



raising
literacy
AUSTRALIA

Annual Report
2019/2020





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Contents

Who is Raising Literacy Australia Inc?	3
Our Vision, Mission and Approach	4
A message from our Chair, Ceinwyn Elleway	6
Read Sing Talk Play	7
Our year at a glance	8
A message from our CEO, Sue Hill	9
Stories from our programs	10
Universal book gifting program	12
Read To Me	14
Building Home Libraries	17
Community Sharing Libraries	18
Featured Stories	20
The new normal	21
Professional Learning and training	23
Little Book Press Publishing House	24
- The Author and Illustrator Mentoring Initiative	26
Financial report	28
Founding and Program Partners	32





Who is Raising Literacy Australia?

Raising Literacy Australia (RLA) is a not-for-profit organisation committed to enriching Australian lives through everyday literacy.

Through our programs, we support families to read, talk, play and sing with their children from birth.

We provide reading packs, books, training and resources that support families to nurture children's development and establish a love of reading and lifelong learning.

In 2020, Raising Literacy Australia is celebrating its 15th birthday. Over this time,

we have established picture book libraries in vulnerable communities, created new picture books for our free Reading Pack program and gifted over 2 million books to South Australian families.

Our team

Sue Hill,
Chief Executive
Officer

Janet Leske,
Director Community
Programs

Belinda Spry,
Director of Training

Fiona Bowden,
Manager
Little Book Press

Julia Jones,
Education Officer

Brodie Evitts,
Training Officer

Georgina
Hetherington,
Communications and
Marketing Officer

Kim Genrich,
Accountant

Our board

Ceinwyn Elleway,
Chair

Matthew Holden,
Treasurer

Melvin Mansell

Ruth Blenkiron

Devita Pathi

Paula Davies

Peter Withy

Our Vision, Mission and Approach

Our vision

Enriching Australian lives through literacy.

Our mission

Our programs, support families to read, sing, talk and play with their children from birth.

Our approach

Advocacy

To raise awareness of the crucial importance of literacy and the role it plays in children's everyday lives.

Partnerships

Working and collaborating with governments, like-minded organisations and the early childhood sector.

Training

Provide learning opportunities to services, individuals and organisations to support best literacy practices.

Knowledge

Continue to develop and provide projects and programs, which nurture families in developing a rich home learning environment.



Raising Literacy Australia

Provide programs and information that support families and early childhood sector to read, sing, talk and play with children every day.

Why?

Research continues to show how adults positively engage with very young children every day is crucial to the child's development, emergent literacy skills and lifelong learning.

Our initiatives and programs

Books in South Australian family's homes with children birth to five years.

Universal access

- Book gifting program
- Featured Stories program
- Social media
- Traditional print media

Targeted access

- Read to Me – children in out of home care
- Building Parental Capacity and Home Libraries
- Community Sharing libraries for vulnerable communities

Little Book Press

- Produce high quality books for RLA universal and targeted book gifting programs.
- Mentor program - support emerging children's writers and illustrators to produce high quality resources for RLA universal and book gifting programs.

Professional learning

Professional learning to early childhood sector on childhood brain development and consistent messaging to promote read, sing, talk and play.



A message from our Chair

I imagine that there is not an organisation in the world, that will not be reflecting on the complexities of the year that is 2020, as it draws to a close. While this reporting period encompasses two vastly different experiences in operating environments, Raising Literacy Australia has finished the year in an enviable position. While our sound financial position is one measure of this success, and this does show a strong foundation for continued growth and development, other measures were the retention of all of our staff through this difficult period, including the need to increase FTE in some areas, and our continued engagement with families and communities to support and grow their capacity to connect with children through everyday literacy practises.

While it became necessary to shift our focus temporarily from longer term planning to managing the ever-changing

landscape through the first half of 2020, this uninterrupted service delivery was testament to the steady hand of our CEO, Sue Hill, and our dedicated staff team. In addition to the continued service delivery of our reading packs, a particular note of acknowledgment needs to go to our Professional Learning team staff, who are to be commended for moving to the online space and continuing to deliver.

We look forward to building on this sound foundation to diversify our sustainability. The next period will see the Board take a renewed focus on reviewing our strategic direction, as we emerge from the uncertainty of the first half of this year.

We had some movement in our Board composition during this period, as we farewelled long term Board member Ruth Starke. As a renowned, award-winning author of adolescent literature, Ruth's role on the

Board provided invaluable contribution to the literacy direction and development of RLA programs. We wish Ruth all the very best with her pursuits. We also welcome a new Board member, Peter Withy. Peter comes to us with a long, distinguished and creative career in advertising, a skill set that is already providing a welcome disruption to our thinking about the brand, Raising Literacy Australia. We are looking forward to working with Peter's initiatives in the next phase of our growth and development.

