Centre for Community Child Health

Exploring the impact of community hubs on school readiness

Summary report

Centre for Community Child Health

Exploring the impact of Community Hubs on school readiness: Summary report
Version 1.1

Prepared by:
Sophie Rushton, Rebecca Fry, Tim Moore, Noushin Arefadib and Sue West

Centre for Community Child Health
The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne
50 Flemington Road, Parkville
Victoria 3052 Australia
Telephone +61 9345 6150
Email enquiries.ccch@rch.org.au
www.rch.org.au/ccch

Contents

Introduction

This report summarises findings from the Centre for Community Child Health's investigation into the impact of community hubs on school readiness. It outlines what the evidence tells us about school readiness and why this is an important issue for migrant and refugee children and their families, services and schools. It provides key project insights and implications for practice, policy and research. Further information about the project's methodology and findings, including a literature review and four case studies, is detailed in the project's full report.

Context and methodology

The community hubs model is a place-based and citizen centric approach to supporting migrant and refugee families in their local communities (Wong, Press & Cumming, 2015). There are currently 39 hubs embedded in primary schools and community centres across Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland (Community Hubs, 2016). They act as a gateway to services, information and learning, and enable families to increase their connections with their local community.

Building on the findings of the 2015 community hubs evaluation (Wong et al., 2015), the Centre for Community Child Health at Murdoch Childrens Research Institute was engaged by Community Hubs Australia to explore the impact of community hubs on children's school readiness. The project involved a rapid review of the school readiness research evidence, updating the Centre for Community Child Health's Policy Brief on *Rethinking School Readiness* (2008), and a pragmatic search for quantitative data and peer-reviewed studies to contextualise school readiness issues for migrant, refugee and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) families in Australia. Four long-standing community hubs within Hume City Council, one of the most diverse municipalities in Victoria, were engaged in the qualitative case study inquiry. Hubs were selected based on their length of operation and co-location with primary schools. Five semi-structured group or individual interviews were held with a total of nine participants (four school principals, an assistant principal and four hub leaders). Interview questions were designed to uncover insights about changes in school readiness components, however the most significant change methodology (Davies & Dart, 2005) was not followed.

What the evidence tells us

School readiness

What is school readiness?

Traditionally, school readiness has been thought of as a simple outcome of maturation or chronological age and has focused on the skills and capacities needed by children to benefit from formal instruction and classroom experiences (eg. Bierman et al., 2017; Morrison & Hindman, 2012). Once these capacities were demonstrated (or achieved), the child was considered to be ready for school. The implication was that early childhood services and communities did not have any role to play in promoting school readiness, nor did schools have to do anything about getting ready to meet the child's needs (Centre for Community Child Health, 2008).

This view of school readiness has been shown to be too limited. Readiness does not lie solely in the child, but reflects the environments in which children find themselves – their families, early childhood settings, schools, neighbourhoods, and communities (Kagan & Rigby, 2003). School readiness is now seen to have three interrelated components: children's readiness for school, schools' readiness for children, and the capacity of families and communities to provide the necessary opportunities, conditions and supports to optimise children's development and learning (Centre for Community Child Health, 2008; Dockett et al., 2010: Emig et al., 2001; Sayers et al., 2012).

Why is it important?

School entry involves a key transition for all children and a time of potential challenge and stress for children and families (Hirst et al., 2011). This transition is not just *to* school, but *from* home, childcare, preschool and kindergarten. It is a transition not just from early care and learning environments, but often from small-scale to large-scale interactions, from highly personalised to less personalised relationships, and from environments with a limited range of ages to an institution with children of many ages. It is a transition to a different learning, education and care paradigm. How well children are prepared for this transition is important as it impacts on their long term outcomes (Centre for Community Child Health, 2008; Hirst, 2011; Sayers et al., 2012)

In Australia, children enter school with marked differences in the cognitive, non-cognitive and social skills needed for success in the school environment (Brinkman et al., 2012; Goldfeld & West, 2014). These initial differences are predictive of later academic and occupational success (Boethel, 2004; Cunha & Heckman, 2009; Dockett & Perry, 2001, 2007; Le et al, 2006). This is partly because skills develop cumulatively, so that those acquired early form a sound basis for later skill development (Cunha et al, 2006). Schools struggle to overcome these initial differences in children (Cunha et al, 2006; Karoly et al, 2005). Schools therefore have a vested interest in ensuring that children arrive at school ready to continue learning. School 'un-readiness' is expensive (Bruner et al, 2005): later attempts to compensate for un-readiness are less effective and may be more expensive than providing the resources, programs and supports needed to ensure that children start school ready to continue learning (Cunha et al, 2006).

