Building Stronger Partnerships
at
St Brendan’s Catholic Primary School Moorooka
Brisbane

Living in Harmony project
illustrated resource book

2007
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1. About the project and grant

This project is funded under the Living in Harmony programme, (Department of Immigration and Citizenship DIAC) which encourages local communities to play a positive role in engaging the whole community in promoting Australian values, mutual respect, and mutual obligation, as well as addressing issues of intolerance in Australia.

The Building Stronger Partnerships, was located in St Brendan’s catholic primary school community, Moorooka, Brisbane. St Brendan’s school community has a significant percentage of students that come from a refugee background and nearly half the school population speaks English as their second language. Families of students from diverse communities often have limited social contact and support networks with families from the mainstream community. This project brought these culturally diverse groups together to foster a sense of belonging and mutual respect.

Activities included eight cooking workshops focusing on nutrition and the establishment of a multicultural playgroup. The playgroup activities included five workshops with guest speakers on parenting and community health issues and creative arts. A Harmony Day celebration was also held including traditional food prepared by the participants.

The application was submitted 25 August 2006. Once the project funds were granted a Living in Harmony program representative and the St Brendan’s project supervisors agreed to a list of objectives, actions, result/outcomes and performance indicators for the project.

The project worker was engaged to start on the first day of the school year 2007 to work 17.4 hours a week in term time for 4 terms. A parent with teaching experience in Sudan was also appointed as a bilingual support worker for the project 3 – 5 hours a week. A reference group was formed including a playgroup mother, ESL teacher, Bilingual support worker, the principal and the project worker.

Ten monthly reports were submitted as well as an interim report and a final report with completed evaluations. The Living in Harmony program representative visited from Canberra mid year and offered support and guidance by phone through-out the year. A teleconference was also organized for all LiH projects in Australia to prepare for Harmony Day. A kit of posters and decorations and ribbons were sent to promote and celebrate Harmony day.
SECTION 1 ATTACHMENT

Position Description of bicultural worker for the Living in Harmony project Building Stronger Partnerships
At St Brendan’s Primary School for third and fourth term

Hours 3 - 5 hours a week during third and fourth term (not in September holidays) 10th July – 10th December 2007.

Pay details - as per principal’s advice

Qualifications – Interest and experience in education and or child and or family support.
You do not need to have early childhood qualifications for this position as your role is to provide cultural and communication support to families from Sudanese background.

Place of employment – St Brendan’s primary School

Supervision – provided by Living in Harmony project worker and reference group (P and F representative Annette Murphy, ESL teacher Karen Jeffery and Principal Paul Drewniak)

Responsible to – Principal of St Brendan’s

What will the cultural worker do

Join play group mothers in 4 week roster

- Set up activities for children and mothers each Thursday anytime between 8.15 – 9.15
- Purchase consumable items for morning tea and other play and craft items to be used by mothers and children as agreed by playgroup parents up to the value of $50 a week or $200 a month. Organise reimbursing of all expenses with St Brendan’s school admin staff who administer the playgroup budget
- Coordinate planning for next week ie, who brings music, what activities for children and mothers, guest speakers are requested
- Coordinate cleaning up between 11 - 11.45 (Mandy can help with this)
- Organise roster or coordinate food preparation and clean-up if required
- Return St Brendan’s hall key to front desk at St Brendan’s by 12.30 on Thursdays
- Keep register of parents and children who attend each week on Playgroup attendance sheets provided by Mandy
- Coordinate visits to Yeronga toy library if playgroup parents are interested.
- Must be available to attend a review meeting twice a term with reference group including Paul Drewniak and Karen Jeffery.
- Book guest speakers according to agreed preferences of parents in playgroup, confirm time of presentation and payment arrangements

Assist African mothers in playgroup

✓ By supporting communication between the playgroup parents
✓ By providing information and support so African parents can take part in playgroup.
✓ By providing support when completing documentation for playgroup association (e.g. enrolment forms, medication forms etc.)
✓ By Promoting playgroup and trying to get more African mothers to come

Assist Children
✓ To settle into multicultural playgroup, cooking workshops and childcare.
✓ To maintain and develop their first language
✓ To help develop positive self esteem
✓ To develop and maintain pride in their own language and culture
2. Harmony Night

On a beautiful March evening under the palm trees in our school court yard we enjoyed the gentle swaying of a Tongan family performing their traditional dance, Aboriginal welcome ritual and hip hop performance of Sudanese ex students. Each of these cultures were represented in the school student population. Two parents Yanka from Liberia and Daniel from Sudan inspired and moved us with their stories of their family's journey to Australia and what Living in Harmony meant to them. By the time the Rwandan dancers started their performance the whole school of students could not resist and joined them on and around the stage dancing to the Rwandan music.

