



Reading for Life e-news



Helping Kids Learn

Welcome to the first E-news for 2008 where it is timely to review the successes of 2007.

By the end of the year, 1,500 children had participated in Reading for Life since its inception, and many exciting developments occurred which, over time, will increase the accessibility of Reading for Life to children across Australia and New Zealand.

Highlights for 2007

- ❖ Reading for Line Online was created with the trial to commence in the first half of 2008. This project is funded by **Samsung Digital Hope**.
- ❖ A DVD for parents was developed with its release to occur in early 2008. This project was funded by the **James N Kirby Foundation**.
- ❖ Reading for Life was delivered in NSW, Victoria, Tasmania, Western Australia, South Australia (for the first time), and New Zealand.
- ❖ Students from Monash University participated as volunteers in Victoria.
- ❖ For the first time, an individual personally funded a program – thank you **Graeme Cruise**.
- ❖ **Citigroup** approved funding to develop Counting for Life Online over the next two years.

Partners for 2007

Thank you to our partners for 2007. We hope you received a great deal of satisfaction for helping children in your local communities.

We would first like to thank and acknowledge Unilever Australasia for delivering and funding programs in NSW, Victoria, New Zealand and (for the first time) in South Australia and continuing to support the program by helping to build the capacity of Learning Links.

Our other partners for the program included the following.

- ❖ **Allens Arthur Robinson** delivered and funded a program in NSW, and provided funding for a second program in NSW.
- ❖ Clubs in the Coffs Harbour region provided funding for a program in Coffs Harbour that was delivered by community volunteers.
- ❖ **Ancor** delivered and funded a program in Victoria.
- ❖ **ANZ** delivered and funded programs in Victoria and Western Australia.
- ❖ **Australand** funded and delivered a program in NSW.
- ❖ **Cadbury Schweppes** delivered and funded programs in NSW, Victoria and Tasmania.
- ❖ **Citigroup** delivered and funded programs in NSW and Victoria.
- ❖ **Genworth Financial** funded and delivered a Counting for Life program in NSW.
- ❖ **Graeme Cruise** personally funded a program in NSW which was delivered by himself and volunteers drawn from the Centre for Volunteering.
- ❖ **Hutt City Council** delivered and funded programs in New Zealand.
- ❖ **Mark Knox The Good Guys South Nowra** funded a program in NSW that was delivered by members of The View Club.
- ❖ **Mitchell and Partners** delivered and funded programs in NSW and Victoria.
- ❖ **Nick Nikas The Good Guys Caringbah** funded a program in NSW that was delivered by local community members.
- ❖ **Rio Tinto** funded a Monash University student to deliver a program in Victoria.
- ❖ **Wilbow Corporation** funded a Monash University student to deliver a program in Victoria.

"To read is to empower
 To empower is to write
 To write is to influence
 To influence is to change
 To change is to live."

Jane Evershed

Reading for Life Online

In early 2007 Samsung chose Learning Links as the beneficiary of a grant to develop an online version of Reading for Life to allow children no matter where they go to school the chance to experience the magic and success of the program.

Learning Links appointed MILK Digital, a technology company with experience developing online games, to take the program to the internet. As part of their involvement, MILK Digital generously agreed to donate the cost of one game.

Pre-testing and post-testing of the children's progress was also reviewed as part of the program. Dr Roslyn Neilson and NCZER generously helped us to develop online versions of the Sutherland Phonological Awareness Test and The Burt Reading Test so the entire program including testing would be available online.

In the weeks following, two characters, 'Bandit' and 'Jazz', were created for the program. These characters guide children



Bandit



Jazz

through each reading activity and a voiceover helps to guide the buddy and children through the program.

The program's design incorporates both administration and game features.

The administration keeps track of students' performances and allows games to incorporate the errors that each student makes in the sight word part of the program. It also links buddies and students online via a password and allows buddies to provide email feedback after each session.

Reading for Life online includes basketball games such as Slam Dunk and Basketball Bounce, racing car games Speedy Sounds and Final Lap and Blast Off, a rocket game where buddies race to build their rocket first and launch into outer space.

The program will be trialed in NSW in the first half of 2008 and, subject to all being well, we are hopeful that it will be available for corporates and other supporters in 2009.

Thank you to our wonderful volunteers, supporting organisations and participating schools. We look forward to providing you with updates about the new projects throughout the year.

Dr Danielle Tracey
 National Manager
 Reading & Counting for Life