



# Illawarra Transition to School Program

## Strategic Plan

June 2009 – December 2011

Incorporating Wollongong, Shellharbour and Kiama LGAs



familiesnsw  
supporting families to raise children



# Strategic Plan June 2009 – December 2011

Transition is the process of preparing children and their families to engage successfully in formal schooling.

The Illawarra Transition to School Project supports families in this process by partnering with stakeholders (schools prior to school services, community agencies and government departments) to promote leading practices and philosophies.

Success in the transition to school bears directly on longer term outcomes for each child, their families and schools and indirectly on the broader social outcomes that shape our community and economy. On any measure the Transition to School Project represents a significant investment in a better future for our children and community.

Against this background and building on outcomes achieved from the 2006 Strategic Plan, the Illawarra Project has developed the following Vision and Strategic Outcomes for application in the Wollongong, Shellharbour and Kiama communities. This project is proudly sponsored by Families NSW and auspiced by Illawarra Children's Services.

# Illawarra Transition to School Program Strategic Plan Wollongong – Shellharbour – Kiama

## Our Vision

That every child is supported in their transition to school, so that they have opportunity to reach their full potential.

## Our Mission

To support children and families to make a successful transition to school, ensuring that identified target groups have equitable opportunity.

## Strategic Outcomes

1. Engage families to maximise outcomes for all children as they transition to school.
2. ATSI children and families experience a successful transition to school.
3. Children from a CALD background experience a successful transition to school.
4. Engage the sector to maximise community support and understanding of transition matters.
5. Provide opportunity for professional development.

Strategies for achieving each Strategic Outcome are included and build on strategies established from 2006 Strategic Plan.

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Strategic Outcome	Strategy	Action
<p><b>1. Engage families to maximise outcomes for all children as they transition to formal schooling.</b></p>	<p>1.1 Create awareness about the importance of a successful start to school.</p> <p>1.2 Create awareness of support available for children with additional needs.</p> <p>1.3 Advocate for improved early identification of health barriers.</p> <p>1.4 Target those families that do not attend a prior to school service.</p>	<p>Distribute information and provide support to families at events including picnics in the park.</p> <p>Engage the community at shopping centres and local community locations including library and community events to explain the importance of successful transition to school.</p> <p>Liaise with SESIAHS Allied Health team to provide health professionals and/or functional information at shopping centres that will assist families in identification of children with additional needs and support them in linking to appropriate intervention.</p> <p>Increase awareness of the benefits for children of early diagnosis.</p> <p>Create awareness about procedures for acquiring assistance from Department of Education and Training to support children with additional needs.</p> <p>Incorporate ideas in resources that provide opportunities for a successful start to school for children that do not attend a prior to school service.</p> <p>Develop and distribute media releases regularly, raising awareness about the importance of successful transition to school for all children, including newsprint, radio and television.</p> <p>Distribute information at supported playgroup sessions across the region.</p>

Strategic Outcome	Strategy	Action
<p>2. ATSI children and families experience a successful transition to school</p>	<p>2.1 Maintain and extend links to Aboriginal communities.            2.2 Engage the Aboriginal community in a culturally sensitive manner.            2.3 Organise culturally appropriate community events.</p>	<p>Distribute culturally sensitive resources including starting school booklets at all events and information sessions.</p> <p>Connect with the ATSI community in comfortable environments identified by members of the community.</p> <p>Facilitate annual Koori School Starters Picnic and liaise with Aboriginal community elders to provide culturally sensitive activities.</p> <p>Develop and distribute media releases that are inclusive of cultural practice.</p> <p>Provide culturally appropriate professional development.</p> <p>Attend ACYFS network meetings.</p> <p>Facilitate Koori transition playgroups in partnership with local schools and services.</p>

Strategic Outcome	Strategy	Action
<p>3. Children from CALD background experience a successful transition to school.</p>	<p>3.1 Ensure equitable support for children from CALD communities that are transitioning to school.            3.2 Ensure all TTS activities are culturally sensitive.            3.3 Liaise with CALD agencies that support new settlers and refugees.</p>	<p>Distribute language appropriate information to CALD families.</p> <p>Promote starting school booklet in multiple languages to schools and prior to school services.</p> <p>Attend IMS network meetings.</p> <p>Identify cultural micro communities and attend those community events with information in appropriate language.</p> <p>Provide information to culturally specific supported playgroups.</p> <p>Include culturally sensitive activities at events.</p> <p>Distribute culturally sensitive information at shopping centre's.</p>
<p>4. Engage the sector to maximise community support and understanding of transition matters.</p>	<p>4.1 Work with schools and prior to school services to ensure quality transition to school practice.            4.2 Connect with all community members that are stakeholders in the transition process.</p>	<p>Attend Families NSW network meetings.</p> <p>Attend Shellharbour and Wollongong Parent Interagency Network Meetings.</p> <p>Distribute regular transition updates and research via e-groups.</p> <p>Connect with Shellharbour and Wollongong Council Family and Community teams.</p> <p>Maintain and enhance the Transition to School website.</p> <p>Liaise with schools to provide school information to parents at shopping centres and at community events.</p>

Strategic Outcome	Strategy	Action
5. Provide opportunity for Professional Development	5.1 Promote best practice in transition process. 5.2 Identify new research. 5.3 Promote relationships between schools and prior to school services.	Facilitate workshops for professionals.  Undertake periodic literature searches to identify trends, developments and emerging practices.  Maintain and extend e-group membership with ongoing distribution of research and current issues.  Maintain relationship with DET Equity team to promote current transition to school initiatives.

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