

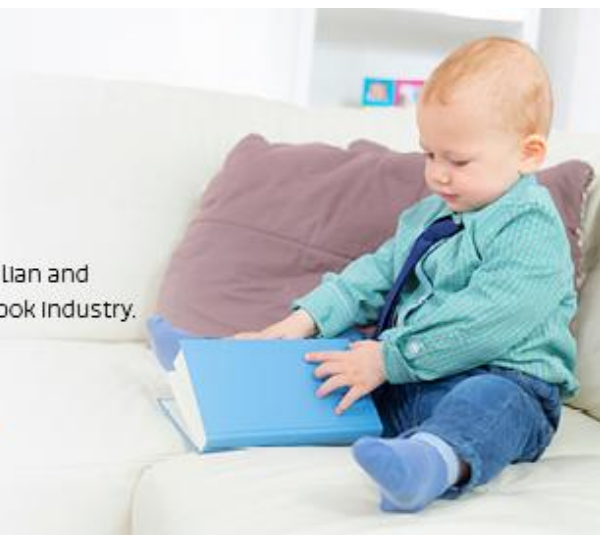
Australian National Early Literacy Summit

7 – 8 March 2016 • Hotel Realm, Canberra

Hosted by TV presenter Jennifer Byrne, an outstanding line up of Australian and international speakers from early childhood, literacy, libraries and the book industry. Join us and help drive the national agenda.



Australian Library and
Information Association



FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS AT THE NATIONAL EARLY LITERACY SUMMIT

Canberra, 7-8 March 2016

The final session of the second day involved a workshop for participants based on the pre-summit consultation questions. Out of the workshop, the following points emerged, which we have grouped under seven headings.

1. Assets

- Common focus on the child and outcomes for children
- Expertise in evidence-based messaging
- Potential solutions
- Willingness to work together and promote a common message
- Early Years Learning Framework
- Quality interactions with families and children
- Potential to connect highly active local organisations
- Friends of early literacy at Parliament House – Paint the Town ReAd has already established this
- Potential to celebrate success

2. Considerations

- Common definition of literacy and early years will need to be agreed – definition of literacy can be very broad, from ability to operate in the home environment through science, music, digital to vocabulary, word meanings, context, reading and writing
- Language and self-regulation are the two critical factors (Professor Melhuish findings) – messaging will need to accommodate both
- Crosses three levels of government with the potential to fall through the gaps
- Overlap and duplication of services
- Children's Centre model, implemented in the UK, Norway and Denmark, as a possible solution for Australia, bringing together health, family support, library, childcare and early education

3. Stakeholders

- Government – politicians, education policy makers (Minister for Children)
- Libraries for free 'no stigma' public places and spaces
- Power and networks of the State Libraries
- Speech and language pathologists bring deep knowledge and skills
- Specialists in health and education, GPs, AMA, maternal and child health
- Family day care, play groups, nannies
- Auslan speakers
- Parents, grandparents, foster parents and other care givers
- Parent and child advocacy groups
- School teachers
- Mother tongue programs, multicultural organisations, multi-lingualism, Indigenous literacy
- Not for profit and charities, The Smith Family, Mission Australia, Vinnies
- Child welfare connections
- Businesses – literate employees of the future
- Adult literacy providers

4. Alliance

- Formal alliance to be created following the National Early Literacy Summit – a children's coalition
- Peak bodies with goodwill to come to the table
- Could this be a sub-committee of Early Childhood Australia?
- Nationwide platform for sharing ideas and programs
- Media partnerships to be sought
- Potential to employ a lobbyist

5. Research

- Deep longitudinal evidence base that supports what we do, provides compelling arguments and feeds conversations with government, philanthropists and the corporate world
- International social return on investment studies – this is about nation building
- Shared data – indicators and measures

6. Funding

- Peak body organisations and other institutions engaged in the space – modest sums together providing seed funding
- Philanthropic and business supporters

7. National conversation (political) and public education campaign

- Steering group with representatives from each sector or organisation to filter the sourced information to focus points, rather than an overload of thoughts and information
- A structured process for collective impact
- Consensus achieved behind the scenes

- Campaign explaining how everyone benefits from improving early literacy
- Focus could be 18 months to 3 years
- Role of organisations in supporting parents as first teachers
- Message for families about the value of reading and talking together – what parents can do; what the whole community can do
- 90 second video clips demonstrating the need and opportunity to improve early literacy
- Up to three clear, catchy messages for parents and carers

- Speak through COAG to federal government, to state/territory governments and local councils
- Genuine and deep collaboration in the sector for political engagement
- Public health, not the poverty agenda, but important to articulate the link with crime and the justice system
- Innovation, human capital and economic prosperity political agenda – it won't work without a literate workforce; look at successful countries in relation to start ups and employment

- Play and creativity an important part of literacy - playgroups, arts and GLAM sector
- Indigenous voice and literacy in remote as well as urban communities
- Role of multi-lingual and bilingualism in early literacy development
- Digital technology engagement, blended learning – literacy is multi modal
- Community outreach eg through sports events

Strategy doesn't have to be perfect, let's start!