



Objectives:

Deliver workshops and activities to parents to:

- ◆ Build the capacity of parents to be involved in educational activities with their children
- ◆ Building confidence for stronger participation in and towards the child's Education
- ◆ Raise awareness of the importance of education and the role that parents play in this

Southern Adelaide



Project Description:

A total of 18 Schools have partnered with the empowering parents project. The parent groups from the participating schools with the support of the coordinator developed their own approach to engaging parents, based on what worked best in their community. In some cases parents were involved in running activities for other parents and students, while in other cases external providers were employed to run the activities. The empowering Parents project was birthed from the creative connections project which ended in December 2012. The emphasis now is heavily focused on sustainability which is being done by empowering the parents.

A project coordinator was employed by the Community Services Board of Onkaparinga City to coordinate and support the development and implementation of the Empowering Parents PaCE Projects across the Southern Adelaide region.

The PaCE coordinator is responsible for:

- ◆ Supporting parents in the ongoing development and review of School Community Partnerships agreements
 - ◆ Chairing steering committee meetings that included parent and community representatives;
 - ◆ Developing and facilitating the running of a number of workshops, courses and activities

Duration:

December 2012



June 2013

December 2013



Weaving

The Southern Weaving Group worked with Parents and family members across several schools in the PaCE project. Through a series of weaving sessions facilitated by the group, parents were able to learn the art and connect with one another.

Gaining Qualifications

In partnership with TAFE SA, Flaxmill Primary School hosted the Certificate II in Family Wellbeing course for parents of Aboriginal students in the local area. The course was run one day a week at the school by TAFE SA with child care provided. Many of the parents had not studied since leaving school and may not have been familiar or confident to attend the TAFE SA campuses. By holding it in the school enabled many parents the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills, and gain a recognised qualification in an environment in which they felt comfortable and supported. In another partnership with TAFE SA, Flaxmill Primary School and Alidinga Beach Primary School offered Parents of Aboriginal students the opportunity to gain accreditation for the skills and knowledge they demonstrated through their volunteer work with the schools. Through this process parents gained a Certificate II in Active Volunteering and/or a Certificate II in Community Services.

Song Writing

Students and parents at Christies Beach Primary School worked with several experienced musicians to collaboratively write and record a song about themselves and their connection to their Aboriginal culture. They began by brainstorming their ideas for lyrics, using the themes of identity, family history and things that are special to them. Once the song was written, the students and the parents were involved in a number of workshops practicing the song. Some of the parents helped to play the music during these sessions. The song was then recorded and a CD of the song was launched at an after school BBQ.

Jewellery Making

As part of a whole school celebration, Seaford 6-12 School ran a range of activities. One of these was a jewellery making stall run by one of the parents from the community. During the lunch break students from across the school were able to make their own piece of jewellery with her assistance. This activity is a good example of how identifying an interest and skills that a parent has can be translated into an activity run at the school that is both engaging for the parent and an enjoyable learning experience for students.



Cooking

Parents at the Flaxmill Primary School in South Australia have been involved in regular cooking sessions for the past three years under the project. When the project first began, an Aboriginal service provider ran the sessions, supporting parents and students to cook healthy and tasty meals at a regular time each fortnight. These sessions are run now by past PaCE participants who are passionate about seeing other parents actively involved in their children's education.

Barbeques

Many schools held regular beginning or end term barbeques. Parents often helped to cook the barbeque and engaged with their children in activities such as weaving, watching musical performances and viewing examples of the students work. These activities also gave the parents the chance to get to know school staff in a comfortable and relaxed setting.

Clay Tiles

Parents and students at Moana Primary School worked with a clay artist to produce clay tile murals and story poles. Starting with plain clay tiles, the parents and students created images on the tiles that represented their personal stories and cultural background. The tiles were grouped to create murals and were mounted onto the school building where they now proudly hang as a reminder of the creative work the parents and students did together.

Gardening

The Garden program was initiated in Seaford 6-12 School and Moana Primary School by male parents and family members. For over two years a parent and the students have grown a variety of herbs and vegetables. The Garden has become particularly good resource for working with children with a disability in the school. At Moana Primary School, a group of Fathers approached the ACEO, wanting to create an orchard in the school garden. The parents researched the plants they thought would work well in the school garden, sourced them and with the help of students planted a variety of fruit trees. The students now maintain the plants.



Meet Mandy

Mandy first attended the Flaxmill Primary Schools PaCE cooking program in 2011. She enjoyed being with the kids and being able to meet and mix with other parents. Mandy said that by seeing other Children's behaviours assisted her to understand her Children better by realising certain behaviours were normal for the age.

In 2012 Mandy successfully completed a Certificate II in Active Volunteering and Certificate II in Family Wellbeing under the PaCE project. This program was developed through the partnership of the PaCE project and TAFE SA. The course went for six months and was delivered in the school grounds. Having not worked for 18 years, Mandy through the PaCE program, has developed many skills including time management, planning and coordinating.

“Mandy's ability to engage with other staff and students was recognized by the school leading to her being offered a position at the school as a Student Support Officer (SSO). As an SSO for Flaxmill Primary School, Mandy supports students and teachers in various activities and tasks. Currently Mandy is running a literacy program called making up lost time in literacy. She teaches 9 children in reception this program. Mandy works as an SSO 15 hours per week and continues to work in the PaCE projects at the school in her own time.

Mandy is passionate about seeing other parents not missing out on the opportunities to be involved in their children's education. Her employment with the school is due to the skills she has learnt through the Empowering Parents PaCE project. Mandy's story is a great example and encouragement to other parents, students and community members. Her involvement in the school has also been an encouragement to her partner who regularly assists the school with groundsman duties. He was also offered employment through the school as a part time groundsman”

Peter Cobb - Principal

“My confidence has grown significantly thanks to the PaCE project. After not having worked for 18 years, by being involved and learning new skills through the project it has built my confidence in my parenting, my interactions with the school community and now as an employed Student Support Officer”

Mandy - PaCE participant/parent, Student Support Officer

Pictured- Top left: Kat - Parent and staff. Middle: Principal - Peter Cobb. Top right: Mandy Parent and staff

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