Other activities during the night

- Every parent was welcomed at the entrance of the school and given a name tag
- Children sang together in the school choir
- Each family brought a plate to share and all enjoyed the generous offerings of supper representing cuisines of many countries eg freshly cooked kangaroo meat, mulaki from Sudan, spring rolls from Hong Kong.
- A new “Welcome to Primary School” orientation kit was launched and partly screened
- Items of traditional clothes and other cultural objects from Peru, Laos and Sudan and all the entrants in a the draw your favourite dish competition were displayed around the stage and courtyard
- The principal invited us to celebrate unity in our diversity and the unique solidarity enjoyed at St Brendan’s.

It was a wonderful start to the year and opened up opportunities for families to feel comfortable and appreciated as members of our school community.

Harmony Quilt

At the Harmony Night parents, staff and students were asked to meet one person they didn’t know and sign a cotton square together with a message of harmony and peace. Each student in the school was invited to also decorate a square with words or a drawing in the weeks following the event. These cotton panels were sewn together into a quilt by a teachers aide. It is now hanging in the school as a continuing reminder of the Harmony event.

How the night was organized

- The Living in Harmony worker used the project budget to hire a stage, book and pay for performers and delegated jobs before, on and after the night. She received very generous offers of help form P and F, staff and students who shared responsibility for welcoming families, helping people to sign the quilt, arrange display of recipes (from student competition) etc
- Lighting staging and sound were anticipated and organized ahead of time by 6/7 teacher.

How the night was promoted

- The principal used assembly time for weeks before the event to engage the students and prepare them for Harmony Night. Orange wig and other colour reminders were used at assembly to help students remember the date
School staff gave their time to remind students in class time in the weeks before the event.
The parish newsletter published an invitation.
Catholic Leader and media section of Brisbane Catholic Education were invited to the function and photos and an article of the event were published on the front page of the Catholic Leader.
Southside welcoming refugee network promoted the event through email out to over 40 member agencies and groups.

Things we have learnt

- Families value and fully support this kind of activity as evidenced by almost 90% school family attendance.
- Next time we would organize different stage or plan for crowd control as the spontaneous decision for all the students in the school to get on stage and dance raised safety concerns.
- Next time we would have a welcoming group giving out name tags as families walked in who are familiar with families/parents at the school so when they enter they are immediately recognized. The welcome team at the front door were not always staff most familiar with the families.
- A briefing meeting with all volunteers on the afternoon before the event could have helped to ensure no confusion.

Spin offs

The staff requested another event to close the year given the success and ongoing benefits of the Harmony night. A Christmas parents and grandparents in the classroom event was organized for the last week of the year.
SECTION 2 ATTACHMENTS

Harmony Night Event at St Brendan’s

6.30  Families arrive and place plate on shared food table

6.30 – 6.35  Stradbroke Island dancers  Uyulu Biria ba

6.35 – 6.45  Principal welcome everyone and announce
1. Ally Wakefield Project Worker  Inclusive Orientation Program for families from refugee and migrant backgrounds has completed project - in the spirit of harmony day all are welcome (translated into 6 languages)

2. launch of Building Stronger partnerships project including play group starting Thurs 29th March and cooking workshops starting on 30th March

6.45 - 6.50  Sudanese parent Daniel message of living in harmony

6.50 – 6.55  Liberian parent Yanka message of living in harmony

6.55- 7.00  Jeanine from P and F

6.55 – 7.05  Screen some of Orientation DVD

7.05 – 7.15  Choir photocopied words for parents to sing

7.15 – 7.20  Tongan dance Meli

7.20 – 7.35  Rwandan performers Michelle and Claire

7.35 – 7.50  African youth dance group

7.50 - 7.55  Draw name out of hat for drawing competition 7 times

7.45 – 8.00  Invite people to find another family with same number on their name tag and together they sign together a flag square with message or symbol of “harmony for children in the future”. Each couple of families will be photographed by Ally and Mandy at the flag signing table next to the food table.

8.0 – 8.30  Invite people to eat supper

8.30  Close and thank for coming and ask people to take home display table objects and plates
Come and help us celebrate one community many cultures

When? 22nd March 2007 6.30 – 8.80

Where? St Brendan’s Primary School, Hawtree Street Moorooka

What we will do- Parents will be introduced to other families in the school. Dance and choir performances will follow short addresses by parents from different cultural backgrounds and staff about living in of harmony. Each family can share a plate of traditional food and can view the orientation kit dvd for new school parents.

