

**Embargoed: Until 2pm on Friday, November 1**

Helping children understand the complexities of life is a tricky job for any parent.

From simple lessons like brushing your teeth to understanding healthy eating, engaging children in these topics can be difficult.

SA non-for-profit organisation, Raising Literacy Australia, is helping families navigate these conversations while also teaching them important literacy skills.

The charity's publishing house, Little Book Press, has released five new titles which tackle these lessons in an enticing, colourful and exciting way.

The new releases include *Sing With Me* a nurse rhyme buggy board book and *Food, Me and ABC*, a new picture book designed in conjunction with SA Health to support food literacy.

Little Book Press has also released *Once Upon My Legs* by Mike Dumbleton and Sarah Boese, *The Hip Hop Barn* by Phil Cummings and Mandy Foot, and *My Teeth* by Danny Snell.

Raising Literacy Australia CEO, Sue Hill, said "these books are produced and designed to engage families and help them talk with their children."

"As an organisation, we help families understand why it is important to read with their children and show them how to do this," Ms Hill said.

"We produce books like *Food, Me and ABC* to provide parents with information in a picture book format and give them the chance to role model healthy eating and talk to their child about different foods."

"By educating families to engage with their children in shared reading, we are creating a future where South Australian babies and children are read to every day."

"This simple, but crucial activity underpins their ability to achieve lifelong learning and social inclusion and greatly improves their overall health and wellbeing."

Author of *The Hip Hop Barn*, Phil Cummings, said the story helps children learn about rhyme and rhythm while also encouraging movement with dancing too.

"The book might seem deceptively simple but it has layers of discovery and learning in text and in illustration," he said.

"It offers a connection to the musical nature and infectious language of rhythm and rhyme."

"This mechanism helps children predict, recall, feel confident, be happy with reading and with books. It helps them bounce along and feel the language not just hear it and read it."

"This all makes it an enjoyable experience, a treasured experience that is so much fun, something that makes them want to revisit again and again."

"I hope they will get up, and, together, try some of the Hip Hop moves to bring the book to life even more!"

*My Teeth* by Danny Snell, is designed to help children understand their teeth, why they are important and how to care for them.

The story is filled with fun illustrations and facts about animal, insect and human teeth.

Produced in conjunction with SA Dental Service, manager of health promotion Kristy Nixon said "the book is filled with positive and interactive dental health messages for both parents and children."

"The book raises awareness of the importance of good oral health, which is often overlooked," Ms Nixon said.

"It is important parents receive accurate, consistent health information from a range of avenues, to reinforce the messages."

"*My Teeth* provides accurate dental messages in a light hearted, fun way to increase child and parent engagement whilst increasing dental knowledge."

Mr Snell said "the challenge was to make dental health interesting and engaging for both children and parents."

"Books offer an intimate way for parents and their children to discover more about themselves and the world around them," he said.

"Children love obscure facts and figures. So, the idea was to pair serious facts about dental care with interesting and odd facts like 'sharks never run out of teeth' or 'we make enough saliva over our lifetime to fill 53 bathtubs.' Hopefully, this sparks a conversation and keeps everyone engaged."

The five new titles will be included in the Raising Literacy Australia's 2020 Reading Pack program.

Celebrating 15 years of helping SA families, Raising Literacy Australia will distribute another 65,000 reading packs in 2020 to families with a baby, toddler or preschool aged child.

The packs are distributed through agencies including Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS), neonatal hospitals, the Department for Education, playgroups, preschools and kindergartens.

There are 1500 plus sites across the state that are supported with reading packs for families.

This year the packs will also include vital information about the importance of face time over screen time offering parents the most recent research, recommendations and information about the benefits of face-to-face interaction with their children.

Little Book Press titles, which were included in the 2019 Reading Packs, *Let's Go Strolling* and *Hush Say The Stars* were shortlisted in 2019 Speech Pathology Australia Book of the Year awards.

*Let's Go Strolling* won the best book in the Birth to 3 Years category.

*Little Chicken Chickabee* was also listed as a Notable Book by the Children's Book Council of Australia.

Over 1000 volunteers will help assemble the 2020 Reading Packs during the charity's Packing Week, which will be held in Stirling Angas Hall at the Adelaide Showground from November 23 to 28.

For more information about **Little Book Press** visit [littlebookpress.com.au](http://littlebookpress.com.au) and **Raising Literacy Australia** at [raisingliteracy.org.au](http://raisingliteracy.org.au).

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