

## Welcome to our Community Chatter Newsletter!

Thank you for registering your interest in Connecting Community for Kids and we hope you enjoy this newsletter. We cannot believe the first half of 2018 is nearly finished! Anyone else feel like it's been a super busy year so far?! Our team helped celebrate Reconciliation Week in May and has been working hard, activating events around our approaches. We have cultural cooking classes happening in June and July and our Community Mother volunteers are participating in training ready to help Mums in need. Happy reading!

### Cultural Spice in Cockburn

Thanks to grant funding provided by City of Cockburn, Connecting Community for Kids is hosting a series of FREE Cultural Cooking Classes in various Family Centres around Cockburn! The program commenced at South Lake Ottey Family and Neighbourhood Centre on **Saturday 9th June**, with a Filipino inspired spread. Volunteer chefs Melanie Endaya and Maureen Madolora prepared Philippine Adobo alongside participants ranging in age from 3 to 60. The group then enjoyed making Biko, a sweet rice cake made of coconut milk, brown sugar and glutinous rice, topped with latik.

The classes will continue at Meerilinga Children and Family Centre on **Saturday 23rd June**, featuring Indian and Sri Lankan inspired cooking. The group will be making Sri Lankan Curry and milk rice, Kiribath alongside volunteer cooks Pravinthi Neelawatura and Shakunthi Neelawatura. On **Saturday 30th June**, guest chef Marissa Verma from Bindi Bindi Dreaming will be showcasing the lovely native herbs and spices from Australia. Participants will get to prepare damper and taste test with native jams, make kangaroo burgers with bush herbs and enjoy a seasonal fruit salad. On **Saturday 7th July** at Yangebup Family Centre; attendees will be preparing Malaysian fried rice, curry and chapatti, kindly demonstrated by volunteers Huey Teoh and Kim Teoh.

The Cultural Cooking Classes have been so popular that spaces are now full. You can register your interest for future events by contacting the team via [info@connecting4kids.com.au](mailto:info@connecting4kids.com.au).



### Reconciliation Week

Kwinana Community Facilitator; Nicole Hunt and members of the Celebrate Culture Action Team attended City of Kwinana's The Maladjiny Project at The Edge Skate Park on **Saturday 2nd June**. The event celebrated Reconciliation Week in the City, with Nyoongar Sports and Ruckas Scooters hosting basketball and skate competitions and a battle of the bands. The Action Team put together a children's activity for the event that was well received by families.

Cockburn Community Facilitator; Belinda Ngoroyemoto attended City of Cockburn's flag raising ceremony on **Monday 28th May** in recognition of Reconciliation Week. The Aboriginal Dance Group was a treat and had the crowd in awe as the children from Perth Waldorf School jumped up and participated in the cultural dance.



## Our Community Champions

We have some fabulous Community Champions in our Action Teams, who are extremely passionate and supportive of each initiative. We will be sharing their stories on building capacity in their community.

### Huey, Mei & Kim Teoh's Story

Huey Teoh first joined Connecting Community for Kids back in 2016 when we established the Decision Making Groups. Engaging with Cockburn Community Facilitator Cath Franco, Huey was encouraged to become a voice for her community and became a Community Champion for both Connecting Community for Kids and Yangebup Family Centre. Huey attended each of our brainstorming workshops as we gathered information and data for our approaches. Once our approaches were decided and Action Teams formed; Huey was inspired to join the Celebrate Culture team and developed a plan to bring Chinese New Year celebrations to the wider community.

Huey is Malaysian born with a Chinese upbringing. She was also heavily influenced by Indian culture; through neighbours in Malaysia. Huey moved to Australia with her family in 1990 at 8 years of age. Her involvement with Connecting Community for Kids has highlighted the importance of keeping in-touch with her culture and Huey now realises the value in sharing culture with others.

To help with the Chinese New Year celebrations; Huey inspired her sister Mei and mother Kim to bring traditional experience to the event. Along with the Celebrate Culture Action Team, Huey, Mei and Kim hosted celebrations at Yangebup Family Centre and Meerilinga Children and Family Centre. Mei has since gained work with City of Cockburn as a bilingual interpreter and has assisted the Community Development Team consult with various ethnic groups. Kim was already heavily involved in the Cockburn community; attending Women of the World regularly to help other Mums connect. Now that Kim is retired, her daughters are keen to get her more involved in the Celebrate Culture Action Team.