Who is it for? All St Brendan’s families and local community members

Contact Mandy Cox at St Brendan’s for more information 32752081

This project is proudly supported by the Australian Government’s Living in Harmony programme. For more information, visit www.harmony.gov.au

Please let us know if you would like the assistance of an interpreter or cultural worker to help you take part in the event
3. Cooking in class rooms during Harmony week

My favourite recipe competition
To help students start thinking about and engage in the Living in Harmony week activities, each student was invited to draw a picture on a round paper plate of their favourite dish and record the recipe on the back of the drawing. This was very well supported. Recipes were displayed on the walls for the courtyard for the parents to view on the evening of Harmony night. The recipes and foods illustrated in the drawings provided another opportunity to recognize and equally value the diverse cuisines represented in the school.

Parents cooking with students in the classroom
Cooking in class rooms involved 12 parents cooking with each class of students (7). The parents were invited to demonstrate the preparation of a dish, explain something about their country of origin and their cuisine. The Living in Harmony project worker personally invited parents who were identified by teachers, PandF and staff as valuable participants.

The Living in Harmony worker also assisted with preparing and purchasing ingredients on requests, helping students make the dish, take photos, provide cooking equipment and prepare tables in the classroom. Teachers helped children focus and participate and helped the parent with the discussion about their culture with maps and references the students would understand. The students were encouraged to make the dish with the parents guidance. Work stations and multiple sets of ingredients were set up.

Dishes that were prepared were Canadian Wagon wheels, Laotian spring rolls, Sudanese donuts and baklava, Peruvian rice pudding and macaroons and Italian spaghetti cabbilana.

Some things we have learnt
- Prepare as much as possible before the class session by ringing the parent to ensure there is clarity of what equipment, ingredients, plates are needed. Some groups of parents didn’t decide till the day of session who would go to which class room and what ingredients were needed. This required the Living Harmony worker and admin staff and principal (who offered to do the shopping) to be flexible and responsive as last minute arrangements and purchases were made.
- Personally inviting individual parents to ensure there was enough volunteers was useful. Asking for self nominated volunteers through the newsletter may not have worked.
- The teachers were very accommodating to allow the parents to do their session whenever they were available.
- Apart from teacher, cooking parent, cooking assistant, it was good to have a runner to get cooking equipment, ingredients, plates at the last minute as parents worked what they needed when they arrived in the class room photos.
Dear members P And F members

Please find above the updated list of parents for cooking demonstrations. The following have been requested by the parents. If you could lend any of the following items it would be much appreciated. If you could bring items

- Please tag or name them
- Leave note in my pigeon hole re what you can lend
- Bring items on Tuesday 20th March

**Items required by parents**

- 4 plug in frypans
- 12 Cutting boards
- 12 cutting knives
- 12 stirring spoons (including wooden spoons)
- 2 plug in boilers (like rice cookers)
- 12 large mixing bowls

Also if anyone is free to come to any of the sessions to help take photos or assist children to follow directions, or provide childcare (the project can pay $15 an hour to anyone who can provide childcare) please let me know. Thanks for your help with this.

Regards

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Extra help</th>
<th>Childcare required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 20(^{3}) 9 – 10.30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>Barb</td>
<td>Sister G Annette</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 9 – 10.30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Atab</td>
<td>Nawal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 11.30 – 1.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>Medta</td>
<td>Nawal</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs am 9 – 10.30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Peruvian</td>
<td>Patricia</td>
<td>Myriam</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 2- 3</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Nawal</td>
<td>Annette</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri 23(^{rd}) March 11.30 – 12.30</td>
<td>6/7</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>Angela</td>
<td>Student taking photos</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri 2 – 3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>Julia</td>
<td>Myriam</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Multicultural Playgroup

Activities for Parents
The multicultural playgroup has been supported by Australians parents with Congolese, Sudanese, Rwandan, Hungarian and Anglo Saxon heritage. Parents have joined with a desire to meet other mothers and provide opportunities for children to make new friends and play and learn together. As Swahili, Arabic and French speaking mothers were often not able to participate in informal socializing with English speaking mothers we have experimented through the year with different activities to engage mothers without requiring English skills. Knitting, group stretches and exercises in the colder months, dancing and movement, craft activities including simple frame making, card making were trailed. These activities were generally lead by mothers with skills in that area. The mothers also made small booklets about themselves. English speakers helped others with saying and writing facts about name, family and childhood.

The playgroup mums have exchanged information about the St Brendan’s school, suburban refugee support activities, arts and cultural programs and groups in the local suburbs including the African Women’s chorus, family support services, driving lessons, job opportunities and local family activities on weekends and holidays as well as lots of information about the highs and lows of their family life.

