting ideas & information to engage their clients. This new resource was reproduced as a booklet that consisted of practical tips & links to local support services for parents of children from 0-6 years of age.

The Celebrating your Child parent booklet has been printed and distributed to all participants in our Triple P programs and has received positive feedback also by other services. This resource will be officially launched at the next Child Protection Interest Group meeting on 19th July and copies will be distributed to all participants. The Celebrating Your Child resource will be distributed to families in Child Protection Week community information stall, Children's Week Parents and Kids Expo, Families Week as well as through the GP division, early childhood clinics and local libraries. The resource is currently on the BCRG website.

Triple P

The Triple P program was run at BCRG in partnership with the Greek Orthodox Community Welfare Centre. The Triple P first cycle of implementation involved three seminars delivered on 21st, April 28th April and 5th May and small group Triple P sessions which began on the 26th May and ended 16th July 2010. Overall it went well the Triple P program was well attended in which the seminars had between 35 to 17 parents attending and the small group sessions had 12 parents attending the program.

Managing Children's Behaviour

New funding through the CDSE scheme has provided an opportunity to deliver these parent information sessions that primarily focuses on CALD communities of local Arabic, Vietnamese and African parents. These workshops are intended to be provided as bilingual workshops on strategies around discipline, child safety and community support. The CSCDO has convened meetings with presenters from Jannawi & Creating Links to discuss the content and implementation of the parent information sessions. A follow up meeting was organised with STARTS (for the African components). The Vietnamese workshop was conducted in late 2009. From the feedback received from service providers many families are requesting Triple P workshops in their own languages. In line with this feedback the rest of the workshops will be delivered next year in schools within Bankstown.

Bankstown Early Childhood Intervention Committee (BECIC)

This local area committee is part of the South Western Sydney Early Childhood Intervention Co-ordination Program (ECICP) which works in partnerships to increase awareness and information, coordinate service delivery and build capacity of the early childhood intervention sector and families with children with additional needs. The local network (BECIC) meets once a term to discuss issues arising in the field and plan activities that support local children with additional needs and their families.

Meetings held during the year included showcases of the new KU Marcia Burgess Autism Specific Education Learning & Care Centre, Starting School: stories from parents of children with a disability DVD for families and the Genetic Counseling Unit at Liverpool Hospital. The local network also successfully secured funding from the ECICP in providing a family advocacy workshop to Arabic speaking families of children 0-8 years of age. This workshop will be delivered later in 2010 and reported on in the next financial year. Overall these meetings have been productive and have established a need in collectively identifying issues and gaps within the sector and relay these within the Families NSW Bankstown Interagency Group through a community analysis of early intervention services and their families.

Transition to School for Children with Additional Needs

This Transition to School for children with additional needs information session has been held annually for the past 5 years and it is strongly supported by the SWS ECICP (South Western Sydney Early Childhood Intervention Co-ordination Program). This information session provided a broad overview of the transition to school process and support services available to children with additional needs. This event was held on the 28th May 2010 at Bankstown Community Resource Group from 6.30pm till 8.30pm and involved representation from DET, Catholic Education Office and Association of Independent Schools. Overall 30 people participated in this event which included a combination of parents, early childhood and early intervention professionals. Surveys indicated that this information session continues to be very useful, in particular to families. Furthermore it was pleasing to see service providers attending these sessions with their families as part of the support offered within the transition to school process.

ASPECT-Recipe for Success

These workshops were facilitated by ASPECT and held at BCRG on the 23rd, 24th and 25th November 2009 to assist the Arabic families with proactive strategies in helping management of children with Autism from 0-12 years of age. This was offered in

partnership with Arab Council to assist families with interpreting. Aspect will be conducting this work shop again at BCRG in November 2010. Overall this event was quite successful with 10 parents registered in attending these workshops. Information packages were developed by BCRG of various organisations that assist in providing respite, advocacy and intervention services provided by BECIC members.

Authorised Supervisors Link Up (ASLU)

This a local network for supervisors in the local early childcare sector which is coordinated and facilitated in partnership with Families NSW, BCRG and Bankstown City Council. As a result of both federal and state government initiatives in recent years the early childhood sector has undergone many significant and recent changes pertaining to funding, curriculum, accreditation, licensing, professional qualification requirements and mandatory reporting.

