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IMPLEMENTING CHILDREN AND FAMILY CENTRES

Children, Communities, Connections Conference
 15 November 2012




Children's Centres
 for Early Childhood Development and Parenting




A joint presentation by

Kathryn Jordan
 Department for Education and Child Development

and

Karl Brettig
 The Salvation Army – FamilyZone Hub




Presentation Overview – Kathryn Jordan

- The enabling policy environment that led to the establishment of Children's Centres
- Update on the development of the centres
- Challenges and enablers
- What we have learned




Presentation Overview – Karl Brettig

- Implementing a children and family centre
- Barriers
- Infrastructure
- Partnerships




Legacy



Lillian De Lissa
 1885 - 1967



Helen Mayo
 1878 - 1967



2004 Inquiry into Early Childhood Services

www.ecsinquiry.sa.gov.au

- Established early childhood as a key priority for the Government
- Commitment to make a difference for young children and their families
- Focus on both high quality and high equity
- Establish Children's Centres for Early Childhood Development and Parenting

 **Children's Centres**
for Early Childhood Development and Parenting

Adelaide Thinker in Residence – Dr Fraser Mustard



Early childhood development focus

- Quality
- Universal
- Accessible
- Brain development

Access Fraser's report at www.thinkers.sa.gov.au

 **Children's Centres**
for Early Childhood Development and Parenting

Children's Centres for Early Childhood Development and Parenting - Vision

Children's Centres support children and families to achieve the best possible learning, health and wellbeing outcomes in a universal setting with targeted responses for children and families who may require additional support.



 **Children's Centres**
for Early Childhood Development and Parenting

Minister for Early Childhood Development

First for South Australia

Demonstration of Government commitment

Underpins and promotes a cross-portfolio approach

High level oversight



 **Children's Centres**
for Early Childhood Development and Parenting

Department for Education and Child Development

CHILDREN and YOUNG PEOPLE are at the CENTRE OF EVERYTHING WE DO



www.decd.sa.gov.au


 **Children's Centres**
for Early Childhood Development and Parenting

Seven State Priorities



Every Chance for Every Child

- Creating a Vibrant Adelaide
- Safe communities, healthy neighbourhoods
- An affordable place to live
- Advanced manufacturing
- Realising the benefits of mining for all
- Premium food and wine from our clean environment

 **Children's Centres**
for Early Childhood Development and Parenting

Every Chance for Every Child discussion paper

- Nurture
- Learn
- Achieve

www.everychild.sa.gov.au



Proposed B-18 Child Development Legislation

Child Development Council
Outcomes framework
Regional trusts
Foundation for children and young people
Duty to children and young people

www.edlawreform.sa.gov.au



Carla Rinaldi

Carla Rinaldi
Re-imagining Childhood



www.thinkers.sa.gov.au



Paradigm Shifts

From	To
Child centred	Child and family centred
Early childhood education and care Welfare	Early childhood development Productivity
Siloed services	Integrated services
Multidisciplinary (working in parallel)	Interdisciplinary (working together)



Children's Centres for Early Childhood Development & Parenting



Commitment to 34 centres
4 Aboriginal Children & Family Centres
School site locations
Enabling/Partnership Groups
Parent Advisory Groups

www.childrenscentres.sa.gov.au



Children's Centres Service Model

Education and Child Care
Child health
Family Support
Community engagement



Children's Centres Service Delivery Model



Local
Universal
Integrated
Working in partnership



Outcomes Framework

Four Population Outcomes

Children have optimal health and development.	Parents provide strong foundations for their children's healthy development and wellbeing.	Communities are child and family friendly.	Aboriginal children are safe, healthy, culturally strong and confident.
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National Quality Standard – Quality Area 6 Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

The child, the family and the service do not exist in isolation. They are all part of a much wider community. When services develop links, share information, and work in collaboration with other community organisations they are better able to achieve the best outcomes for children and families using the service.



Working together is not easy...

From practice to policy, there is no alternative but to work together to benefit children and families. There are opportunities but also obstacles. It is exciting but not easy.



Dorothy Scott, 2007



Challenges



- Agency or discipline culture and language
- Territorialism
- Legislation
- Budgets and funding
- Regional / service boundaries
- Governance
- Communication and information sharing
- Changes in decision-makers



Current Challenges

Governance

Leadership

Multidisciplinary setting



Leadership challenges



- Leadership in an integrated setting
- Leading a multidisciplinary team
- Collaborative integration
- Managing change



Fraser Mustard Centre – Children's Centre Evaluation

What is the program utilisation by priority population groups?

Do Children's Centres provide families with effective pathways to services and support?

How do Children's Centre staff work together?

Is system-wide change occurring and what factors influence this?

What are the processes that enable effective partnerships and integrated governance?



