



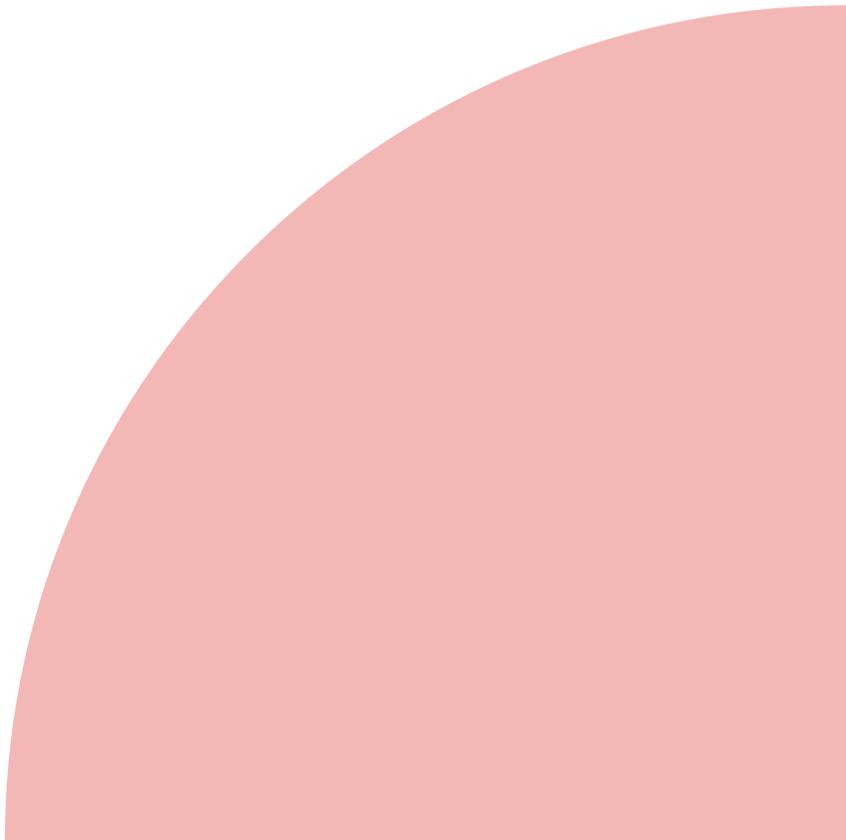
# Schools as Community Centres (SaCC)

Annual Results Based Report 2017



# Introduction

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Overview of investment in NSW</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>At a glance... 2017 results for families with young children</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>SaCC Program Framework</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Measuring results for the SaCC program</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Outcomes for families with young children</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>SaCC program initiatives</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Case Studies</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Feature initiatives</b>	<b>11</b>



# Introduction

Schools as Community Centres (SaCC) projects are hosted by NSW Public Schools and led by a local facilitator, who coordinates and manages a range of community engagement initiatives supporting families with young children. In 2017 there were a total of 45 SaCC projects hosted by NSW Public Schools.

Each year more than 5000 families participate in SaCC activities, including:

- supported playgroups
- early literacy activities
- transition to school strategies
- parenting programs
- adult learning and
- health and nutrition initiatives.

There is flexibility in the SaCC program to enable local communities to implement additional initiatives, which address the needs of families and young children in their area.

## Reporting on outcomes for families with young children

SaCC projects are required to report each year on progress against performance measures through the SaCC Annual Results Based Report.

In 2017, 45 SaCC projects provided data for the Annual Results Based Report. This report summarises the results they achieved.



# Overview of investment in NSW

In 2017 SaCC projects were hosted by:

- Albion Park Rail PS
- Alexandria Park CS
- Anna Bay PS
- Ashcroft PS
- Auburn North PS
- Blue Haven PS / Northlakes PS
- Bonnyrigg PS
- Buninyong PS
- Cabramatta PS
- Canley Vale PS
- Cessnock PS
- Condobolin PS
- Curran PS
- Dareton PS
- Dee Why PS
- Dubbo West PS
- Fairfield PS
- Farmborough Road PS
- Fennell Bay PS
- Forbes North PS
- Franklin PS
- Glebe PS
- Glenroi Heights
- Gorokan PS
- Goulburn PS
- Granville South PS
- Irrawang PS
- Kempsey West PS
- Lakemba PS
- Marrickville West PS
- Moree East PS
- Narooma PS
- Narrandera PS
- Punchbowl PS
- Queanbeyan PS
- Rosemeadow PS
- Sanctuary Point PS
- Telopea PS
- The Meadows PS
- Wiley Park PS
- Windale PS
- Woodberry PS
- Woy Woy PS
- Wyoming PS
- Wyong PS

Thirty seven of the 45 SaCC projects operated 4 or 5 days per week, with the other 8 SaCC projects operating 2 or 3 days per week.