This year the network has had a strong focus in supporting the early childhood sectors on both federal and state government initiatives, through guest speakers to address the new modern awards for child care services, Preschool Investment Reform Plan, Accreditation and pathways to TAFE and University study. The meetings have also been focused in providing an opportunity to local support system to collectively interpret and share ideas of implementing the Early Years Learning Framework. Due to a continual demand by members of this network for more locally based training a yearly calendar was provided identifying local professional development opportunities that were initiated by Families NSW- Bankstown Interagency Group and other local networks and key agencies..

Workshop Opportunities:

NSW Commission for Children & Young People: Child Safe Organisations – a situational prevention approach / Updates on Working with Children Check

Two workshops were held at BCRG on 17th & 29th June 2010 in partnership with the commission. The workshops focused on how services can make their organisations child friendly at an operating level reflecting in policies and procedures of the organisation. Further discussions were made to hold a full day Child Safe workshop at BCRG.

Nutrition workshop – Caring for Infants – Sydney South West Area Health Service.

A workshop was held on 24th June 2010 for long day care services that care for children between ages 0-12months. In partnership with Bankstown Community health child care services were informed on the changes to feeding regulations and were given a new resource that highlighted the key issues presented. It appears that this partnership will develop further through involvement in the ASLU and possible further workshops in the future.

The CSCDO project strives to build on children's services networks and partnerships that explore opportunities to promote best practice and deliver services that address local needs. We look forward to working with you again next year.

María Marmarinos
Children's Services Community
Development Officer

Kathy Theofilopoulou
Children's Services Community
Development Officer

Occupational Therapy Project

Funding Body: Bankstown City Council

Project Staff: Madelin Burt , Alison Hammond, Caroline Mills

Project Description

2009-2010 has seen growth and expansion for the Occupational Therapy project. We have welcomed two new Occupational Therapists in Alison Hammond and Caroline Mills. We are also excited to be involved in new projects such as the BCRG Kid's Clinic service and the Autism Panel services under the Helping Children with Autism Panel.

The Communication Sensation project funded by CDSE and ClubsNSW has continued as one of our successful early intervention group programs. And, the "Pick Me" project has been a small adjunct for those families who have previously been involved in the Communication Sensation project. This program was designed to support children with a disability and their families to access and participate in sport and recreation activities.

Kid's Clinic

- At the end of the 2009, BCRG launched its Kid's Clinic Service.
- The Occupational Therapy team has been involved in providing assessment and therapy services to early childhood and school aged children.
- This service is fast growing with a regular flow of referrals for a variety of reasons such as behaviour and sensory issues, handwriting difficulties and difficulty participating in daily activities such as mealtime and toileting.

Helping Children with Autism Package

- At the beginning of 2010 the Occupational Therapy team began servicing Autism clients under the Helping Children with Autism Package.
- We conducted 2 x information sessions regarding services offered at BCRG under the Helping Children with Autism Package.
- Since the launch of this service we have had an increasing number of referrals and have provided individual Occupational Therapy sessions at BCRG as well as in the Child Care Centres
- This has also afforded the Occupational Therapy team more opportunities to work with school-aged children within the education system and in collaboration with teachers.
- The service has also promoted collaboration with the Speech Pathology team to conduct multi-disciplinary assessments, write reports and liaise with families and childcare centres.

Communication Sensation Project

Project Description:

Communication Sensation is a 10-week program designed for children with autism and/or developmental delay and their families. The program is delivered by an Occupational Therapist and Speech Pathologist from the Early Intervention Team at BCRG.

The sensory and music room provided us with a large and safe space where we can build positive interactions between the child and family while supporting the child's participation in meaningful activities to build their communication, social and sensory motor skills.

Project Aims

The project aims were to provide a responsive early intervention service with sustainable child and family outcomes. Key to the achievement of sustainable child and family outcomes was the emphasis on improving the relationships that are occurring at all levels, from communities and services, professionals and families, and parents with their children. It was these relationships that became pivotal to our interventions and interactions.