What does the research tell us?

Research suggests there are a number of factors that either facilitate or hinder school readiness; these can be at the level of the individual, the family, early childhood services, schools and the community. Evidence indicates the best approach to promoting children's readiness is to concentrate on providing children with environments and experiences that maximise learning (Gopnik, 2016). Positive relationships with caregivers (Cozolino, 2012), nurturing home environments (Janus, 2011; Edwards et al., 2009) and participation in high quality early childhood education and care programs (Farrar et al, 2007; Fox & Geddes, 2016; Yoshikawa et al., 2013) are key factors known to promote school readiness.

Research also tells us that effective transition programs and 'ready schools' promote smooth transitions from early years programs to schools and are particularly beneficial for children from disadvantaged backgrounds (Schulting et al, 2005). The key features of effective transition programs include relationships, parent and caregiver involvement, school involvement and collaboration between educators. Schools also need to be able to provide options that meet the diverse needs of the children they enrol and their families (Hirst et al., 2011; Petriwskyj, 2010; Pramling & Samuelsson, 2012). Creating welcoming and supportive environments tailored for the needs of each child is critical – as Peters (2010) observes, 'almost any child is at risk of making a poor or less successful transition if their individual characteristics are incompatible with the features of the environment they encounter'.

Migrant and refugee children and families
Issues at school entry

There is a growing body of evidence which indicates children who begin school with limited proficiency in the language of instruction at school are more likely to experience poorer outcomes across a range of health and developmental domains that exceed language and academic challenges (Dawson & Williams, 2008; Dowdy, Dever, DiStefano & Chin 2011; Goldfeld, O'Connor, Mithen, Sayers, & Brinkman, 2014; Han, 2010). For example, a recent Australian study (Goldfeld et al., 2014) found that children who were not proficient in English when they began school were significantly more likely to be developmentally vulnerable across four Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) domains (physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, and language and cognitive development) at school entry. The unique vulnerabilities experienced by

CALD children were raised in the 2015 State of Victoria's Children Report (Department of Education and Training, 2016) which reported that children from non-English speaking backgrounds demonstrated higher rates of antisocial behaviours, peer problems and emotional symptoms, than the general population upon school entry.

One of the most commonly cited factors that contributes to discrepancies in levels of early childhood vulnerability is poverty. Given evidence that shows CALD families face disproportionally high rates of unemployment and poverty (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011; Parliament of Australia, 2014) there are strong grounds for the assertion that CALD children are among those living in the most economically disadvantaged areas of Australia. Results from the 2015 AEDC national report show that children living in the most economically disadvantaged areas of Australia are more than twice as likely to be developmentally vulnerable than those living in the least disadvantaged areas (four times as likely to be behind in language and cognitive skills) (Productivity Commission, 2016).

Engagement in early childhood services

Children from non-English speaking backgrounds are among those who are most likely to miss out on early childhood education experiences (Baxter & Hand, 2013). Data also indicates lower levels of participation by CALD children and their families in early childhood services, including preschool and maternal and child health (MCH), compared to the national average (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2004, 2009; Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2013; McDonald, Turner, & Gray, 2014; Productivity Commission, 2014). There are many potential reasons for this underutilisation of services including: negative perceptions of formal service institutions; language and cultural barriers; lack of awareness of available services; lack of awareness of the importance of early learning, development and the value of play-based activities; and competing priorities, i.e. newly arrived families living in low socioeconomic areas or in poverty often have other issues superseding early childhood development (Carbone, Fraser, Ramburuth & Nelms, 2004; Rogers & Martin, 2004; KPMG, 2006; Department of Education and Training, 2016).

Such trends are echoed by state and community-based research which indicate lower early childhood education and care (ECEC) participation and engagement rates by CALD children (e.g. Rogers & Martin, 2004; Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2011; Victorian Foundation for the Survivors of Torture, 2004).