We would like to acknowledge and thank our funding partners for their continued support: the State Government of South Australia, Advertiser Newspapers, Carthew Foundation, Variety SA and Cochranes.

Ceinwyn Elleway,
Chair
Raising Literacy Australia

Read Sing Talk Play

Literacy in the early years matters.

Research has shown us that a child's brains rapidly develops and "doubles in size in the first year"¹. By the age of three, a child's brain grows up to "80 percent of adult size"² and "90 percent – nearly full grown – by age five"³.

It is in these early years that it is crucial to lay the foundations for a child's future. During this time, we have the best opportunity to "plant the seeds for tomorrow's engaged and active student, productive and skilled worker, and confident and loving parent"⁴.

From the time a child is born, "more than 1 million new neural connection are formed every second"⁵ in their brain. Research has found that children who are "rarely spoken to, who are exposed to few toys, and who have little opportunity to explore and experiment with their environment"⁶ will struggle to "fully develop the neural connections and pathways that facilitate later learning"⁷.

It is the relationships and environments children experience that foster their brain development. The more frequently they have a positive experience, for example every time they see someone smile

at them or they hear a familiar nursery rhyme, the stronger the connections in their brain become. Every experience helps build crucial language, literacy, and social-emotional skills needed for healthy development.

In Australia, reports show that 60,000 children "start school developmentally behind their peers in key areas like language and emotional competence"⁸.

This is why Raising Literacy Australia encourages families to **read, sing, talk** and **play** every day with their children.



¹ Arizona State University, (2020) 'Early childhood brain development has lifelong impact', Arizona PBS, Phoenix, AZ, <https://azpbs.org/2017/11/early-childhood-brain-development-lifelong-impact/>, (accessed 7 October 2020)

² ibid

³ ibid

⁴ Council of Australian Governments (COAG) 2009b, (2009), 'Investing in the

early years—a national early childhood development strategy', Canberra, ACT.

⁵ Center on the Developing Child, 'The Science of Early Childhood Development (InBrief)', Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 2007, <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-science-of-eed/> (accessed 7 October 2020)

⁶ T Hawley & M Gunner, (2000), 'StartingSmart: How Early Experience Affect Brain Development', 2nd

edn, Ounce of Prevention Fund & ZERO TO THREE, USA, p. 4.

⁷ ibid

⁸ M O'Connell, (2019), 'A Chance To Even The Odds', University of Melbourne, Melbourne, VIC, <https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/a-chance-to-even-the-odds> (accessed 7 October 2020)

Our year at a glance



Over **400,000** resources given in **65,000** reading packs

2 million books
given over 15 years



15,000+ extra board and picture books for 24 regional and metro community sharing libraries to support through COVID-19

16,000 books given through the Read to Me program to children in out-of-home care



3263 books and activity packs have been delivered to families in the Inner North region of Adelaide, to build home libraries and encourage engagement with children

130 educators from 31 different kindergartens learned new skills from our training



5 new picture books published

77,000 books in homes since the start of Read to Me program in 2015



800+ sites across SA receive reading packs for distribution to families



A message from our CEO

As an organisation, our vision is to enrich Australian families and communities through literacy. Our goal is to engage families and the early childhood sector to read, sing, talk and play with their children every day.

In the first three years, 80% of a child's brain develops and a parent and/or carer's involvement plays a large part in their children's early learning. But it is not just reading – talking, listening, singing, and playing together all help to build the strong foundations for a love of books and emergent literacy skills.

To support and communicate with families across Australia and the early childhood sector, we provide book gifting programs, develop high-quality resources, and write and deliver professional learning workshops.

In 2019/20 our universal and targeted book gifting programs delivered over 400,000 books and resources direct to homes and services. Our professional

learning supported, educated, and guided organisations, services, and individuals around Australia to embed everyday literacy practices into their family-based programs and RLA's Little Book Press publishing house produced new picture and board books, STEM activity books and downloadable activity books.

The barriers that hard-to-reach families face, English as a second language, unemployment, poverty, low literacy levels, and mental health issues, all affect how parents engage with their children. The way we work with organisations, allied health, education, and outreach services to support and work with families is vital. Midway through 2019, in conjunction with Inner North Collective, we launched a 12-month pilot program, Building Home Libraries.

In 2019, the World Health Organisation released information on screen time

and sedentary behaviour in young children. Their strapline: To grow up healthy, children need to sit less and play more. When sedentary, engaging in reading and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged. To support these guidelines a year-long social media campaign was undertaken by RLA, with additional screen time information included in the Baby, Toddler and Preschool Reading packs.

A committed Board, team and stakeholders have enabled RLA to give families and the early childhood sector access to amazing books, information, and resources to share with young children.

