



Greater Shepparton Communities for Children Communications Consultation Results Report

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Greater Shepparton Communities for Children Communications Consultation Results Report

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CONTENTS

PROJECT BACKGROUND 1

WHAT WE DID..... 1

RESULTS 3

WHAT WE FOUND 5

OPPORTUNITIES 6

RECOMMENDATIONS..... 8

MONITORING AND EVALUATION RESULTS 9

 CONSULTATION OBJECTIVES AND SUCCESS MEASURES 10

 RESULTS AGAINST THE SUCCESS MEASURES 11

 CONSULTATION EVALUATION..... 12

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Communities for Children (CfC) program exists to improve the health, development and wellbeing of vulnerable and disadvantaged children in the community, from before birth to age 12, as well as the lives of their families.

Given the barriers that exist for vulnerable and disadvantaged families, CfC wanted to consult clients and those who assist them, about their communications preferences. The information gathered in this project will enable CfC to provide information in a form that has the best chance of reaching the various stakeholders and engaging others in the community.

This report should be read in conjunction with the Communications Consultation Plan that outlines the purpose and objectives of the consultation phase of this project.

This project has been designed to align with, and feed into, the CfC Strategic Plan and Communications Strategy. It is guided by the CfC vision and mission:

VISION

That all families and children in the City of Greater Shepparton have the opportunity to develop and grow in a supportive and nurturing community.

MISSION

To work strategically to improve service accessibility, responsiveness and outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged families and children through family-centred practice.

WHAT WE DID

In this project we undertook:

- An analysis of the website visitation data
- Initial formative research with Community Partners to establish the best methods to reach clients
- Tested the client survey through multiple Community Partners before finalising it
- Sent invitations to key stakeholders to take part in the survey and share the link
- Administered three surveys – for the Community Partners, the clients and the broader community. These were offered in print and online and Community Partner staff assisted those clients who needed help to participate.

The surveys asked questions about:

- Awareness of Communities for Children
- Communications preferences
- Satisfaction with existing communications
- The types of information stakeholders were seeking
- Internet access / usage

- Awareness and usage of the CfC website
- CfC brand attributes

The following table summarises the high-level results of the three surveys.

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RESULTS

Questions	Community Partners & Steering Committee reps - 17	Clients responses - 111	Clients - The Bridge - 9	Community responses - 129
How do you currently receive comms from C4C	Mostly email			
Satisfaction with comms	94% satisfied or v satisfied			
How did you hear about the program		Varied responses – 36 schools, 11 Lulla's, 7 word of mouth	Worker	
Awareness of C4C		70% no	78% no	79% no
What they know of C4C				varied
Awareness of survey				Training, MCH, playgroup, school, kinder, LaTrobe
Comm preferences	Email, phone call, face to face	Text, phone call, someone talking to you	Text, phone call, social media	Email, flyer, Facebook
Comments on comms	Good, integrated practise approach produces benefits			
Types of info sought	Prof development, C4C program*, funding available	Other prog, support groups	Support groups, other programs	Support groups, other programs, specialists – advocacy, evaluation of programs
What's helpful		Varied – family support worker	Friendly worker, calls or texts	Details of programs – who, what, where etc
Do you use the internet to find info on programs		Yes – 84%	Yes – 44%	

Greater Shepparton Communities for Children Communications Consultation Results Report

Questions	Community Partners & Steering Committee reps - 17	Clients responses - 111	Clients - The Bridge - 9	Community responses - 129
Type of info		Photos – 60% Videos – 54%	Photos – 100% Videos – 25%	
Do you use C4C website	Yes – 59%			96% no
Why not?	No reason or opportunity	English language difficulties, time and others – see individual responses	Don't know what to look for	85% Not aware of it
Favourite website features/feature requests	varied			Varied
Info users seek from website	Timely, current info on programs & updates			
Brand values	Looking out for children in Shepparton – seen as the funder	Friendly, supportive, non-judgemental	Supportive, non-judgemental	Supportive, friendly, non-judgemental - accessible
Best things C4C does	Collaboration and integration for benefit of the clients			
Ease of survey	Easy or very easy = 80%	Easy or very easy = 73%	Easy or very easy = 50%	Easy or very easy = 77%
Safety of completing the survey		Comfortable or very comfortable = 80%	Comfortable or very comfortable = 62%	
Age range	Good spread of ages	Good spread of ages	13 - 24	Good spread of ages
Gender	73% female	69% female	100% female	89% female
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	No	42% - yes	12% - yes	87% - no
Languages at home	No	85% - no	100% - no	98% - no
CP or SC member	20% both, 53% CP, 27% SC			