The project budget also allocated funds to engage guest speakers and facilitators to inform and bring mothers together around a common interest. All guest speakers were very favourably received and have been welcomed to attend the playgroup again in 2008

Guest speakers workshop facilitators

- **Sewing teacher** - 5 sessions were requested by the mothers so they could learn how to use the 7 machines donated to St Brendan’s, cut and sew simple patterns
- **Parenting coach** - 3 sessions were offered to assist mothers reflect on discipline styles, effective communication and maintaining loving supportive relationships with their children. Certificate of completion were issued to all mothers who attended and evaluation sheets were completed to assist parent coach and LiH project worker
- **Kids in Mind counselor** – A mental health worker explained this state government mental health services to families living in Moorooka Yeronga area.
- **Recycled jewellery maker** – A community artist brought a wide selection of recycled materials for a morning of jewellery making by mothers and some children.
- **Tenancy advice worker**– The Tenancy advocacy and advice Service manager from Acacia Ridge Community Centre provided a session on rights and responsibilities of landlords, agents and tenants.

Activities for Children
The children have enjoyed many indoor and outdoor games, craft activities, dancing, playing instruments and singing during the year. The have made connections with other preschoolers that may contribute to an easier transition into the prep year in 2008. They have improved their English language skills, learnt about morning tea.
manners, group sharing and cleaning up routines. The children have got to have very positive relationships with adults from other cultures which in some cases has been the first time in their lives. For some the activities involving fine motor skills, running and playing football are also a new experience. Many mothers have commented how children look forward to the playgroup and the playing with the friends they have made. While there has been a loose routine followed in the beginning of the year, the playgroup schedule changes week to week depending on the parents who attend on the day.

**Things we have learnt**

There is much to be learnt about differences between cultures in regards to discipline, whether parents do or don’t play with their children, group and individual responsibility for children and sharing responsibility for bringing food, setting up and clearing up. The group is still and learning much about this and have been challenged as differences and unmet expectations about other parents behaviours have arisen.

It has been useful to consider things that we don’t understand in others behaviour with an open mind and diplomatically seek information to help find reasons and explanations for attitudes or responses we don’t understand. There has been attempts to balance a desire amongst some to accommodate every parents cultural childcare practices and being realistic about what is acceptable in Australian society. Some parents have been very constructive in using humour and a light touch to build connections and balance the confusion that different approaches can create. Playgroup association guidelines for how to support parents and children when behaviour is challenging have been useful.

**Spin offs**

Some mums have helped other mothers with childcare, securing casual work and finding furniture. These activities have happened outside the playgroup and demonstrate strengthening bonds amongst the mothers.

Singing group was formed in the playgroup which has since received invitations to perform at public events.
Welcome to parents of children starting prep in 2008. Come to our playgroup, meet other parents, and play with your children in a safe and stimulating environment.

When – Every Thursday morning 9 – 11.30 during term time

Where – St Brendan’s hall, Hawtree Street, Moorooka. Catch bus no 116 and get off outside St Brendan’s in Hawtree street.

What we will do - Parents and children enjoy music, do crafts and play together. Guest speakers can lead discussion of interest to mothers.

Who is it for - All St Brendan’s parents and local community members with children 0 – 5 years old.

What to bring – hat & some food to share for morning tea.

Contact – Mandy Cox at St Brendan’s 32752081 to register your interest or just turn up!

Other languages – At present the playgroup mums speak languages spoken in Rwanda, Sudan and Australia. Mothers from all cultural backgrounds are welcome.
INTRODUCTION TO SEWING USING COMMERCIAL PATTERN
5 x 2 hours sessions 10 – 12.00 Thursday  Starting 1st November

What to bring
1 x fabric scissors
1 x paper scissors
Tape measure
Pins
$10 for patterns.

Objectives:
- To be able to thread and replace needles, change and refill a bobbin on a domestic sewing machine.
- Basic Machine Maintenance.
- To competently sew straight lines using seam allowances.
- Reading a Commercial Pattern.
- Construct elastic waisted pants & a skirt with a zip & waistband.

Week 1 Starting 1st November
Setting up and threading machine, Changing Bobbins & replacing needles
Sewing Straight Lines
Understanding seam allowance
Reading Commercial Patterns
Cutting out commercial patterns

Week 2
Setting up the machine, Threading and replacing bobbins
Straight Sewing
Taking Measurements
Cutting out Commercial Pattern

Week 3
Setting up Machines, threading and replacing bobbins
Constructing shorts
Elastic Application

Week 4
Setting up Machines, threading and replacing bobbins
Cutting out commercial Pattern for Skirt
Constructing skirt

Week 5
Setting up Machines, threading and replacing bobbins
Further construction
Putting in Zips
Completing Garments & Revision.
5. Cooking workshops with Nutrition Australia