Sussan Hill,
CEO
Raising Literacy Australia

Stories from our programs

*The young girls love the Handa books.
They never see their own faces
in books or on TV.
They are a beautiful addition to
the already wonderful library.*

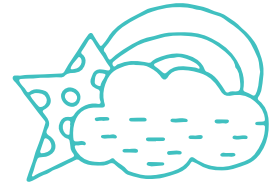
Kate Spanner,
Refugee Child Health Nurse



*This initiative helped me to develop my own artistic
practice giving me a greater understanding of how
to share visual concepts in multiple formats.*

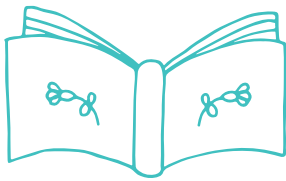
Ross Morgan, illustrator part of the
Author and Illustrator Mentoring Initiative





I never used to give my son a book, I thought he was too young until I got the book pack. He loves his book we read every day.

Mother and participant of the Building Home Libraries program



It is always a joy to give each family their pack and to see the looks on both parent and child's face. They are truly grateful firstly for just receiving the pack then thankful that the pack contains books and resources that they can go away and create something at home.

2020 Preschool Reading Packs survey response



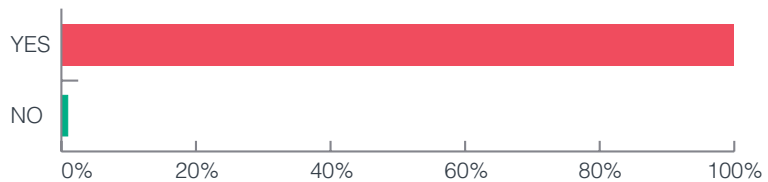
Universal book gifting program

Our Reading Pack program is designed to encourage all families to read, sing, talk and play with their children.

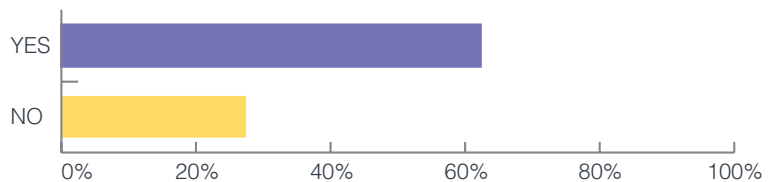
Each year a combined 65,000 free reading packs are distributed for babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers. The packs are given direct to families via health, educational and outreach programs and services.

Along with high-quality, age-appropriate books, the packs include accessible information on why it is important to read, sing, talk and play.

Are the packs having an impact with families and children?



Have the packs helped staff stay in touch with families during Covid19?



During the COVID-19 pandemic, the packs were used by many centres as the foundation for their curriculum and embedded in their programs and practices as they knew families would have the resources at home. The survey also showed that families are recognising the packs from previous years and looking forward to receiving next year's pack.

This is such an amazing service every year. Children and families are amazed by the book packs and they just keep getting better and better every year. The book packs especially help our refugee families who come with not a lot for their children.

Our families look forward to receiving your packs every year. The books are read at home often. This year especially we used the books (because we know the families had copies of them) for learning at home packs where we designed play at home around the books in our preschool age group.

The importance of reading to young children is always high on our agenda and we want as many families to be reading with their child long before they begin preschool. The packs ensure all families in our community have access to quality reading and age appropriate resources.

2020 reading pack survey responses

100%
of families said the packs are having an impact with families and children

95.28 %
of children are enjoying the books. They also recognise the story, when used in group reading times



75 %
of families are reading the books and doing the STEM activities with their children

94.34%
of centres/preschools read the books from the preschool packs during group story time

89.62 %
said the packs have helped preschools have literacy-based discussions with parents/carers

63.21%
said the preschool packs helped staff stay in touch with families during Covid19



Read To Me

In the past year 16,000 books have been sent to directly to children in care.

The Read to Me book gifting program continues to support children in care to improve their reading and language skills and is a vital source of information and resources for carers across South Australia. The program recognises that children in care often have limited access to quality age appropriate books and encourages positive adult-child interactions to support healthy brain development.

Each child from birth to 6 years automatically receives free books and resources, creating a library that they can keep and enjoy for many years to come.

A start-up library launches each child's reading journey, featuring:

- 10 age appropriate picture and board books
- A Read to Me library bag
- Carer resources, including an activity book and role-modelling DVD.

Home library packs are then sent every 3 months. The books are specially selected based on each child's age.

This project is supported by founding partners Variety SA – the children's charity, Cochranes, Office of the Guardian for Children and Young People, Department of Education, and the Department for Child Protection.

Key Achievements of the Read to Me project

- Over 77,000 books in homes since start of program in 2015.