# At a glance ... 2017 results for families with young children



## Children

- **8126** children aged 0-8 years regularly participated in SaCC projects. This is an average of 181 children per project.
- **77%** of these children were below school age.
- **18%** of children who participated identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Islander.
- **36%** of children who participated identified as having a culturally and linguistically diverse background.
- **7%** of children aged 5 years or less participating in SaCC projects were identified as having additional needs.



## Families

- **6306** families with young children 0-8 years regularly participated in SaCC projects. This is an average of 140 families per project.
- **1063 or 17%** of these families identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- **2496 or 40%** of these families identified as having a culturally and linguistically diverse background.
- **182 or 3%** of these families had a parent aged less than 21 years.
- A further **5004** families participated in SaCC projects on a short-term or occasional basis.



## Partnerships

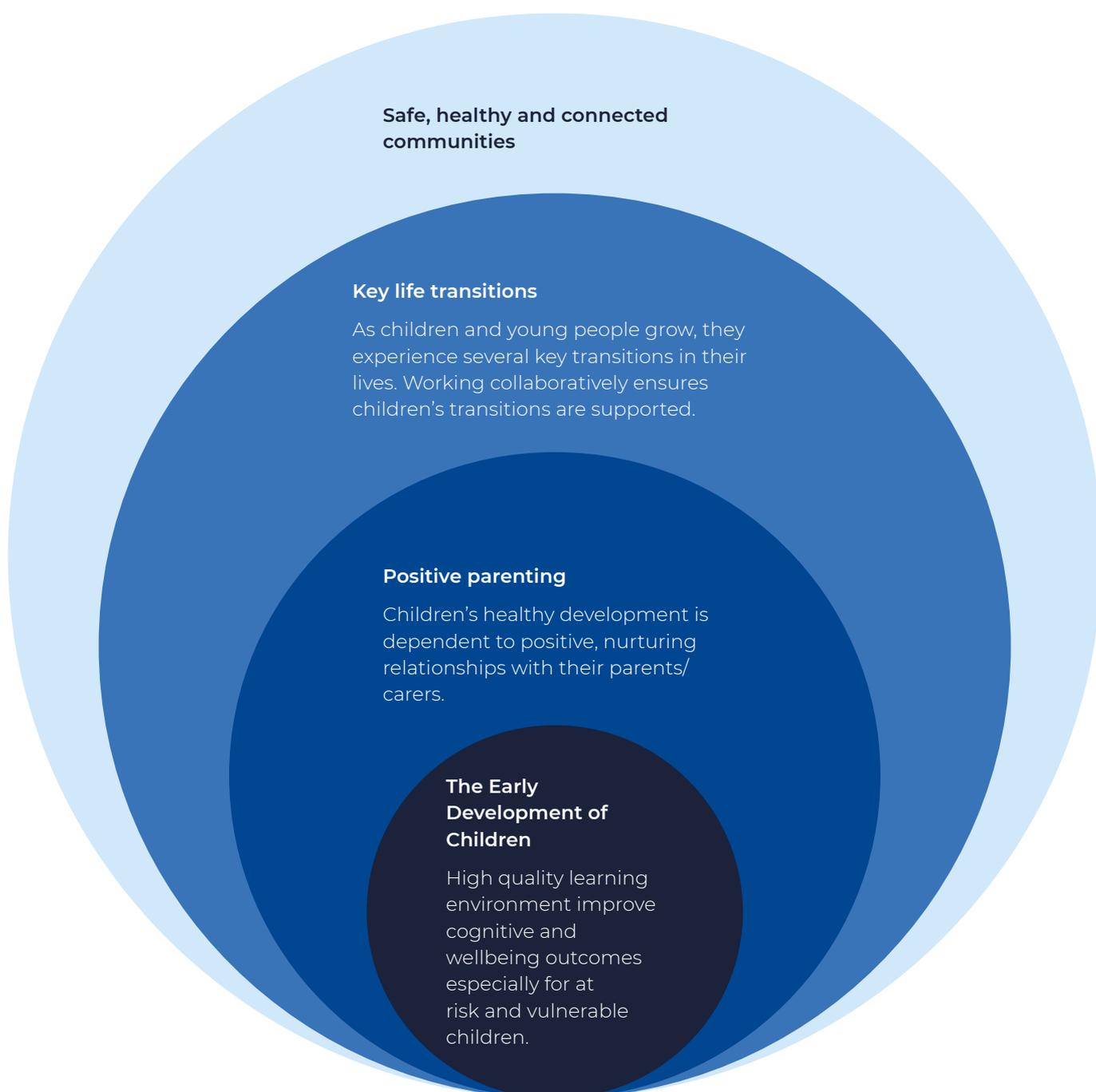
- **1178** initiatives for families were delivered by SaCC projects across NSW.
- **79%** of SaCC initiatives were delivered in partnership with human service agencies.



