

Logan Together Foundation Roadmap –Project scoping

Project title:

“Kindy Call to Action” - Boost attendance at high quality kindergarten programs and create kindergarten alternatives catering for diversity

Strategic or Chapter-based project:

Chapter based project within Education

Short description:

Utilising data to inform where community action is needed to increase the understanding of the importance of kindergarten attendance especially for the most vulnerable children and targeted populations.

Examine the barriers around enrolment and attendance and collaborate to create alternative solutions

Link quality home learning environments with kindergarten quality strategies

What results does it help Logan Together to achieve?

Children who attend high quality Kindergarten programs are more likely to transition to school effectively (Australian Early Developmental Census data) and an Australian study (Early Bird Catches the Worm – Warren and Haisken - De New; 2013, University of Melbourne) shows correlation between Kindergarten attendance and NAPLAN results.

SER Kindergarten data (ECEC census) indicates that only 56% of the most vulnerable children attended a Kindergarten program in 2015. Logan has areas of underutilisation of kindergarten particularly from children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD backgrounds.

This project will contribute achieving the following key results:

- Reduce % of children developmentally vulnerable on 1 or more AEDC domains by 11.6%
- Reduce % of children developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more AEDC domains by 11.6%
- Reduce % of children developmentally at risk but not yet vulnerable on the five AEDC domains by an average of 4.9%
- Reduce % of children developmentally vulnerable on AEDC language and cognitive domain by 18.8% and at risk by a further 11.4%.

- Reduce % of children developmentally vulnerable on AEDC communication and general knowledge domain by 22.4% and at risk by a further 2.2%.

Why will it help achieve those results?

National and International research shows the importance of attendance at high quality Kindergartens for successful achievement and lifelong learning. QLD has seen significant gains in the past few years in the rolling out of Kindergartens particularly in areas of social disadvantage; however these services have been challenged in securing the most vulnerable children's attendance due to access and affordability.

Examining some sample data from schools in the lowest 10 Kindergarten attendance in Logan brings other information to light – some locations (Logan Central) have noticed that the majority of children attending any ECEC service come from Family Day Care Providers. Others have gleaned from parents that little difference is understood between any early childhood services whether it is a Kindergarten program with a qualified teacher; a long day care setting, family day care or even a playgroup or mums and bubs group.

Our most vulnerable children are less likely to attend a high quality Kindergarten program with particular cultural groups not identifying with the importance of Kindergarten as one of the important steps in education and lifelong learning. Parents may see Kindergarten as intruding upon their parenting role and other issues like transport, cost, operating hours continue to be barriers of engagement. Some parents benefit from individual support in enrolling and being introduced to the concept and benefits of a Kindergarten program

Project details:

Using the Results Based Accountability Framework, specific data sources and community partners and networks (including the Early Years Neighbourhood Networks) the conversation will begin to obtain relevant understanding about the challenges and barriers to identify collaborative actions which are continually adjusted and evaluated.

Raise community awareness through schools and neighbourhood networks of the importance of Kindergarten attendance through RBA's "Turn the Curve Exercise" and by providing a "Kindy Call to Action" pack which links to the DET ECEC Kindy Counts campaign. Target the Kindy Call to Action within specific geographical areas and through specific early childhood services including Family Day Care Schemes to maximise the opportunities.

Leverage from the work already started with DSS, Community Partners and Community Elders "Growing Our Mob Up Strong" which brought together parents with young children receiving parenting payments with Community Elders to link them into services including schools and ECEC services.

Partner with Logan Children and Family Centre and Burregah Community Kindergarten to develop an effective engagement model for ATSI families for further rollout across other geographical areas and cultural groups.

Link other ECEC strategies regarding improving the quality of home learning environments which includes developing strong adult/child interactions and supports both social and emotional development and language development.

Data and scale:

The data used is ECEC census which identifies by SA2 area the areas which have the least ECEC and Kindergarten attendance alongside the AEDC data which identifies the numbers of Kindergarten attendance of vulnerable, ATSI and CALD children. Other data examined in the Indigenous Prep enrolments in State schools and DHSS data for parents with young children receiving parenting payments. We are currently working with State Schools (particularly in the top 10 SA2 areas – 6 in Logan) to obtain accurate data on Prep children enrolling as the current picture has some degree of inaccuracy – partly due to Community misunderstanding the differences in ECEC services.