- Carers are now engaging more readily with their children:
 - o 95%* of carers agreed the Read to me books are enjoyed by the child/ren.
 - o 83%* of carers agree the Read to Me book packs have meant I spend more 'together' time with my child/ren.
 - o 86%* of carers read books to their child/ren at least once a day.

**September 2018, Carer feedback survey on the Read to Me program.*

Janet Leske,
Director of Community Programs
Raising Literacy Australia





Feedback from carers about the Read to Me book gifting packs



I just wanted to express my gratitude for the wonderful books we receive from this amazing organisation. There is nothing better than going to the letterbox and finding a parcel addressed to my Grandson and then to find a book by his favourite author Mo Willems in the pack. He was delighted to say the least. It's a little bit of sunshine in these turbulent times. Thanking you all again.

A kinship carer and 6-year-old little boy

I just wanted to say a BIG THANK YOU to you and your team at Raising Literacy for the beautiful book packs that our precious little twins receive – they absolutely love them!

The excitement starts with collecting from the post office and then getting home to open their bag. I love seeing their little faces light up when they see a book they are familiar with from kindy or the “muuum, did you have this book when you were a little baby”. A story before bed is a nightly routine and we are so grateful for their love of books.

Again, a very big thank you – we all appreciate the books and the work Raising Literacy do! The packs are an excellent reminder and receiving them is like an exciting gift each time.



I think what you do is fantastic, it is amazing. Our little one delights in receiving her packs!





Building Home Libraries

Read To Me – Building Home Libraries: A 12 month Pilot Program for vulnerable families.

Why?

The barriers that vulnerable families face – English as a second language, unemployment, poverty, low level literacy levels, mental health issues – all effect how parents engage with their children. How we come together as organisations and support and work with families is crucial. We wanted to bring literacy development into existing programs and to avoid introducing yet another individual service. This means established services can be armed with high-quality and age appropriate resources to give to families and have

meaningful conversations about ways to positively parent, during their already scheduled visits.

Who's on board?

Inner North Collective which include, United Care Wesley Bowden, The Food Centre, St Catherine's Community Hub and Family Zone, Ingle Farm. The service staff, educators, social workers, and social work students have been integral to the success of the program.

What's involved?

At the beginning of the pilot, a practical, training session is held for everyone who delivers the program and covers topics such as; early childhood brain development, the importance of everyday literacy, key messages for families and

how to model ways to use the books and resources.

Findings so far

The main aim of the pilot has been to assess if giving parents and services access to quality resources on an ongoing basis with regular coaching about how engage with books and play resources, will develop greater levels of engagement with their child/children.

Self-report surveys received at the mid-point show a positive shift in parenting behaviour with an increase in the amount of days spent reading and playing and an increase in the amount of time spent in activity with their child. This has been particularly evident in the services that deliver the book packs during home visits.



Community Sharing Libraries

Raising Literacy Australia worked with the Department for Education to provide community sharing libraries to Children Centres and preschools across South Australia.

An expression of interest was sent out to 157 sites in South Australia, where the 2018 AEDC data percentage of vulnerability in language and cognitive skills were higher than the national average.

With COVID-19 at our doorstep and news of potentially closing children centres and preschools, it was a team effort to get 19 large libraries of 650 plus books

and resources and 5 smaller libraries of 450 plus books and resources out to communities to ensure services were able to resource families with quality books and activities in what was difficult circumstances. The following sites receive a Community Sharing Library.

- Blair Athol North School
- B-7 Children's Centre
- Elizabeth Downs Preschool
- Sir Thomas Playford Kindergarten
- Para Vista Child Parent Centre
- Elizabeth North Preschool
- Elizabeth Grove Children's Centre – top up
- Keithcot Farm Children's Centre
- Smithfield Plains Kindergarten
- Tynyari Children's Centre
- Nangwarry Primary and Preschool
- Port Pirie West Children's Centre
- Loxton North School
- Coober Pedy Area School Preschool
- Pinnaroo Kindergarten

Some of our children are showing an increased level of engagement in books and ask educators to read to them.

A number of children come to preschool with their books in their hand ready to borrow again.

Wendy Batson, Elizabeth North Preschool

The excitement of families even having the option of borrowing books from Kindy.

They have been so thankful and appreciative.

Port Broughton Kindergarten



- Kirton Point Children's Centre
- Mount Gambier Children's Centre
- Flinders View Primary School
- Quorn Kindergarten
- Glossip Community Preschool
- Renmark Children's Centre
- Naracoorte North Kindergarten
- Liberman Kindergarten
- Port Broughton Kindergarten
- Gabmididi Manoo Children and Family Centre

Survey July 2020 highlights:

- 90% of services said their families have been borrowing books from the sharing library to take home and share with their child/ren.
- 27% of the families borrowing are borrowing every week.
- 90% of families are now having more conversations with their centre about ways they can encourage everyday literacy at home.
- 100% of services have noticed an increase in children's engagement

with literacy their programs after receiving access to sharing Library. 45% have noticed a strong increase.