Over 25 women and their children attended the cooking workshops between March and July. Childcare was provided by a regular childcare worker and 4 -5 participants in a Community Jobs Plan child care trainee project run by the Brisbane City Council. Women with Australian, Portugese, Sudanese, Rwandan, Congolese, Liberian heritage participated in the workshops sharing delicious meals and cooking secrets. With the LiH budget Robin Tilse from Nutrition Australia was engaged and presented eight cooking sessions providing all food, recipes. Her goal was to

- Promote healthy food choices that adhere to the Australian Dietary Guidelines
- Promote safe food handling and hygiene practices
- Encourage participants to try foods from different cultures (Sudanese, Indian, Thai, South American and Australian)
- Include a vegetarian meal
- Use foods that can be purchased locally (Moorooka)
- Use foods that represent value for money and value for health
- Encourage the participants to appreciate the cultural differences associated with the provision and serving of food and share experiences
- Encourage participants to actively become involved in preparing the recipes each week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop Theme</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quick meals</strong> for Australian families</td>
<td>General: Challenges to Feeding a Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Chicken and Honey Soy Stir Fry</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Tuna and Tomato Pasta</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Salad and bread</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sudanese</strong> Okra, Kissera, Salad</td>
<td>Cultural norms associated with serving food in Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Healthy Snacks</strong> Sushi, Jacket Potato and fillings, Homemade Pizza</td>
<td>Confusing messages in the Australia food supply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asian</strong> Sushi making was lead by Japanese childcare worker</td>
<td>Asian food culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Lunches</strong> Range of other foods suitable for school lunches- muffins Hommos, Quiche. Group practiced packing a healthy lunches</td>
<td>Getting food variety into school lunches Wrapping and packing food for a school lunchbox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethiopian cuisine</strong> being lead by Ethiopian participants in the group</td>
<td>Social and spiritual aspects of coffee ceremony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mediterranean cuisine</strong> Lasagna and Portuguese dish</td>
<td>Lead by a Portuguese member of group (not a parent at the school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entertaining Australian style</strong> A collection of celebration foods to share</td>
<td>Cultural norms associated with serving celebratory food in Portugal, Australia, Sudan, Ethiopia</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The women sometimes assisted Nutrition Australia dietician with recipes and sometimes watched as dishes were prepared and sometimes took charge of concurrent preparations. A bilingual support worker helped Arabic speaking women
understand. Women from Rwanda who attended had intermittent interpreting support. Dishes were eaten at the end of the session and dietician follow-up with informal discussion with participants. At the end of 8 sessions a feast was prepared and

**How it was promoted**
- The parish newsletter published an invitation
- School newsletter featured invitations to join throughout term 2 and three
- Word of mouth through friends of school families
- Southside welcoming refugee network promoted the workshops through email out to over 40 member agencies and groups

**Things we have learnt**
- Possibly more direction and structure to ensure participation from African women could be used by the facilitator. However as most women were breast feeding infants it was necessary to be flexible in how much was expected of mothers regarding taking part in the preparations
- All recipes could have been translated before the course began so Arabic women could more closely follow the demonstrations.

**Spin offs**
Junction Park state primary school has since set up cooking workshops for new families at the school from a refugee background
Come and join us and meet other parents, exchange recipes from around the world, learn about preparing healthy food for children

This project is proudly supported by the Australian Government’s Living in Harmony programme. For more information, visit www.harmony.gov.au

**When?**  Friday 30th March 2007
007 10 – 12. Quick meals for Australian families, 27th April Sudanese cuisine, 4th May Healthy snacks 18th May Asian cuisine, 1ST June School lunches, 15th June, 13th and 27th July

**Where?**  St Brendan’s Church hall, Hawtree Street Moorooka

**What we will do-** Meet other parents, learn new recipes and prepare food with workshop leader, discussion with dietician from Nutrition Australia. All ingredients and recipes are free, free food samples.

**Who**  All St Brendan’s parents and local community members

**Contact**  Mandy Cox at St Brendan’s 32752081 to book a place in the
6. Multicultural Singing Group

In response to some of the Sudanese parents seeing the African children’s choir advertising and wishing that their children could sing and perform African songs a proposal was floated that the playgroup mums form a singing group with students of the grade 6/7 so they could perform together at the school fete. A Ghanian song sung in two part rounds, a Sudanese crusader song with actions, a well known Australian song and an Indigenous song were chosen for the performance repertoire. Nyambol one of the playgroup mums taught us the words and actions (which the students loved to ham up) to the crusader song in a Sudanese language and Zen a Ghanian woman from the African Women’s chorus taught us a tradition song from her country of origin.

