



WORDS GROW MINDS

Led by Raising Literacy Australia

GLOBAL NETWORKING PRESENTATION

Presenter - Julia Jones

June 2023



We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Kurna people, the traditional custodians whose ancestral lands we gather on today. We acknowledge that they are of continuing importance today.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all First Nations People who are present today.

Early Years Taskforce Partners



PLAYGROUP SA



1 in 5 parents felt that children's genes determined how their brain developed and that they could not make a difference.

*Source: Engaging Families in the Early Childhood Development Story, 2010
- research findings pp 55-58*

2009, 'Investing in the Early Years – A National Early Childhood Development Strategy'.

1 of the 6 specific reform priorities was to:

“engage parents and the community in understanding the importance of early childhood”.

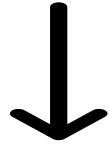
Recommended: “the importance of brain development during this time is consistently and universally promoted to all parents and caregivers in order to maximise the contribution they can make to their child’s development.”

The Early Years Taskforce identified:

- There is no national coordinated approach or framework to early childhood development messaging.
- Many parents are unaware of the importance of the early years on brain development.
- Parents expressed an overwhelming concern around lack of information available.
- There needs to be a co-ordinated, consistent approach to distill messages, to create familiarity and trust for families about the information they receive.

Our Purpose Became Clear...

Improve early childhood development outcomes for South Australian children



- Increase collaboration across services
- Raise awareness of the importance of early childhood development and positive engagement with babies and young children in their first three years

Campaign goal

Increase awareness of the importance of early childhood development and positive engagement with babies and young children in the first three years.

Words Grow Minds is Australia's first comprehensive early childhood development campaign based on a Tripartite strategy.

Tripartite Strategy designed to simultaneously target:

Part 1: General Public – through a quality mass mainstream media campaign.

Part 2: Early Childhood Service Providers – collaborative professional development program and framework for consistent implementation.

Part 3: Direct to parents – free resource packs, books, parent information and practical tools to increase positive interactions with their child.

There's a biological correlation between words and brain growth. When you talk to a child, their brain develops.

Or, to put it another way, words grow minds.



WORDS
GROW
MINDS

Part 1 – Media Campaign

- Television ads
- Radio ads
- Print ads
- Song
- Website
- Social media tiles
- Posters

[Words Grow Minds](http://WordsGrowMinds.com)

STICK ME ON THE FRIDGE

WORDS GROW MINDS

MONDAY
RHYME TIME
Find things that rhyme with your child's name and make up silly songs.
"Joe, let's count your toes"
"Ellie, let's tickle your belly"

TUESDAY
BLOWING BUBBLES
With this simple activity, you can talk them through every step of the process, from making the mixture, to learning to blow, pop and chase the magical bubbles.

WEDNESDAY
SING...AND STOP!
Kids get excited with anticipation. Start singing their favourite song... stop... and wait for your child's reaction before singing again.

THURSDAY
POUR AND MIX
Kids love to pour and mix with water, sand or when helping in the kitchen. Use recycled containers or trusty Tupperware to help them explore this fun activity, and remember to talk to them about what you're doing.

FRIDAY
ECHO... ECHO...
Making the same sounds or words as your baby or toddler, no matter how silly it is, is a great way to connect. Throw some new words in the mix and encourage them to copy you.

SATURDAY
TOY STORIES
From teddies to tennis balls, bring toys to life. "Oh hi Teddy, you want to be part of the lunch club too?"

SUNDAY
PROP IT UP
Introducing a few props like a soft toy or funny hat can make a regular story feel like a Broadway production. Encore!