- 72% of services have noticed that families are sharing books at home that they are sharing within their programs.



With the sharing library display visually appealing, providing a range of quality books and accessible in the front foyer it catches the eye of children and families and has encouraged borrowing along with valuable, casual conversations with families about books and early literacy. Families are enjoying reading together and sharing their favourite books. Some families have brought in books from home to share with the centre.

Mount Gambier Children's Centre

Featured Stories

Our Featured Stories program was developed in 2006. The program was designed to help families and early-childhood practitioners choose high-quality, age appropriate books to share with children every day.

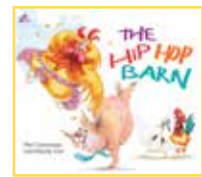
Every month with the support of Australian publishing houses, the Raising Literacy team selects three picture books in age categories; baby, toddler and preschool.

The books are chosen to build early literacy through shared reading and include features such as new themes,

rare words, role modelling, vocabulary, rhythm and rhyme.

Our team also develop free resources to match each title including an Activity Time sheet (perfect for use at home with a parent and child) and Learning Time sheets (written in the form of a lesson plan and great to use in library, childcare and school settings).

All our picture book recommendations are featured online and in The Advertiser and Sunday Mail, Facebook, Instagram and monthly eNewsletter.



ACTIVITY TIME

My Teeth

Danny Snell

Did you know that a Tyrannosaurus Rex had sixty teeth? I wonder how many teeth you have? This book will have you and your child thinking, wondering, asking questions and talking! Discover the formation of a tooth and why your teeth are special and need special care. Take a look at your teeth in the mirror. What can you see? Are your teeth different sizes? Where is your gum? Can you remember the names of the different teeth? Talk often about the food that helps keep your teeth strong and healthy and the importance of brushing both morning and night. Plan a trip to the dentist and take the book along to show and talk about, with the dentist! Help your child form good habits right from the start using this book, and the tooth brushing chart as a fun way to guide them.

Tooth Brushing Chart

You will need:

- Tooth Brushing Chart template
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Star stickers, crayon, pencil or texta.

Instructions:

To keep re-using your chart, print and laminate or print multiple copies.

1. Start using the chart on a Sunday.
2. Brush your teeth with toothpaste in the morning for around 2 minutes – up and down, front and back and sideways.
3. Smile in the mirror.
4. Now colour in or sticker the tick for Sunday morning – well done!
5. Repeat in the evening and for every other day of the week both morning and night.

Songs to sing

Heads Shoulders Knees and Toes, and This Is The Way We Brush Our Teeth here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pd4WrsXwdq&feature=emb_title

Key message

Good Nutrition, Health and Exercise are Critical.

Adult supervision is required at all times when children play or are around water.

You can introduce simple Science Technology, Engineering & Maths (STEM) concepts to children aged 2+ years through every day play.

Proudly supported by raisingliteracy.org.au • littlebookpress.com.au

Book title: My Teeth
Activity: Tooth Brushing Chart
Age group: Preschoolers

Sunday	✓	✓
Monday	✓	✓
Tuesday	✓	✓
Wednesday	✓	✓
Thursday	✓	✓
Friday	✓	✓
Saturday	✓	✓

The new normal

2020 has been a challenging year for families across the globe.

The COVID-19 pandemic meant many of us had to adapt new routines and change the way we live our day-to-day lives. During the pandemic, families and educators had to work or teach remotely on top of having their children home from school. Our team worked to put together a wide range of fun activities, videos, songs and stories to keep children engaged and entertained.

Our social media presence was more crucial than ever and was one of the main channels we used to connect with families and educators at home. We adapted our messaging to give families activities and tips while isolating at home. This included our everyday highlight campaign, a twist and extension on our

Tuesday tips. The interactive campaign focused on positive messaging and asking families to share the ways they were reading, singing, talking and playing at home.

On YouTube, we started an Authors and Illustrators at Home series, which featured story times from authors, songs and illustration demonstrations for those missing playgroups and library story time sessions. We adapted our training to an online format engaging educators from across the country and created free downloadable activity and learning times for each of our Little Book Press titles.

Our reading packs also took on a new importance with many educators using the packs as the basis for their at-home learning.

Since January 1, 2020 our Facebook reach has increased by

83%



Our packs were an amazing gift to our families to support home learning during the initial COVID crisis in April 2020. To be able to provide them with some early childhood preschool books with resources attached provided valuable learning opportunities to support parents with learning at home during this difficult time.

Our 10-week learning from home program we were asked to create centered around a book per week. We used the books and activities in the pack to plan our learning from home program as we knew every child would have access to these books at home. Families then shared their learning through journal recordings, short videos and photos and emails.

