PDF

Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program

Evaluation Report Number 3

2015 – 2016

Prepared by
PDF Management Services Pty Ltd

for
Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania

November 2016

Contents

1. Executive Summary and list of recommendations

1.1 Executive Summary

The Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program is delivered through the Neighbourhood House network in Tasmania using funds provided by the Tasmanian Community Fund.

The program was funded for a period of 10 years, with external program reviews to be conducted every two years.

PDF Management Services Pty Ltd were engaged to undertake the initial review for the 2009-2011, a second review for 2012-2014, and have been re-engaged to complete the third review for the 2015-2016 period.

Given the longer term nature of the program, each review has been undertaken using a developmental – action learning approach.

The recommendations from the previous review have largely been implemented with positive results being reported – with many of the observations and judgements reported – particularly in the areas of the grant application and administration processes, and the change in role of the project worker to incorporate a larger developmental and capacity building role.

The main focus of this evaluation has been to better understand the indicators from which the performance of the program can be assessed, and determine performance to date in these areas. In addition, consideration has been given to measurement and reporting of outcomes for the remainder of the funding period.

The findings from this evaluation show:

- The investment of the grant funds has been prudent, with the likely available funds for in perpetuity distribution from year 11 and beyond being almost three times the initial estimate
- Effective allocation of project funds by an independent assessment panel of more than $ 700,000 to over 85% of the 35 Tasmanian Neighbourhood Houses, along with effective professional develop and administrative support
- Demonstrated understanding of literacy needs in the community by Neighbourhood Houses and evidence of many initiatives which show the capacity of Houses to creatively and effectively identify and address needs
- Evidence of literacy activities, projects and initiatives being embedded in the day-to-day operations of Houses, much of which has been stimulated by the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program – and it is also interesting that many of these initiatives and activities have been funded from other sources which has further extended the reach of Houses literacy projects

- Evidence of numerous partnerships and relationships with other organisations (both literacy related and non-literacy related) in the development and delivery of Houses literacy projects and activities
- Evidence of a growing number of resources that have been acquired and/or developed through the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program – many of which are suitable for and/or are in the process of being shared across the house network
- Demonstrated benefits in the change in the Project Officer's role – with reduced administration time and increased professional development and support responsibilities
- Many extraordinary and significant projects with outcomes that have changed participant's lives
- Continuing capacity of Houses to provide a safe and non-threatening place where they connect with and maintain strong and effective relationships with vulnerable people – and create opportunities and choices that improve people's lives

The major challenge for Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania is the planning, management and transition of the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program from the current 10 year funded period into the smaller program to be funded from the Future Fund from year 11 and beyond – which will commence in July 2019.

Significant literacy support capacity has and will continue to be built in Houses – albeit there is some vulnerability associated with staff turnover.

The achievements to date suggest that the final report will demonstrate the value and vision of this 10 year funding period and significant return on the $ 1,5 million investment.

Another challenge for Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania will be the capturing and recording of the performance and outcomes of the Program. The evaluations will partly contribute to judgements about the Program. What the evaluations have identified though, is the many, many examples of how this program has touched people's lives in major and unexpected ways. It is these stories which demonstrate the true value of the program that can go un-recorded and under-valued.

This evaluation has proposed recommendations in regard to further development of performance indicators and reporting to gear up for the year 10 evaluation and report.

1.2   List of recommendations

Recommendations are provided through-out the report, along with the observations and rationale which has led to the recommendations. Listed below is a summary of the recommendations.

Recommendation 1:

'That Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania include data on the number of participants attending the House for the first time for an activity involving literacy and the number of participants who come to the House for the first time to do a literacy activity and then return and participate in other House activities.'

Recommendation 2

'that prior to the end of the initial 10 year funding period, Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania develop and pilot a funding allocation model designed to distribute annual allocations from the Future Fund for year 11 and beyond.'

Recommendation 3:

'That Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania adopt guidelines which establish maximum timeframes for defined milestones in the Project Application and Payment Process.'

Recommendation 4

'That Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania develop an Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Phase 2 Strategy for Year 11 and beyond.'

This Strategy should also include transitional arrangements from Years 9 and 10 to Year 11, and include a professional development and House capacity building component.

Recommendation 5

'That Neighbourhood Houses review and finalise the performance measures which will be used to assess the level of success of the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program.'

Recommendation 6

"That the current project data and information collected from Houses via project reports and other sources be reviewed to ensure all necessary material is being gathered that will enable the best possible Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program Final Evaluation and Report to be prepared.'

2 Introduction

The Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program is funded for a period of 10 years by the Tasmanian Community Fund.

One of the requirements of the funding is an evaluation every two years. This is the year 6 (third) evaluation. PDF Management Services have been engaged to undertake the evaluation.

The contact between Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania and the Tasmanian Community Fund contains seven objectives, with key performance indicators.

Some of these objectives and measures are fairly straight forward, and others are more challenging.

The aim is to explore what can be measured and how this measurement can occur. This is recognised as a challenging area, as the literacy activities provided by houses vary considerably, and many of the outcomes are unique to individuals and not something that can be easily counted or calculated.

It will be useful to have the Results-based Accountability framework in our minds for this discussion – as we want to look at measures which address 'how well did we do?' and 'who is better off?' in addition to the more quantitative questions which look at 'how much did we do?'.

3 Evaluation Objectives

The previous two evaluations targeted the action learning required to establish and continue to develop the everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program. This took into account some performance assessment against contracted objectives, however, the focus was primarily on building the systems and operational capacity of the program to deliver quality and value for money outcomes.

This objectives for this 2015-2016 evaluation has a greater focus on the contracted objectives in the funding deed between the Tasmanian Community Fund and Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania.

These contracted objectives are:

- *Prudently invest funds to meet approved purposes, while minimising the risk to capital.*
- *Distribute funds to neighbourhood houses*
- *Target Support for people who have already identified or begun addressing their literacy needs.*
- *Improving understanding of literacy needs in the community.*

- *Increased literacy levels in some or all of the six literacy key areas for adult and family participants in programs.*
- *Increased provision and use of literacy resources in neighbourhood houses.*
- *Provide non-threatening literacy support for people with literacy needs who are not ready for overt or formal literacy support.*

In order to obtain feedback on the current performance of the program and to prepare for the evaluation and reporting requirements for the remainder of the 10 year funding period, the following evaluation objectives were developed.

- 'to identify current performance indicator measures'
- 'to access and summarise available performance data and information'
- 'to develop additional performance indicator measures'
- 'to document examples of outcomes achieved from projects'
- 'to obtain feedback on implementation of recommendations from previous evaluation reports'

4   Methodology

This evaluation was undertaken as follows:

- Face-to-face meetings with representatives at Regional Neighbourhood House meetings at Tresca and Pittwater
- Interviews with the Co-ordinators of six Neighbourhood Houses who had received funding for the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program – East Devonport, Ulverstone, Risdon Vale, West Moonah, Deloraine and Northern Suburbs
- Interviews with literacy staff from two Houses
- Written responses to questions from six Houses
- Interviews with Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania Executive Officer and Literacy Project Officer
- Desktop analysis of financial and reporting information and other relevant program documentation

Details of the interview questions to engage Houses are provided below.

Which of the following data currently exists and would be available for the final evaluation?

