



4 December 2019

New Strong Families Strong Children program for Buloke

The North Central LLEN is delighted to announce it has received funding from the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust to deliver a new early years program designed to ensure all children in the Buloke Shire start school ready to learn.

The North Central LLEN will work in partnership with the Buloke Shire Council to engage an Early Years Facilitator to work with families and children as part of the Strong Families Strong Children Buloke project which builds on a similar program currently being undertaken in Loddon Shire.

North Central LLEN Executive Officer Jane Hosking said Strong Families Strong Children Buloke will connect individual families and children to local education, health and wellbeing support services.

“We will use learnings from each child/family to make the service system more responsive, to build local workforce capacity to better meet ALL children’s needs, and to advocate to create system reform”.

“We will also be raising awareness that child development is everyone’s responsibility and want to increase the voice, and influence, of all children and families,” she said.

Strong Families Strong Children Buloke will be overseen by the North Central LLEN, Buloke Shire Council and supported by a network of Buloke Early Years educators, health, education and community sector representatives.

According to CEO of Buloke Shire Council Anthony Judd, “Buloke Shire is keen to see all children arrive at school prepared for learning and we are excited to partner with the LLEN in this initiative”.

Ms Hosking cited recent data confirming that the number of children in Buloke Shire arriving at school 'ready to learn' has decreased significantly in recent years with the 2018 Australian Early Developmental Census results showing that 30.8% of children commencing school in the Buloke Shire were developmentally vulnerable in one or more domains - up from 11.5% in 2015.

Strong Families Strong Children Buloke will implement a number of initiatives that are designed to change these statistics over the next few years. An integrated, coordinated approach will involve a range of service providers who have the opportunity to positively impact these families and children.

For more information about Strong Families Strong Children Buloke, please contact the North Central LLEN on 5491 1144 or email eo@nllen.org.au.

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Photo Caption: (Left of Slide) Buloke Shire Council Director of Community Development Rose Harris, CEO Anthony Judd, North Central LLEN EO Jane Hosking, (Right of Slide) Nikki Coatesworth, Nellie Biggs, Whitney Boyle and Tessa Cole at the Wycheproof Kinder with students (top to bottom) Harry, Edie, Leeah, Ashton, Emily, Kayley and Charlotte on the slide.