Keep an eye out next week for more ideas, or visit wordsgrowminds.com.au

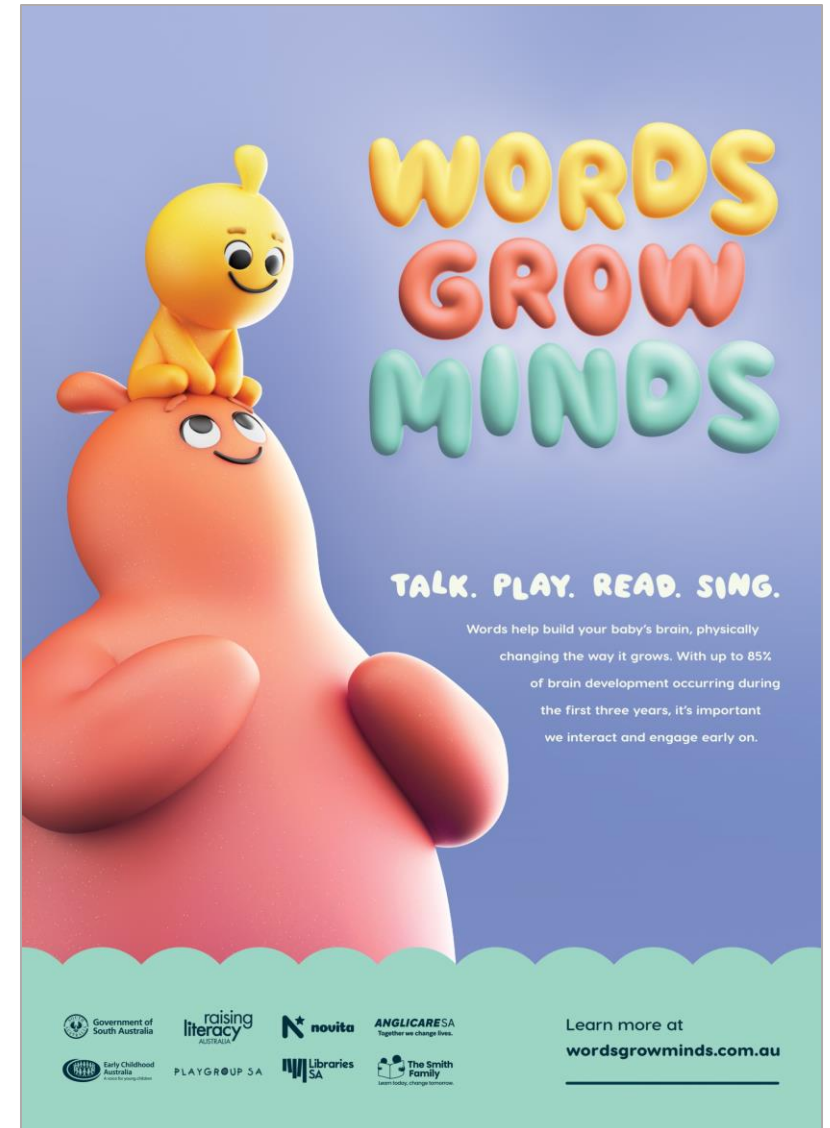
Supported by the Early Years Taskforce, including:

Government of South Australia | raising literacy AUSTRALIA | PLAYGROUP SA | Libraries SA

Hero Poster

Words help build your baby's brain, physically changing the way it grows.

With up to 85% of brain development occurring during the first three years, it's important we interact and engage early on.





CAFHS,
Childcare Centres,
Novita, Playgroups,
The Smith Family,
Libraries,
Speech Pathologists,
Hippy, Centacare,
DfE...and more.

Part 2 - Professional Learning Package

Everyone was provided with:

- Words Grow Minds Campaign Guide for Services – to support the **co-ordinated approach** to rolling out the campaign consistently.
- Our ad and social media tiles, to share with their own networks via their own channels.



Campaign calendar - weekly roll out

Words Grow Minds Campaign calendar

6 Week Rollout

Week 1 – Introduce Words Grow Minds
Post Social Media Template (1)
Display Poster
Play WGM jingle at beginning/end of group times
Display the WGM family pack & hand out to families with children aged 0-3 years
Remind families to join the WGM Facebook group and visit the WGM Website
Circulate Newsletter article – Welcome to Words Grow Minds

Week 2 – Importance of 0-3
Post Social Media Template (1)
Play WGM jingle at beginning/end of group times
Talk to families and display visuals about early brain development and the importance of early interactions
Promote the early years services in your community that can support parents and caregivers in their role
Continue to hand out WGM family pack to families with children aged 0-3 years
Circulate Newsletter article – Your Words Will Grow Their Minds!

