



# Media Release

## Let's Build Child Literacy Skills

2 June 2017

Recent surveys indicate that one in two Buloke children is below the expected level of oral language development. Buloke Shire Council in collaboration with Mallee Family Care and early years professionals are taking on the cause of improving oral language development and literacy amongst children in the Early Years across Buloke head on by establishing an Early Years Network.

The aims of this network are to provide both support to professionals working with, and families of children aged zero to eight years. As a first step Nikki Coatsworth (Wycheproof P-12 School) will this month present a workshop, 'Reading for Fun', in Charlton and Sea Lake.

These workshops for families will highlight the importance of reading to children.

Learning to read begins at birth with parents holding their baby and reading children's stories. Snuggling up with people we love and who care for us to share a story establishes strong and positive relationships that lead to a better ability to communicate, express feelings and is the first step to building a child's literacy skills.

Nikki is an experienced educator having undertaken her education training at Fort Lauderdale, Florida in the United States of America before moving to Australia where she has since worked at both Birchip and Wycheproof P-12 schools. She is the parent of six year old twins and is a passionate believer in giving young children the best start in life though reading and talking to them from birth. She loves the work she undertakes as an Early Years educator relishing the fun and excitement she experiences every day as she works with her Early Years class as each child learns and develops their skills.

Nikki believes, "Our babies and children are our most precious resource and we need to do whatever we can for each individual to make sure they reach their fullest potential".

As both a parent and an educator Nikki understands the challenges confronting young families. Her workshops are fun and engaging. If you are the parents of, or look after children aged between zero and eight years of age this opportunity is not to be missed.

These workshops will take place on Thursday 15 June 2017 at St Joseph's Multipurpose Room in Charlton at 9.15am and a repeat session in the north of the Shire at the Sea Lake Community Centre at 2.00pm.

Childcare and refreshments will be available. These workshops will be a fun way to hear more about making sure your children go leaping into reading.

For more information on these workshops or on child literacy contact Council's Development Officer – Child and Youth Barry McKenzie on 1300 520 520.

### End release

For further information contact Media and Communications Officer, Travis Fitzgibbon on 1300 520 520 or [tfitzgibbon@buloke.vic.gov.au](mailto:tfitzgibbon@buloke.vic.gov.au)