Learning from Children's Centres

Interdisciplinary work is both rewarding and challenging

Knowing our communities is important

Developing partnerships takes time

Adequate resourcing of facilities is imperative

There is a need for common integrated systems

Current governance arrangements are complex



Enablers

- Common goals and vision
- Understanding, respect and trust
- Communication
- Relationships
- Flexibility
- Learning from others

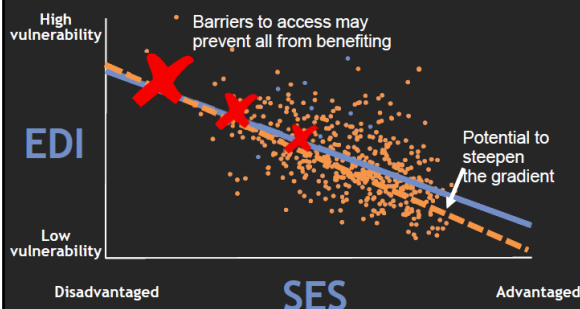


Targeted programs?

Human Early Learning Partnership
www.earlylearning.ubc.ca

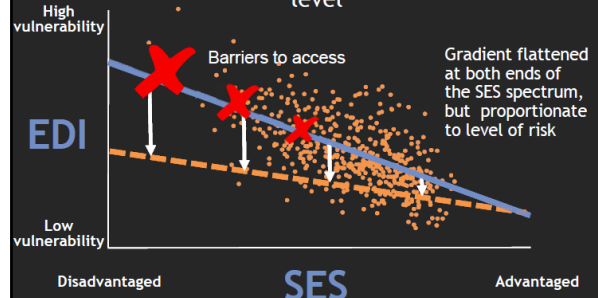


Universal programs?



Proportionate Universality

Universal access with an **intensity and character** that addresses barriers at every level



1. What are the barriers?
2. How can we negotiate them?
3. Service examples

www.salisbury4c.org

What are the barriers to implementation?

1. Infrastructure – how children and family centres are designed

- Urban sprawl vs. Village planning

2. Making inter-sectorial collaboration work

- No individual sector agency or department has enough resources

3. Engaging vulnerable young families

- Deconstructing hard to reach services

4. Integrating research, policy and practice

- Bridging the Know – Do gap

5. Negotiating government and non government bureaucracies

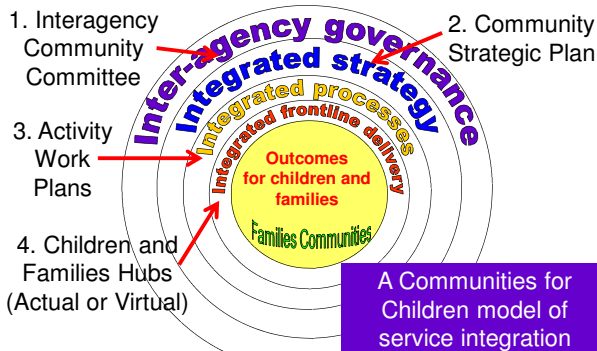
- Bottom up decision making

6. Scaling up integrated early childhood services that work

- How can sectors can develop a service provision model that builds communities?

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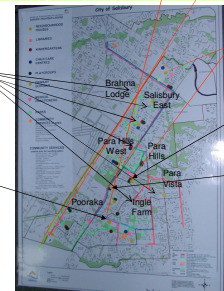
1. Infrastructure – how children and family communities are designed



SC4C Response to Community Consultation & AEDI

Suburb	No	Proportion of children developmentally vulnerable					Average scores						
		Phys	Soc	Emo	Lang	Com	Phys	Soc	Emo	Lang	Com		
Ingle Farm	43	15.0	17.5	10.0	12.5	10.0	32.5	15.0	8.18	8.44	8.37	8.85	8.48
Para Hills	50	7.0	9.5	11.5	7.0	14.0	18.6	11.6	8.64	8.25	8.46	8.62	8.75
Pooraka	29	16.4	11.5	11.5	15.4	15.4	30.8	19.2	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.25
Salisbury East	100	4.8	6.0	8.5	4.8	6.0	16.9	8.4	9.09	8.96	8.37	9.23	8.75

Social /emotional learning in classrooms



First Steps Playtime



34



FamilyZone Para Hills



Wilkinson Road



2. Making inter-sectorial collaboration work

Cooperative	Coordinative	Collaborative
Differentiating relationships		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low trust – unstable relations • Infrequent communication flows • Known information sharing • Adjusting actions • Independent/autonomous goals, Power remains with organisation • Resources – remain own • Commitment and accountability to own agency • Relational time frame requirement – short term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium trust – based on prior relations • Structured communication flows • 'Project' related and directed information sharing • Joint projects, joint funding, joint policy • Semi-independent goals • Power remains with organisations • Shared resources around project • Commitment and accountability to own agency and project • Relational time frame Medium term – often based on prior projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High trust – stable relations • Thick communication flows • Tacit information sharing • Systems change • Dense interdependent relations and goals • Shared power • Pooled, collective resources • Commitment and accountability to the network first • Relational time frame requirement – long term 3-5 years

Source: Keast & Brown, 2003; Keast et al 2007

Keast, CHUT March 2010

3. Engaging vulnerable young families

Home visiting > Being with Baby > Supported playgroup > Craft Group > Leadership

Naomi the mother of a young toddler and a new baby, was referred to Family Zone **Home Visiting Service**. She had recently separated from the children's father and had moved from her marital home to stay for a short time with her parents. This move was perceived as a great opportunity to gain extra support at a difficult time physically and emotionally. Naomi however was evicted from her parent's home following a particularly difficult domestic violence incident. With new housing secured, she was connected with a family support worker who home visited on a regular basis. Because of her level of depression, Naomi was referred to her G.P., provided with medication and offered the opportunity to attend **Being with Baby**. Participation in Being with Baby was the catalyst for lots of change for 'N'. She developed **friendships**, learned new skills and started the road to a new-learned confidence as a single parent.