Campaign calendar

Week 3 – Talk with your baby	Week 4 – Play with your baby
Post Social Media Template (2)	Post Social Media Template (3)
Play the WGM jingle at beginning/end of group times	Play WGM jingle at beginning/end of group times
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a community Walk and Talk and use walking activity (pack) • Create Touch, Feel and Talk Treasure Boxes (ask families to bring items of meaning from home) • Draw & Talk • Mirror Discovery – talk about what you see in the mirror 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a Community Toy Picnic • Nature Play Space • Sensory Cubby • Indoor Obstacle Course
Encourage families to post a photo to WGM Facebook group of their favourite talk activity from the Conversation Cards	Encourage families to post a photo to WGM Facebook group - their favourite play activity from the Conversation cards
Circulate Newsletter – Talk with your baby	Circulate Newsletter – Play with your baby

Week 5 – Read with your baby	Week 6 – Sing with your baby
Post Social Media Template (4)	Post Social Media Template (5)
Play WGM jingle at beginning/end of group times	Play WGM jingle at beginning/end of group times
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a community 0-3 book swap • Role model reading with props to help tell the story • Invite a guest to tell a story in their home language • Go on 'picture walk' with Let's Go Strolling (pack) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a community Baby Karaoke singing session • Sing with instruments • Sing songs from Nursery Rhyme book (pack) • Learn a cultural and/or sign language song
Encourage families to post a photo to WGM Facebook group - their favourite read activity from the Conversation cards	Encourage families to post a photo to WGM Facebook group - their favourite sing activity from the Conversation cards
Circulate Newsletter article – Read with your baby	Circulate Newsletter article – Sing with your baby

Part 3 – Direct Parent Campaign Resource Packs

- Let's Go Strolling - picture book
- Let's Go Strolling - walking activity
- Sing With Me - buggy book
- Nursery Rhymes booklet
- Parent and caregiver information
- Conversations cards



Talk, Play, Read & Sing – your words will grow their minds!

Over 50 families turned up to celebrate Words Grow Minds at the Whyalla Launch.

The vibe was joyful.

We put the key messages into real life practice with families.

The singing session became one big baby choir!



Families discovering their Words Grow Minds Packs

'Here are a couple of our friends receiving their packs with their families and also some of our little friends looking at the amazing resources inside the bag with our educators.'

Whyalla Child Care Centre



Conversation Cards

From car karaoke to making your own bubbles, having a teddy bears picnic and playing echo games....these cards are loaded with fun and easy ways to help you talk, play, read and sing with your baby every day.

Did you know 85% of brain development occurs in the first three years?

The ideas in these cards will help grow your baby or toddlers precious mind. Discover which activity your little one enjoys best today!



Campaign messages increased understanding about importance of engagement

The majority of parents in both regions recognised the importance of engaging in early years activities, although some participants in focus groups mentioned uncertainty about the purpose of these various activities until they encountered the campaign. In total, 58% of parents credited the campaign for raising their awareness regarding the significance of brain development in the early years.

Mount Gambier

- Around half (48%) had a greater awareness about the importance of brain development in early years after exposure to the campaign.
 - Three in ten (31%) who were previously unaware of the campaign also indicated agreement with this.

Port Augusta/ Whyalla

- Nearly seven in ten (67%) felt the campaign increased their awareness about the importance of brain development in early years.
 - 69% who were previously unaware of the campaign agreed with this



The findings indicate that the campaign has effectively supported parents by presenting information in a clear and accessible manner, allowing them to better understand the importance of engaging in early childhood development. It is well established in behavior change modeling that raising awareness and enhancing knowledge are key factors that drive attitude transformations and subsequently lead to changes in behavior.

Campaign shifted attitudes and perceptions toward early years engagement

Overall, there was a 13pp (percentage point) increase in parents' placing high importance on engaging in early years. This trend was the same for various engagement activities.

There was also a noticeable positive shift in parent's attitudes toward their role in early development, with a rise in agreement of 7pp for understanding that the environment a child grows up in significantly impacts their development, and a rise in agreement of 8pp for acknowledging the large influence a parent has over their child's brain development in their first 3 years.

Mount Gambier

- 98% of parents placed high importance on parent-child engagement in early years in both pre-and post-campaign
- Total agreement for 'the environment in which a child grows up has a significant impact on their development' remained at 96% for pre- and post-campaign results
- Total agreement for 'I have a large influence over my child's brain development in their first 3 years of life' rose by 9pp from pre- to post-campaign

Port Augusta/ Whyalla

- High levels of importance for engaging in early years rose 20pp from pre-campaign levels, from 76% to 96% post-campaign.
- Total agreement for 'the environment in which a child grows up has a significant impact on their development' rose 25pp, from 64% pre-campaign to 89% post-campaign
- Total agreement for 'I have a large influence over my child's brain development in their first 3 years of life' rose 17pp, from 68% pre-campaign to 85% post-campaign

Frequency of daily engagement activities increased from pre- to post-campaign levels

Daily engagement behaviour across multiple engagement activities among parents in both regions was seen to increase post-campaign. Overall, the following percentage point increases in daily engagements were found: Reading (27pp), singing/ playing rhymes (26pp), playing (25pp), teaching them at home (24pp), and playgroups/ playdates (6pp).