Family awareness

There is evidence of low levels of awareness of ECEC and its importance by CALD Australian families, especially those relatively new to Australia and/or non-English speakers (Rogers & Martin, 2004) and families from a refugee background (Multicultural Development Association, 2012). Many parents also had little to no understanding of child development, and lacked the personal resources to meet their child's developmental needs without assistance (Rogers & Martin, 2004). An Australian national survey of CALD parents with children birth to age eight also found that these parents were less likely than other parents to be aware of the importance of the early years, including engagement with ECEC services, and the value of home-based learning (Winter, 2010).

The effect of community hubs on school readiness

Principals and hub leaders were invited to share the most significant changes they had observed in school readiness by children, families, early childhood services and schools, and how these changes came about. Case studies showcasing the four selected hubs' work to promote school readiness and the effects of this work are presented in the full report. Overall, hubs provided numerous examples of positive changes in children's

readiness for school, schools' readiness for children and in family conditions and environments that influence children's learning.

Children's readiness for school

Children's smooth transition to school and their increased confidence and familiarity with hub and school environments was highlighted as a significant change created by hubs. Principals and hub leaders spoke of how early education experiences and hub transition efforts minimised children's distress and promoted a sense of belonging and wellbeing when starting school.

> *What I see [about children] is an ownership of the space, and the school already…this is their school…they're really happy to be here, and to connect to teachers who they're familiar with, who they've already had heaps of conversations with. (Acting principal)*

All hubs reported general improvements in children's skills and abilities upon school entry (since commencement of the hub model) and attributed this to their increased exposure to and participation in early learning programs and activities. Improvements included English language skills, including the capacity to follow instructions, early literacy and numeracy, and the ability to follow school routines.

Schools' readiness for children

An early focus on transition has also resulted in teachers gaining a better understanding of children and families arriving at school. Teachers were reported to have greater awareness about the circumstances of migrant and refugee families and the degree of cultural and linguistic diversity in the local community.

> *I think what it has done is raise the awareness of our teachers of how many different languages we have here…a little bit of understanding around what it might be like to not be able to participate in that as freely as you'd want. That cultural stuff about what's polite to ask and not…We're constantly building that understanding that when people don't return notices or do exactly what it is that we ask when we send home a notice in English, that there's some reasons why. (Hub leader)*

This enhanced understanding of children and families' needs at school commencement has accelerated the development of relevant learning programs and led to adaptations in practices such as parent and teacher interviews. Although few specific strategies or resources schools used to cater for the diverse needs of children once they started school were raised, broader strategies, such as the need for all staff to foster an inclusive and welcoming school environment, have been implemented.

Family conditions, environments and supports for children's learning

Positive changes in families' social and emotional environments were described in interviews, with increased parent confidence, a sense of belonging and wellbeing all recurrent themes across the hubs. Principals and hub leaders emphasised that family engagement with hub activities and community services had led to these changes in self-confidence and wellbeing. They considered this to be foundational to families' abilities to function positively within the school community and, in turn, support an effective transition to school. Many stories of families engaging in adult education programs, such as English language and vocational training, enabled through increased self-confidence, were also shared.

> *[Through] having more participation and being engaged in their children's learning, it's helped to build the confidence of families too. I know of a particular parent who bought her children here for kindergarten, would pass by the office and have her head down just so no one would say hello to her because she was really embarrassed to speak in English because she didn't find*

herself adequate enough. We worked with this mother for a long time, and just kept insisting on making her talk and speak in English…[now] she's off doing courses here, there and everywhere. (Principal)

Stories of increased parent understanding of the expectations and practicalities of school, critical to supporting a smooth transition to school, as well as increased family involvement in school were raised.

For parents, it's still part of their journey…understanding their role in their children's learning, that they are their children's first teachers. They continue to be the most significant teacher in their child's life. They don't just drop the children at the front door, push them in, but that learning continues…For some families, it's been understanding schooling in Australia because it's much different to what they have experienced. (Principal)

Several participants commented on effect of family involvement in the school in terms of the sense of pride children showed in their parents when leading a school activity: '*they're proud of it, they think it's important*' *(Hub leader)*.

Hubs also spoke of providing parents with developmentally appropriate activities to undertake at home with their children, however specific examples of changes in the home learning environment were not provided.

