Families Australia Child Aware Conference Workshop 2016

Building strong communities with young families

Karl Brettig
Manager Salisbury Communities for Children
www.salisburyc4c.org.au
What isn’t working?
What is working?
Can we change the trajectory?
Proportionate Universality

The concept of proportionate universality first proposed in the UK 2010 Marmot Review was developed in Canada (Hertzmann, 2011). Targeted programs may reduce vulnerability for targeted groups but the majority of vulnerable children receive no benefit. Universal programs can have barriers to access that prevent all from benefitting. Proportionate universality provides for universal access at a scale and character that addresses barriers at every level and results in a much greater number of vulnerable families receiving support. In effect proportionate universality focusses on reducing barriers to access in areas of high vulnerability which may be distributed over a range of socioeconomic status areas though there would naturally be a concentration in areas at the lower end of the SES scale.
The expanding universal family centre model

The most common from of universal family social service is perhaps the Family Centre model. In most cases these family centres bring together a fully co-located range of services central to promoting the wellbeing of both the children and the parents. In Sweden the pioneer of this form of family support, municipal family centres offering a variety of services to families have been in place since the 1970s (Kekkonen et al, 2012). These centres, which are free of charge are open to all families.

Integrating Social Services for Vulnerable Groups
OECD Report 2015. p60
A Family Centre is defined as a fully integrated centre with:

- Maternity healthcare services (antenatal)
- Child health care services (well baby clinic)
- Open nursery school (open kindergarten)
- Social welfare preventative activities and operations

Vibeke Bing (2013) *Family Centres in Sweden in a public health perspective* - everything in one place – accessible for each child
Central to the family centre activities in Sweden is the drop-in service which is called the open pre-school, where parents visit the open pre-school together with their children [8]. The service is accessible to parents while they are on parental leave or have leisure time on week days. This is a unique component in comparison to family centres in other countries such as Great Britain, since the purpose of the services in Sweden is not to provide day care in order to enable parents to work [8]. The open pre-school has in earlier research been seen as providing “... self-realisation in which parents have the possibility to use both expert and lay knowledge in improving their lives and the lives of their children” [8, p. 143]. Parents can, together with their children, easily access family support at the open pre-school. The support is delivered mostly by pre-school teachers and social workers, but also on occasion by nurses and midwives [6]. The drop-in service is available if and when parents need support without a time appointment in advance.

- Agneta Abrahamsson (2013). Open Preschools at integrated health services, Sweden, University of Jönköping.
The objective is:

- To offer a meeting place in the neighbourhood
- To strengthen the social network of parents and children
- Providing ways of learning and developing skills
- Offering social support
- Serving as a centre of knowledge & information
- To encourage and support parents to have a good time and enjoy their children

Vibeke Bing (2013). *Family Centres in Sweden in a Public Health Perspective* – Everything in one place accessible for each child
FamilyZone Ingle Farm

- Reception Area
- Internet Access
- Kitchen
- Information
- Front Door

Play areas
Crèche
Group rooms
Staff Area

"A GREAT PLACE FOR FAMILIES WITH PRESCHOOLERS"
Does it Work?
“FamilyZone Ingle Farm uses the hub concept as a pivotal element of an integrated service model. The concept reflects the emerging move to co-located and coordinated services inherent in the design of Sure Start in the UK and many other early intervention children’s service delivery models throughout the USA, Canada and Europe. Although there is already a strong evidence base for integrated service delivery for early childhood services, FamilyZone provides an excellent illustration of the additional benefits for particularly vulnerable populations, such as recently arrived migrants and refugees and socially isolated young single parents. The project also provides some useful insights into the role of helping professionals. In addition to the promotion of collaboration as a pathway to improved client outcomes, the project comments on the nature of family–worker and worker–worker relationships that contribute to empowering practice as well as minimise burnout”.

FamilyZone Ingle Farm Hub Promising Practice Profile.
Early Years Parenting Community

First Steps
Mainly Music & Movement Groups
Outdoor Play
The Wellbeing Classroom

Beyond the family context, schools provide the environments where children over five years of age spend most of their time. Children’s ability to cope with the social, emotional and behavioural demands of schooling is thus significantly shaped by their experiences in the home and in the early years of school. Teachers are instrumental in creating classroom environments to support children’s learning and development.

Teachers need to understand the difficulties faced by traumatised and chronically stressed children, and what can be done in the learning environment to support them. Assisting children to become aware of their emotional and physical states and to learn strategies to self-regulate when they are feeling stressed or reacting to past traumas, provides pathways to improved social and emotional well-being, and enables effective learning.

An evaluation of the Wellbeing Classroom project showed it identified improvements in children’s social relationships, their abilities to identify their own and others’ feelings and school attendance. Reading and spelling development trajectories were maintained, indicating that attention to social and emotional learning at school does not adversely affect children’s academic achievement.

Young mums & Dads Parenting Together DVD/Booklet

what’s inside...

