



2015 Meetings:

Thursday 13 August 2015. 10.30-12.00

Attendance: Mike Friganiotis, Ulrick Strodl, Belinda Raine, Ben Walker, Donna McCulloch, Leah Stevenson, Will Jones

Apologies: Reesa Sorin, Moniek de Kievith, Annabel Daunt Watney, Andrew McLean, Gill Kolopelnyk

Facilitator: Mike Friganiotis

Notetaker: Donna McCulloch

Meeting began at:

Item	Topic	Discussion	Action
1	Welcome Review Minutes of last meeting/Old business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction by Mike, including an explanation of RA services and functions and how they extend to the Early Years. 	Shared information on upcoming groups/events
2	FNECN Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Network - Finances - Website and Facebook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The September meeting invitation will go out the week prior, with details of speakers and venue. - Donna welcomed new attendees with an explanation of FNECN, the goals and plans for remainder of year. 	Reesa and Andrew
3	Overview of Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partners' reports - Announcements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ben shared information of the <u>Early Childhood Conference</u> on 10 & 11 Sept, including content around Pedagogy, Research, Parent Engagement with speakers to include Mark Wennetong and Collette Taylor. - Ben also shared upcoming PD session "<u>First step in the Longest Journey</u>" running 1st Oct. There is a facebook page for Semann & Slatery where all information can be found. - Donna shared the good news that the Early Years Numeracy Prog "<u>Let's Count!</u>" (recently featured 	Facebook page for more info

		in many media) will be offered to 4-5 EY services in Cairns next year by The Smith Family. Please get in touch if you'd like your staff (2 per centre) to be trained in this fabulous initiative.	Donna 40337469 or donna.mcculloch@thesmithfamily.com.au
4	Questions and Answers		
5	New Business - Venue, times and topics for next semester. - New facilitators and notetakers	-September meeting confirmed	10 September, JCU. Certificates issued to attendees
6	Topic of the month:	<p>Melinda Tankard-Reist ("Anti-Porn Crusader and Pro-Life Activist")</p> <p>Out of 1000 girls aged 15–19yrs, 65% thought that they'd like to be either a dancer, stripper or model to feel successful. When asked who or what they most related to they replied "Celebrities, fashion, grooming and beauty".</p> <p>When a group of 6yr old girls were asked about who is popular, they responded by pointing at pictures and were heard to make comments such as "She is sexy", "She'd be popular" etc.</p> <p>There has been a 90% increase in 12-14yr olds who self-harm, 60% of girls interviewed had tried it. A recent Mission Australia survey of 45916 young girls showed that the number 3 priority or concern is Body Image.</p> <p>More recently, a vote was held for the most popular woman (visually) in Maxim magazines. The winner was solely computer generated.</p> <p>1 in 4 girls interviewed would like plastic surgery before "they get too old".</p> <p>Anorexia related illness is currently the biggest killer of young girls in Aust.</p> <p>The Child Development Association says "Childhood is being driven out of our children. We are losing the 9-13 yr olds into the teenage years too soon."</p> <p>The largest consumers of porn is currently 12-17yr olds, based on recent IT reporting. When interviewed, these users felt it was much more important for girls to give a good 'performance' than to experience anything meaningful or pleasurable, leaving them feeling Disconnected and with regret about many early experiences.</p> <p>Mainstream media has dramatically changed in past 5 yrs, with attempting to normalize images of girls by recommending lingerie to young girls, magazine ads for plastic surgery and beauty pageants, video games of unrealistic female forms becoming increasingly popular.</p> <p>Major advertisers and online sites study the key strokes of children and send to porn sites so that 'Pop ups' will appear on their screen. The average user targeted is 11 yrs old. Software is now prevalent that trawls facebook for photos and then sends them out to various sites and subscribers to young girl sites. Yet any pictures of a mother breast feeding their infant/child are removed. It is suggested that parents keep computer screens in the public areas of homes.</p> <p>Melinda represents also the group "Australians again child beauty pageants". A variety of her writing and work can be found easily with a search online into any of these areas.</p>	
Next Meeting: 10 September			
Topic: x 2			
Meeting closed 12 pm			



A tip sheet for parents of girls of all :

Let's Count will benefit your centre by:

- Following your individualised program through the introduction of numeracy learning opportunities for children in your centre.
- Providing a Professional Development opportunity for your education team to learn and understand theory and practice.
- Giving an opportunity to educators to build relationships with parents.
- Making numeracy fun and engaging for all families.
- Giving children the skills to solve, identify and communicate their personal needs.
- Building awareness, respect and understanding with children using a 'teacher learning model', which led to all the child's strengths, confidence and background.
- Supporting educators to implement the EYLF at your centre.