Common features of the hubs' approach

Principals and hub leaders spoke of implementing responsive, relationship-based approaches, informed by the needs of their communities, to achieve these changes. Common features within hubs' approaches were: relationship-building practices; family engagement; an early focus on transition; flexibility and adaptability; and coordination.

Investment in relationships

It is just about relationships really. Having good relationships with people, because if you do then it will make it a successful school place for the kids and the parents. (Hub leader)

Principals and hub leaders reflected that the hub model has facilitated the development of relationships between families, services and schools, which has had a powerful role in promoting family involvement in the hub and school. Authentic and responsive relationships with children by both hub and school staff has also been a central feature of hubs.

Family engagement

You're often seeing parents enter the classroom more so than what we ever did in the past. (Hub leader)

A dedicated outward facing role and the development of warm, trusting relationships between families and hub workers has underpinned families' participation at the hubs and, in turn, at school and more widely in the community. The benefits of family involvement and a school and family 'alliance' to promote children's learning have been increasingly recognised through the work of hubs.

The establishment and ongoing promotion of a culture of inclusion at the hubs was also emphasised as critical, with principals and hub leaders noting that all staff from teachers to administrative staff must be on board with an inclusive and family-centred approach for it to be effective and break down barriers for families. This was noted to be particularly important for families with a refugee background, who could view the school as an institutional service and a 'very scary place'.

Early focus on transition

> *The more we can give them in the early years, the more successful they'll be. (Principal)*

All hubs described the need for children and families to begin to prepare for the transition to school at a young age, not just in the year before school, and described facilitating this by developing families' understanding of the importance of the early years and providing connections into early learning. Hubs offered children a range of early education experiences (e.g. playgroup, supported playgroup, kindergarten) and reported that the model had contributed to more CALD, migrant and refugee children participating in playgroups and kindergarten in their communities.

Flexibility and adaptability

> *I think just an openness to being flexible and possibly needing to change the model to make it work. (Hub leader)*

Principals and hub leaders indicated that services and schools have increased recognition of the need to adjust and adapt practices to better support the diverse needs of children and families. At all hubs, participants reported kindergartens and schools working together to adapt school transition processes to improve the transition experience for children and families. For example, changes to the timing, length, frequency, resources and range of activities in transition programs were made at various hubs.

Coordination

> *We talk closely with them [educators], that's the main thing. (Hub leader)*

Hubs spoke of improved coordination between services and schools to achieve the common goal of improved children's learning. This incorporated information sharing, network meetings, joint activities and programs, and different professionals working together to facilitate holistic support for families and their children. Some hubs noted coordination with secondary services, such as speech pathology and nutrition, had also developed since the hub's inception. However, hubs were not immune from common coordination challenges, particularly when there was a high turnover of staff.

Lessons and improvements

Principals and hub leaders reflected on the journey of their hub and the lessons learned. They emphasised the importance of effective and early engagement of families and the time it takes to build an inclusive culture across the entire school and community. Participants also learnt about the benefits of taking an integrated approach to promoting school readiness and children's learning by working closely with schools, services and the community and the importance of clear transition pathways from playgroup to kindergarten and on to school.

Improvements hubs considered might assist their work to promote school readiness included continuing to be flexible and adapt to changing community needs; the need for outreach to reach and engage additional families; investing more resources into early learning (i.e. playgroups and three year old kindergarten); providing childcare for families attending adult-focused hub activities; improving community facilities; and better measuring success to maintain sufficient funding and resourcing for ongoing activity.

Alignment of community hubs to the evidence

There is sufficient evidence from various demonstration projects, such as the Toronto First Duty Project (Arimura et al., 2011), that community hubs can be an effective way of promoting healthy child development

and learning, seamless transitions to school, and parental engagement with the education system. The findings from the present study support this general conclusion.

Key observations concerning the alignment between the case study findings and the literature concerning the factors that promote school readiness are as follows:

- School community hubs increase the likelihood of smooth transitions by providing facilitated playgroups and kindergarten programs on school sites. Although co-location of services is not a guarantee of collaboration, the findings indicate that school and kindergarten staff did, in fact, work together in adapting and improving the transition experience for children and families. Other features of effective transition programs, such as relationship-building practices and an extended transition period (well beyond the year before school), were consistently reported by hubs.

