

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 7 September 2015

Successful early learning program to start in new communities

A pioneering early learning program, which prepares four and five-year-old children for school, will start delivering in 25 new communities across Australia in early 2016—and will focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

The Brotherhood of St Laurence, which developed HIPPY—the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters—in Australia, today welcomed the announcement of the local organisations in each community that will run the two-year program. HIPPY supports parents and carers to be their child's first teacher.

Due to funds committed by the Australian Government through the Department of Social Services, HIPPY will now be expanded to 100 communities across the country.

HIPPY also creates at least five jobs in each of the 25 new communities for coordinators and for the home tutors who help parents and children at home with fun educational program. The positions are filled by those who are involved in the program with their children.

The Brotherhood's Executive Director, Tony Nicholson, said the organisations announced today were chosen for their experience and capacity to work in their communities, along with their proven ability to run early learning programs and support families.

‘HIPPY is an outstanding program working in communities with local organisations to make a difference to the life chances of children. Importantly, over 70 per cent of families complete the two-year program and over 95 per cent report an educational improvement for their child, which is a remarkable success,’ Mr Nicholson said.

HIPPY Australia National Manager Marian Pettit said, ‘HIPPY assists children to be more confident and competent at school, which lays the foundations for greater achievement in life. Our new HIPPY organisations will join a network that understands their community. We aim to get families learning together.’

HIPPY has been subject to rigorous independent research evaluation, which has shown that children who took part in HIPPY generally begin the program with numeracy and literacy skills well behind the Australian average. After two years they had caught up, and their cognitive skills equalled those of other children.

The Brotherhood started HIPPY—an international program that originated in Israel in the 1960s—in Australia 15 years ago and is responsible for supporting the community organisations that operate it across the nation.



The recruitment of coordinators and tutors will commence shortly in each community, with the program starting for families in early 2016. For more information about HIPPY, see the website at <http://www.hippyaustralia.org.au>

For more information or to arrange interviews phone Mairéad Doolan, HIPPY Australia, 0409 821 968.

The list of providers and locations are on the next page.

State	Provider	Community
NSW		
NSW	Miimi Aboriginal Corporation	Nambucca and Surrounds
NSW	Samaritans Foundation	Kempsey
NSW	Uniting Care Burnside	Taree-Forster
NSW	Uniting Care Burnside	Wyong and Surrounds
NSW	YWCA	Goonellabah and Surrounds
NT		
NT	Anglicare NT	Darwin North
NT	Anglicare NT	Milingimbi Island
NT	Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation	Tennant Creek
QLD		
QLD	Gungarde Aboriginal Corporation	Cooktown and Surrounds
QLD	Life Without Barriers	Deception Bay
QLD	Save the Children	Doomadgee
QLD	The Ration Shed	Cherbourg
QLD	TBC	Northern Peninsula Area
QLD	Wucchoperren Health Service	Cairns Central
QLD	Wucchoperren Health Service	Cairns South
SA		
SA	Uniting Care Wesley Country Inc.	Port Augusta
TAS		
TAS	Save the Children	Brighton
VIC		
VIC	Life Without Barriers	Whittlesea
VIC	Save the Children	Mooroopna and Surrounds
WA		
WA	Anglicare WA	Kalgoorlie
WA	Australian Red Cross Society	Mowanjum-Derby
WA	Child Australia	Hedland
WA	Investing in Our Youth	Bunbury-Collie
WA	Ngala Community Services	Midlands and Surrounds
WA	Nyamba Buru Yawuru	Broome and Surrounds