



Adult Literacy Conference

2nd October 2008



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General Manager – Queensland

The Smith Family

About The Smith Family



Who We Are, and Why We're Different

The Smith Family is a uniquely Australian community organisation with a focus on education and prevention.

- A national, independent, not-for-profit community organisation
- Started by businessmen in 1922
- No religious affiliation, non-political
- Working in and with 133 communities across Australia
- Last year \$32m spent in the community
- Focus on education and inclusion



The Smith Family in Queensland



The Need

Without support, a large proportion of Australia's youth will not achieve to their full potential.

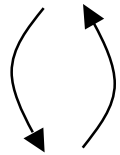
- Over 700,000 children & young people in Australia live in families in poverty, which is 22%
- In Queensland, 26% of households are in the lowest income quintile, and so living in poverty ⁽¹⁾
- Our clients tell us “help our children so that they don't end up where we are”
that *students from disadvantaged backgrounds (low SES) are just as likely as other students to enter university – and they are more likely to go and do well* ⁽³⁾
- Education is a major determinant of labour force outcomes



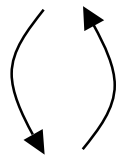
Education and opportunity
is the key to breaking the generational cycle of poverty

What We Do

**Social
Enterprise**



**Commercial
Enterprise**



**Community
Enterprise**

We have a range of preventive educational programs, provided with and through others in community.

- We have a range of programs focused on disadvantaged Australians
 - Key program is *Learning for Life*
- **PLUS** Self help commercial activities (approx \$1.1m profit towards administration costs)
- **PLUS** 25,000 VIEW women in 408 clubs around Australia



Why the challenge?



Too many young people achieve only minimum standards

- Many leave secondary school with only minimal standards of education, giving Australia one of the lowest secondary school completion rates in the OECD
- Young people in the bottom 25 per cent on literacy and numeracy tests in Year 9 are four times more likely to leave school early than those in the top 25 % (Abelson, 2002)
- The Council of Australian Governments (COAG, 2006) has set a goal to improve basic skills among potentially 'at risk' students by:
 - improving the proportion of children acquiring the basic skills for life and learning
 - increasing the proportion of young people meeting basic literacy and numeracy standards, and improving overall levels of achievement.

Why the challenge?



- Young people in the lowest quarter or not completing Year 12 are more likely to experience multiple periods of time outside work and are less likely to engage in further education or training (Hillman, 2005)
- Throughout school there are wide variations in students' levels of achievement – for example, by Year 5, the top 10 per cent of children in reading are at least five years ahead of the bottom 10 per cent (Masters & Forster, 1997).
- Recent results of the first national Numeracy and Literacy tests put Qld trailing other States (is this due to lack of structured Early Years programs?)

Too few people ready for the workforce



- Currently, 87 per cent of available jobs require post-school qualifications, but 50 per cent of the workforce lacks these qualifications (Australian Industry Group, 2006)
- Based on current supply, new entrants and skilled migration, there will be a projected shortfall of 240,000 people with VET qualifications
- Indigenous adults in all age groups remain below the non-Indigenous population: In 2006, 67.34% of Indigenous adults 15 to 64 were in the labour force compared with 76.3% of the non-indigenous population.
- Nearly 40% of sole parents are not in the labour force.
- NESB immigrants have significantly lower participation rates than those from English-speaking backgrounds (52.6% and 65.9% respectively).

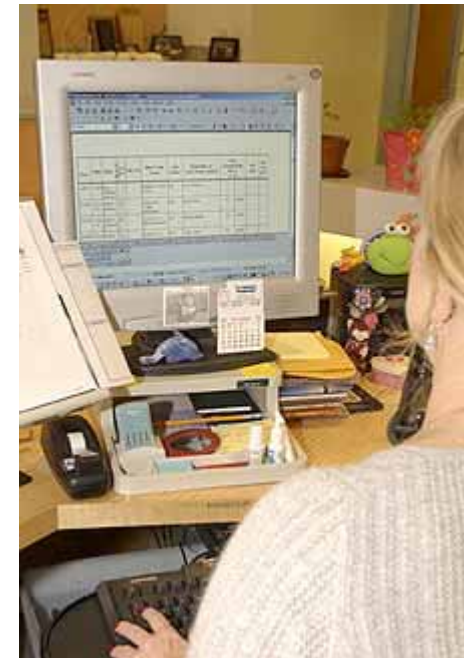
Education and Training Systems for Social Inclusion