2020 Preschool Reading Packs survey responses



Professional Learning and training

Professional Learning and training has taken on new opportunities, whilst adapting quickly to the challenges of COVID-19. During 2019 we trialled a range of new workshops with guest speakers that received overwhelmingly positive feedback. This included Chitter Chatter presented by a qualified Speech Therapist, Sing a Song of Sixpence presented by a Specialist Music Teacher, and Sensory Processing in the Early Years presented by a qualified Occupational Therapist. These sessions were very popular and feedback was positive and encouraging. February 2020 we ran our first RLA Literacy and STEM workshop which was booked out and had excellent feedback.

A significant development was our inclusion in the Victorian School Readiness Funding (SRF) program. Two of our Professional Learning workshops (Building Foundations for Early Learning BFEL, and Inclusive Literacy Practice ILP) were independently assessed at the highest rating, and then included on the SRF Menu of Evidence as a preferred provider for Victorian kindergartens. By the start of 2020, we had received 40 enquiries from Victorian kindergartens looking to undertake workshops but then in March came COVID-19 lockdowns. During lockdown, and in response to demand, significant time went into adapting the BFEL and ILP

workshops to 2 hour sessions on Microsoft Teams or Zoom in an online live webinar session. We were also able to complement the workshops with a 'wrap around' literacy approach offering kindergartens the option to purchase Reading Packs for children, additional books and resources for staff, and supplementing Lending Libraries to support literacy rich environments in their centres. With over 1600+ additional Victorian Kindergartens (making a total of approx. 4000 Victorian kindergarten in SRF) coming on board to join the SRF program in 2021 there will be additional opportunities and challenges to maintain the highest level of service.



Little Book Press publishing house

It has been a very busy but exciting year for Raising Literacy Australia's publishing house Little Book Press.

One of our most exciting achievements was having *Once Upon My Legs* and *Sing with Me* buggy board book shortlisted for the 2020 Speech Pathology Book of the Year Awards.

The challenges of COVID-19 meant we pushed production on our new titles forward to ensure they would be printed in time to include in the 2021 Reading Packs. We are very proud of our three new picture books; *Shoo You Crocodile*, *Molly Moores Has a House Like Yours* and *Look, Baby!*.

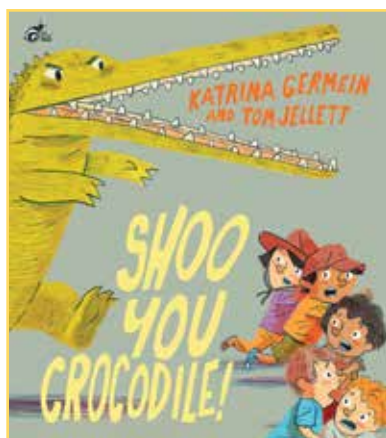
Shoo You Crocodile

By Katrina Germein and Tom Jellett

Shoo You Crocodile! is a fun, raucous tale for imaginative young readers and small, brave adventurers. Author Katrina Germein said the story began while watching a group of children play in the sandpit as they escaped invisible crocodiles like dodging molten lava.

"It was super fun to write. The story has noise and action with themes of imagination, play, teamwork and courage," she said. "The rhythm and rhyme is lively and there are crocodiles on the loose! What could be more fun than that?"

Illustrator Tom Jellett said when imagining Katrina's text, his mind immediately took him to the SA Museum. Tom sketched an idea of what the museum looked like in his head from years ago, and then spent a few days in the museum to make the story come to life.



Look, Baby!

By Janeen Brian and Renee Tremi

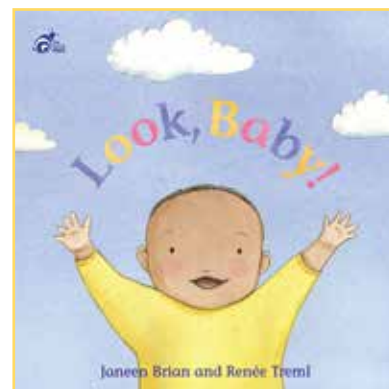
Look, Baby! encourages adults to show their child how to look and explore the world around

them. *Look, Baby!* features all different kinds of families and celebrates those quiet special moments when we come together at home and in nature.

Author Janeen Brian said she hoped the story would create an enjoyable reading experience for families and encourages stimulating play.

"I'm fascinated by the way babies explore their new world. Their senses are alive and alert," she said. "I love to look where they're looking, see what they reach for and what delights them. I love to notice what they notice."

Illustrator Renée Tremi said she was excited to use cut-outs, which help readers slow down and look carefully at the pictures in a fun and clever way.



Exciting projects for 2021

In 2021, we will be publishing an exciting new book, *Warna Manda Baby*.