	If yes, how?	If no, how could this be collected?
Number of participants in projects and activities		
Attendance levels		
Number or proportion of participants who complete the literacy project or activity		
Number of participants attending the House for the first time – who come to do a project or activity involving literacy		
The number of project which have continued beyond the grant funding		
Number of participants who come to the House for the first time to do a literacy related project or activity and then go on and participate in other House activities		
Number and type of partners and referral organisations		
Activities and initiatives co-designed and or implemented with partner organisations		
Number of referrals of participants to the House by other providers		
Types and number of referrals to other services – not just literacy providers, also including doctors, social workers … .		
Type and amount of resources used		
Resources re-used for subsequent projects and activities		
Resources created to support projects and activities		
Development and acquisition of resources that will continue to be used in the future		
Resources acquired that can continue to be used – that is not dependent on Everyday Literacy Program grants		
Resources that can be and/or have been shared with other Houses		
Number of participants asking for assistance and seeking entry into other programs such as Linc		

Case studies or stories

Please provide an example of how:

- The House's capacity to meet participant's literacy needs has changed

- Literacy related initiatives have been incorporated into other House projects and activities

- How the literacy skills and knowledge of staff and volunteers has been developed to support participants with literacy related needs

- Literacy levels of individuals participating in the programs has changed

- Confidence levels of individuals participating in the programs has changed

Questions

- How would you describe the quality and effectiveness of the program administration and grant distribution processes? (Also ask to rate on 1 to 6 rating scale)

- How do you create an environment which makes it easy for people to get involved and participate in literacy related projects and activities?

- What, if anything has been changed in the physical and cultural aspects of Houses to support and engage people with literacy needs?

- How do you create a House culture and staff attitudes which support effective literacy projects and activities?

5 Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Evaluation Findings

5.1 Evaluation Objective - 'to identify current performance indicator measures'

The purpose of this evaluation objective was not to seek performance information – rather to establish what data and information is available for future evaluation and reporting of the program.

Engagement with Houses determined the following information is currently available on program activities:

- Number of participants who joined projects and activities
- Attendance levels (rate of attendance/absenteeism)
- Number or proportion of participants who complete the literacy project or activity
- The number of project which have continued beyond the grant funding
- Number and type of partners and referral organisations
- Type and amount of resources used
- Resources re-used for subsequent projects and activities
- Resources created to support projects and activities
- Development and acquisition of resources that will continue to be used in the future
- Resources acquired that can continue to be used – that is not dependent on Everyday Literacy Program grants
- Resources that can be and/or have been shared with other Houses

There were other areas identified where data and information is not recorded for past activities however can be provided for current activities and future activities. These areas include:

- Number of participants attending the House for the first time – who come to do a project or activity involving literacy
- Number of participants who come to the House for the first time to do a literacy related project or activity and then go on and participate in other House activities

This will provide an indication of the degree to which literacy is a motivator for people to become involved with Houses and also the degree to which Houses are successful in removing barriers for people seeking support for what can be a sensitive issue which may stigmatise people.

The number of participants who attend a House for the first time to undertake a literacy activity and/or then continue on to other House activities is an indicator of

Houses providing services and support in an open, safe, respectful and accepting manner.

Further discussion regarding additional reporting information that may be considered is provided in evaluation objective 5.3 below.

Recommendation 1:

'That Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania include data on the number of participants attending the House for the first time for an activity involving literacy and the number of participants who come to the House for the first time to do a literacy activity and then return and participate in other House activities.'

Houses were also questioned in regard to referral information – in particular referrals made by Houses to other literacy providers and more broadly to other support services, such as:

- Types and number of referrals to other services – not just literacy providers, also including doctors, social workers
- Number of participants asking for assistance and seeking entry into other programs such as LINC

Generally, this information is not recorded. This type of information is difficult to capture due to the nature of engagement with participants (informal, confidential, multiple staff working with individual participants). It is also important that requirements to identify and record such outcomes do not compromise the trust and capacity of Houses to work with participants.

5.2   Evaluation Objective - 'to access and summarise available performance data and information'

Objective 1

Prudently invest funds to meet approved purposes, while minimising the risk to capital.

Findings

An investment plan was developed and implemented at the start of the 10 year funding period – in line with the funding deed between the Tasmanian Community Fund and Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania.

The Funding Deed enabled a 'Future Fund' to be established from the interest and income earned on the $ 1.5 million approved and paid at that time. The ongoing interest and income from the Future Fund – beyond the 10 year funding period was to be used to support literacy initiatives and activities across the Neighbourhood House network in perpetuity.

The initial estimate of funds that would be available for distribution in year 11 and beyond was approximately $ 12,000 to $ 15,000 – subject to interest rates and the performance of the investment plan.

Current estimates now predict the funds that will be available for distribution from year 11 will be more like $ 40,000 per year.

As the Program gets closer to the end of the initial 10 year funding period, this ongoing annual amount will become more certain, and further planning for the funding allocation model for year 11 and beyond can be determined and piloted.

Recommendation 2

'that prior to the end of the initial 10 year funding period, Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania develop and pilot a funding allocation model designed to distribute annual allocations from the Future Fund for year 11 and beyond.'

Objective 2

Distribute funds to Neighbourhood Houses.

Findings

Generally the feedback suggested the grants administration processes continue to be further developed and streamlined, with comments such as, 'they are very easy now', and 'I personally have not had any major issues to this point.'

Areas identified where further improvements could be made included:

- The process to apply could be made less cumbersome
- The turnaround time from application to when the money was received by Houses. Suggestion to set a maximum time to be allowed for this process.
- Gaps between funding – where a follow-up project is successfully proposed

Recommendation 3:

'That Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania adopt guidelines which establish maximum timeframes for defined milestones in the Project Application and Payment Process.'

For example, there may be a maximum period of 4 weeks from when a House lodges and application to the House being advised of the success or otherwise of their application; a maximum of 2 weeks from receipt of the Activities and Indicators of Success form by Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania to the funding agreement being sent to the House; and a maximum of 4 weeks from Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania receiving the signed funding agreement from the House and making the project funding payment to the House.

The funding period from 2009 until November 2016 has seen a total of $ 1,046,396 distributed, This consists of $ 702,443 in project funding to Houses; $ 37,500 for evaluation; and $ 306,455 for professional development and administration. $ 1,048,396 represents 69.76% of the $ 1.5 million grant being spent in approximately 74.17% of the 10 year funding period. There are other recently approved grants that are not included as the funding has not been distributed to Houses at this stage.

Given the proposed allocation of projected funds – lower amounts in the establishment phase of the program and higher rates in the later years - it appears that the Program is tracking well in terms of the distribution of funds.

The project funding to Houses and evaluation represent 70.58% of funds spent. The remaining allocation is split between professional development and administration. In the remainder of the 10 year funding period the allocation to administration will decrease and the ratio of funding to be allocated to House projects will increase. A reduction in hours of the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Project Officer hours will commence as part of the transition to a reduced Program budget from Year 11.

House project allocations have seen 6 Houses on the North West Coast receive $ 182,811.70 (26%) of the Project funds distributed; 7 Houses in the North receive $ 215,530.12 (31%) of the Project funds distributed; and 16 Houses in the South received $ 304,100.85 (43%) of the Project funds distributed. 29 of the 35 Neighbourhood Houses in Tasmania or 85+% of Houses have delivered funded Projects.

The funds distributed to Houses has included $ 24,462 over the past four years for National Simultaneous Story-time. This has involved providing a book to each participating child and their parent or carer – who is encouraged to read and talk to their young children. In 2016, twenty seven Houses provided books and facilitated story-telling to 730 children with their parents – on the same day. In the past four years, nearly 2,000 children and their parents have participated.

Further comments will be made in relation to success of National Simultaneous Story-telling later in this report.

It is also clear from the evaluation that significant other literacy activity has occurred in addition to the funding provided from the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities, and recognition that literacy is an issue in House communities is embedded in most programs and activities. The Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program has been quoted by House Co-ordinators in this evaluation as 'putting literacy on the Houses agenda' and assisting to embed literacy in House activities'.

Detailed below are the projects funded from 2009 to November 2016. This information is presented in two ways – by Houses funded in each region; and by the nature of projects funded in each region. The description of the nature of projects has been defined very narrowly to the primary theme(s) if the grant. These themes could be further broken down to reflect the more holistic outcomes of these projects. Many projects have tackled literacy through initiatives aimed at children and families; food and cooking; computers and technology; life skills; and supporting migrants and refugees.