WHAT WE FOUND

Summary

1. Awareness of CfC among clients and the broader community is very low – more than 70% hadn't heard of CfC.
2. 94% of Community Partners and Steering Committee representatives are either very satisfied or satisfied with existing communications.
3. Community Partners (CP) agreed the only way to reach clients was through CP workers with whom the clients already had a bond of trust.
4. CfC's integrated practice approach is highly regarded and produces benefits for clients and the community.
5. The top communication tools for clients were text messages, phone calls and someone talking to them.
6. The top communication tools for the community were email, flyers and Facebook.
7. All stakeholder groups highly rated finding out about other programs for children/families. Clients and the community also said they sought information on support groups.
8. Information on advocacy, evaluation of programs, professional development and about available funding was also sought.
9. The community, and to a lesser extent clients, said being able to find details of programs – who, what, where, when etc would be helpful.
10. One respondent from the CP group raised the issue of confusion of CfC being seen as a range of programs vs CfC being the program.

Website:

1. After analysing the website visitation data and feedback from the three stakeholder groups, it's apparent the Communities for Children website is being used mainly as a resource for individuals and groups who may be referring or assisting potential clients of the various CfC funded programs. Few clients and community members are visiting the CfC website directly.
2. However, the client and community feedback tells us that these two groups do use the internet and have a preference for visual communication – CfC's existing digital stories may meet part of this need – the six currently on the website have been viewed between 26 and 151 times
3. The community largely doesn't use the CfC website because it is unaware of it. Other stakeholders said they didn't use the website because they didn't know what to look for.

This and other feedback on the CfC website are addressed in the website development brief.

OPPORTUNITIES

The strong message sent by these survey results is that CfC has a great opportunity to run an awareness campaign. Key elements of this should focus on CfC's new website, results of the programs so far, its partners, its integrated practice approach and the benefits to the community.

The survey data suggests CfC can position itself as the key reference point for support services for families and children, raising awareness of the services offered more broadly in the community, and not just CfC funded programs. This can only be beneficial to the target group of clients. The more clients the programs attract, the more impact CfC can have which ultimately feeds into the delivery of its mission – to work strategically – and its vision.

At the strategic level, CfC's reputation for bringing service providers together to work collaboratively in a client-focused way also presents opportunities for CfC to take on an advocacy role. For example, access and transport were raised. These issues present barriers in many rural communities and CfC could advocate on behalf of the wider Shepparton community.

In addition, CfC could take on a broader role of bringing service providers together for networking opportunities to address accessibility and build relationships.

Opportunities from Community Partners' and Steering Committee responses

- Forum offered for Community Partners (CPs) about program details could be extended to more groups.
- Share details of the programs that are funded more widely to other potential referrers.
- More community awareness.

From clients

- Churches, kindergartens, playgroups and doctors surgeries present opportunities to contact potential clients.
- Use case studies, probably in digital story format, of people who have been through the programs and tell the story of their experience.
- Clients found interpreter services helpful.
- More community awareness – some clients don't know where to look for information.

From community

- Consider offering visits to programs by other professionals.
- Disseminate information through libraries – they see themselves as community information points.
- Offer local networking opportunities for all involved in child and family welfare.

- Eligibility was frequently mentioned – people need more information on whether or not they can be involved in programs offered.
- What does CfC do regarding those with a disability?
- Access and transport were also raised as questions / opportunities. Does CfC advocate on behalf of the transport needs of its clients and the barriers that lack of transport presents in the region?
- There is real opportunity to promote CfC programs more in schools and with Maternal and Child Health Centres staff.
- A Facebook page may provide opportunities to link to other groups that only exist on Facebook.