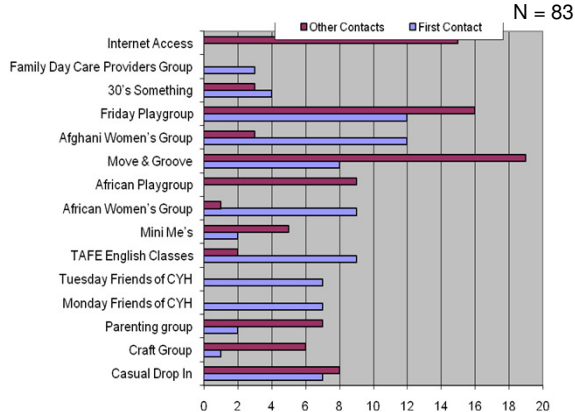
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From Being with Baby, Naomi moved into a **supported playgroup** – Stepping stones, which encouraged her growth and confidence as a parent. She also attended **post-being with baby** for continued support with her post natal depression. During the last week of being with baby the women are introduced to a **craft activity**, an effort to encourage them to spend some time enjoying some time for themselves. She had REALLY enjoyed being introduced to beading and as a consequence joined the Busy Fingers group to extend this interest.

Several terms on – following lots of one-on-one support sessions, several rounds of home visiting, play support in stepping stones and fun in Busy Fingers, Naomi expressed a need to start **giving back** for all of the support she had experienced. Last term she **facilitated** a cake decorating course for other women who attend Family Zone. By attending Busy Fingers, Naomi had discovered a new-found creative side. She has used her new talents to share her creativity. She has taught women how to make and decorate birthday cakes for their children in an economic manner which has resulted in a great confidence boost for all concerned.

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Seamless referral to other services



4. Integrating research, policy and practice

A staff of child & family sensitive practitioners who can

- work in a trans-disciplinary and trans-agency environment
- use a community development approach
- communicate effectively and engage with people
- assist with early childhood development
- work collaboratively in a team
- safeguard and promote welfare of children
- initiate targeted prevention activities
- assess developmental delay and provide early intervention support for families

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5. Negotiating government and non government bureaucracies

No single department or organisation has the capacity to resource what is needed. State Governments, for example, do not really have sufficient levels of funding to develop Children and Family Centres as comprehensively as is needed for them to be fully effective. NGO's have a good level of engagement with local communities and expertise in family support that is much needed for Children & Family Centres to make a significant difference in addressing social problems through prevention and early intervention. Bringing them together as Fraser Mustard has suggested is difficult.

"Rationalizing the range of programs and services, layers of tradition, and the mosaic of funding patterns of the governments for the support of a variety of activities in early child development will be difficult and requires legislation and specific funding for the children's centres. Different South Australian government departments, federal government, community organizations and non-government organizations support diverse non-integrated programs in early child development. Establishing integrated programs for early child development from this mixture will be difficult and slow". (Early Childhood Development the Best start for all South Australians, p38) www.salisbury4c.org

Some key elements needed to successfully navigate the mosaic

- Governing Councils need to have a permission giving, empowering role that provides guidelines and accountability rather than a top down bureaucratic 'gatekeeping' role that impedes initiative.
- The vision, strategic plan & activity work plans provide checks and balances and need to be reported against .
- Bottom up decision making - the people responsible for implementing decisions need to be the ones empowered to make them.
- No short termism – we need a bipartisan approach to achieve significant change.

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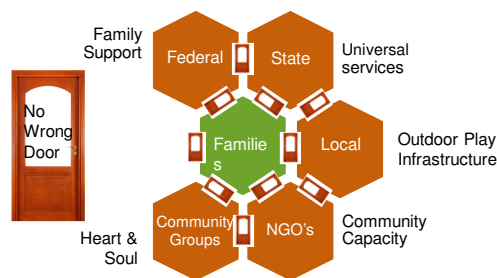


6. Scaling up integrated early childhood services that work

- Establish a Facilitating Partner /Leadership Group
- Convene a representative local committee/partnership group
- Consult with families /services/community groups/institutions
- Develop a Community Strategic Plan
- Develop implementation plan/ Activity Workplan
- Implement the plan
- Continue to consult with parents and services to keep the community healthy
- Manage conflicts & Maintain relationships, Rest & Relaxation
- The more vulnerable the families the more integrated the support needed.
- We need the 3 levels of government, NGO's and community groups to work together if we are going to make a major difference in terms of outcomes for families.

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Key partnerships for implementing effective children & family communities



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Thank you