

First 2000 Days-Project outline

Project of the Combined Rotary Clubs of the Illawarra-Corrimal, Dapto, Kiama and Fairy Meadow.

Background

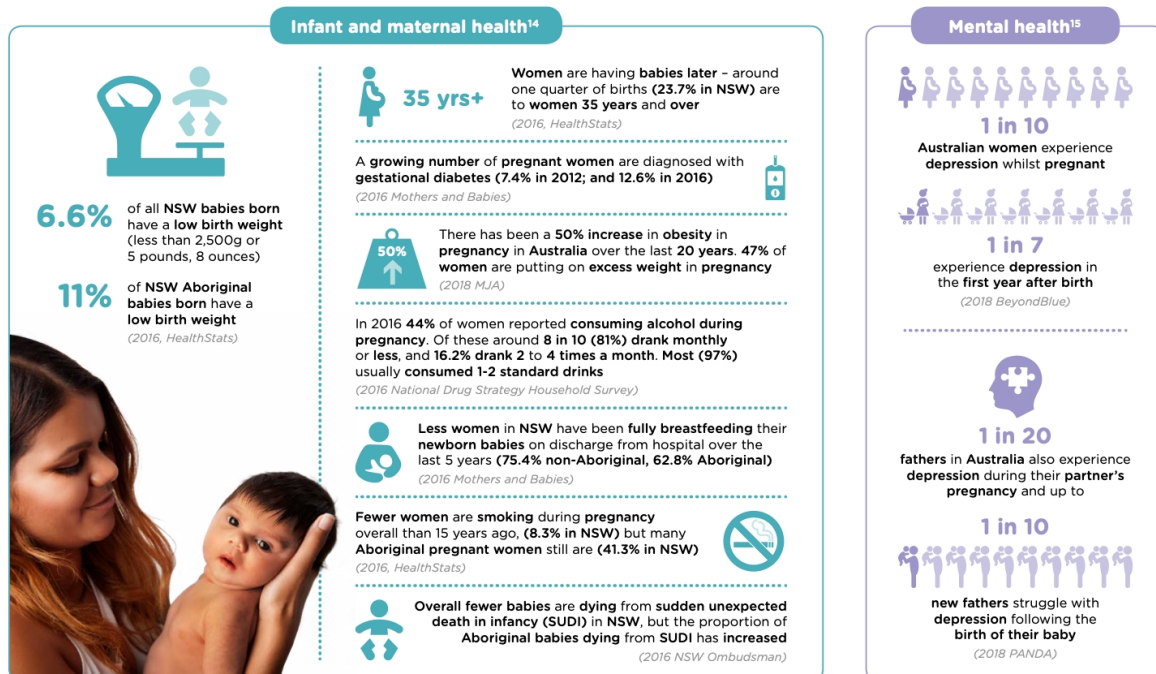
The first 2000 days is a critical time for physical, cognitive, social, and emotional health. What happens in the first 2000 days has been shown to have an impact throughout life.

For example, early life experiences are:

- strongly predictive of how a child will learn in primary school
- a predictor of school performance, adolescent pregnancy, and involvement with the criminal justice system in the adolescent years
- linked to increased risk of drug and alcohol misuse and increased risk of antisocial and violent behaviour
- related to obesity, elevated blood pressure and depression in 20–40-year-olds
- predictive of coronary heart disease and diabetes in 40–60-year-olds
- related to premature ageing and memory loss in older age groups.

Research

The first 2000 days is everyone's responsibility



Risk factors that have a significant impact on a child's health and wellbeing emerge across a number of health domains. This section includes key statistics that demonstrate the prevalence of these risk factors.

Harm to mothers, babies and children¹⁶



The number of child concern reports made to the NSW Child Protection Helpline is increasing (278,521 reports in 2015-16)
(2016 NSW FACS)



In 2014-15 in NSW 41% of children were re-reported at risk of significant harm within 12 months of the last report
(2016 NSW FACS)

Physical abuse and neglect are the most frequently reported forms of harm to children in NSW, followed by sexual abuse, domestic and family violence and drug and alcohol abuse by a carer
(2016 NSW FACS)

Early childhood development¹⁷

1 in 5 (20.2%) children starting their first year of school in NSW are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains
(2015 AEDC)



1 in 5



2 in 5 (42%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in NSW are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains
(2015 AEDC)



Childhood health¹⁸

1 in 6



1 in 6 (16.4%) 2 to 4 year olds in NSW are overweight or obese
(2014-15 ABS)

Over 80% of obese children go on to become obese adults while only 15% of healthy weight children go on to become obese adults
(2011 Juonala M et al.)



93.3% of all 5 year olds are fully immunised in NSW, and 96.5% of Aboriginal 5 year olds are fully immunised
(2016 Health Stats)



HEALTHY, SAFE AND WELL:

A strategic health plan for children, young people and families in NSW 2014-24

The First 2000 Days Framework



Mental health: Perinatal and infant mental health, Adult, Child and Youth, Older person

Maternity, Child and Family Health: Child and family health, Maternity, Neonatal, Paediatric medicine, Surgery for children, Youth health

Underpinning all work in the first 2000 days are workers' responsibilities to identify and respond whenever child protection and wellbeing concerns arise.