The African Women’s chorus leader (Marina Thacker who is an experienced musician and choir leader) was engaged with the Living in Harmony project funds to conduct 3 rehearsals and perform with the group at the fete. Two other members of the chorus joined us for the rehearsals and performance which added much appreciated energy and confidence on the day. The students were very quick learners and very well behaved and enthusiastic performers. While some of the adults (9 in total) were shy about singing to an audience there was a great sense of achievement after receiving appreciative applause from the audience some of whom could not resist dancing singing and clapping along to the song from their homeland.

Things we learnt

Having an experienced choir director with years of experience leading small scale community choirs was invaluable. Her warmth, gentleness, acceptance and encouragement helped us feel it was all possible.

Mothers some of whom with babies who haven’t performed before need lots of reassurance and encouragement and help to attend rehearsals and get to the performance stage. Lots of patience, flexibility and understanding is needed to overcome barriers to participation.

Spin offs

The group has been invited to perform at Councillor Griffith’s Moorooka community Christmas event on 5th December at the Moorooka State school.
Invitation to join a St Brendan’s parents and friends singing group

Please join us. We are parents and friends of St Brendan’s catholic primary school who are preparing three songs to sing at the school fete on 26th August. We will be learning one English, one Dinka and one Arabic song with Yani a very experienced choir leader. Beginners are welcome. No experience is required, just a desire to learn. Singing group practices will be Thursday mornings. Next practice is at 11am Thursday 2nd August under St Brendan’s church Hawtree Street Moorooka. Please ring Mandy Cox at St Brendan’s 32752081 for more information and to register your interest.

Sudanese Crusaders song
A dacrudasada A dacrudasada
Namename nameme, nameme nameme Nameme, nameme, nameme erenena
A da na bumpin (action) A da na bumpin A da na bumpin na bumpinnnn
Namename nameme, nameme nameme Nameme, nameme, nameme erenena
A da na guitari (action) A da na guitari A da na guitari na guitari
Namename nameme, nameme nameme Nameme, nameme, nameme erenena
A da na rhumba (action) A da na rhumba A da na rhumba na rhumba
Namename nameme, nameme nameme Nameme, nameme, nameme erenena
A da na disco (action) A da na disco A da na disco na disco
Namename nameme, nameme nameme Nameme, nameme, nameme erenena
A da na Dinka (action) A da na Dinka A da na Dinka na Dinka

Inanay Australian Aboriginal Song
In- a nay gu-pu- wa na
In- a nay gu-pu- wa na

Ay ay ay oo-la
oo-la oo-la
oo-la ay yip-py yay yip-py yay

Goo wa-na goo wa –na
Goo wa-na goo wa –na
Ga wa Choo

Goo wa-na goo wa –na
Goo wa-na goo wa –na
Ga wa Choo
7. Grandparents and Special Person Day

The grandparents and special person day was arranged to broaden the understanding across generations and cultures of the value and wisdom of older members of our community. It was also hoped to provide more opportunities for relationships in the wider parish and family networks to build. The principal had been inspired by an older couple who are active members of St Brendan’s parish who have a very rewarding and close relationship with a Rwandan family at the school who they met through the church. This couple (known as grandpa and grandma by the children) speak with pleasure about what they have learned from knowing this family.

The day started with a special assembly attended by 7 members of the parish community and 34 grandparents and great grandparents. After a welcome by the principal one grand-dad with German heritage and his barber shop quartet (who recently represented Australia in an international singing competition) provided a wonderful concert. World class entertainment for all ages! Grandparents and special friends then entered classrooms and
- told stories of their childhood and journey to Australia as refugees (in case of grandparents from Laos)
- played traditional musical instruments
- brought mementos from the Vietnam war and shared memories
- explained the use and history of antique toys, household items and school equipment (some pieces were over 100 years old)
- demonstrated the use of tools they used in his career as a carpenter
- displayed dolls and other games from 60-70 years ago

After the classroom interactions, all guests were invited to a morning tea, where more information through informal discussion about the students and their diverse backgrounds and the loving connections these adults had with the children. Guests were invited to join a volunteer register to help with reading at the school on a regular basis and attend the end of term Movie night. There was very positive feedback in the days following from staff and families.

How it was promoted
- The parish newsletter and school newsletter
- Word of mouth through staff and parish who go to mass at St Brendan’s

Things we have learnt
- Grandparents are interested and curious about African families at the school and some had had no previous interaction with these students. This opportunity was a positive and enlightening experience for them.
- Next time a more structure session plan to incorporate the grandparents in the class rooms activities would be preferred for some of the class rooms.
- Many Grandparents were proud and eager to share stories about their life.