About The Smith Family

The Smith Family is a national, independent children's charity helping disadvantaged Australians to get the most out of their education, so they can choose better futures for themselves.

The Smith Family believes that every child deserves a chance and that circumstances should never limit the achievement of potential. With research showing that education has the power to transform lives, not just minds, the national charity's Learning for Life program enables disadvantaged children and young people to get the opportunities they need to fully participate in their education.

thesmithfamily.com.au



Let's Count is a Smith Family numeracy program for young children, supported by Origin Foundation and developed in partnership with BlackRock Investment Management.







Let's Count
Making numeracy fun and engaging

thesmithfamily.com.au





What is Let's Count?

Let's Count is an innovative new program designed to improve the numeracy skills of children 3-5 years old.

Numeracy is the use of mathematics to solve everyday challenges and problems, and the confidence and desire to do so.

As professionals in early childhood education, you will understand how important it is for children to develop their foundation skills in numeracy before entering school.

Let's Count offers your centre the opportunity to enhance learning partnerships between parents and teachers. These partnerships will build conversations about numeracy, providing parents with practical skills and ideas to take home and share with their child.

Implementing Let's Count will contribute to your work with parents in building a responsive learning environment in the home, and assist in developing a shared mathematical language to link the home and pre-school setting.

The Let's Count training has been designed by experts in the field of Early Childhood Education and numeracy and will be delivered by accredited trainers in Let's Count training.

How does Let's Count work?

The potential in every day events provides for learning about mathematics is not always obvious to participants. These events can be as simple as:

- Getting dressed
- Preparing lunch
- Going shopping
- Doing housework

Through the professional training, your staff will increase their skills to support participants to recognise these opportunities and promote the importance of language and play in learning.

Let's Count gives staff the resources and ideas to conduct sessions at your centre with parents. These resources will enable them to recognise and plan opportunities for their children to investigate explore mathematics and its use in their daily lives. Parents will receive a resource pack to support them to do this at home.

What do I have to do?

You will need to commit to implementing Let's Count in your centre.

This will include:

- Releasing staff at your Centre to attend the free Let's Count training sessions delivered in a locally based training venue.
- These days will be flexible apart to allow for education to meet the needs they have learnt in Day 1. Day 2 of the training is an opportunity for educators to reflect and build on the practice of these skills.
- Supporting your staff to conduct Let's Count parent sessions in your centre.
- Promoting ongoing engagement with parents around numeracy learning opportunities.

What will be provided?

- Payment for casual staff for the centre when your staff members attend the Let's Count training.
- Free Let's Count training resources that will support educators to implement the EYLF at your centre.
- Opportunity for educators to use this training to contribute to recognised play learning for a TAFE Diploma of Children's Services (Early Childhood Education and Care).

"It is essential that the mathematical ideas with which young children interact are relevant and meaningful in the context of their lives."

Belonging, Being and Becoming
2009

A tip sheet for parents of girls of all ages

Girls get many messages about how they should look and behave. These messages can start when girls are very young, and not all of these are healthy messages. Girls may be told that what matters is how 'hot, or how 'sexy' they look or dress. These messages are evident on TV and across the Internet, in song lyrics and music videos. You see it in movies, electronic games, and clothing stores. They are powerful messages. Some of these messages encourage the sexualisation of girls from a very early age, before they are emotionally and physically ready. Sexualisation occurs when a person's worth is judged on the basis of sexual appeal and behaviour to the exclusion of other characteristics, when a person is held to a standard that equates physical attractiveness with being sexy, or when a person is seen as a sexual object rather than a person with their own independent thoughts and behaviour. While boys and men can be the target of sexualised messages and images, research shows that girls and women are portrayed in a sexual manner more often.

What parents can do

As parents, you are powerful too. You can teach girls to value themselves for who they are, rather than how they look. If you also have boys, you can teach them to value girls as friends, sisters, and girlfriends, rather than as sexual objects. And you can advocate for change with manufacturers and media producers.