# SaCC Program Framework

The SaCC program offers a holistic approach to early learning and wellbeing with four key interconnected elements of collaborative service delivery: the early development of children; key life transitions; positive parenting; and safe, healthy and connected communities.

Within the Framework, each school in consultation with its community identifies key local priorities that enhance early learning and wellbeing outcomes for children birth to 8 years. The Framework is outlined in the diagram below.





# Measuring results for the SaCC program

Results-Based Accountability (RBA) is used as the state-wide service performance measurement tool. There are three performance measure categories: How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off? (Trying Hard Is Not Good Enough; 2015 [ed]; Mark Friedman; PARSE Publishing).

Outcomes of local projects are used to inform each school's reporting and planning and feed into state-wide program evaluation. The data in this report provides evidence for the first two RBA questions – 'How much did we do?' and 'How well did we do it?' The case studies are local examples addressing the question, 'Is anyone better off?'

## Outcomes for families with young children

Each SaCC project develops its own project outcomes which address the four interconnected elements of the SaCC Framework: the early development of children; key life transitions; positive parenting; and safe, healthy and connected communities. Sample outcomes that cover the four program elements are:

- Children's early language acquisition, cognitive development, sense of self and security, emotional regulation and ability to form positive peer and other relationships are maximised.
- Children are set up for success in the remainder of their schooling through effective transitions.
- Parents and carers have the knowledge, skills and support they need to enhance their nurturing behaviours and positive parenting strategies.

- Parent and carers' confidence and skills are increased as their child's first teacher.
- Family, school and community efforts are integrated so that children grow up in safe, healthy and connected communities.

Schools may also choose to identify additional context-specific outcomes to support the early learning and wellbeing of children identified through the school's planning and reporting processes and community consultation.



**A total of 6,306 families raising children birth to eight years regularly participated in initiatives delivered by SaCC projects in 2017.**

## Outcomes for families with young children *continued*



### Families

- 5,338 parents and/or carers participated in SaCC initiatives. Of the total regular families attending SaCC initiatives, 289 or 5% of participants were fathers or male carers, 282 or 5% were grandparents and 152 or 3% were other relatives or carers.
- A further 5004 families with children birth to 8 years participated in SaCC initiatives on a short term or occasional basis.



### Children

- 8126 children aged up to 8 years participated regularly in initiatives delivered in 2017 by SaCC projects across NSW.
- Of the children who participated regularly in SaCC initiatives, a total of 3158 (39%) were aged less than 3 years and 3059 (38%) were aged from 3 years to school age. A further 1,909 (23%) were school aged (5-8 years).



### Community members

- For each SaCC project, an average of 680 adults attended events aimed at fostering community cohesion, delivered through partnerships between SaCC projects and local human service networks.
- A total of 1,605 community members without young children participated in initiatives delivered by SaCC projects across NSW.