Projects funded between 2009 and November 2016 x Region x House

North West Coast Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
Burnie 2016	Know the Risks – Choose Well	Drug and Alcohol Education	$ 13,967
Burnie 2013	Kitchen Confidential	Food	$ 14,600
Burnie 2010	Getting It Together	Resource purchase	$ 1,500
Devonport 2009	Reading Time At the Playhouse	Professional Development	$2,250.00
Devonport 2012	Circus Tales Project	Life Skills	$ 4,266.46
Devonport 2012	Storytime at the Playhouse	Children and Families	$ 5,000
Devonport 2011	Creating Your Own Child's Fairytale	Children and Families Computers	$5,540.00
East Devonport 2016	Meals with Mates	Food	$ 5,000
East Devonport 2016	Dude Food – Cooking for One	Food	$ 14,614.49
East Devonport 2015	Family Cookbook	Food	$ 5,000
East Devonport 2015	Food IQ	Children and Families Food	$ 15,000
East Devonport 2015	Family Cookbook - Printing	Food	$ 5,000

North West Coast Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
Eastern Shore 2009	Doing It Right	Professional Development	$7,600.00
Rosebery 2016	Every Month Is Storytime	Children and Families	$ 4,541.75
Rosebery 2016	The Gift of Learning	Children and Families	$ 4,350
Rosebery 2013	Food For Thought	Food	$3,700.00
Rosebery 2010	Basic Computer and Internet Skills Training	Computers	$ 4,900
Ulverstone 2016	Learning the Language of Technology	Computers	$ 5,000
Ulverstone 2016	Navigating the Touch Screen/App World	Computers	$ 5,000
Ulverstone 2015	Empowering Community	Resource Development	$ 30,000
Ulverstone 2010	Basic Computer Savvy; Computer Savvy Seniors; Literacy Using Computers	Computers	$4,652.00
Zeehan 2015	The Great Race!	Problem Solving	$ 3,000
Zeehan 2013	Sift it, Shake it, Bake it	Food	$2,320.00
Zeehan 2012	My Family Tree	Computers	$2,450.00
Zeehan 2010	Let's Get Cooking	Food Computers	$ 2,160
Zeehan 2009	Computer Basics and Internet Access	Computers	$ 4,000
25 Projects			$ 167,811.70

Northern Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
Deloraine 2014	Colony 47 Aboriginal Community Life Skills project	Community Garden	$ 2,000
Deloraine 2012	Healthy Cooking on a Budget	Food	$2,500.00
Dorset 2012	DorsArt	Art	$ 5,000
Dorset 2011	Literacy Technology Support	Computers	$3,778.00
Dorset 2009	Everyday Literacy in Dorset	Professional Development	$ 2,832
Fingal 2011	I Can	Children and Families	$9,200.00
Northern Suburbs 2016	Everyday Literacy in the Northern Suburbs	1:1 tutoring	$ 14,125.92
Northern Suburbs 2015	Everyday Literacy in the Northern Suburbs - resources	Resource purchase	$ 5,000
Northern Suburbs 2015	Everyday Literacy in the Northern Suburbs	1:1 tutoring	$ 15,000
Northern Suburbs 2013	Everyday Literacy with the Multicultural Centre	1:1	$13,300.00
Northern Suburbs 2012	Make Time to Read	Children and Families	$2,750.00
Northern Suburbs 2012	Everyday Literacy with the Multicultural Women's Group	Life Skills	$ 12,500
Ravenswood 2013	Keeping Up With the Kids	Children and Families	$ 13,768.20
Ravenswood 2012	Literacy Links	Life Skills	$ 27,834
Ravenswood 2011	Literacy Links (continuation)	Life Skills 1:1 tutoring	$29,899.00
Ravenswood 2010	Literacy Links	Life Skills 1:1 tutoring	$ 29,434
Starting Point 2016	Study Buddies	Training Employment	$ 15,000
St Helens 2012	WOW Working with Windows	Computers	$4,900.00
St Helens 2009	INFORMED (Information Form Education)	Employment	$ 1,674
Tresca 2010	Window On Words	Life Skills Employment	$12,435.00
19 Projects			$ 207,930.12

Southern Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
Bucaan2011	Everyday Literacy for Bhutanese Elders	Life Skills Migrants and Refugees	$ 10,500
Clarendon Vale 2016	Computers for CVNC Clients	Computer equipment	$ 4,923
Clarendon Vale 2015	Own Story	Autobiographies	$ 3,160
Dowsing Point 2014	The Point Computer Group	Computers	$ 5,190
Dowsing Point 2014	Sweet Pea Literacy Garden	Community Garden	$ 1,904
Dunalley Tasman 2015	Bridges Literacy	Children and Families	$ 5,000
Dunalley Tasman 2011	Making Ends Meet	Life Skills Financial	$5,000.00
Gagebrook 2015	Masterclass	Children and Families Food	$ 10,900
Gagebrook 2014	Let's Get Cooking…Again	Food	$ 4,954.36
Gagebrook 2011	Let's Get Cooking	Food	$ 2,956.28
Geeveston 2016	A Year in Geeveston	Computers	$ 4,941.68
Geeveston 2016	Everyday Literacy and Huon Valley Works	Employment	$ 15,000
Geeveston 2015	Literacy For Locals	Children and Families	$ 14,846.56
Geeveston 2014	Photobook Course	Children and Families Computers	$ 4,370
Geeveston 2014	Literacy For Locals	Life Skills 1:1	$ 15,000
Geeveston 2013	Literacy For Locals	Life Skills	$14,898.00
Geeveston 2013	Work Start, Work Smart	Computers	$4,978.00
Geeveston 2012	On the Air and Off the Ground	Community Garden	$ 4,483
Geeveston 2011	Cracking the Code Stage 2	Life Skills	$6,945.00
Geeveston 2011	Cracking the Code	Computers	$2,012.75
Goodwood 2016	Dicing With Patterns and Words	Children and families	$ 1,408

Southern Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
Goodwood 2011	Literature, Puppets, and Oral Language	Children and Families	$2,960.00
Goodwood 2009	Growing Good Readers At Goodwood	Children and Families	$ 13,277
Jordan River Services 2016	Fast Foodies - Eat Right 4 Less	Food	$ 15,000
Karadi 2011	Let's Make It Work Together	Employment Computers	$2,400.00
Maranoa 2014	Practical Woodworking Literacy	Life Skills	$ 4,437.95
Maranoa 2014	Playing Around	Life Skills	$ 5,000
Maranoa 2012	How to Pay Bills and Sell Stuff Online	Computers	$ 1,650
Maranoa 2012	Overcoming Budget Blues: Budgeting, Cooking, and having Fun	Food Financial	$2,500.00
Maranoa 2011	Maranoa Meeting Place	Food	$4,200.00
Okines 2016	Introduction to Computers	Computers	$ 1,325
Risdon Vale 2016	Anything is Possible Together	Children and Families Food	$ 10,500
Risdon Vale 2013	Getting Out Of the Box	Computers	$5,730.00
Risdon Vale 2012	Smarties for Smart Board	Computers	$1,800.00
Risdon Vale 2011	Real World Learning	Computers	$7,415.00
Risdon Vale 2009	Searching For Literacy	Children and Families Computers	$ 3,298
Rokeby 2015	Literacy Project	Food	$ 14,013.75
Warrane Mornington 2013	You Online	Computers	$ 2,551.52
West Moonah 2016	Play Learn Grow Together	Children and Families	$ 15,000
West Moonah 2015	Learner Driver Program	Resource development	$ 14,950
West Moonah 2015	Bhutanese Elders Program	Migrants and Refugee Support	$ 4,800
West Moonah 2014	Literacy/Learning Equipment	Resource purchases	$5,000
West Moonah 2014	Learner Driver Program	Migrants and Refugee Support Life Skills	$ 5,000
West Moonah 2014	Citizenship Course	Migrants and Refugee Support	$ 14,820

Southern Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
West Moonah 2012	Learner Driver Program	Migrants and Refugees Life Skills	$5,000.00
West Moonah 2011	Learner Driver Course	Life Skills Migrants and Refugees	$3,000.00
48 Projects			$ 326,700.85