Spin offs
- Boys and men oral history project is planned for 2008 if funding can be secured. After hearing the moving and fascinating stories of some of the grandparents the ESL teacher has been motivated to plan an oral history recording activity with the school grandparents and parents to capture tales of the unique life journeys of the families associated with the school.
- One grandmother has volunteered to help a reader during the school week.
- Xmas in the classroom activity was planned due to the success of this event.
SECTION 7 ATTACHMENT

Update on the preparations for the Grandparents day.
Gifts to grandparents – Mandy can make bookmarks with crest of school and poem and thankyou on it for each grandparent/volunteer. If classes wish to make something else please let Mandy Cox know.

Recruiting visitors –
- Could teachers remind students to invite a special person from church or neighbourhood or grandparent for 3rd Sept.
- Paul Drewniak will be attending St Brendan’s mass on 26th Aug Refugee and Migrant Sunday to invite parishioners.
- Gerti and Val will invite people at Mass while selling raffle tickets.

Welcoming visitors – Mandy and Paul can welcome visitors as they arrive on Monday morning 3rd Sept and seat them ready for assembly when students will sing a song (hopefully something to do with welcome) Mandy to check with Yolanda if students know a “Welcome” song.

Activities in the class room- Grandparents have been invited to bring something and be prepared to explain how to use it or tell a short story about their life, ie Shoalea’s grandad may play his flute which is a traditional instrument from Laos. Grandparents will join the classes for 30 – 40 mins and be part of what teacher is doing with students.

Recording activities. Mandy Cox can float between classes taking photos.

Morning tea – Mandy will set up hall, purchase morning tea and clean up afterwards. Paul will thank people for coming and Francis and Barry will be invited to talk about their connection with Marie Clare and her family as surrogate grandparents.

Table for Grandparents distribution on 3rd September

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grandparents or volunteers</th>
<th>Confirmed yes/ no If no who will follow up confirmation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>Isobella grandparents</td>
<td>No Paul to check with Sophie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Barb’s mother Zac Moler’s</td>
<td>No Mandy can check Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Francis and Barry with Marie Clare</td>
<td>No Paul can check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Shoanalea grandad with Loatian instrument</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Thomas Luke</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Chelsey Kelmana</td>
<td>No Mandy will check with grand dads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6/ 7</td>
<td>No one as yet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Sharing Xmas traditions and recipes with students

Parents, grandparents and special friends were invited to celebrate Christmas with students at St Brendan’s on Tuesday 4th December so the students could value and understand the traditions of celebration and faith of the diverse families and cultures in this school community.

After a marvelous special assembly where the grade 6/7 performed an African dance and song taught to them by a Sudanese parent. Parents and grandparents went to their children’s grandchildren’s class rooms

Prep and 4 and 5 made mini Christmas puddings and were assisted by 5 parents and grandparents. One grade 5 student’s grandmother brought a Sheffield Shield Cricket poster that included depiction of her father who had played against Donald Bradman. Her grandson proudly showed the class his great grandfathers photograph. Another grandmother showed the class how she used wine bottle corks to make angels to decorate the Christmas tree. A Prep mum who had arrived from India in July also interacted with the children and assisted the teacher.

Ten parents and grandparents (including from Pacific islands and Vietnam) of grade ones help make Christmas food gifts and told stories of how Christmas was celebrated in the Australian outback.

Grade 2 children listened to family tradition stories from 3 of the grandparents and made Mexican decorations for Christmas trees

Grade 3 students listened to a mother describe how guests are treated when they visit a home in Sudan at Christmas time and got to try her Christmas season food. An El Salvadorian mum brought food traditionally eaten in her country of origin. The grade three enjoyed a feast, made Christmas cards, wooden Santa ornaments and chains of popcorn.

All parents and grandparents were invited to share morning tea at the parish hall and further get to know each other.
Invitation to Parents of Prep and Grade 5

What- You are invited to a special assembly to celebrate Christmas with parents and grandparents of the school.

Your child’s teacher then needs your help in the classroom to assist students prepare food or decorations or read stories about Christmas around the world.

After classroom activities you are invited to a morning tea with the principal in the church hall

When – Tuesday 4th December 8.45 – 11.45

Where – St Brendan’s school & church hall afterwards for morning tea

Please let us know if you can come by completing the below tear off segment and returning to the St Brendan’s school administration office by 27th November.

No/Yes I can come to 4th December “Celebrating with students” morning

The student I am related to is ..............................................................