- Hubs reported that more CALD, migrant and refugee children were now participating in playgroups and kindergarten in their communities. However, it is unclear whether these programs were of the kind identified in the literature as best practice. There is nothing to suggest otherwise – this study simply did not explore this aspect in any detail.

- Models of school readiness clearly identify 'ready schools' as a key component in supporting smooth transitions to school. There is little in the findings of this study to indicate what specific strategies or resources schools used to cater for the diverse needs of new students once they had started school. This does not mean that schools did not use such strategies, or do a good job of catering for individual differences.

- Hubs have provided families with examples of how they might implement developmentally appropriate activities at home, although there was no direct evidence of the extent to which this was effective in changing children's home learning environments. While the hubs described facilitating school transition by providing more practical connections into early learning and promoting the importance of the early years, it is not clear what proactive strategies are being employed to share this knowledge around the importance of the early years with families.

Key observations concerning the alignment between the case study findings and the literature concerning processes for ensuring successful provision of school readiness support are as follows:

- The hub model helped greatly in building positive relationships between staff (both early childhood and school staff) and parents. Inevitably, this took time to achieve, but the positive and trusting relationships that resulted helped ensure greater parental involvement in the early childhood and school programs, and greater capacity to support their children's learning. However, it is not clear whether this was universal result or whether there were some families with whom staff were unable to build strong relationships and who therefore failed to attend regularly or at all.

- Hubs succeeded in promoting positive collaborative relationships between school and early childhood staff, with many positive benefits for the children's transition to school.

- The hub model also appears to have contributed to a better integrated support system for families although the nature and extent of these connections were not explored in any detail.

Taken together, the case study findings suggest that the community hubs are largely succeeding in their central task – of ensuring that children arrive at school ready and able to take advantage of the learning and social opportunities that schools provide. The findings also show that the community hubs have had wider benefits for families – most notably building the confidence of parents to be involved in education, including building

their own vocational skills. This is in keeping with reviews that suggest that school community hubs have the capacity to achieve a range of positive outcomes beyond the immediate school readiness agenda (Arimura et al., 2011; Horn et al., 2015; McShane et al., 2012; Wong et al., 2015).

Implications

The evidence stresses the importance of school readiness and the subsequent benefits of children arriving at school ready to make the most of the rich learning opportunities available. Data suggests that CALD children are among the most developmentally vulnerable in the Australian community and that it is important to intervene early before differences in ability gaps become fixed and difficult to close. Such interventions should focus on all three components of school readiness simultaneously: children's readiness for school, schools' readiness for children, and the capacity of families and communities to provide the necessary opportunities, conditions and supports to optimise children's development and learning.

The community hubs model is a promising approach to enhancing migrant and refugee children's school readiness that addresses these three components. The case studies provide insights about the strengths of the model, including relationship-building practices, family engagement, an early start to transition, coordination and the adaptation of services to better meet the needs of children and families.

The case study hubs provided evidence of:
- Facilitating practical connections into early learning, which appeared to result in the increased participation of CALD, migrant and refugee children in playgroups and kindergarten in their communities
- A smooth transition for children and families, enhanced by the co-location of hubs and schools
- Positive relationships between staff (both early childhood and school staff), parents and children
- Collaborative relationships between school and early childhood staff, with many positive benefits for the children's transition to school
- Action to build family capacity and the quality of the home learning environment
- Building a more integrated support system for children and families in local communities

Project findings about the hubs promoting children's early education experiences, a smooth transition to school, positive relationships between hubs and families and collaboration between schools and services align with 2015 evaluation results (Wong et al., 2015).

The project findings also provide insights about areas for possible hub focus, investigation and/or improvement. These include:
- Ensuring the most vulnerable families are reached and engaged by community hubs
- Investigating and monitoring the quality of playgroup programs and practices, as well as other strategies designed to build family capacity and improve the home learning environment, to ensure they align with best practice
- Investment in strategies that proactively share the importance of the early years with families
- Exploring and/or developing further specific 'ready school' strategies to cater for the diverse needs of children once they start school

Creating evidence-informed resources to support practice monitoring and evaluation, targeting the above areas of focus, and capturing and sharing exemplars across community hubs could provide two main benefits. First, important evidence on the program's implementation and outcomes will be collected and documented. Second, this information could be used to inform local community hub planning and improvements so as to amplify the positive impact of hubs on children, families, communities and schools.

