

Macarthur Child & Family Interagency

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 20th April 2010

Venue: Kazcare, cnr Kirkham and Centennial Roads Bowral

Chairperson: Phoebe Boardman

Minutes: Karen Chisnall

Present: Kate Crossley, Louise Pilon, Jodie Reeder, Stephanie Isvik, Jenny Tilocca, Eileen Huxtable, Judith Taylor, Jane Manson, Rachel Ware, Sandra Connelly, Karen Hockey, Fiona Devine, Kate Fitzgerald, Hong Lu, Donna Skobla, Margaret Hudson, Yvonne Porter, Margaret O’Dea, Donna Crawford.

Apologies: Marie Fletcher, Trish Coombes, Gaynor Schoenfeld, Lorraine Simpson, Stephen Chan, Celina Ang.

1. Welcome and self-introduction:

2. Minutes of the last meeting:

Accepted: Donna Crawford, Jenny Tilocca

Presentation: Hong Lu – Odyssey House After Care
(Information attached to minutes)

3. General Business:

- Introduction – Karen Chisnall newly appointed Families NSW Facilitator

4. Standing items:

4.1 Discussion – Macarthur/Wingecarribee Gaps and Issues:

- Concerns raised over the decline of funding and support for supported playgroups within the area.
- The region is facing a significant cut back in relation to funding for supported playgroups even though the target population is growing.
- Immigration is sticking to a five year plan; however the issues don’t disappear after five years. Thus, concern raised over who is picking up those services?
- 120 families at CCC so a massive gap will arise if funding is cut.
- Major diversity issues within the playgroups.
- MDSI faced this funding issue two years ago and if funding is cut who will coordinate the supported playgroups program?

- Immigration has said in the past that we don't have the migration to warrant further funding; however the population growth in the area is increasing.
- Funding needs to be carried out on a more permanent basis instead of year-to-year.
- If funding is cut who will coordinate the supported playgroups? Families do not want to be involved in running playgroups and legal issues also arise from family run playgroups.
- Working group to be organised to try and address the issues facing supported playgroups.
- Funding is stretched across services and therefore families are not getting enough support; and rapport building is made more difficult.
- Survey was conducted and it was found that a large proportion of the families attending supported playgroups said they would not go anywhere if there wasn't the supported playgroup in place.
- Interagency members who showed interest in attending a working group meeting:
 - Phebe Boardman
 - Camden Community Connections
 - Jo Walker
 - Benevolent Society
 - Kate Fitzgerald
- Phebe Boardman, Community Links Wollondilly informed the meeting that a DOCS worker is available for information and community days. Also, children who have been removed from families by DOCS were using the free counselling service available.
- Hong Lu, Odyssey House informed the meeting that Odyssey House sometimes runs groups with parents whose children have been removed by DOCS – Possible DOCS group specific to this issue: Hong Lu to further investigate feasibility.
- Multicultural Family Day/Family day for Chinese garden community – check minutes from previous meeting and discuss at next meeting.
- Highlands Child – many barriers to accessing services in the Wingecarribee area such as isolation and new families not knowing about services available in the area. Families feeling threatened.
- Possible solution – linking services to be proactive i.e. funding for Child and Family services directory website for new families. Possibly put information on Council website and working with the local libraries.
- Sector Connect, Families NSW – looking at websites for links to community services.
- Resources for parents not up-to-date have to be proactive to get supported playgroups up and running.
- Nicole in the process of setting a website up – trying to find funding for the project.
- Possibly approaching Sector Connect to develop a link to community services.
- Need an integrated model because search engines are not adequate nor access friendly.
- Wellbeing unit – long waiting lists.

4.2 General Service Information Share:

- **MDSI:**
 - Triple P's Program starting Monday May 3rd at Yummy Cafe.
 - Support group for parents.
 - Open to anyone.
 - 10am-12pm
 - Contact Kate for further information – 4627 1188
- **Hey Dad Program:**
 - Open to anyone.
 - Arabic speakers welcome.
 - Call Kate (MDSI) for specific dates and times.
- **Tips in Tarmore:**
 - Friday at Tarmore Community Centre.
 - General parenting program.
 - Contact Phebe Boardman for further information
phebe@communitylinks.org.au
- **Hippy Program:**
 - Seven vacancies.
 - Referrals welcomed.
 - Open to anyone.
- **Big Books Big Fun:**
 - At Yummy Cafe.
 - Literacy based program – interactive approach.
 - 10am-12pm last Wednesday of every month.
- **Recipe for Reading:**
 - Two weeks of healthy eating.
- Camden area needs a volunteer
- Youth worker positions filled; open for more youth workers.
- MDSI: has a new pacific islander youth worker named Tom.
- ILLS program: please refer families.
- Community Links: Greg Duffy in manager position and youth worker has been put on.
- Louise Pilon, Home Start needs volunteers in June.
- Bridges for Learning: occupational therapist is running two workshops.
 - May: workshop for professionals focusing on sensory processing.
 - June: workshop for parents focusing on information provision for sensory processing disorder – 'Touch and Stuff'
 - Autism program growing – is now the only service provider in the sector. Interested in support groups within the area to guide.
- Halfways: now has access to internet to find accommodation which has been a barrier in the past.
- MDSI: working with ASPECTS autism – working out of the office. Doing interviews with families for funding.
- Dr Steve Walker training: Challenging Behaviours with children with autism at St. Anthony's family care.
- St. Anthony's has a speech therapist at Warragamba and Picton – for families with FASCIA funding.
- Camden Community Connections toy library is closing down – no funding available.

- Look into getting a Families NSW representative at next meeting.

Close:

Next chairperson: Katie Fitzgerald

**Next meeting: Tuesday 1st June 2010
10am – 12noon
Sector Connect Training Room
351 Welling Drive, Mount Annan
Car parking available at the front of the venue.
Morning tea provided.**