This beautiful book was written by renowned Australian Aboriginal artist Susan Betts. Susie's paintings make up the background of the book with the characters in the foreground created by illustrator Mandy Foot.

The project began with a workshop in Susie's hometown of Streaky Bay. Mandy said the

workshop was an "incredible experience and the pair spent time learning about why this book was so important and how connected Susie was with animals and the earth.

The opportunity to work with Susie was extraordinary, Mandy said. The connection was instant. Two artists from different cultures coming together with the same passion for Mother Earth and our animal kingdom. Our intensive one week spent together painting and drawing to create the finished

artwork, I will never forget. Together we were immersed in the creation of this story.

Sharing the story of connection to country, Susie said she hopes the story will inspire future generations.

Warna Manda Baby is special because it is about that connection to the earth and being able to share that connection, Susie said. I hope that it inspires everyone, especially children because that's who I wrote it for, to feel and awaken that sense of connection to Mother Earth.



The Author and Illustrator Mentoring Initiative

Molly Moores has a House Like Yours

Molly Moores has a House Like Yours, written by Kaliah Tsakalidis and illustrated by Ross Morgan, is the first book published as part of Raising Literacy Australia's Emerging Author and Illustrator Mentoring Program.

The initiative gives unpublished authors and illustrators intensive mentoring support to develop their writing and illustration techniques.

Executive Director of the James and Diana Ramsay Foundation, Kerry de Lorme, said the foundation was thrilled to be

able to foster the talents of up-and-coming artists in SA.

In particular, they were pleased to create more opportunities for authors and illustrators starting their career in the publishing industry.

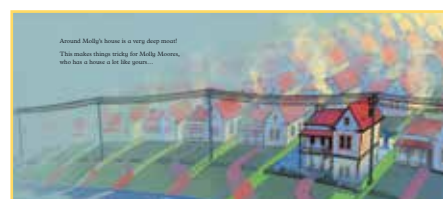
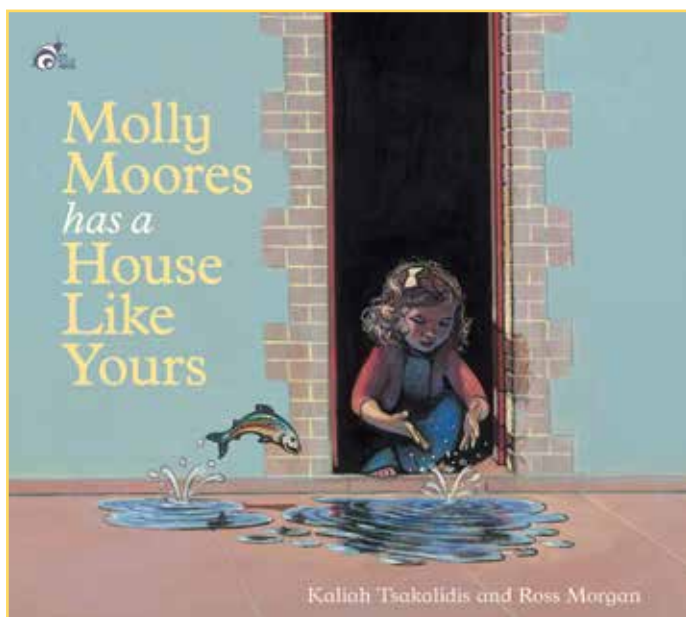
"It was such a privilege to be part of this initiative," Ross said. "I learned so much about the different stages of developing a manuscript for print and the multiple stages of conversation with the publisher.

"I feel the most valuable thing I learned was how to use my drawings as a key form of conversation to achieve a shared vision."

Molly Moores Has A House Like Yours uses rhyme and an element of surprise, coupled with detailed, fantastical illustrations, to capture its audience.

The book uses a collection of rare words and lends to rich conversations around what makes a home, moving house, diversity of homes and different cultures all from a child's perspective.

Molly Moores Has A House Like Yours will be included in RLA's 2021 Preschool Reading Pack, which will be given free to 23,000 South Australian preschool children.





Financial report

Raising Literacy Australia Inc saw an increase in overall Income earned for the 2020 financial year, with large increases in revenue from Product Sales, Grants & Projects Commissioned.

Total revenue of \$1,411,951 was a positive increase from the previous year's low total of \$1,083,294, an increase of

\$328,657 (30.3%). This year represents the highest revenue generated by the organisation since inception, and a recognition of the strategic efforts by all to diversify revenue sources and provide a more sustainable business model.

Grants continue to provide the vast majority of income, being \$775,900 or 55% of the total

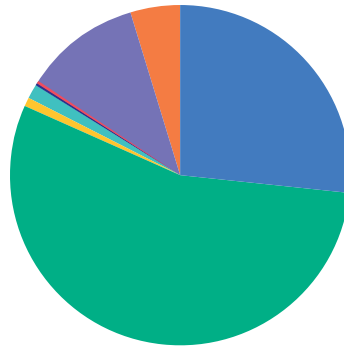
overall revenue and therefore organisation is still heavily reliant on these to continue, predominantly with the support of the South Australian State Government.