- Tune in and talk. Watch TV and movies with your children. Read their magazines. Look at their web sites. Ask questions. "Why do you think there is so much pressure on girls to look a certain way?" "What do you like most about the girls you want to spend time with?" "Do these qualities matter more than how they look?" "What do you think of the different roles that are usually given to boys and girls?" "Do you think women and men are portrayed fairly?" Really listen to what your kids tell you.
- Question choices. Girls who are overly concerned about their appearance often have difficulty focusing on other things. Clothes that require lots of checking and adjusting can be part of the distraction. If your daughter wants to wear something you consider too sexy, ask what she likes about the outfit. Ask if there's anything she doesn't like about it. And maybe you can talk about being sunsmart as well, and how clothes can be useful to protect your skin from too much sun.
- Speak up. If you don't like a TV show, CD, video, pair of jeans, or doll, say why. A conversation with children about the issue will be more effective than simply saying, "No, you can't buy it or watch it." Support campaigns, companies, and products that promote positive images of girls. Complain to manufacturers, advertisers, television and movie producers, and retail stores when products sexualise girls.
- Try to see it their way. Young people often feel pressure to watch popular TV shows, listen to music their friends like, and conform to certain styles of dress. Help your daughter make wise choices among the trendy alternatives. Remind her often that who she is and what she can accomplish are far more important than how she looks. But keep in mind that dress can be an important social code for girls. Girls really care about their looks because they can provide a more obvious and tangible way to compare, contrast and belong. Other personal qualities are much harder to rely on as a way to evaluate oneself and others (and people can change so much at this time that their personalities and values can fluctuate and be unpredictable). Looks are more predictable, so it's not surprising that they consume so much time and attention.
- Find out why your daughter wishes to look a certain way. Ask her to think about whether her clothes and accessories sexualise her, rather than making judgments yourself. Understand that looking different and reacting against her parents' generation may all be part of her growing up. You might never wear what she wears, but she may not stand out when with her peers the way she would if she were with a group of adults.
- Encourage. Athletics and other extracurricular activities emphasise talents, skills, and abilities over physical appearance. Encourage your daughter to follow her interests and get involved in a sport or other activity. Find ways to celebrate being female - for example, a special lunch, girls' day out, or flowers can mark when a girl gets her first period.

- Educate. You may feel uncomfortable discussing sexuality with your kids, but it's important. Talk about when you think sex is OK as part of a healthy, intimate, mature relationship. Ask why girls often try so hard to look and act sexy. Effective sex education programs discuss media, peer, and cultural influences on sexual behaviours and decisions, how to make safe choices, and what makes healthy relationships. Find out what your school teaches so that you can follow up on what she is learning about at school. Let the school know if you think there are gaps in what they are teaching. This process of teaching children can be started when they are very young. As soon as children can talk, you can be teaching them about the basics of sex education. Keep it simple and brief, and be prepared for constant revision in response to questions or as situations arise. Always tell the child you are glad that they ask questions, whatever you really feel, but give yourself time to answer if you need it, and tell children what they need to know even if they don't ask. One way to have a discussion about sex with adolescents without lecturing or telling or checking (which a lot of young people hate) is to say something like "I've realised I'm not sure what your values are about sex etc, and I'm interested in what you think" as a way of opening the discussion. It's then much easier to talk about your values if you have listened to theirs first, and it's often surprising how conservative they really are!
- Provide healthy role models for your children. Marketing and the media also influence adults. When you think about what you buy and watch, you teach your sons and daughters to do so too. Parents need to be careful how much they talk about diets, or pass comments on their own body image (e.g. "I look fat in this"). It can be more helpful to talk about healthy eating, and to show their children that health is related to many more things than just weight. Mothers and fathers should be careful not to criticise their daughters or sons about how they look - this can create an unhealthy attitude towards appearances. Fathers can be particularly important in the development of their daughter's self-image, and their son's attitudes towards women. The way men treat and talk about the women in the family and women in general is a powerful model for how to behave for their children. Encouraging your children to find healthy heroes is also important. Often people become heroes because they are rich or thin, rather than because they have demonstrated more positive values. Check who you admire and hold in high regard. Talk about people who really show what you want your child to copy. This helps your child understand how people demonstrate real worth in the world.
- Be real. Help your kids focus on what's really important: what they think, feel, and value. Help them build strengths that will allow them to achieve their goals and develop into healthy adults. Remind your children that everyone is unique, and that it's unhelpful to judge people solely by their appearance.
- Maintain a balance. Try to take advantage of opportunities that arise in conversations, but do not become too pre-occupied with all the experimentation your daughter tries in her dress or mannerisms. Sometimes adults see sexual references that mean nothing to young children. Remember that it is your example and values that your children will often copy! Remember, too, that despite differences, maintaining a good relationship with your daughter is paramount.

This tipsheet is adapted from the American Psychological Association's tipsheet: 'What parents can do'.