SA2 Areas being targeted initially include: Kingston, Crestmead, Marsden Woodridge, Waterford, and Eagleby. Very recent improvements in supporting ATSI children and families to enrol and attend Kindergarten have identified the importance of individual connections through cultural leaders/elders; wrap around support including transport, lunch boxes and appropriate family support alongside appropriate cultural response to pedagogy and curriculum delivery.

There are 17 Family Day Schemes in Logan with 566 Educators who potentially educate 2264 children. Initial research has shown that some of our Logan City schools receive the majority of their Prep cohort from Family Day Care Schemes. Whilst it has been recognised that some of our Family Day Care Schemes are struggling to provide the basic safety and care requirements to comply with the National Quality Standards; community knowledge is suggesting CALD families see FDC as the most culturally appropriate care provision and also an employment opportunity. Therefore Community Action is needed to shift the lens from the adult onto the child and the learning gap that is already evident on school entry.

Partners:

Schools and ECEC services; Child and Family Centre and Early Years Centres; Church Leaders, Indigenous Organisations – Kalwun, Ganyjuu etc.; Community Elders; ISA; Cultural Support Organisations like Access and Multilink; Libraries; Playgroups and Playgroups QLD; Neighbourhood Networks; Large Kindergarten Providers – C&K, Goodstart, G8 etc.; Centrelink; Abecedarian Champions; Dept of Communities – particularly Family and Child Connect; Child Safety; Health services particularly specific Indigenous services – e.g. Deadly Ears

Co-design:

Logan Children and Family centre are already supporting this as co –designers; Neighbourhood Network Patrons and School Leaders will also play a key role Community Leaders and Elders will also play a strong role which links with the project group supporting the “Growing Our Mob Up Strong”

Quick wins:

Establishing a Model with Indigenous Children and Kindergarten Enrolment for further rollout across CALD and Vulnerable children

Action to Date: Enrolments To Date: Week Commencing the 1st of February: 31 Children

Ganyjuu have lodged a service providers application for the Logan Children and Family Centre for Outside of School Hours Program and Community Kindergarten

Burrarah Community Kindergarten - enrolments full and closed off at 22 children

Agreement between Ganyjuu and Nana's day care completed and currently working on enrolments for 22 placements - Current Status is 9 children enrolled

Partnership between Ganyjuu and C&K to the develop an agreement for the 22 placements at the Kingston C&K Centre

Partnership between Wesley Mission and Ganyjuu to run an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Kindy Program in the Beenleigh/ Eagleby Area

Success Factors to be included in the Model

- Wrap Around Family Support - to go out to the family homes to build relationships and trust
- Transport to and from the Kindy Programs
- Lunch Box Program - for locations that don't provide lunch
- Child Maternal Health - Health Check Ups as part of the Kindergarten program

This model to be presented and discussed at the QBQF Stakeholder Forum – Education Chapter Logan Together.

Kindergarten Community Awareness

Early Indicators suggest that there is now growing awareness within community about the difference between FDC and Kindergarten. Families are enrolling earlier in Kindergartens this year than previously and suggesting they have been told to enrol by their Family Day Care provider or other community members including Schools and Centrelink.

The Kindy Call to Action Starter packs alongside the use of “Turn the Curve “exercise will be occurring throughout the initial SA2 areas and should yield strong results.

Areas to potentially fund

Kindy model roll out – connection to other funded support services and playgroups etc.

Family day care and other alternative models to receive Abecedarian training

Options to Scale up quickly

This initiative could be scaled up quickly by the following:

- Align existing Community Liaison Officer's roles to include the support of the "Kindy Call to Action" through Early Years Neighbourhood Networks and other partnerships/programs e.g. the new Federal Initiative "Parent Next" (NO COST)
- Employ additional Community Liaison Officers with specific targeted focus – (Indigenous, Pacifica, Children with Disability, Young Parents) to work through Logan Together and with the mentoring support from DET Partnership and Innovation Officer to implement Kindy Call to Action community responses within the SA2 areas identified through the ECEC Census and AEDC data. (salary per CLO \$50 – 60K)