Projects funded between 2009 and November 2016 x Region x Project Theme

North West Coast Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
Burnie 2016	Know the Risks – Choose Well	Drug and Alcohol Education	$ 13,967
Burnie 2013	Kitchen Confidential	Food	$ 14,600
East Devonport 2016	Meals with Mates	Food	$ 5,000
East Devonport 2016	Dude Food – Cooking for One	Food	$ 14,614.49
East Devonport 2015	Family Cookbook	Food	$ 5,000
East Devonport 2015	Family Cookbook - Printing	Food	$ 5,000
Rosebery 2013	Food For Thought	Food	$3,700.00
Zeehan 2013	Sift it, Shake it, Bake it	Food	$2,320.00
Zeehan 2010	Let's Get Cooking	Food and Computers	$ 2,160
East Devonport 2015	Food IQ	Food Children and Families	$ 15,000
Devonport 2012	Storytime at the Playhouse	Children and Families	$ 5,000
Rosebery 2016	Every Month Is Storytime	Children and Families	$ 4,541.75
Rosebery 2016	The Gift of Learning	Children and Families	$ 4,350
Devonport 2011	Creating Your Own Child's Fairytale	Children and Families Computers	$5,540.00
Burnie 2010	Getting It Together	Resource purchase	$ 1,500
Ulverstone 2015	Empowering Community	Resource Development	$ 30,000
Devonport 2009	Reading Time At the Playhouse	Professional Development	$2,250.00
Eastern Shore 2009	Doing It Right	Professional Development	$7,600.00

North West Coast Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
Devonport 2012	Circus Tales Project	Life Skills	$ 4,266.46
Rosebery 2010	Basic Computer and Internet Skills Training	Computers	$ 4,900
Ulverstone 2016	Learning the Language of Technology	Computers	$ 5,000
Ulverstone 2016	Navigating the Touch Screen/App World	Computers	$ 5,000
Ulverstone 2010	Basic Computer Savvy; Computer Savvy Seniors; Literacy Using Computers	Computers	$4,652.00
Zeehan 2012	My Family Tree	Computers	$2,450.00
Zeehan 2009	Computer Basics and Internet Access	Computers	$ 4,000
Zeehan 2015	The Great Race!	Problem Solving	$ 3,000

Northern Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
Deloraine 2014	Colony 47 Aboriginal Community Life Skills project	Community Garden	$ 2,000
Deloraine 2012	Healthy Cooking on a Budget	Food	$2,500.00
Dorset 2011	Literacy Technology Support	Computers	$3,778.00
St Helens 2012	WOW Working with Windows	Computers	$4,900.00
Dorset 2009	Everyday Literacy in Dorset	Professional Development	$ 2,832
Fingal 2011	I Can	Children and Families	$9,200.00
Northern Suburbs 2016	Everyday Literacy in the Northern Suburbs	1:1 tutoring	$ 14,125.92
Northern Suburbs 2015	Everyday Literacy in the Northern Suburbs	1:1 tutoring	$ 15,000
Northern Suburbs 2013	Everyday Literacy with the Multicultural Centre	1:1	$13,300.00
Northern Suburbs 2015	Everyday Literacy in the Northern Suburbs - resources	Resource purchase	$ 5,000
Northern Suburbs 2012	Make Time to Read	Children and Families	$2,750.00
Ravenswood 2013	Keeping Up With the Kids	Children and Families	$ 13,768.20

Northern Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
Northern Suburbs 2012	Everyday Literacy with the Multicultural Women's Group	Life Skills	$ 12,500
Ravenswood 2012	Literacy Links	Life Skills	$ 27,834
Ravenswood 2011	Literacy Links (continuation)	Life Skills 1:1 tutoring	$29,899.00
Ravenswood 2010	Literacy Links	Life Skills 1:1 tutoring	$ 29,434
Starting Point 2016	Study Buddies	Training Employment	$ 15,000
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St Helens 2009	INFORMED (Information Form Education)	Employment	$ 1,674
Dorset 2012	DorsArt	Art	$ 5,000

Southern Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
Dunalley Tasman 2015	Bridges Literacy	Children and Families	$ 5,000
Geeveston 2015	Literacy For Locals	Children and Families	$ 14,846.56
Goodwood 2016	Dicing With Patterns and Words	Children and families	$ 1,408
Goodwood 2011	Literature, Puppets, and Oral Language	Children and Families	$2,960.00
Goodwood 2009	Growing Good Readers At Goodwood	Children and Families	$ 13,277
West Moonah 2016	Play Learn Grow Together	Children and Families	$ 15,000
Gagebrook 2015	Masterclass	Children and Families Food	$ 10,900
Risdon Vale 2016	Anything is Possible Together	Children and Families Food	$ 10,500
Jordan River Services 2016	Fast Foodies - Eat Right 4 Less	Food	$ 15,000
Gagebrook 2014	Let's Get Cooking…Again	Food	$ 4,954.36
Gagebrook 2011	Let's Get Cooking	Food	$ 2,956.28

Southern Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
Maranoa 2011	Maranoa Meeting Place	Food	$4,200.00
Rokeby 2015	Literacy Project	Food	$ 14,013.75
Risdon Vale 2009	Searching For Literacy	Children and Families Computers	$ 3,298
Geeveston 2014	Photobook Course	Children and Families Computers	$ 4,370
Geeveston 2016	A Year in Geeveston	Computers	$ 4,941.68
Dowsing Point 2014	The Point Computer Group	Computers	$ 5,190
Geeveston 2013	Work Start, Work Smart	Computers	$4,978.00
Geeveston 2011	Cracking the Code	Computers	$2,012.75
Maranoa 2012	How to Pay Bills and Sell Stuff Online	Computers	$ 1,650
Okines 2016	Introduction to Computers	Computers	$ 1,325
Risdon Vale 2013	Getting Out Of the Box	Computers	$5,730.00
Risdon Vale 2012	Smarties for Smart Board	Computers	$1,800.00
Risdon Vale 2011	Real World Learning	Computers	$7,415.00
Warrane Mornington 2013	You Online	Computers	$ 2,551.52
Geeveston 2014	Literacy For Locals	Life Skills 1:1	$ 15,000
Geeveston 2013	Literacy For Locals	Life Skills	$14,898.00
Geeveston 2011	Cracking the Code Stage 2	Life Skills	$6,945.00
Maranoa 2014	Practical Woodworking Literacy	Life Skills	$ 4,437.95
Maranoa 2014	Playing Around	Life Skills	$ 5,000
Bucaan2011	Everyday Literacy for Bhutanese Elders	Life Skills Migrants and Refugees	$ 10,500
West Moonah 2015	Bhutanese Elders Program	Migrants and Refugee Support	$ 4,800
West Moonah 2014	Learner Driver Program	Migrants and Refugee Support Life Skills	$ 5,000

Southern Houses	Title	Topic area	Amount (excluding tax)
West Moonah 2014	Citizenship Course	Migrants and Refugee Support	$ 14,820
West Moonah 2012	Learner Driver Program	Migrants and Refugees Life Skills	$5,000.00
West Moonah 2011	Learner Driver Course	Life Skills Migrants and Refugees	$3,000.00
West Moonah 2014	Literacy/Learning Equipment	Resource purchases	$5,000
West Moonah 2015	Learner Driver Program	Resource development	$ 14,950
Clarendon Vale 2016	Computers for CVNC Clients	Computer equipment	$ 4,923
Clarendon Vale 2015	Own Story	Autobiographies	$ 3,160
Dowsing Point 2014	Sweet Pea Literacy Garden	Community Garden	$ 1,904
Geeveston 2012	On the Air and Off the Ground	Community Garden	$ 4,483
Dunalley Tasman 2011	Making Ends Meet	Life Skills Financial	$5,000.00
Maranoa 2012	Overcoming Budget Blues: Budgeting, Cooking, and having Fun	Food Financial	$2,500.00
Geeveston 2016	Everyday Literacy and Huon Valley Works	Employment	$ 15,000
Karadi 2011	Let's Make It Work Together	Employment Computers	$2,400.00

Recommendation 4

That Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania develop an Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Phase 2 Strategy for Year 11 and beyond.