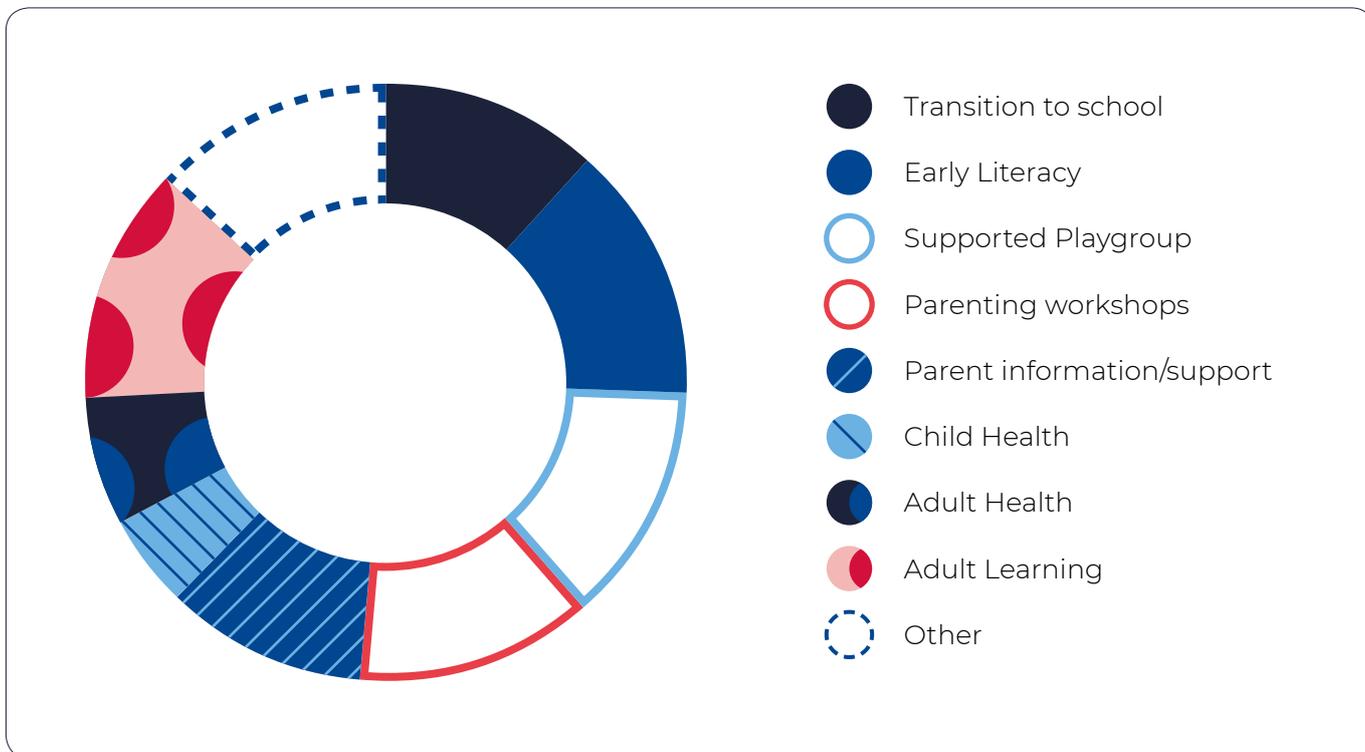
# SaCC program initiatives

In 2017 SaCC projects delivered a total of 1178 initiatives to support families raising children birth to 8 years.

In addition to common SaCC initiatives such as supported playgroups, early literacy, parenting programs, transition to school, adult learning and health and nutrition initiatives, SaCC projects also provided a range of other activities which address the needs of local families.



The chart below shows the type of SaCC project initiatives across NSW for 2017:

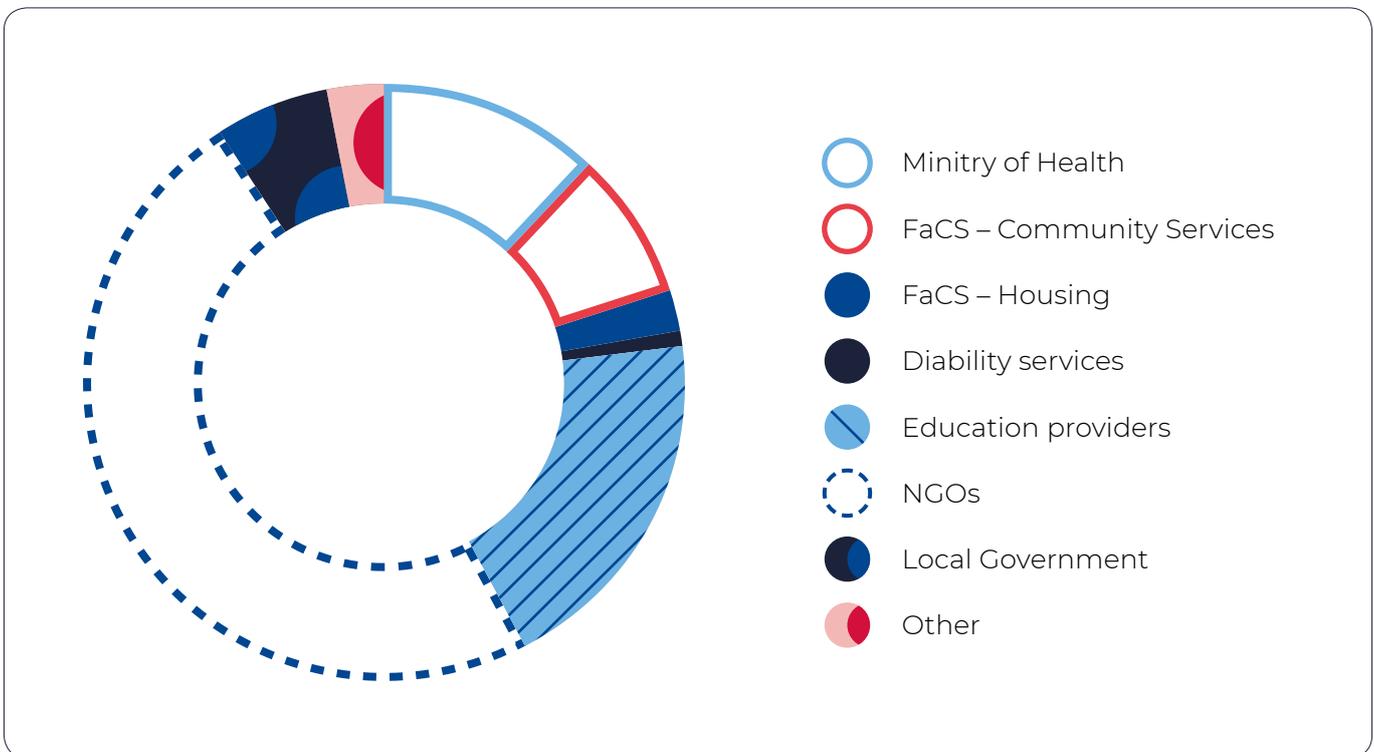


# Partnerships:

A total of 930 local partnerships with human service agencies were utilised in 2017 to implement SaCC project initiatives. This includes 188 partnerships with education providers (mostly outreach to local DoE primary schools), 119 partnerships with the Ministry of Health and 471 partnerships with non-government agencies (NGOs).



The chart below shows the type of SaCC partnerships across NSW for 2017:



# Case Studies

## Participant's stories – 'Is anyone better off?'

I needed a place for my elder son to play and develop social skills. I was fortunate to find a SaCC playgroup which I have been attending for the past two years.

The playgroup helped me (as a new mum then) to trust my son's ability to explore and learn. Most importantly, my son learned several skills during our weekly play there. The program is structured (a very good thing). There is a time for play, socialisation, snack time, reading and sing and dance.

My son had speech and social delays when we started with the playgroup. The SaCC facilitator introduced us to a speech therapist from an early intervention service. Since then up to now, we are still with the service which is helping to improve his social skills. I am forever grateful for the SaCC facilitator's support and encouragement.

I appreciate and enjoy the play. It is always fun. My youngest loves going there. It is an engaging and safe place even for a one year old. My kids have developed a great deal of social skills in play, and as a mother, that has been the most rewarding thing for me.

I am a grandmother who takes care of my granddaughter while her mother is at work. When my granddaughter was two I wanted to take her to a playgroup to socialise with children of her own age. I found the SaCC playgroup advertised in my local paper. My granddaughter just loves it. She loves playing with children her own age – painting, playing, craft, story-time and dance time. Two hours just fly by. Now a year later, my granddaughter still looks forward to coming to her playgroup.

I want to share something that changed my life. I am a mother of two kids and I have been in in Australia for 8 years. I did not have family support and was raising my kids alone. I was going through depression. When my son started school I was so quiet, hardly anyone could notice me. One day I was sitting in school and the SaCC facilitator came to me and asked me to join the SaCC playgroup, but I was very uncomfortable to join any groups. After a few weeks, the SaCC facilitator approached me again and she asked me to give it a go. Then I joined playgroup. After that my life started to change in many positive ways. I got many new friends, came to know other mothers. Playgroup played a very important role in my daughter's and my life. I learned how to raise my child. My daughter learned many new skills, she started to get independent. Life started to get easy and happy. After both my kids started school, I was willing to do something for the community. I have been approaching new parents and giving them information about the SaCC, telling them what kind of programs they run and how they will get benefit from those programs. I also shared my experience about how it changed my life.