A breakdown of the categories of Revenue follows:

INCOME	2020	2019	Variance
Product Sales	377,505	233,392	144,113
Grants	775,900	706,700	69,200
Donations & Sponsorships	3,294	8,106	- 4,812
Copyright	8,795	11,673	- 2,878
Interest	755	3,013	- 2,258
Workshops	18,503	23,708	- 5,205
Projects Commissioned	163,265	96,702	66,563
COVID-19 Stimulus	63,934	-	63,934
Total	1,411,951	1,083,294	328,657

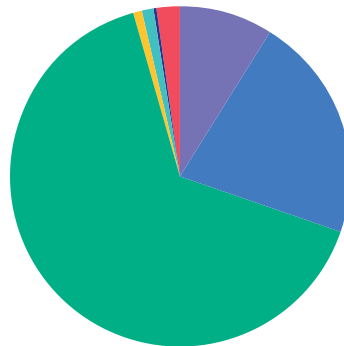
Breakdown of 2020 revenue

- Product sales
- Grants
- Donations and sponsorship
- Copyright
- Interest
- Workshops
- Projects commissioned
- COVID-19 Stimulus



Breakdown of 2019 revenue

- Product sales
- Grants
- Donations and sponsorship
- Copyright
- Interest
- Workshops
- Projects commissioned



Overall, the increase in total Revenue was pleasing, particularly as the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 threatened to disrupt many of organisation's plans. We are thankful for the support of the Federal and State Governments shown through this time.

The organisation is still heavily reliant on income from Grants, particularly from State Government sources, however progress has been made to diversify other revenue sources to build a more sustainable model.

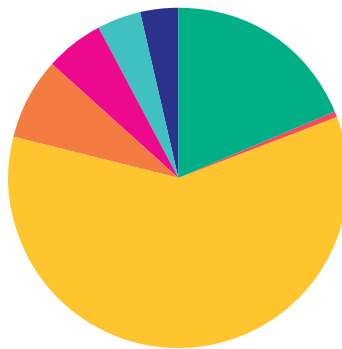
Pleasingly, after two years of negative growth, the organisation has achieved a remarkable revenue turnaround and appears on track to build further growth and sustainability.

Expenditure

Expenditure increased for the year by \$77,791 due to the increased cost of sales proportional with the increase in Product Sales.

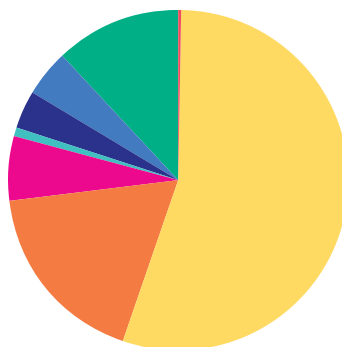
Breakdown of 2020 expenditure

- Cost of products sold
- Depreciation
- Project costs
- Employee benefits
- Occupancy costs
- Advertising
- Administration



Breakdown of 2019 expenditure

- Cost of products sold
- Depreciation
- Project costs
- Employee benefits
- Occupancy costs
- Advertising
- Administration
- Other overheads



EXPENDITURE	2020	2019	Variance
Cost of Products Sold	227,785	135,256	92,529
Depreciation	4,954	5,638	- 684
Project Costs	725,100	622,018	103,082
Employee Benefits	92,780	202,485	- 109,705
Occupancy Costs	68,744	69,542	- 798
Advertising	-	-	7,687
Administration	49,320	42,353	6,967
Other Overheads	42,355	48,268	- 5,913
Total	1,211,038	1,133,247	77,791

Summary

After losses and volatility in previous years, it is pleasing to see the 2020 financial year result in a profit for Raising Literacy Australia Inc.

Given the challenges of COVID-19 that all organisations have had to deal with, particularly since March 2020, such a strong financial result is an achievement to be acknowledged and celebrated.

Cash position is currently healthy and therefore the

organisation remains solvent.

The financial and business model of the organisation however results in unpredictable financial results due to narrow sources of large-scale revenue, such as State Government Grants, and the substantial costs attached to deliver these programs, along with managing the timing of the year when these occur.

As Raising Literacy Australia Inc proceeds through the impacts

of COVID-19 and beyond to the “new normal” it will be important to maintain the financial disciplines and good practice to build a more sustainable business model and foundation for the security and success of the organisation.

Matthew Holden,
Treasurer
Raising Literacy Australia

Founding and Program Partners

We couldn't do what we do without a range of founding and program partners:

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Origin Foundation

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