Huey is one of our Community Champions that is now a Joint Leadership Team (JLT) committee member and is enjoying seeing the overall goal of what we are working to achieve. Huey said "at the beginning I was focussed on the problems in my community. I'm now enjoying my time working with Connecting Community for Kids and feel more relaxed that we are working on solutions."

Thank you Huey, Mei and Kim! Connecting Community for Kids is very lucky to have you on our team!



## Rapid Trial in Cockburn

Our rapid trial offering 2 year old health checks in four dedicated Child Care Centres within City of Cockburn has commenced! Working in collaboration with NursePrac Australia and Telethon Speech & Hearing, the pilot program offers parents a flexible alternative of accessing a health assessment. The aim is to help families finding it hard to attend a standard health check at their local Child Health Centre, by bringing the health check to them as they drop off or pick up their child from care. If any concerns are found, the child is then referred to various practitioners for further assistance.



The trial commenced on **Monday 14th May** at South Lake Child Care Centre. The team continued assessing on **Tuesday 15th May** at Kids Corner Child Care Centre in Munster and **Monday 28th May** at Meerilinga Children and

Family Centre in Coolbellup. Across these three Centres, 43 children were assessed from 18 months to 3 years of age. 70% of children did present with middle ear problems, so follow up appointments with the Telethon Speech & Hearing Mobile Children's Ear Clinic were scheduled to ensure this was not simply caused by seasonal colds.

The trial is continuing in to June with a second visit to South Lake Child Care Centre conducted on **Monday 18th June** and children attending Port School Early Learning Centre in Hamilton Hill scheduled for a nurse and ear clinic visit on **Wednesday 27th June**.

Feedback so far tells us the most parents and carers participated in the trial as it was convenient and they and their children felt comfortable having a health check at their Centre. Health checks were important to families, with nearly 60% of participants responding they were keen to get the health check complete and 40% wanted to get their child's hearing checked and learn more about developmental stages for their child.



## Community Mothers Program ready to launch!

Our Community Mothers have been selected and have participated in training by Curtin University School of Nursing.

If you are pregnant, have a newborn child, or are caring for a little one under two; you now have the opportunity to self-refer to the program to be matched to a volunteer Community Mother. While your baby or toddler does not have to be your first child to participate in the initiative, recipients must reside within the City of Cockburn or City of Kwinana.

Parenting in the early years is hard and many women struggle quietly and on their own, too afraid to admit they need help. This program sees volunteers with lived experience walk alongside a new Mum and show her what she is doing right, building her strength and self-assurance. Volunteer Community Mothers offer emotional, educational and physical support in parenting. They are not expected to offer health advice; but will be the link back to community and have a referral pathway on hand to help families access the required professionals.

Our Community Mother Volunteers will take care of between one and 3 families each, visiting once a month for approximately one hour. The length of support per family will be determined by need.

Our Volunteers are excited to get started. Here are some statements from the lovely team:



“As a mother of six children aged 20 to 2 years, I hope to bring my life experience to other mothers within our community, giving guidance and the strength to meet the challenges that all mothers face raising children in today’s society.”

“It’s truly a wonderful opportunity to be a part of engaging with these community families, to help provide

support and reduce isolation. It’s an excellent program that will benefit both the Community Mothers and the families we work with.”

Contact us on 0429 904 324 or [info@connecting4kids.com.au](mailto:info@connecting4kids.com.au) if you are interested in a Community Mother visiting you.

## Dads N Tods Mud Trek

On **Saturday 9th June**, Community Facilitator Belinda Ngoroyemoto attended City of Cockburn’s Dads N Tods Mud Trek at Boodjar Moolyiny Reserve, Munster. The sun was shining as the kids got to walk alongside Dad and help plant a seedling or two on the way. Dads grabbed some valuable information from The Fathering Project and a great day was had by all.



## Let’s Introduce Our Team

We would like to introduce our newest Backbone Team Member!

### Sharlene Hindmarsh

#### Data Interpreter



Sharlene joins the team with extensive experience in program development, implementation and evaluation; in the primary health, not-for-profit and local government sectors. Joining the team as our Data Interpreter, Sharlene will be supporting our Approaches with data collection, refining the Program Logics and further developing the Evaluation Frameworks.

Sharlene is passionate about making credible and actionable evidence accessible to all; and to inform the learning and change that will lead to the achievement of community aspirations and goals. As a Mother of two, she identifies with the Initiative’s philosophy of uniting community to give children a place to belong. Sharlene is excited to join the team and looks forward to working closely with our Community Champions.

Welcome to the team Sharlene!

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