My son and my journey with the SaCC program has been such an achievement on both our parts. When we first arrived to playgroup, my son was only 3 years old and his social skills weren't fully developed with strangers and I suffer from severe anxiety. It did take time for us both to get used to socialising, however my son successfully joined in arts and craft, he LOVED the easel and paints and he enjoyed the dancing and singing at the end of the playgroup. My son has made new friends, which was amazing. I also made new friends with the other mums. If you could see how much change has happened for myself and my son, it would surprise a lot of families. Without the help and support from the SaCC facilitator and her colleagues, I doubt that both of us would have been as confident in ourselves as we are now. I am now an ambassador for the SaCC program, or perhaps I should say the parents' liaison person for the SaCC program with new families. My son is now in his 2nd week of Kindy and also doing the same too. Helping new students adjust to the overwhelming big world of school.

From the beginning, the SaCC facilitator encouraged me to get involved in some of the school and community affairs, such as playgroup, English conversation group and P&C meetings.

As a migrant whose first language is not English, I felt timid and shy in any social group and was reluctant to participate in any of the programs. The most wonderful thing was that the SaCC facilitator didn't give up or step back because of my refusal or reluctance, she just kept talking to me and offered me information. I was persuaded one day!

Little by little I was stepping forward. I started to attend the English conversation group and felt more and more confident to speak out my thoughts in English. You see, now I have been attending the P&C meeting regularly, volunteering in school and community and enjoying the social and exercise group very much.



Little by little I was stepping forward. I started to attend the English conversation group and felt more and more confident to speak out my thoughts in English. You see, now I have been attending the P&C meeting regularly, volunteering in school and community and enjoying the social and exercise group very much.

I started attending the SaCC program and I have enjoyed the company of the local Aboriginal women and have learnt a lot about my new surroundings through the social and creative engagement of the playgroup. I loved and enjoyed the arts and craft at the SaCC playgroup and demonstrated my artistic skills through painting, becoming a playgroup volunteer. I completed my Certificate III in Early Childhood Care and Education and now I am employed as both a SaCC playgroup worker and as a team leader at a preschool centre. I am also continuing my studies completing a Diploma. My aim is to save and buy my own house for me and my children one day. I haven't looked back.

# Feature initiatives

## Facilitator reports – ‘Is anyone better off?’

**Baby Group:** I was approached by an Early Childhood Health Nurse (ECHN) who highlighted the need for a playgroup for new parents and their babies. The ECHN discussed that some new parents had additional support needs due to isolation and a lack of extended family. The ECHNs felt there was a gap in service provision for a babies’ playgroup in the local area and suggested partnering with the SaCC program. We then also approached a non-government organisation who deliver Early Childhood Care and Development programs and we decided to partner to trial a weekly baby group.

Initially the number of parents attending the playgroup was quite small, but steadily the numbers grew with 10 families participating. The ECHN attended the playgroup once a month to answer any questions the parents had about their baby’s development. We also secured a grant to run a musical beginning program facilitated by a music therapist. The families really enjoyed this aspect of the program and each family was given a CD to take home. One participant commented, “We have been playing the CD at home and my son really loves the music”.

Our evaluation demonstrated a number of important things. Our baby group initiative showed that SaCC facilitators and other service provider partners need to be persistent with a group and give it plenty of time to establish itself before making decisions to continue or not. By partnering to provide a baby group, we also engaged with families and children at an earlier stage and supported them to access services early if required. Parents have also asked if the age of the play group can be extended up to 2 years so that they can continue and new parents can come in. We are looking at trialling this and therefore it is important to be flexible and see what works best for the families SaCC projects are supporting.

**Rohingya Women and Children’s Program 2015-2017:** This group started in response to observing the increasing number of Rohingya families enrolling children at our school. An NGO was running a playgroup to support the families; however it was not held locally and was hard for families to get to. We negotiated to relocate the program to our SaCC project with the aim of connecting the families to relevant local services and supporting the women and children with a regular group. The NGO was responsible for referral of families, a caseworker most weeks, a volunteer for ‘child support’ and programming input. Our SaCC project provided a child carer each week, outreach to Rohingya families that were not clients of the NGO, premises, equipment, hospitality and programming input, as well as links to other services and the school.

As the program continued some of the families began attending the other playgroups at the SaCC so they became better connected to other families, as well as providing further opportunities for their children to enhance their social and emotional development. The NGOs support funding ended in late 2017, and as it was clear that most families had made connections and were using other services in the area as well, we decided to end the group. The group ran for two years and successfully engaged over 50 families during that time.

Our SaCC project maintains a strong connection with the Rohingya community with many families continuing to attend playgroup and using the Centre as a support. The SaCC is also a partner in a local working party coordinating responses and programs for the Rohingya population in our area.

# Schools as Community Centres (SaCC)



We acknowledge the homelands of all Aboriginal people and pay our respect to Country.

## Say hello

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