

Name of Library	Cunnamulla Library	
Address	PO Box 75 Cunnamulla QLD 4490	
Phone	0746 558 490	
Contact person	Mrs Tammy Hickey	
Email	cmalib@bigpond.net.au	

Title of project/innovation/initiative	Seniors/Students Buddy Reading Program
Date initiated	October 2012
Date completed	Ongoing

The issue/challenge – Getting the schools to embrace the program and for the young people to see how much fun they can have with the elderly. While showcasing how much fun the program is to encourage the “at risk kids” to display appropriate behaviour so they will be chosen. Only students displaying exemplary behaviour are chosen to come.



Project details – I wanted to find a way to collaborate old and young people. I wanted to get the elderly out of the aged care home more, and have a reward for the students who always do the right thing. It’s quite common in schools now instead of rewarding the good students, they reward the ones with behaviour issues in the hope of turning the behaviour around. While this is a good strategy it isn’t at all fair on the students who do the “right thing” all the time.

With these thoughts in mind, I contacted the aged care lodge, other community senior citizens and Cunnamulla State School (to trial it first with them). All parties were excited and keen to come on board. Once a month 2 students from each class who have displayed exemplary behaviour during the month, are accompanied with a teacher to the library. Community seniors as well as the residents from “Yapunyah” Lodge arrive to meet up with the students at 9.30 a.m. The students and seniors take turns at reading books to



each other. Then they talk about the book and draw a picture that tells the story of the book in pictures.

We all then enjoy a beautiful morning tea and play Bingo. A senior is paired off with a student who share the one Bingo card. Both seniors and students enjoy this immensely and get very excited. First, second and third are presented with a medal each and a lolly pop. The seniors and students leave the library at about 11.15 a.m. We have noticed that the students have developed a new sense of respect for the seniors. Often when we're having morning tea, we'll notice the students are asking what the seniors would like and are getting up to go and get it for them, which is very inspiring. The seniors also appear to have found a new respect for the young people – again inspiring and the outcome I had hoped for.