References

Arimura, T.M., Corter, C., Pelletier, J., Janmohamed, Z., Patel, S., Ioannone, P. & Mir, S. (2011). *Schools as integrated hubs for young children and families: A Canadian experiment in community readiness – The Toronto First Duty Project.* Pp 189-202 in D.M. Laverick & M.R. Jalongo (Eds.), Transitions to Early Care and Education: International Perspectives on Making Schools Ready for Young Children. Springer Netherlands.

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2004). *Australian social trends, ABS, Canberra.* Retrieved from http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/30EDAC9D34AFC189CA256E9E0028706F?opendocument

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2009). *Preschool attendance. In Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian social trends*. Canberra: ABS. Retrieved from http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features40Dec+2009

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2011). *Perspectives on Migrants: Characteristics of Recent Migrants*. Retrieved from http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/3416.0Main+Features22011?OpenDocument

Australian Institute of Family Studies. (2013). *Access to early childhood education in Australia*. Research Report No. 24. Retrieved from https://aifs.gov.au/publications/access-early-childhood-education-australia/executive-summary

Baxter, J. and Hand, K. (2013). *Access to early childhood education in Australia*. AIFS Research Report No. 24. Melbourne, Victoria: Australian Institute of Family Studies. Retrieved from http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/resreport24/rr24.pdf

Bierman, K., Morris, P., and Abenavoli, R. (2017). *Parent Engagement Practices Improve Outcomes for Preschool Children.* Princeton, New Jersey: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Retrieved from http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/issue_briefs/2017/rwjf432769

Boethel, M. (2004). *Readiness: School, family, and community connections.* Austin, Texas: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

Brinkman, S.A., Gialamas, A., Rahman, A., Mittinty, M.N., Gregory, T.A., Silburn, S., Goldfeld, S., Zubrick, S., Carr, V., Janus, M., Hertzman, C. & Lynch, J.W. (2012). Jurisdictional, socioeconomic and gender inequalities in child health and development: analysis of a national census of 5-year-olds in Australia. *BMJ Open, 2* (5), e001075. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2012-001075

Bruner, C. with Floyd, S. and Copeman, A. (2005). *Seven Things Policy Makers Need to Know About School Readiness*. Des Moines, Iowa: State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network

Carbone, S., Fraser, A., Ramburuth, R., & Nelms, L. (2004). *Breaking Cycles, Building Futures, Promoting inclusion of vulnerable families in antenatal and universal early childhood services: A report on the first three stages of the project, Victorian Department of Human Services, Melbourne*. Retrieved from https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/beststart/ecs_breaking_cycles_best_start.pdf

Centre for Community Child Health (2008). *Rethinking school readiness.* CCCH Policy Brief No. 10. Parkville, Victoria: Centre for Community Child Health, The Royal Children's Hospital. Retrieved from http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/ccch/PB10_SchoolReadiness.pdf

Cozolino, L. (2012). *The Social Neuroscience of Education: Optimizing Attachment and Learning in the Classroom.* New York: W.W. Norton.

Cunha, F. and Heckman, J.J. (2009). The economics and psychology of inequality and human development. *Journal of the European Economic Association,* 7 (2-3), 320-364.

Cunha, F., Heckman, J.J., Lochner, L.J. and Masterov, D.V. (2006). Interpreting the evidence on life cycle skill formation. In E. Hanushek and F. Welch (Eds.), *Handbook of the Economics of Education.* Amsterdam: North-Holland.

Dawson B. A., & Williams, S. (2008). The impact of language status as an acculturative stressor on internalizing and externalizing behaviors among Latino/a children: A longitudinal analysis from school entry through third grade. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence., 37*(4), 399-411.

Davies, R., & Dart, J. (2005). The Most Significant Change (MSC) Technique. United Kingdom: CARE International. Retrieved from https://www.kepa.fi/tiedostot/most-significant-change-guide.pdf

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. (2011). *Refugee Status Report A report on how refugee children and young people in Victoria are faring.* Retrieved from https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/govrel/Policy/children/refugee-status-report.pdf

Department of Education and Training. (2016). *The State Of Victoria's Children Report.* Retrieved from http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/research/state_of_victorias_children_2015.pdf.