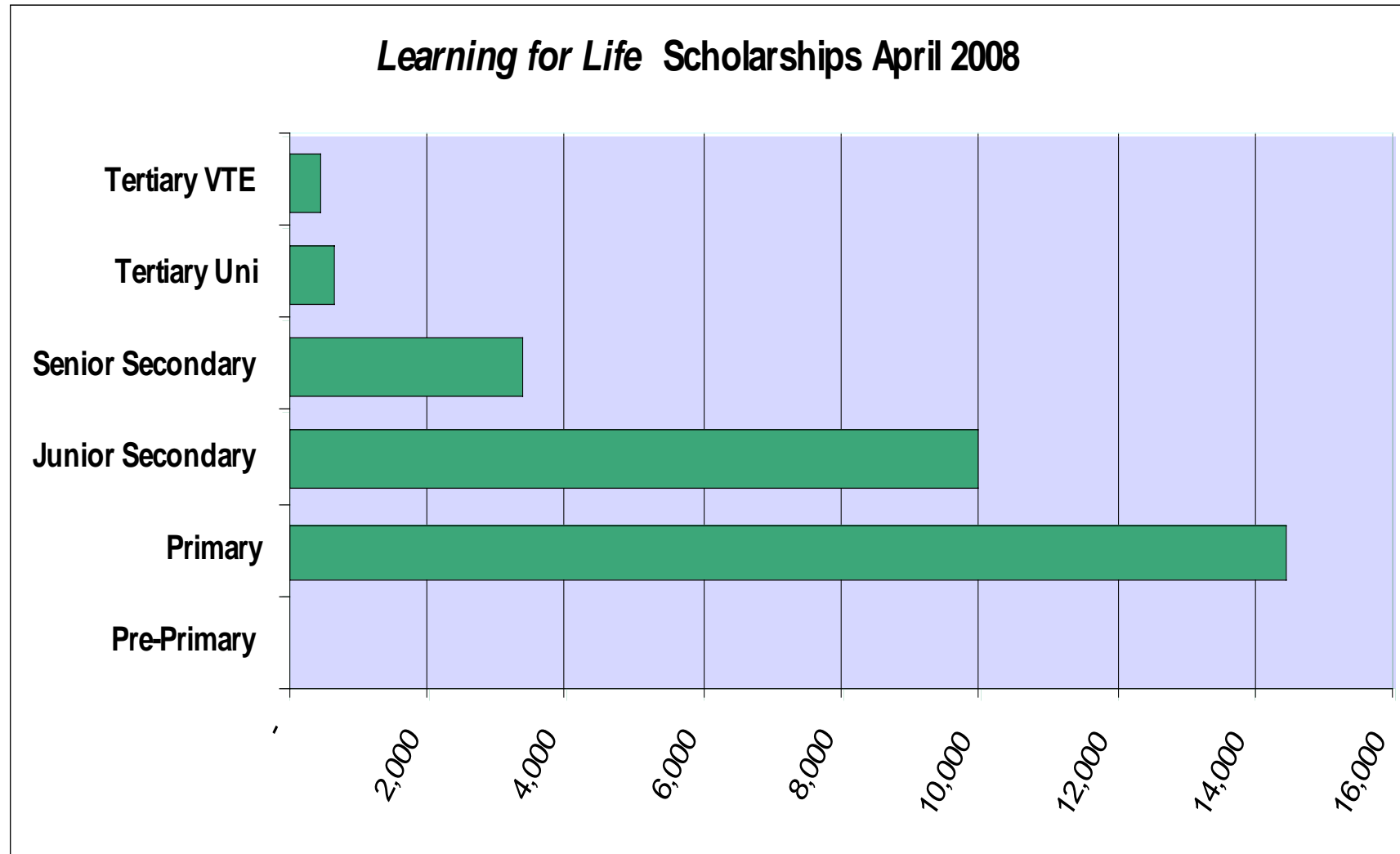
The Response of The Smith Family

Learning for Life Suite of Programs: 4 streams

- The Learning for Life Scholarship
- Literacy:
 - Reading
 - Digital Literacy
 - Financial Literacy
- Personal Support
 - I Track
 - Tertiary mentoring
- Personal Development
 - Non-cognitive skill base development



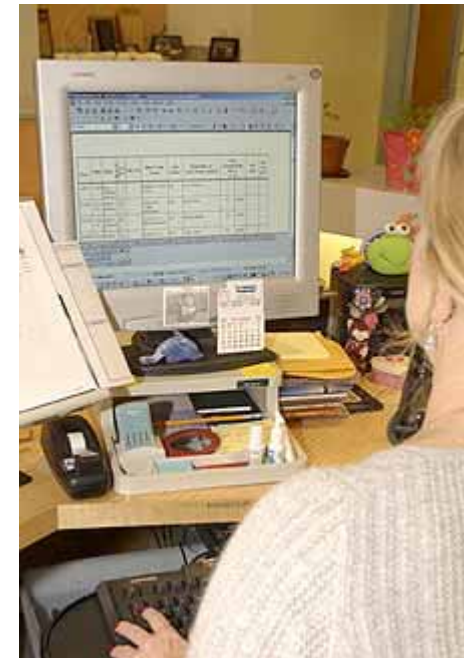
LfL Scholarships: VTE-424; Uni-615; SnrSec-3,385; JnrSec-9,962; Primary 14,402; Pre-Primary-24; Total: 28,812