53% reported that hearing the campaign's 'read, sing, play talk everyday' message made them interact more frequently with their child, and 45% indicated that they interacted in different ways with their child after seeing the campaign.

Mount Gambier

- Daily reading increased by 17pp, from 57% to 74%
- Daily singing/ playing rhymes increased by 16pp, from 62% to 78%
- Daily playing remained at 85% for both pre- and post-campaign levels
- Daily teaching at home increased by 18pp, from 43% to 61%
- Daily playgroups/ playdates increased by 7pp, from 0% to 7%

Port Augusta/ Whyalla

- Daily reading increased by 31pp, from 20% to 51%
- Daily singing/ playing rhymes increased by 30pp, from 25% to 55%
- Daily playing increased by 39pp, from 26% to 65%
- Daily teaching at home increased by 27pp, from 17% to 44%
- Daily playgroups/ playdates increased by 6pp, from 6% to 13%

Resource packs actively engaged parents with the campaign's messages

Across both regions, high level of knowledge about different activities to engage with a child aged 0-4 increased by 9pp, from 44% to 53% post-campaign. This post-campaign figure was higher among those who had received a Words Grow Minds resource pack.

Mount Gambier

- Prior to the campaign, 45% of parents reported having a high level of knowledge (rated as very good or excellent) about different engagement activities. This rose by 3pp to 48% in the post-campaign results.

Of those who received the resource pack:

- 55% agreed that the resource pack gave them new ideas about how they could interact with their baby/ toddler
- When asked what the most useful resource in the pack was, 45% indicated the conversation/ activity cards.

Port Augusta/ Whyalla

- Prior to the campaign, 43% of parents reported having a high level of knowledge (rated as very good or excellent) about different engagement activities. This rose by 15pp to 58% in the post-campaign results.

Of those who received the resource pack:

- 76% agreed that the resource pack gave them new ideas about how they could interact with their baby/ toddler
- When asked what the most useful resource in the pack was, 35% indicated the conversation/ activity cards

Campaign and resource pack increased engagement with early years services

Overall, a quarter (25%) of parents indicated that the campaign prompted them to make contact with service providers, slightly higher among those who received a resource pack. Half (51%) of parents across both regions who received a pack agreed that the included pamphlet gave them a greater understanding of early years services they could access.

Mount Gambier

- 15% of parents indicated that seeing/ hearing the campaign prompted them to make contact with service providers
- Half (50%) of those who received the resource pack agreed that the pamphlet gave them a greater understanding of early years services they can access

Port Augusta/ Whyalla

- 33% of parents indicated that seeing/ hearing the campaign prompted them to make contact with service providers
- Over half (53%) of those who received the resource pack agreed that the pamphlet gave them a greater understanding of early years services they can access

Seeing or hearing the campaign's message influenced behaviour for some

A couple expressed that exposure to the campaign made them feel motivated to engage with their child more frequently.

Most agreed that the emphasis on talking, playing, reading, and singing, from the campaign made them actively think about how they choose to interact with their child in early years, and for some, this meant rethinking about the frequency of which they do those behaviours.



It definitely makes me feel guilty when I hear and see things, particularly around devices. I found that I'm talking more and more about what we're doing and what's going on next now.
- Female, 3-year-old, 1 child

Having that reminder there for you is good because you can get back into that routine and doing those things with your kids.
- Female, newborn, 4+ children

[I think the campaign helped] me because it gave me that message about how important it is.
- Female, 2-year old, 3 children

I've been actively trying to read to my kids every night now, but there was a good time where I wasn't doing this. I think if someone is falling into that sluggish phase with it when it definitely makes you think it's time to pull my head in.
- Female, newborn, 4+ children



WORDS GROW MINDS

Find out more

www.wordsgrowminds.com.au



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www.instagram.com/wordsgrowminds