Dockett, S. and Perry, B. (2001). Starting school: effective transitions. *Early Childhood Research and Practice, 3* (2), e 1-14.

Dockett, S. and Perry, B. (2007). *Transitions to School: Perceptions, expectations and experiences.* Sydney, NSW: University of New South Wales Press.

Dockett, S., Perry, B. and Kearney, E. (2010). *School readiness: what does it mean for Indigenous children, families, schools and communities?* Closing the Gap Clearinghouse Issues paper no. 2. Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Retrieved from http://www.aihw.gov.au/closingthegap/documents/issues_papers/ctg-ip02.pdf

Dowdy E., Dever B., DiStefano C., & Chin, J. (2011). Screening for emotional and behavioral risk among students with limited English proficiency. *School Psychology Quarterly, 26*(1), 14-26.

Edwards, B., Baxter, J., Smart, D., Sanson, A. and Hayes, A. (2009). Financial disadvantage and children's school readiness. *Family Matters, No. 83*, 23-31.

Emig, C., Moore, A. and Scarupa, H. J. (2001). *School readiness: Helping communities get children ready for school and schools ready for children.* Child Trends Research Brief, October. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

Farrar, E., Goldfeld, S. and Moore, T. (2007). *School readiness.* ARACY Topical Paper. West Perth, Western Australia: Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth.

Fox, S. and Geddes, M. (2016). *Preschool – Two Years are Better Than One: Developing a universal preschool program for Australian 3 year olds – evidence, policy and implementation.* Mitchell Institute Policy Paper Report No. 03/2016. Melbourne, Victoria: Mitchell Institute, Victoria University. Retrieved from http://www.mitchellinstitute.org.au/reports/two-years-preschool/

Goldfeld, S., O'Connor, M., Mithen, J., Sayers, M., & Brinkman, S. (2014). Early development of emerging and English-proficient bilingual children at school entry in an Australian population cohort. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 38*, 42-51.

Goldfeld, S. and West, S. (2014). Inequalities in early childhood outcomes: What lies beneath. *Insight Issue 9.* Melbourne, Victoria: Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS). Retrieved from http://apo.org.au/resource/inequalities-early-childhood-outcomes-what-lies-beneath

Gopnik, A. (2016). *The Gardener and the Carpenter: What the New Science of Child Development Tells Us About the Relationship Between Parents and Children.* London, UK: The Bodley Head.

Han, W. J. (2010). Bilingualism and socioemotional well-being. *Children and Youth Services Review., 32*, 720-731.

Hirst, M., Jervis, N., Visagie, K., Sojo, V. & Cavanagh, S. (2011). *Transition to primary school: a review of the literature.* Canberra, ACT: Department of Health and Ageing.

Horn, M.B., Freeland, J. and Butler, S.M. (2015). *Schools as community hubs: Integrating support services to drive educational outcomes*. Discussion Papers on Building Healthy Neighborhoods No. 3. Washington, DC: Brookings Institute. Retrieved from https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Horn-Freeland-Paper-FINAL.pdf

Janus, M. (2011). Transition to school: Child, family, and community-level determinants. In D.M. Laverick and M.R. Jalongo (Eds.), *Transitions in Early Care and Education: International Perspectives on Making Schools Ready for Young Children.* Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer Netherlands

Kagan, S.L. and Rigby, D.E. (2003). *Improving the Readiness of Children for School: Recommendations for State Policy.* Washington, DC: Centre for the Study of Social Policy. Retrieved from http://www.cssp.org/uploadFiles/improving_readiness.pdf

Karoly, L., Kilburn, M. and Cannon, J. (2005). *Early childhood interventions: proven results, future promises.* Santa Monica, California: The RAND Corporation.

KPMG. (2006). *Evaluation of Victorian Maternal and Child Health Service.* Retrieved from https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/mch/reportmchevaluation.pdf

Le, V.N., Kirby, S.N., Barney, H., Setodji, C.M. and Gershwin, D. (2006). *School Readiness, Full-Day Kindergarten, and Student Achievement: An Empirical Investigation.* Santa Monica, California: RAND Corporation.

McDonald, M., Turner, C., & Gray, J. (2014). Evidence into action: Playgroups for diverse communities. Melbourne: Victorian Cooperative on Children's Services for Ethnic Groups.