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Informing our Life-Cycle approach – Population Outcomes



Understanding The Smith Family

Population Group	Early Years	Primary School years	Middle School	Young Adult	Adult
Transition Point					
TSF Programs	Lets Read C4C	LFL Scholarship Student2Student Learning Clubs	I – Track • Mentoring Next Steps	Literacy Tertiary Scholarships • Mentoring	Financial Literacy • Saver Plus • Moneyminded ICT Literacy
Outcomes	School readiness	Numeracy/literacy	Engagement in education	Smooth transition	Skills & capacities
Indicators	Social skills Communication skills Literacy/numeracy skills Physical skills Cognitive skills (AEDI data)	• Yr 3/5/7 Literacy & numeracy assessments • Attendance	• Attendance • Participation • Personal support/development	Post Study ↳ Work ↳ Study (Qld next step data?)	• Life skills • Increased participation • Sustained employment

* C4C – Communities for Children LFL – Learning for Life ICT-Information and Communication Technology

The Smith Family's Population Outcomes?








The five population outcomes decided upon by The Smith Family best reflect our vision, mission, strategy and suite of programs as a social enterprise. They also reflect the emphases of the Council of Australian Governments Human Capital Indicators (the priorities to build Australia's future economic and social prosperity). They are:

- 1. All children are ready for school** – targeting children aged 0-5 years and encompassing the transition from home to school
- 2. All children meet minimum literacy and numeracy standards** – targeting children aged 6-12 with a focus on primary schools
- 3. All young people stay engaged in education and learning** – targeting young people aged 12-16 and encompassing the transition from primary to junior secondary
- 4. All young people make a smooth transition from school to work or further education** – targeting young people aged 16-24
- 5. All parents and carers have the skills and qualifications to lead active and productive lives** (strong families)

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Outcomes Based Accountability



In simple terms, Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) is a disciplined way of thinking and taking action that can be used in two ways:

To align the contribution of organisations in improving the lives of children, families and the community as a whole (the POPULATION level); and

To improve the performance of an organisation's programs (the PERFORMANCE level).

Why is OBA relevant to The Smith Family?

At the POPULATION level, OBA helps TSF understand what we should do if we are to effectively contribute to the wellbeing of disadvantaged children and their families. At the PERFORMANCE level, OBA helps TSF understand how effective we are in actually changing people's lives for the better.

Literacies for the 21st century -- digital, comprehension, financial (2003– 2008)



2003: *Barriers to Participation: Financial, Educational and Technological* provided a platform to consolidate a focus on the development of digital, comprehension, and financial literacy's:

Digital

- National and international research has shown that digital literacy is a key component of engaging individuals in lifelong learning and contributing to social inclusion
- Education levels, opportunities and motivations to learn are strongly tied to a person's ability to access and use technology to its fullest capacity
- Informal community based education where learning can be self-directed and self-paced has been found to be successful in engaging those with the lowest skill, education and employability levels
- TSF takes a lead role in facilitating Microsoft Unlimited Potential network of Community Technology Learning Centre's (CTLCS).

Literacies for the 21st century – digital, comprehension, financial (2003—2008)



Comprehension

- 2003: TSF with CCCH applied evidence from a literature review that identified 'success factors' in raising awareness of the importance of literacy in disadvantaged families to the development of *Let's Read*
- 2006 – 2010: TSF / CCCH / Melbourne University -- an ARC Linkage Grant for a five-year cluster randomised control trial on the effectiveness of *Let's Read* in contributing to the development of pre-literacy skills in families on *Let's Read* in comparison with families not on the program.

Financial

- Research shows multiple gains in wellbeing from higher levels of financial literacy: increased household stability, greater social connectedness and improved health (Sherraden, 2005)
- Improved levels of financial literacy can also have major effects on levels of parents' confidence and their capacity to support their children's education
- TSF evaluates and develops Saver Plus and MoneyMinded and also develops its own Financial Literacy Program.

Dual Generational Learning



- DGL is a strategy for model development in which educational activities and support address the learning needs of more than one generation
- Inequality of family opportunities requires building the capacity of disadvantaged children and their parents in a holistic manner
(2006: Heckman *The Economics of Human Skills*)
- Reflects one of our 8 Guiding Principles: 'be focused on disadvantaged children within the family context'.
- The Smith Family has developed **Families Learning Together**

Families Learning Together (FLT)



Focusing on the *family*: McKinsey research informed a business plan to provide evidence to develop a 'Families Learning Together' (FLT) model.

FLT encourages all family members independently and together to engage in learning by providing:

- *Early education and development* for children to aid their cognitive and non-cognitive development and assist their transition to school
- *Parenting education for adults* to build their confidence and capacity to provide a stable home environment
- *Adult education for parents* to assist them in engaging in learning opportunities and improving their prospects to enter the workforce
- *Parent and Child Together Time* improves skills and strengthens relationships and communication within families.