This Strategy should also include transitional arrangements from Years 9 and 10 to Year 11, and include a professional development and House capacity building component.

Objective 3

Target Support for people who have already identified or begun addressing their literacy needs.

Findings

Evidence of continuing to support participants who have started to address their literacy needs and issues is demonstrated by literacy projects and activities extending beyond the funding period, with examples such as:

- One on one computer lessons
- Puzzle table
- Circus activities and use of equipment
- Participants coming in to the centre to use our computers to update resumes and prepare job applications

Addressing ongoing literacy needs and issues is further demonstrated by many examples of Houses developing and delivering programs and activities with literacy outcomes, which are not dependent on funding from the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program. Examples include:

- Financial Literacy – with a Manual created in partnership with Housing Choices
- Cooking and nutrition programs
- Health programs
- Resume and job application assistance
- Storytelling Festival,
- Parenting programs;
- It's Not Ok booklet to empower and assist self-advocacy of participants not being treated fairly by service providers
- Formal training with both TAFE and Avidity
- Citizenship training
- Driver Mentor programs

Objective 4

Improving understanding of literacy needs in the community.

Findings

One of the indicators of Neighbourhood House's capacity to understand literacy needs is the partner and referral agency relationships which are developed and maintained.

Examples of such relationships Houses identified included:

- TasTAFE (3)
- LINC (5)
- Workskills
- Department of Education
- Salvation Army
- Avidity Training (3)
- Centrelink
- UTas
- ABLE Australia
- Life Without Barriers
- Schools – including social workers at schools
- Service providers
- Doctors
- Other Neighbourhood Houses
- Child and Family Centres
- Risdon Prison

Houses identified a number of things they are doing differently in regard to literacy to what they were five years ago, (2009), which demonstrates increased capacity to support people with literacy needs. Some examples of what Houses are doing differently include:

- *The House* now understands that Literacy comes in far more forms than simply reading and writing
- We now see and actively support literacy through communication, emotional literacy, technological literacy, and family literacy in the sense of understanding stages of growth/brain development/personality challenges and so on
- Improved design and layout of our newsletter
- Now have a language rules officer to support participants
- Engaging more with local service providers such as LINC to support participants
- Now have Launceston Legal Literacy volunteers and service operating from the House
- Ensuring that all paperwork is easy to read and literacy friendly

- Rather than one generalised literacy program we have branched out into many smaller programs. These programs have been things requested by the community. If a program has taken off we keep it - some programs we have had to let go due to lack of numbers
- The programs running at the moment are: computers made easy, a cooking class, getting L1's for driving, a technology class and a conversational English and Life Skills class

Application of learning from previous programs into future projects and activities is also an indication of increased House capacity in regard to literacy initiatives and support. Some example areas where Houses have indicated they have learned from their experiences regarding literacy projects and activities include:

- Literacy projects work best when incorporated into all activities as well as having structured activities to ease people into
- It takes the right person to do the final product, as in you can have the best training booklet ever but if it isn't in plain language then it is not going to help our community
- Projects need to be focused one on one support and allow for a significant time to support participants combined with a coordinated approach with other service providers to support participant
- Involving locals in something that ignites their passion (even if it is not funded) provides a great opportunity for development, ownership and success.
- Sites for online resources
- Managing and working the balance between the participant's pace and meeting their personal goals

Many of the projects and activities focus on a community's literacy capacities, which demonstrate the House's understanding of literacy needs in their communities. Examples of such activities include:

- Using smart phones
- Using computers and web pages
- Becoming energy efficient
- Census workshops
- Legal literacy
- Filling in forms
- Coaching for citizenship assessment
- Provision of child care to enable parents to participate in literacy activities
- Provision of assistance to transport participants to literacy activities

One of the House Co-ordinators interviewed spoke of the criteria they used in selecting the books they used for literacy activities. Books are consciously chosen on factors such as colour, size, topics, font, pictures, and so on – depending on skills,

needs and interests of the participants. This a further demonstration of changes in the depth of understanding over time - in regard to literacy.

Increased provision and use of literacy resources in neighbourhood houses.

The types of resources accessed and used in literacy projects and activities is also an indicator of House's understanding of literacy needs. Examples of the types of resources being used to improve literacy skills included:

- Computers and computer software (3)
- Books (3) (Atlas, Street Atlas, Dictionaries & Thesaurus, Picture Encyclopaedias, Gardening Guides, Cook Books),
- Children's non-fiction books
- Road Rules
- Young Adults fiction, phone book
- Cooking equipment
- Garden equipment
- Word based games
- Games (2)
- Tafe course
- Youth group
- Volunteering
- Tablets (2)
- Broadband for seniors webinars and booklets
- Microsoft programs such as Word / Publisher, Excel. Computer literacy programs such as Broadband for Seniors,
- Adult Learning Australian information
- Australian Bureau of Statistics trends (stats on employment and economic activity
  in Tasmania),
- local Learning Community Group
- Microsoft office, web browsers, typing software, online road rules test and citizenship training, translation software

Other resources have been developed as products of the literacy project activities. Examples of such resources include:

- Cook books
- Participants stories
- Class activities
- No Interest Loan Scheme Forms
- Newsletters
- Communication Literacy Booklet/Training Manual
- Developed in-house computer tutorials to support House participants

- Reading to children by volunteer at our drop in centre for parents/carers of children 0 - 5 years after volunteer received training and increased skills/confidence in reading to children
- Puzzle table utilised by adults and children at drop in centre
- Parenting photo story book
- Circus equipment available for use created through a literacy program focussing on measurement, reading cards, youth working with parents and display of new skills
- It's Not Ok - resource booklet on domestic and family violence in local area. (though not accepted for funding it is never-the-less one of our most widely used resources for locals wanting easy to read information particularly in regard to Domestic Violence)
- Still in process of creating booklet called "*&%# Services...How to help yourself when dealing with services!"
- Recipes, planting guides, posters and banners (telling their story)
- Cards
- Calendars

Objective 6

Increased literacy levels in some or all of the six literacy key areas for adult and family participants in programs.

Findings

Previous evaluations have concluded that the nature of this project does not warrant formal literacy assessments of participants - pre and post activities. This has been accepted by the Tasmanian Community Fund.

What is clear, however, is that there are a number of identifiable participant outcomes – from both a literacy and holistic personal perspective.

Examples of the areas identified include:

- Increased confidence
- Education – including progress to further education such as Certificate II and Certificate III level courses in areas such as Community Services
- Employment - Applying for and getting jobs
- Mentoring
- Confidence built in regard to dealing with services, which also translates into confidence in other areas of life
- Computer literacy
- Increased engagement with Houses and in social activities
- Increased motivation to interact with Neighbourhood House
- Participation in other House programs such as cooking and the Eating With Friends
  group

- Improved engagement with both community and the community centre activities
- Involvement and facilitating other activities new and old run from the house

The recent Department of Health and Human Services funding Houses have been allocated for building extensions, has also clearly added to House's capacity to deliver literacy outcomes. Houses provided examples of additional literacy projects and activities and increased opportunities in regard to the new space and variety of functional areas recently added to their buildings.

Objective 7

Provide non-threatening literacy support for people with literacy needs who are not ready for overt or formal literacy support.

Findings

Communities are astute when it comes to associating opportunities with funding. One of the consequences of the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program has been Houses being seen by the community as access points and hubs of activity for literacy. For example, as the community has become aware of a literacy officer in a House, requests for assistance such as completing a form or assistance with a resume increase. This is an illustration of the degree of comfort participants have in approaching Houses.