The cumulation of the overall research has demonstrated:

A: What occurs to the mother in the antenatal period can have significant impact on the life of a person.

B: Brain development i.e., full development of neural pathways occurs in the first 5 years of a child's life.

C: Childhood experiences have a significant impact on development.

More information:

[Link to more information](#) [First 2000 Days Framework](#).

Current Situation

The aim of the project will be to support the dissemination of information (the results of the research) and strategies under the First 2000 Days Framework to local disadvantaged groups. We will work closely with Jenny Claridge from the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District to link Jenny and her team with the local organisations with which we have an established relationship. Using the local organisations to target the families who are disadvantaged and who may not access this information through normal channels.

This project:

- will be a Rotary Illawarra Centenary Project for 2021-22 involving Fairy Meadow, Corrimal, Dapto, and Kiama Clubs
- has the potential to impact positively on the health and well-being of young children and families in our local community
- will involve working with local groups with which we have already formed an alliance: Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation, Illawarra Koori Men's Support Group, Combined Illawarra Rotary Clubs Imagination Library, GoodStart Early Childhood Centre-Dapto, Wollongong Homeless Hub, Supported Accommodation and Homelessness Services Illawarra Shoalhaven (SAHSSI), Strategic Community Assistance to Refugee Families (SCARF). Plus, others that emerge if the project goes ahead.

The plan outlined below will:

Activity	When
Consult with Dr Elisabeth Murphy's team, New Generations Directorate, and local Department of Health personnel	July 2021-completed. Dr Murphy is very supportive of the project.
Consult with Jenny Claridge Co-Director Kids & Families Operational Manager Child Health & VAN Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	August 2021. Jenny Claridge is very supportive of the project and sees the strategies as a significant way of disseminating information to disadvantaged groups through our network.
Formation of the steering committee and development of an implementation plan.	October 2021
Develop a series of short videos on key concepts with DoH. This will be made available for delivery via YouTube.	January-February 2022
Development of promotional materials (pamphlets, flyers, posters) including a branding concept. These would be given to local disadvantaged groups identified in the project. Links to services and more information would be included in the materials. Using our contacts with local refugee groups we anticipate translating these	February - March 2022



materials into different languages (the number of languages will be determined on the most significant need and resources available).	
Planning meeting with local agencies @ BlueScope Visitors Centre	8 February 2021-1 pm – 4 pm
Launch of the project to local groups advertised through social media and print, radio	22nd February- 1-3 pm (needs to be confirmed by 18 January)
Local media campaign to spread the word (local papers, radio, and social media).	January-May 2022
Work with the NSW Department of Health (DoH) to deliver small group forums to Illawarra residents, targeting disadvantaged groups who are unable to attend larger groups due to social and mental health issues.	As organised with the DoH. Tentatively March – June 2022.
Evaluate the strategies: via survey, numbers attending the forums, hits on our social media, structured interviews with partner organisations.	During the period March-May 2022
Compilation of the final report	June 2022.

Meeting the needs of the community

The research has highlighted the need to disseminate the information and results to families of young children in our local community. The groups of families supported by the organisations listed in the project brief are very disadvantaged financially and often have poor literacy skills and access to information. This will also reach culturally and linguistically diverse groups (CALD). This project will use our existing networks/organisations, working with them to engage disadvantaged and marginalised groups and support the dissemination of the information being produced by the DoH.

In addition, with the help of groups such as SCARF and our local Illawarra Rotaract Club (many who are former refugees or children of former refugees) we will translate the key messages provided by the DoH into several languages for increased access. SCARF and the Illawarra Rotaractors will also be able to liaise with families in a culturally sensitive manner. This is also true in working with our indigenous organisations who will be able to target families in their communities in a culturally sensitive manner.

The project can impact many disadvantaged families and strengthen our ties with the local organisations supporting them.

Sustainability of the project

We believe that this endeavour has potential to be ongoing after this initial project. Given the impact of COVID restrictions on the community cohort we are targeting and the resulting increased risks to them due to lost employment, stress, and social isolation, we feel there will be an ongoing need for this information to be disseminated.

The results of the project will be measured by:

- the number of people attending the forums
- feedback via a social media campaign i.e., number of hits and engagement. The articles in the local papers will direct people to our social media sites



- an evaluation survey following the forums to judge the impact of the information presented on participants
- anecdotal feedback using a structured interview technique on the impact of the project will be conducted with the organisations involved.

The project evaluation will then inform the steering committee and participating clubs how best to work with the organisations identified to continue the project beyond June 2022.

Budget

We have sought funding under at District Grant (Rotary District 9675). We have received \$3100.

The four Rotary Clubs involved have committed one thousand days each. \$4000

BlueScope have kindly offered the use of the Visitors Centre for no cost for meetings. Also, the printing of all promotional material.

Conclusion

This project has the potential to impact significantly on disadvantaged families in our local community using the well-established networks developed by Rotary in the Illawarra over many years of community involvement.

Julie Collareda
Assistant Governor, Northern Illawarra
Mobile: 0416120201
Email: jcollareda@gmail.com

Kerrie Guillaume
Assistant Governor, Southern Illawarra
Mobile: 0402795756
Email: south.illawarra.ag@gmail.com