

Name of Library	Fraser Coast Libraries	
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Title of project/innovation/initiative	Chatter bugs – Catch the Bug
Date initiated	June 2010
Date completed	Ongoing

The issue/challenge

To establish a productive partnership with a local school to support literacy development for Prep students.

Project details

Two important objectives of Fraser Coast Libraries' strategic plan are that we will work in partnership to deliver our services and programs and; we will engage with our community to ensure awareness of our services, programs and services. In line with these objectives we have been actively engaged in seeking opportunities to work with community groups to promote library resources and services.

Early in 2010 we were approached by a local primary school, Maryborough Central State School, who was interested in forming a partnership with us to support the literacy development of Prep students at their school. The school had identified ongoing poor progress of students in literacy attainment, development and progress as a major need area. Increasing numbers of students with low oral language scores were entering the Preparatory Year at the school. The school identified that it would be vital to commence intervention programs that would directly address oral language before children commence learning to read and write.

Fraser Coast Libraries already offer planned oral language and reading experiences through our well established collection and our storytelling and Rattle & Rhyme programs. We were concerned with increasing community awareness of our resources and services and had set of target of a 5% increase in membership and loans annually. From discussions with the school principal and teachers a natural partnership concept emerged. The school applied for Seed Funding under the Schools First Program to cover the cost of transport to and from the library and the purchase of library bags.

Although the application for funding was unsuccessful the program commenced in Term 4 2010. The Children and Youth Services Librarian made an initial visit to the school where she talked about the library and the services we offer and shared a story with the children. The teachers sent registration forms home to the parents for

each of the children and these were returned to the Librarian before the children's first visit to the library. Library cards were prepared for each of the children and any children that were already members were issued with a second card. These cards were to be retained by the teachers until the end of the program.

Three visits to the library were arranged during the term. The students were using the "Oracy for Preschool" program in class and the librarian planned the library visits to coincide with the texts that the children were reading in class. On their first visit to the library the children were given a library tour and issued with their library cards. After the storytelling session the children were able to select a picture book and then they checked this book out using our self-checker. The picture books were kept in the classroom and the students returned them at their next visit. It was great to see the enthusiasm of the students and teachers.



The school re-applied for funding in 2011 and was successful this time. The partnership is working well and will continue to evolve over time. Both partners are committed to the project continuing in future years. It is planned that the success of the program will be filtered to other schools in the area and there is the potential to extend the program across the five branches of Fraser Coast Libraries.

Major benefits for our library service are an increase in membership numbers and loans but, of equal importance are the intangible benefits. We are developing a strong partnership between the school and the library and we are establishing relationships with the children that we hope will be lifelong.