There are also a number of other areas where Houses actively remove barriers to participation through actions such as providing child care; transport; outreach activities in schools and other provider and community venues; provision of resources such as books and cooking utensils materials; and by developing engaging and creative names for projects and activities which downplay any negative perceptions about individual participant's literacy capacity and needs.

In addition to the outcomes achieved with participants, there are also examples of outcomes at a Neighbourhood House level. For example,

- It is evident that the profile of some Houses has increased as a result of the literacy programs and activities delivered – and in particular the partnerships and relationships developed through that delivery
- Increased accessibility in Houses through plain English signage around the House – and discussion regarding language, not using acronyms, and signage in staff meetings

The Case Studies provided below further demonstrate the capacity to provide a respectful, sensitive and non-threatening environment for people how may feel anxious or vulnerable due to their literacy skills.

5.3 Evaluation Objective - 'to develop additional performance indicator measures'

The starting point was to look at the objectives and performance measures already detailed in the Funding Deed – and then establish other options for additional performance measure options.

Objective 1

Prudently invest funds to meet approved purposes, while minimising the risk to capital.

Funding Deed Performance Indicators

Interest received

Capital retained

Comments and questions

Performance indicators look adequate and reasonable

Objective 2

Distribute funds to neighbourhood houses.

Funding Deed Performance Indicators

Number of houses receiving funds

Amount of funds distributed

Comments and questions

The dollar values are relatively easy to count

How can the quality of the distribution process be measured?

Objective 3

Target Support for people who have already identified or begun addressing their literacy needs.

Funding Deed Performance Indicators

Number of people identifying as requiring support

Number of people received support

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Comments and questions

These indicators are adequate.

Consideration has been given to greater assessment of participant driven actions to address their literacy needs – however, this would be complex to assess and made more difficult because of the high proportion of House activities that have literacy initiatives embedded in them.

Objective 4

Improving understanding of literacy needs in the community.

Funding Deed Performance Indicators

Changes in programs delivered through neighbourhood houses to better address literacy needs

Comments and questions

Additional ways Houses can demonstrate their understanding of literacy needs in the community include:

- the degree to which literacy initiatives are embedded in House activities
- House activities which have literacy initiatives that are not funded by Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Grants
- The number and types of relationships and partnerships relating to the design and delivery of activities with literacy components included
- changes in the language and communication used by Houses which acknowledges participant literacy ability
- the way Houses engage participants – to ensure maximum participation in activities and avoiding stress and anxiety for people with literacy needs
- the nature of activities – including things like the level of administration and form completion required
- the matching of literacy activities with participant needs – for example, provision of energy efficiency activities for people with identified hardship in meeting electricity costs

There may also be scope to obtain feedback from referral agencies and partners in regard to their observations on how well the Houses identify and action literacy needs in the community.

Objective 5

Increased literacy levels in some or all of the six literacy key areas for adult and family participants in programs.

Funding Deed Performance Indicators

Perceived changes in literacy levels for individuals participating in the programs

Comments and questions

Previous evaluations have suggested assessing changes in literacy levels against a recognised assessment scale is not realistic and the Tasmanian Community Fund has accepted this.

There is still capacity however, to provide case studies and narrative which describes outcomes and individual participant changes and achievements.

It is important that any outcomes are accounted in a holistic context and recognise changes that the literacy activity has created in the quality of life, life skills, self-esteem and confidence of the person – and not limit the results to changes in their literacy ability.

This evaluation has identified some of the areas in which holistic changes have occurred, such as:

- personal presentation, appearance and hygiene
- further training and education
- relationships and engagement with children and families
- community participation
- ability to speak in from of a group
- achieving positive changes in personal circumstances

Objective 6

Increased provision and use of literacy resources in Neighbourhood Houses.

Funding Deed Performance Indicators

Amount and use of resources

Comments and questions

The degree to which Houses have accessed, developed and provided literacy related resources has been high.

The indicator of the 'amount and use of resources' can be further broken down, if required, into areas such as:

- what resources have you used and/or created to support activities which address literacy needs?
- what lesson plans and resources have been shared with other Houses or across the House network?
- what resources are being used?

There may also be a need to define what is meant by 'literacy resources' - books, games, computer software, and so on.

Objective 7

Provide non-threatening literacy support for people with literacy needs who are not ready for overt or formal literacy support.

Funding Deed Performance Indicators

Type of literacy support embedded in practical projects

Number of people actively given literacy support using informal, non-threatening approaches

Comments and questions

One of the most useful measures of the House environment is participation levels and the degree to which participants attend, complete activities and return for subsequent activities in similar and/or different areas.

Another indicator is the level of disclosure in regard to personal ability, circumstances and needs which occur as the relationships and trust develops between participants and House staff and volunteers.

The Case Studies in this evaluation provide examples of where such disclosures occurred as the relationships developed.

Other indicators for this objective that emerged in this evaluation were the ways Houses identify and remove barriers to participation – in areas such as cost, transport, child care, and resources.

Characteristics of the House in relation to culture is also an area where outcomes can be identified. For example, literacy discussions in staff meetings; signage and

language around the House; names and descriptions of projects and activities; and so on.

Considering each of these objectives and the performance indicators separately highlighted that some indicators, such as participation, were relevant to more than one objective, and that a set of indicators across all of the objectives should be considered for the final report.

It was also clear that measurement of performance was possible from three perspectives, as follows:

- Through data and information from Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania

- Through data and information from Neighbourhood Houses

- Through data and information from partner and referral organisations

Detailed below is a framework to identify possible indicators for measurement and reporting along with a checklist to consider possible data and information collection methods to obtain the required material.

Proposed data and information from Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania

	Analysis of Financial Reports	Analysis of Grant Applications	Analysis of Project Reports	Analysis of Annual Reports and Community Fund Reports	Evaluator interviews with Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania manager and staff
Interest earned from the grant	✔				✔
Proportion of capital retained after the acquittal of funds distributed	✔				✔
The number of Houses receiving grants		✔	✔		
Distribution of grant funds across each Neighbourhood House	✔	✔	✔		
The number of projects funded		✔			

	Analysis of Financial Reports	Analysis of Grant Applications	Analysis of Project Reports	Analysis of Annual Reports and Community Fund Reports	Evaluator interviews with Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania manager and staff
Participation numbers in literacy projects and activities and the overall program			✓		
Participation and outcomes from National Simultaneous Story-telling		✓	✓		✓
Professional development activities delivered				✓	✓

Proposed data and information from Neighbourhood Houses

	Analysis of Project Reports and Records	Electronic questionnaire to Houses	Houses developing case studies and stories	Evaluator interviews with House manager and staff
Quality and effectiveness of the program administration and grant distribution processes		✓		✓
Number of participants	✓	✓		
Attendance levels	✓			
Number or proportion of participants who complete the literacy project or activity	✓			
Number of participants attending the House for the first time – who come to do a project or activity involving literacy	✓			✓
Number of participants who come to the House for the first time to do a literacy related project or activity and then go on and participate in other House activities	✓			✓
The number of projects which have continued beyond the grant funding		✓		✓

	Analysis of Project Reports and Records	Electronic questionnaire to Houses	Houses developing case studies and stories	Evaluator interviews with House manager and staff
Number and type of partners and referral organisations		✓		✓
Changes in House's capacity to meet participant's literacy needs		✓		✓
Incorporating literacy related initiatives into other House projects and activities		✓	✓	✓
Effectiveness in removing barriers to participation in literacy related projects and activities		✓	✓	✓
Modification to physical and cultural aspects of Houses to support and engage people with literacy needs		✓		✓
Acquisition and/or development of literacy related resources		✓		✓
Type and amount of resources used		✓		✓
Resources re-used for subsequent projects and activities		✓		✓
Resources specifically created to support projects and activities		✓		✓
Development and acquisition of resources that will continue to be used in the future		✓		✓
Resources acquired that can continue to be used – that is not dependent on Everyday Literacy Program grants		✓		✓
Resources that can be and/or have been shared with other Houses		✓		✓
Active professional development and building the literacy skills and knowledge of staff and volunteers to support participants with literacy related needs		✓		✓
Perceived changes in literacy levels for individuals participating in the programs		✓	✓	✓
Changes in participant confidence levels		✓	✓	✓