Starting out …
• Being prepared
• What children need in the first years
• How your baby develops

Travelling together …
• Setting boundaries for your children
• Issues for single parents
• Parenting as a team

A healthy family starts with ME …
• Understanding ourselves
• Attitude check
• Anger management
• The big binge
• Anxiety and fear

A healthy family is all about WE …
• Working together
• Understanding conflict
• Tips on resolving conflict through negotiation

Where to go for support …
• Some websites to look at
• Useful phone numbers
What’s the evidence?
AEDC Percentage of Children Vulnerable in One or More Domains

Percentage of Children Vulnerable

2006 SC4C suburbs  Added in 2010  Added in 2015
Substantiated notifications Ingle Farm/Walkley Heights 2011—2015

![Bar chart showing substantiated notifications for years 2011 to 2015.](chart_image)
Salisbury Communities for Children
Facilitating Partner
The Salvation Army Ingle Farm
2005 – 2015
SEIFA 2011  936.7  (822.1 – 1077.1)
2005 – 5 suburbs
2009 – 7 suburbs
2015 – 12 suburbs

In implementing the AEDC in 2006, it was found that, of the five suburbs included in the site, Ingle Farm had the highest proportion (32.5%) of children developmentally vulnerable in one or more domains. Ingle Farm also had the highest proportion of developmentally vulnerable children on the social knowledge and competence domain (17.5%) (AEDI, 2006).
Study of Comparable Groups of Suburbs
### Percentages of children found to be vulnerable in the two amalgamated groups of suburbs in 2009 and 2012
- Diamond, McInnes & Whitington (2013)

**Yellow**: Significant reduction in the percentage of children vulnerable from 2009 to 2012;  
**Pink**: Significant increase in the percentage of children vulnerable from 2009 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One or more domains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC4C</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-SC4C</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more domains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC4C</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-SC4C</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical wellbeing</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC4C</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-SC4C</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social competence</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC4C</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-SC4C</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional maturity</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC4C</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-SC4C</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication and general knowledge</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC4C</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-SC4C</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and cognitive</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC4C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-SC4C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion of Comparative Study

Critical differences between the SC4C and non SC4C outcomes suggests that 5-year old children living in SC4C suburbs in 2012 had received more developmental supports than the same aged children living in the non-SC4C suburbs in 2012.

Other examples
(Is it replicable?)
Some Australian Suburbs with Family Activity Centres

2002 - Café Enfield established as a family centre which later became a children’s centre in South Australia at Enfield Primary School with initial funding from the Federal Government.

2005 - Seaton Central family centre established at Seaton Primary School funded by the federal Communities for Children initiative.

2006 - FamilyZone Ingle Farm established at Ingle Farm Primary School under the C4C initiative.

2008 - The Family Place established at Slacks Creek in Brisbane under the C4C initiative and later moved to adjacent suburb of Woodridge.
The Family Place - Communities for Children Logan
Australian Suburbs with Family Activity Centres

AEDC Vulnerability in one or more domains
A US initiative developing Family Activity Centres

Derived from the neighbourhood-based child protection strategy proposed by the U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect in 1993, *Strong Communities for Children* is a comprehensive communitywide initiative for the promotion of family and community well-being and prevention of child abuse and neglect. *Strong Communities* involves the whole community through voluntary assistance by neighbours for one another, especially for families of young children. The strategy entails the use of outreach workers to facilitate community engagement and leadership development in order to enable communities to accept responsibility for parent support and child safety. The outreach workers then build on the resources that they have cultivated to promote the creation of volunteer-delivered support for families of young children in settings not commonly identified as providers of family support service (e.g., fire stations, faith communities, libraries). See:

http://www.cebc4cw.org/program/strong-communities-for-children/

Rated 3 on California EB Clearinghouse
Some possible centre activities:

- supported playgroups for generic and culture specific groups
- home visiting
- craft & cooking groups to engage parents
- parenting courses
- mothers and babies groups
- parent support groups, including African & Afghani women’s groups
- music and movement groups
- post natal depression groups
- TAFE English classes for humanitarian entrants
- Early childhood leadership development
What can you do in your sphere of influence?
Healthy lifestyle
Respectful relationships

Pre-birth
Healthy lifestyle
Respectful relationships

Perinatal
Home visiting
PND support groups
Circle of security parenting

Early years
Early years parenting/play groups
Young mums groups
Parenting together
Wellbeing classroom

Windows of opportunity
Key partnerships for implementing an effective integrated family centre

- Federal
- State
- Universal services
- Local
- Outdoor play Infrastructure
- Families
- Community Groups
- NGO’s
- Community Capacity

No Wrong Door

Passion & volunteers

Family Support
The conclusion is that we vastly underestimated the difficulty of the task. Given that we either should have made the task less challenging by more specification on how to do it, or thought more about the kind of support and training new training managers would need. In fact we should have done both.

Little children are our future. What is important to them is very VERY important to all of us. We need to learn to listen to their words, study their drawings, hear their cries and enjoy their laughter. The kind of community we will have in the future depends on it.

www.salisburyc4c.org.au

karl.brettig@aus.salvationarmy.org

@KarlBrettig