McShane, I., Watkins, J. and Meredyth, D. (2012). Schools as community hubs: Policy contexts, educational rationales, design challenges. Paper presented at Joint AARE/APERA Conference, Sydney. Retrieved from http://www.aare.edu.au/data/publications/2012/McShane12.pdf

Morrison, F.J. and Hindman, A.H. (2012). Promoting school readiness: an integrative framework. In S. Suggate and E. Reese (Eds.). *Contemporary Debates in Childhood Education and Development.* Oxford, UK: Routledge.

Multicultural Development Association. (2012). *Universal access to early childhood education for children from CALD backgrounds – Options for consideration 2012-2013.* Retrieved from http://embracekindy.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Universal-Access-to-Early-Childhood-Education-for-Children-from-CALD-backgrounds-Options-for-Consideration-2012-13.pdf

Parliament of Australia. (2014). *Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee, Bridging our Growing Divide: Inequality in Australia*.

Peters, S. (2010). *Literature Review: Transition from early childhood education to school.* Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Ministry of Education. Retrieved from https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/ECE/98894/Executive_Summary

Petriwskyj, A. (2010). Kindergarten transitions and linkages to primary school-readiness reconceptualised. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw, Barry (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education.* Oxford, UK: Elsevier, Oxford.

Pramling, N. and Samuelsson, I. P. (2012). School readiness and school's readiness: On the child's transition from preschool to school. In S. Suggate and E. Reese (Eds.). *Contemporary Debates in Childhood Education and Development.* Oxford, UK: Routledge.

Productivity Commission. (2014). *Childcare and Early Childhood Learning. Productivity Commission Inquiry Report Volume 1.* Retrieved from http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/childcare/report/childcare-volume1.pdf

Productivity Commission. (2016). *Report on Government Services. Volume B: Child care, education and training.* Retrieved from http://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2016/childcare-education-and-training/rogs-2016-volumeb-child-care-education-and-training.pdf.

Rogers, R., & Martin, J. (2004). *The early years: consultation with providers of early childhood services in the Melbourne municipalities of Yarra, Hume and Moreland, Brotherhood of St Laurence and Centre for Community Child Health, Melbourne.* Retrieved from https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/beststart/ecs_breaking_cycles_best_start.pdf

Sayers, M., West, S., Lorains, J., Laidlaw, B, Moore, T. and Robinson, R. (2012). Starting school: a pivotal life transition for children and their families. *Family Matters, No. 90,* 45-56.

Schulting, A.B., Malone, P.S. and Dodge, K.A. (2005). The effect of school-based kindergarten transition policies and practices on child academic outcomes. *Developmental Psychology, 41* (6), 860-871.

Victorian Foundation for the Survivors of Torture. (2004). *Towards a health strategy for refugees and asylum seekers in Victoria, Melbourne.* Retrieved from http://refugeehealthnetwork.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Towards-a-health-strategy.pdf

Winter, P. (2010). *Engaging Families in the Early Childhood Development Story: Research findings from a survey of parents of children from birth to age 8*. Retrieved from http://www.scseec.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/Reports%20and%20publications/Publications/Early%20childhood%20education/Engaging%20Families%20in%20the%20ECD%20Story-Survey%20of%20parents%20of%20children%20from%20birth%20to%20age%208.pdf

Wong, S., Press, F., Cumming, T. (2015). *Report on the pilot evaluation of the National Community Hubs Program*. Scanlon Foundation / Refuge of Hope: Melbourne.

Yoshikawa, H., Weiland, C., Brooks-Gunn, J., Burchinal, M.R., Espinosa, L.M., Gormley, W.T., Ludwig, J., Magnuson, K.A., Phillips, D. & Zaslow, M.J. (2013). *Investing in Our Future: The Evidence Base on Preschool Education.* Ann Arbor, Michigan: Society for Research in Child Development, and New York: Foundation for Child Development. Retrieved from http://fcd-us.org/resources/evidence-base-preschool

Centre for Community Child Health
The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne
50 Flemington Road Parkville Victoria 3052 Australia
www.rch.org.au/ccch

The Centre for Community Child Health is a department of The Royal Children's Hospital
and a research group of Murdoch Childrens Research Institute.