	Analysis of Project Reports and Records	Electronic questionnaire to Houses	Houses developing case studies and stories	Evaluator interviews with House manager and staff
Type of space and environment provided for participants		✓		✓
Where and how literacy projects and activities are being delivered		✓		✓
Level of bureaucracy and paperwork requirements for participants		✓	✓	✓
Attitudes of staff that underpin the literacy projects and activities – and the overall culture of the House and staff's perception of and interaction with participants		✓	✓	✓

Proposed data and information from partner and referral organisations

	Electronic questionnaire to Providers	Analysis of Provider Data and Records	Evaluator interviews with partner organisation managers
The number of participant referrals	✓	✓	
The type of program or service to which participants were referred	✓	✓	
Effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Houses projects and activities in preparing participants for the programs to which they were referred	✓		✓
Achievements of participants in programs to which they were referred	✓		✓
Number of referrals of participants to the House by other providers	✓		✓
Processes to build and maintain relationship between Houses and other providers	✓		✓
Joint professional development and program design	✓		✓
Number of referrals of participants to the House by other providers	✓	✓	

Recommendation 5

'That Neighbourhood Houses review and finalise the performance measures which will be used to assess the level of success of the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program.'

Recommendation 6

"That the current project data and information collected from Houses via project reports and other sources be reviewed to ensure all necessary material is being gathered that will enable the best possible Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program Final Evaluation and Report to be prepared.'

5.4 Evaluation Objective - 'to document examples of outcomes achieved from projects'

A number of examples were provided to demonstrate the value of the program in the lives of participants. Interestingly, these outcomes indicated a more holistic benefit to participants rather than being limited to literacy.

It is difficult to quantify the exact outcomes for participation in the program, and to limit the results to the literacy project or activity only, as the other support provided by Houses and the way in which that support was provided are also contributors to the participant changes observed.

The following case studies illustrate the type and scale of outcomes achieved through the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program.

Writing Group Project

Participants in the senior's writing group found that just writing was not as popular or satisfying as including discussion and storytelling.

The initial writing focus evolved into a 'memoirs' group where participants started telling their life stories and writing them up.

Professional photographs were then taken and adapted to reflect the themes identified in these life stories. (For example, a person who was an extraordinary gardener was modified with wings on their feet, flying through an amazing garden).

The photos (approximately 60 x 90 centimetres) were then professionally framed – with a quote from the participant which made a significant statement about their life, their wisdom and their passion.

The photos were exhibited at the House. At the official opening of the exhibition, participants spoke about their photo and their story.

One of the consequences of the project was participants acknowledging that their life and their achievements were greater than they realised, and this in part came from the validation and recognition received from other members of the group.

What started out as a participant describing themselves as 'not really doing much – I'm a bit of a gardener'; or a participant telling the group about their first plane trip being when they migrated from England to Australia at the age of 80' it became obvious that their perception of their life was quite understated.

Participants now reflect on the positive changes to their confidence and self-esteem and the exhibition is soon to open in a nearby gallery.

Community Garden Experience

A participant became involved in the Community Garden and suggested there were options of adding value to the produce from the garden.

When the conversation led to the requirement to do a food handling course in order for this to be achieved, the person's interest declined.

Over time, as the relationship developed between the person and the House, they disclosed they had reading and writing issues.

With the support of the House, the person successfully completed a food handling certificate, and later commented to a staff member, 'I wouldn't normally tell people about my reading.'

The food handling course tutor was a chef, and made the course very practical. After the course, the participant told the chef, 'they always wanted to do food and couldn't read and write.' The House staff suggested the LINC could be an option for more literacy work – and the participant indicated they were not ready for more formal training. Yet they were still keen to pursue food interests and continued to work with the chef through the trade training centre.

The person also shared an interest in the development of a community garden at a nearby town, and asked House staff to assist in preparing a proposal for discussion.

Staff were asked to attend and provide support for them at a progress meeting. The person talked about their proposal – which was accepted, and they subsequently became an active participant in that garden.

The House support person said, 'they did not need to do much' and spoke about the positive changes in confidence they observed as a result of this process and the validation the person received by their proposal being accepted.

Becoming Energy Efficient

The House has assisted a number of people successfully apply for support from Aurora Energy under the Aurora Hardship Program, for low income people trying to meet their power charges.

22 people from this Aurora Hardship Program register were invited to a workshop – 'Becoming Energy Efficient' – and 19 were able to attend.

Gift vouchers at the 'op-shop' were included as an incentive to attend.

The workshop involved assisting people to read and understand their power bill, and to develop strategies to reduce their power usage.

This workshop re-connected a number of participants with the House and provided the opportunity for ongoing support and to become involved in activities which continued to address their literacy needs and issues as well as connecting them with other participants.

Changing addictive behaviour

The entry point of a 30 year old young person with a substance addiction was the 1:1 literacy program.

With the support and encouragement of a male worker and other staff they strongly connected with, the participant then joined a 'cooking with others' group and connected with the community garden.

Now the person attends community lunches and has chosen to become more active in the House – consciously choosing to do so to reduce time at home where they know there are people who are not a good influence on them.

Staff have observed a number of changes – such as the person attending a community meeting – where they contributed and were given a voice. The person was quoted as saying 'people believe in me here'.

The person is working toward their driver's licence and staff observe visible changes – including examples such as 'looking neater and taking more interest in food and where it comes from' – following a cooking program food handling course where issues such as wearing an apron, tying back hair and wearing gloves was addressed.

The person has a supportive mother, who has now also connected with the House by enrolling in learning activities and becoming more active in the community.

Feeding the family

A young mum joined a food and cooking activity – and was the only participant not connected to any other support services.

As a result of participation in this activity, confidence grow to the point where they are now sharing their knowledge with others. This was their first contact with the House and they have since joined the weekly social network and become involved in other activities such as knotting squares and making rugs for homeless people.

The cooking activity required a report for the funding body – and this participant wrote a paragraph about their own experience.

The literacy activity and what it has led to has provided a support base that has underwritten other outcomes – with the participant being quotes as saying the House 'is my home away from home'.

Literacy is more than reading and writing

House staff realised how literacy includes language and how some language and capacity to use language affectively is failing participants.

This lead to the development of a project which is about what literacy can mean and where it can go.

A 'service literacy' framework was adopted to assist participants assert themselves in services such as income support and personal support, where unfamiliar language and acronyms are often used.

Participants are coached in understanding 'service language' and ways to engage such services to have their needs understood and met.

One model is delivered to assist participants have their needs met – at the first point of call; and a second model is delivered to assist participants in situations where the outcomes from the first point of call were not satisfactory. Resource booklets are currently being developed for each of these models.

Examples of results achieved to date include a situation where a mother had been unable to negotiate a successful arrangement with her children and their father was able to achieve a successful result; and a women who had not been able to access a childcare benefit from Tafe for over 6 months, was able to achieve a successful result.

This project has been undertaken on a joint basis with another Neighbourhood House.

Based on the success of this project, the House is now looking to future opportunities to continue to provide support to participants in areas such as emotional literacy; sexual assault and leaving home; mindfulness and emotional understanding of how the brain works to develop the calm required for successful outcomes at school, at home and in the community,

Increased confidence and support leads to jobs

An 18 year old involved in the community garden has just been offered a job in the parks and gardens section of Council. Council previously would not employ him due to poor literacy skills – and these skills have significantly improved through his involvement in the garden and the literacy program.

A young man who left school in Grade 8 and has been involved with the Men's Shed (including the literacy activities) for the past 5 years has just started a job in the construction industry.

Literacy a game the whole family can play

A year ago, 9 mums started a craft group – with literacy activities included. Over time, the scope of the group has broadened and now the husbands are involved too.