The intervention principles used to deliver a responsive and relationship based service included:

- Family involvement in goal setting and planning
- Flexible and dynamic approach according to the evolving needs of the family
- Responsive teaching e.g. child led activities that would promote joint attention and promote turn taking skills
- Choosing activities based on the child's interests and sensory preferences
- Adapting tasks and modifying the environment to optimise the child's participation in meaningful activities
- Clinical support and professional dialogue within the transdisciplinary team
- Community partnerships and supporting funding processes

Project Outcomes:

1. Parent child relationship improved

- Results from mixed-methods outcome data revealed that the program had a positive influence on relationships between parent and child
- For example, Parent Stress Index (PSI), one of the assessment tools used pre- and post- program indicated for the parent-child interaction item that families moved from clinically significant stress levels to within the normal range after the group
- Anecdotal information at the post-focus group with the families was also indicative of this change. For example, "The observation of seeing my child smiling was a lasting memory in my mind"

2. Achievement of child goals

- Using the Goal Attainment Scale families could see tangible results as they marked their child's improvements from week to week.
- For Example one family said "I liked acknowledging the small achievements and then wow I'm at the top"
- Families were able to transition into the "Pick Me" project to extend their goals further and support their child's participation in sports and recreation activities such as swimming lessons.

3. Sustainable child and family outcomes

- Families would use the activities or experiences where they observed the child's joy to recreate similar experiences in the home

- Families were supported with funding processes to obtain equipment and toys that were used within the group so that they could continue to support their child's goals at home and continue to build positive interactions with their child
- With our results we were able to apply to FaCHSIA and advocate for the role of the Communication Sensation project as one of the services BCRG would provide under the Helping Children with Autism Package

4. *Transdisciplinary approaches and enhanced collaboration*

- Therapists gained greater confidence integrating and embedding goals across disciplines
- Therapists collaborated and produced comprehensive multidisciplinary assessments
- Madelin Burt and Nisrine El-Chouefati presented on the Communication Sensation project at the Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA) conference, held at the National Convention Centre, Canberra.
- We found that our presentation content was very relevant and in line with the information presented by the keynote speakers. This confirmed that the early intervention team at BCRG is at the forefront in delivering innovative and evidenced based early childhood intervention programs. It was also a great opportunity to network with other early intervention services.

Visions for 2010 – 2011

- Implement the Communication Sensation group to children with Autism and their families under the Helping Children with Autism Panel.
- Research and make recommendations regarding parent education programs that may be suitable to run within the Helping Children with Autism Package.
- Research and make recommendations regarding social skills programs, which target older children with higher functioning autism
- Collaborate with some of the schools where we are frequently seeing clients under the Helping Children with Autism Package e.g. Broderick Gillawarna and Caroline Chisholm.
- Collaborate with Brighter Futures Bankstown in order to address the complex needs of families accessing BCRG for the Kid's Clinic service

Thank you

Bankstown Community Resource Group would like to express our appreciation to Bankstown City Council and ClubsNSW for their contribution and support for the Communication Sensation project.

To Jenny Bombardieri (Executive Officer): Recreation Sports and Aquatics Club (RSAC) for her generosity and contribution to the project

To all the Early Intervention staff, Effi and Bec for your hard work and collaboration to see the BCRG Kid's Clinic & Autism Panel services commence, grow and succeed.

All the children and families involved with the BCRG Occupational Therapy projects.

Madelin Burt

Co-ordinator

TREASURER'S REPORT

It is my pleasure to report that BCRG has had a very successful 2009/10 financial year. BCRG's income over this period was \$784,986.

We receive \$369,120 for a series of projects which are funded on a recurrent basis. These are:

- Children's Services Community Development
- Mobile Minders
- Community Development
- Speech Pathology and
- Supporting Children with Additional Needs

In addition to this, BCRG was also successful in obtaining:

- DOCS (WSAAS) Year 4 funding for the TICL project \$72,474
- Bankstown City Council funded a variety of projects including:
The Odyssey, Building Local Capacity in Autism, The Bongo Roadshow, Pick Me Project, Drug and Alcohol Awareness Project, CSCDO activities and playgroup activities \$47,808
- Revesby Workers Club funded the Communication Sensation Project \$19,946

Our cash in the bank as of 30 June 2010 was \$568,773.
'Profit' for the financial year is \$14,142.

BCRG is strongly placed to continue to provide its existing projects and programs and to seek to initiate new programs that fill gaps in service delivery in our community.

We would like to thank the funding bodies for their continued support. We wish to also thank our accountant, Denis Cala for maintaining the books and financial records and our auditor Gerard Abrams of Benbow and Pike. The full audited figures in this report reflect the work that has been accomplished by our organisation.

Tim Carroll
Treasurer