

Kids In Philanthropy

The focus of Sydney Community Foundation's *Kids In Philanthropy* (KIP) is to build social awareness, a social conscience and a practice of giving by children, for children. Kids In Philanthropy engages children between the ages of 5 and 18 years, and their families, in an annual program of proactive philanthropy where activity is focused on raising awareness of areas of need in their own city, and providing opportunities for these young people to take a leadership role in addressing these areas of need. KIP is also for parents, guardians, carers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters or other significant people, who seek to instil in their younger family members the values of giving, reciprocity, and active compassion. To learn more, visit: <http://www.sydneycommunityfoundation.org.au/>

Governance

It took over 12 months to establish the first Kids In Philanthropy program because it was a response to genuine community needs. The time it takes to develop relationships, to collaborate and innovate in the community shouldn't be a reason to deter people. It is incredibly worthwhile and enables communities to be empowered to do what is really needed in their community. It helps them drive the agenda. (Kristi Mansfield, ED, Sydney Community Foundation)

The Sydney Community Foundation (SCF) is governed by a volunteer Board of community leaders and prominent citizens representing a cross section of society. The Foundation is a public company and registered under the Corporations Act 2001. It is regulated by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC). The company and its two funds (a Tax Deductible Fund, with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status and a General Fund) are endorsed as Tax Concession Charities (TCC) by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Newly established in 2012, *Kids In Philanthropy* (KIP) is a sub-fund of the

Sydney Community Foundation. The fund is an Immediate Impact Fund, allowing gifts to be distributed to eligible organisations and projects relevant, as decided by the Kids In Philanthropy Advisory Board and the Trustee (the SCF Board).

Innovation

Students have significant representation, an active voice and a strong leadership role on the Advisory Board of KIP and are instrumental in determining where funding and other assistance is directed. The program provides opportunities

for the young people involved to take a leadership role in addressing these areas of need.

There are two primary reasons for the establishment of KIP. The first is to grow the culture of giving and philanthropy in Australia by engaging children in meaningful opportunities to learn, grow, develop leadership and harness their giving power. The second is to address the significant disadvantage in many communities that continues to result in increasingly negative outcomes for families, and children in particular.

This case focuses on the Sydney *Kids In Philanthropy* program. A project has also been funded in the Western suburbs of Melbourne.

The Sydney Community Foundation supported KIP Founder, Dr Catriona Wallace to engage a group of seed funders who formed an Advisory Council to assist with the design and expression of interest for the *Kids In Philanthropy* funding and other support. The Foundation then supported KIP to undertake consultations with the Fairfield local council and four primary schools in the Fairfield area to identify their needs and interests in working on a new program to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged children. Through an expression of interest process, the not-for-profit organisation Learning Links has been selected and funded by the Foundation to work with four primary schools in the Fairfield

children show increased capacity in key learning areas as determined by evaluation processes put in place by Learning Links and children are engaged in the program ... the Foundation hopes that as consequence of the Kids In Philanthropy Program, there will be a flow-on effect whereby improved family and school engagement will result. (Kristi Mansfield, ED, Sydney Community Foundation)

district. Learning Links staff work with children with disabilities and learning support needs, as well as their families and communities, to improve their access to learning and quality support. It became apparent throughout the consultations that learning through technology is the key priority area for the program across multiple learning areas such as literacy, numeracy, nutrition, recreation, sport and art

You need to work in-depth with the community. These collaborations are important because they cut new pathways. It may seem an obvious thing to do, but this step can often get overlooked. (Kristi Mansfield, ED, Sydney Community Foundation)

Following extensive consultation with the Fairfield City Council, several key primary school principals, senior representatives of various not-for-profit service agencies/organisations and community leaders in Fairfield City Council, the Sydney Community Foundation believes that supporting the development of children and young people aged 9-14 years is essential in ensuring improved outcomes for children and a better future for NSW. There are many challenges facing young

people aged 9-14 years, the transition from a child to a young person, from primary school to high school, puberty, and independence. *'Despite a mounting body of evidence on the importance of this period of development, public policies and practices tend to focus on earlier or later developmental periods, as such "the middle years, upper primary years" appear to be largely overlooked'* (ARACY 2011).

Factors for effective engagement

(see all 10 factors on p. 22)

For the Sydney Community Foundation, making informed, evidence based decisions is the most important factor for effective engagement in the community. The Foundation does significant ground work to identify what communities require, including consultations over the phone, meetings with principals and site visits.

A challenging factor to address is ensuring that relationships are built on trust. The *Kids In Philanthropy* program seeks to overcome this as a potential issue by starting the program with those the Foundation already has established long-term relationships with: in this case, the Fairfield Council. The trust developed over time with a senior leader within the Council has helped broker new relationships with schools and not-for-profit groups.

There is considerable consultation with the schools from the outset, so their engagement in the program is really key. Without their proactive approach Learning Links would not be able to work the program to its maximum potential. The schools have been key in identifying/selecting students to participate the program, knowing which students could benefit most from being involved. Close monitoring with the school and Learning Links ensures that the school is happy with progress and the children are gaining from being involved and any issues that arise can be dealt with

Models over time

Guiding principles and practices Sydney Community Foundation uses to engage effectively with not-for-profits, government and education ...

First wave



(Individual donors approach Sydney Community Foundation about setting up a fund and the Foundation consults with a local council and school)

- *Have a champion(s) who has the passion and drive for grass-roots level of change:* There was a champion donor who had established networks and was readily able to bring them together in order to get the momentum for the program going.

Second Wave



(Sydney Community foundation funds a not-for-profit to work with four primary schools)

- *Ensure the needs of the children in the community are identified by those in the community:* There was a breadth and depth to the community consultation. Cast the net wide within the community to talk with community leaders facilitated by the local council. Use the information gathered to identify key people to work with them to focus down and deeper understanding of the broad issues and possible solutions to those needs.

immediately.

The KIP Advisory Board strikes a balance between being engaged yet mindful of the fact that very experienced and qualified people are delivering the program. It has been a collaborative process from the outset with the KIP Advisory Board involved in the initial community and school consultations right through to the selection process of the community organisation delivering the program, Learning Links. The KIP Advisory Board actively seek additional support for the program, for instance the Harris Farm partnership that now sees fresh fruit delivered free to the four schools weekly as part of the nutrition component of the program. This is one example of how the program thrives because of the collaboration between Learning Links, the schools and KIP.

Impact

What are the main outcomes?

Some key program outcomes include:

- Offering a safe environment for young people to access innovative and structured, educational activities, as well as positive peer support outside school hours;
- Providing children with increased opportunities for inclusive participation in quality, safe and relevant educational activities;
- Providing practical support and guidance to families, and where appropriate, to provide referrals;
- Fostering links with community-based organisations and the corporate community to create opportunities for ongoing participation and community ownership

How is information gathered?

Learning Links have an evaluation process in place that gathers information on the children involved from the outset as a baseline measure and they will measure impact across a variety of indicators as the program goes along. In addition to these measurements, the schools will evaluate the success of the program in terms of the students' learning and behaviour outcomes, and KIP will evaluate the program in areas such as collaboration, community engagement, impact outside of the school and in terms of funds raised and social return on investment.

How do you share the information gathered and with whom?

It is envisaged that the outcomes of the program and key learnings continue to be shared in various ways through many channels, including digital and social media. The KIP website features a blog that is updated regularly and KIP will seek a public forum to present the program and its outcomes, in collaboration with the schools and Learning Links where appropriate.