A Homework Centre at the House involves both young people and parents. 3 of the parents have now developed their literacy skills and 'got to read'. This often involves the use of fun activities and interesting discussion using resources like 'the Game of Life'.

Capacity to respond to needs

2 young mum's who have been bringing their children to Breakfast Club for a while said today 'we want to be volunteers'. The literacy money is really useful as we (the House) can ring Steve (Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Project Officer) and access resources to help teach them the reading and writing skills they need as volunteers.

Working as a Network

A couple (18 and 16 year olds) fell pregnant. The young man, who didn't finish school indicated he wanted to be better at reading and writing and some tutoring was arranged. When the couple moved to another area serviced by another Neighbourhood House, the Co-ordinator introduced them to the Co-ordinator of the House in the new area, and he continued with literacy support at the new House. The couple were also introduced to the Child and Family Centre in the new area.

The couple have said 'they now know they can go to the Houses or the Child and Family Centre – if they get in trouble.'

Learning to Drive

Neighbourhood Houses have been active in the development of a state-wide network and model for learner driver mentoring.

One House developed a video to assist people with their L1 requirements.

The learner driver mentoring co-ordinator used match boxes to visually demonstrate road rules. A grant was accessed from the Department of State Growth and a film-maker engaged to make a learner driver video. It involved the words being included in the video and it was successfully launched in June 2016.

Additional Department of State Growth funds have been provided to deliver 'train-the-trainer training and use of the video in schools around Tasmania. There are now discussions underway to explore a second video, and consideration of making the video available nationally is also occurring.

The House also specialises in assisting migrants and refugees prepare for the citizenship test. This has created some employment outcomes with multicultural community members being engaged as interpreters.

Taxi vouchers have also been provided to assist participants with transport issues to attend these activities.

Both of learner driver and citizenship activities have been very effective in increasing the profile of the House – 'people now come to us'.

The message for the House is that activities 'have to sound like fun' – like 'play, learn grow' for children. The House also commented on the benefits from the recent building extensions – 'people feel more welcome – and it is now and even nicer place to come along to, as we can offer more.'

Literacy increases in volunteers

By the very nature of the things volunteers become involved with and the environment where the volunteers are working alongside staff in project support roles, there have been a number of examples where volunteer literacy and numeracy levels have improved.

One House spoke of the significant growth in skills and capacity of a woman who became treasurer of the House some 30 years ago when the budget was $ 20,000 and who is still the treasurer and the budget has grown to $ 250,000.

5.5 Evaluation Objective - 'to obtain feedback on implementation of recommendations from previous evaluation report'

The recommendations from the previous evaluation and progress to date on these recommendations is as follows:

Recommendation 1:

That the policy of holding back 10% of the grant until the project report was received be ceased.

*Progress: **Completed.***

This recommendation was adopted and has been implemented.

Recommendation 2:

'That Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania re-establish face to face meetings of the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Program Assessment Panel meetings at a frequency to be determined in consultation with the Assessment Panel.'

*Progress: **Actioned.***

Some face-to-face meetings between the Everyday Literacy Program Assessment Panel and Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania have occurred.

These are expected to continue in the future and there is scope to further increase the frequency of these meetings.

Recommendation 3:

That the application and reporting process be simplified as follows:

Design the application form as a single form to reduce duplication – with the form be in three parts to be completed at different stages in the process.

*Progress: **Completed.***

This recommendation has been adopted and implemented.

The initial Expression of interest process is now a single form – with a streamlined application process where additional information is sought following the approval of an Expression of Interest Application by the Assessment Panel.

A Funding Agreement is then finalised which includes agreed activities and indicators of success which then flows through to the reporting process at the final report template to be completed at the end of the project.

Recommendation 4:

That Houses that submit projects for funding that are not approved due to the application details not meeting the required level continue to be encouraged and supported to re-submit their application if funds remain available.

Progress: ***Actioned.***

This recommendation has been adopted and implemented.

There are numerous examples where House have unsuccessfully expressed interest in a project and a revised application is subsequently approved. There are also examples where Houses have had applications not approved on more than one occasion – and subsequently approved with multiple modifications.

One example is a House that applied for funding to purchase computers. The Assessment Panel do not approve such applications unless there are clear literacy outcomes associated with their intended use – and grants for such equipment are rare. After two revisions to the application, the House was able to demonstrate the literacy merit and the project was approved.

Some Houses chose to not reapply after an unsuccessful expression of Interest, however, the capacity to reapply is there if they wish.

There are also examples where the Everyday Literacy for Local Communities Project Officer has identified areas in Expressions of Interest that are likely to be problematic for the Assessment Panel to approve – for example, not enough detail on the merit of the literacy outcomes. In such cases, the Project Officer has suggested additional information be included prior to the application being considered by the Assessment Panel. This has occurred with many such applications being approved.

Recommendation 5:

That Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania trial regional workshops where Houses develop project ideas and draft applications under the support and guidance of Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania staff.

Progress: ***Yet to be implemented.***

This recommendation has not been actioned at this stage, however, the intent is accepted and it is likely to be actioned.

This recommendation will be considered in conjunction with recommendations 8 and 9 below.

Recommendation 6:

That Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania review the Project Officer position with the view to it being re-designed as a House Development Officer position with a greater emphasis on field-based work to further develop the Literacy Program and the capacity of Houses to deliver it.

Progress: **Actioned**.

The emphasis of the Project Officer now has a greater developmental role which includes some field work; and a reduced amount of administrative work.

The examples of Project Officer activities in recommendation 4 above is an illustration of this. The Project Officer is also active in sharing literacy project and initiative ideas across Houses. The role also includes leading professional development activities at Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania State Conference.

Recommendation 7:

That appropriate funds be budgeted to support field work by the Project Officer.

Progress: **Actioned**.

This recommendation has been adopted and implemented.

Recommendation 8:

That the Project Officer design and implement a professional development and House capacity building strategy for the Everyday Literacy Program in consultation with the Houses.

Progress: **Yet to be implemented**.

This recommendation has not been actioned at this stage, however, the intent is accepted and it is likely to be actioned.

Houses see literacy as an integral component of most House activities and any such Strategy would need to be developed in that context.

Recommendation 9 below aims to address transitional issues from Year 10 of the Program to Year 11 and beyond. The likely amount of funding available for year 11 and beyond has only recently been determined. This recommendation with therefore be further considered in light of the actions to be taken in regard to Recommendation 9.

Recommendation 9:

That Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania allocate $ 15,000 each year from the budget for the next 5 years to develop and trial options for an ongoing and sustainable grants program for years 11 and beyond for the everyday Literacy Program.

Progress: ***Yet to be implemented***.

This recommendation will be considered now that further information on available funding for Year 11 and beyond is more certain.

Consideration of this recommendation with also include provision of funds for National Simultaneous Story-time on an annual basis. This would commit approximately $ 9,000 of the projected $ 40,000 budget. Options to be considered in an ongoing and sustainable literacy grants program will be equal and equitable grants for every House.

6   Acknowledgements

PDF would like to thank all of the people involved in the evaluation consultation for their willing and open participation in this review process.

This process has been a demonstration of the passion for the literacy work being undertaken by the Neighbourhood House network and the commitment to continually improve the services and support to achieve the best possible outcomes for individuals and families.

PDF would specifically like to acknowledgement and extend our thanks to John Hooper and Steve Cooke from Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania who have not only provided a major contribution to the evaluation - they have also embraced the developmental and action learning nature in which we have approached the evaluation process.

More intensive engagement occurred with six Neighbourhood Houses and PDF are very grateful for this insight and contribution of these Houses who have added significantly to the quality and depth of the evaluation.

The findings of this evaluation show significant progress since the Evaluation Report Number 2 – 2012 – 2014. This is testament to the spirit in which the evaluation process has been entered into and the maturation of the Neighbourhood House network as a contributor to addressing literacy needs in a holistic manner at a local level.