Please tell us if you have any activities/ideas you would like to share with the teacher and the students
9. Contribution to other school activities and family support activities

While the Living in Harmony project did not initiate the following activities it contributed to them in the following ways

a. Movie night end of term 3- The Living in Harmony project worker promoted the movie night at Grandparents day to encourage further connections with students at the school, hired projection equipment and did advertising in the parish newsletter.

b. Wonder Women carpentry workshop- The Living in Harmony project worker promoted this women’s carpentry day in the multicultural playgroup and recruited two Sudanese mums to take part. They made a table for the school with the help of a TAFE instructor who provided the tools and guidance. They were very positive about the skills they picked up in using power tools. All participants reported that it was good to meet other mothers from other cultures and learn something together. The LiHarmony project worker organised childcare so these women could take part.

c. Melbourne Cup function - hat decorating and lunch - The Living in Harmony project worker helped promote the function in multicultural playgroup and source a community artist to run a hat decorating workshop on the day.

d. Inclusive Fete activities- The Awiel dancers( including a parent and ex parents of the school) did a performance at the school fete that was accompanied by the Sudanese bilingual support worker who explained the significance of dance and costumes to the fete audience. This was organized and funded through the Living in Harmony project and was the first time African parents participated in the fete as performers. Members of audience clapped and danced as their traditional music was honoured.

The parents from Peru were asked by The Living in Harmony project worker to prepare food and have a cultural display which they did, donating all proceeds of their sales to the school. The Living in Harmony project worker attended the project display and talked to parents about the project throughout the day.

e. Expanding membership to Parents and Friends group. The Living in Harmony project worker attended reference group and P and F meetings to plan strategies to make P and F meetings more inclusive. The principal and Lin Harmony project worker formulated a questionnaire and conducted a consultation with the help of the bilingual support worker with 8 African mothers (see questionnaire attached) to generate interest in P and F activities and get advice on how parents would like to participate in the school.
f. **English tutoring with volunteers** – The Living in Harmony project worker assisted the ESL teacher in recruiting 3 volunteers trained through a local community center to tutor in English. They hold group tutoring for 4 – 10 women on Fridays in a relaxed informal atmosphere that welcomes babies and young children (who are not welcome in TAFE). They have themed sessions including, health, fashion and Melbourne Cup, transport, time and appointments. The tutors can regularly debrief and plan with the Living in Harmony worker who monitors the numbers and progress of mothers learning English and provides photocopying assistance etc. (See Melbourne cup study notes)
SECTION 9 ATTACHMENTS

Questions about how would (NESB) parents like to meet other parents and or get involved in the Parents and Friends Association

1. Do people understand the purpose of the Parents and Friends group?

2. If no the purpose is to
Provide suggestions and comments to the principal about
How the school can be improved
Have a fundraising plan to get extra money for the school to buy things like...
To offer support and build relationships with principal and other parents
To help principal carry out the mission of the school

3. Would people like to come to P and F meetings? Yes No
The next meeting is at 7pm Tuesday 6th November. It will be a friendly gathering where people get ask questions and informally meet other parents at the school, everyone is welcome

4. If so what would make it easier for you to take part in P and F meetings
   • Different time of the day for the meeting?
   • More help with understanding the discussion in the meeting?
   • More time to get to know someone else at the meeting? Any other suggestions

5. If you would prefer not to come to P and F meetings would you like to help with the school in other ways. Please tick one or more of the following
   • Come to school on Tuesday 4th December 8.45 and help teachers in class room show students how to make a Xmas decoration, recipe ritual form your culture (see attached flyer) We need 7 mothers to help with this.
   • Work on “once a term” working bees
   • Work regularly at the Tuckshop after you have received enough assistance to get used to food and money handling
   • Work at fete or work before fete preparing food or sorting donations.
   • Assist students understand/learn singing, dancing, cooking from your culture in once a term activity (eg like Harmony week cooking in class room, singing songs in different languages with grade 6/7)

6. Would you like to meet more parents at the school? Yes No

7. If so how would you like to do this. Please tick one or more of the following
   • Monthly weekend gatherings at the school around a meal
   • Monthly night time gathering at the school around a topic of interest
   • Social gathering at a park or restaurant/café in Moorooka
   • Sport get together at a park/pool in Moorooka/Yeronga
   • At movie night and sausage sizzle
   • At Harmony night event
   • Any other ideas

8. Would you be prepared to help organize these types of gatherings? Yes No

9. If so please give name and phone number so Pand F can contact you.
Free Movie Night
“The Indian in the Cupboard”
PG
A children’s movie about what makes people human

For
All St Brendan’s families, grandparents and special people

At
St Brendan’s Catholic Primary School
Hawtree street Moorooka

Time
6.00pm Sausage sizzle 6.45 Movie start
Wednesday 19th September

To
Celebrate the great effort the school community has put into this
year’s fete and the end of term 3

Return slip by Monday 17th September to admin office

Yes/No. I/My family can come to the movie night and sausage sizzle.
How many adults ..... children ....

Signed
.................................................................

‘This project is proudly supported by the Australian Government’s Living in Harmony programme. For more information, visit www.harmony.gov.au’