

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 1 November 2016

New reading packs to inspire young bookworms across SA

Raising Literacy Australia (RLA) is a not for profit organisation with a vision to enrich Australian lives through literacy. One of its key programs is The Little Big Book Club; a universal reading development initiative that encourages families to read, play, talk and sing with their young children every day to support the development of early literacy and numeracy skills and importantly, a lifelong love of books and reading.

Since 2006, The Little Big Book Club's FREE Reading Pack project has distributed over 370,000 reading bags to South Australian families with children aged from birth to five years, helping to establish home libraries and foster positive parent and child engagement right from the start.

Longitudinal research conducted by The University of South Australia showed that 70% of families read to their children more often once they received a Little Big Book Club reading pack.¹

Raising Literacy Australia CEO, Sue Hill, said positive interactions with young children such as reading, talking, playing and singing are some of the most important activities parents and carers can do to support their child's growth and development.

"By educating families to engage with their children from birth we are creating a future where South Australian babies and children are read to every day. This simple, but crucial activity underpins their ability to achieve lifelong learning and social inclusion and greatly improves their overall health and wellbeing".

The 2017 Reading Packs feature three new books published by The Little Big Book Club, including *Baby Dance* by Katrina Germein and Doris Chang; *Little Chicken Chickabee* by Janeen Brian and Danny Snell and *Fancy Pants* by Kelly Hibbert and Amanda Graham.

Families with a baby, toddler or preschool aged child are eligible to receive a free reading pack from supporting services across SA including Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS), Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) Children's Centre's, specialist neonatal hospitals, government, Catholic and independent preschools and selected outreach services.

Packs will be available from Monday 21 November 2016 and a complete list of collection points can be found on the Little Big Book Club website: thelittlebigbookclub.com.au/readingpacks

For further information on the Reading Pack project, please contact Nicole Marshall, nicole.marshall@raisingliteracy.org.au or 0402 296 967.

¹ Hill, S., Forster, J., & Ward, C. (2014) *Babies and Books: A longitudinal study into family reading practices with children from birth to three years*. Adelaide, University of South Australia.

The Little Big Book Club Reading Pack project is proudly supported by



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PROJECT BACKGROUND

Project aims

- Build awareness of the importance of reading to young children from birth
- Provide families with information on how they can support their child's growth and development in the crucial early years.
- Support positive family engagement through activities such as regular reading, playing, singing and talking
- Develop children's literacy and numeracy skills prior to entering formal education
- Foster a lifelong appreciation of books and reading.

Key project highlights

- 63,000 home libraries established each year (21,000 Baby, 21,000 Toddler and 21,000 Preschool Reading packs given out to SA families).
- 400 volunteers support the project each year, volunteering their time to help pack the bags during the week of 5-9 November 2016 at the State Opera of SA, Netley.
- 370,000 Reading Packs have been distributed since 2006
- 700 services across SA are supported with the Reading Packs

New books in the 2017 Reading Packs

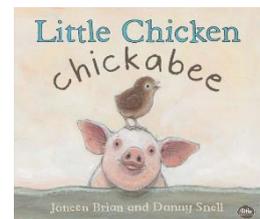
BABY READING PACK

Baby Dance, written by SA author Katrina Germein and illustrated by Doris Chang, an emerging SA artist. A delightful rhythm and rhyme story that follows four Australian baby animals who spend their day frolicking, dancing, playing and singing together.

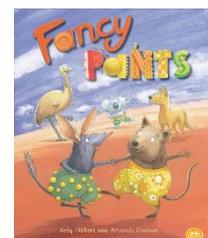


PRESCHOOL READING PACK

Little Chicken Chickabee, written by SA author Janeen Brian and illustrated by SA artist Danny Snell. An outstanding picture book which focuses on differences, perseverance, problem solving and ultimately, friendship.



Fancy Pants, written by emerging SA author Kelly Hibbert and illustrated by SA artist Amanda Graham. A heartwarming story about resilience, teamwork and friendship that is sure to become an all-time family favourite.



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