General

- Registering additional domain names which link to sheppartoncfc.com.au that may enhance people's ability to find the site through a Google or other search – using combinations of the following key words:
Children, families, services, Shepparton
- Develop a smart phone app that provides details of services for families and children in Shepparton may be one way to address the main opportunity of increasing awareness of available support services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Position CfC as the key connector or hub for finding out about the various support services available for families and children in Shepparton through:
 - a. Conducting an awareness campaign
 - b. Highlighting the new website
 - c. Building relationships with additional stakeholder groups (see point 2 below)
 - d. Advocating on issues that affect clients
 - e. Offering opportunities for workers in the sector to network
 - f. Taking the lead in a collaborative project to develop a service app
2. Prioritise key stakeholder groups and develop relationship plans to build this network in the community. Library staff appear to be a priority stakeholder, more information could be dispersed through school newsletters, service clubs that are tackling issues around family and children should be engaged and community groups and the business community present, as yet, unknown opportunities for collaboration. Undertake a stakeholder analysis, prepare a plan to engage with the priority stakeholders and allocate resources to action it.
3. Domain name – make it easier for potential clients and others to find the CfC website by revisiting the current domain name or setting up additional domain names that direct people to the existing one, for example www.sheppartonfamilyandchildren – dot com, dot org etc.
4. Prepare case studies – as already outlined in Communications Strategy, page 10. (These can then be used on the website and in the awareness campaign.)
5. Develop a media plan, develop relationships with key media contacts and seek appropriate media opportunities.
6. Undertake an annual awareness survey to monitor progress in improving the understanding of what CfC offers.
7. Revise the CfC Communications Strategy in light of the communications feedback from the key stakeholders, especially as it relates to how stakeholders use the CfC website and their communications preferences. Also update the strategy to include cultural and disability considerations, such as literacy, English language proficiency, visual impairment etc. This may require some information to be available in multiple languages, in audio form etc. Complete the strategy by developing a communication action plan, detailing activities, SMART objectives, timelines and resources required and monitor against the action plan.

8. Use the answers to Q12 about the CfC brand to develop a content strategy for the website, relationship plans and media plan – these would inform the tone of voice, language and images / video used.
9. Consider setting up a Facebook page.

Website

10. Develop content – written, visual, in multiple languages and consider audio options. Develop a list of other resources CfC could add to the website that would be useful for referrers and clients (including some base information available in more than one language.)
11. Develop a procedure for regular review and update of website materials and monitor against targets.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION RESULTS

The monitoring and evaluation process established as part of the Communications Consultation Plan provided Success Measures and Evaluation Criteria. The tables from the Plan have been included below and updated with the results.

Greater Shepparton Communities for Children Communications Consultation Plan

CONSULTATION OBJECTIVES AND SUCCESS MEASURES

Purpose type	Objectives	Success measures	Data collection points
<p>Inform – Advise stakeholders why they are being consulted, how to participate and how their input will be considered.</p>	<p>To ensure clients are reached and are able to access information to participate in consultation.</p> <p>To ensure all stakeholders understand how they can be involved in the consultation.</p> <p>To ensure that participation in the consultation includes diverse demographic groups, including CaLD and Aboriginal communities.</p>	<p>Reach & awareness</p> <p>Client survey: 100% of clients in attendance on the day of the survey are informed of the survey & invited to take part. Community Partners: 100% of Community Partners invited to participate in survey. Community: People who had not previously heard of CfC were reached.</p> <p>Access</p> <p>Responses were received from a spread of demographic groups across the three different stakeholder group surveys.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Survey</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Facebook</p>
<p>Consult – seek feedback on stakeholders' communication preferences & awareness of Communities for Children</p>	<p>To receive stakeholders' feedback on their communication preferences.</p> <p>To generate new communication ideas / opportunities.</p> <p>To gain information about Stakeholders' awareness / knowledge of CfC.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Feedback collected from clients in all 7 programs. b. Feedback collected across all three survey types. c. 100% of Community Partners respond. d. 50% of service providers named on the mailing list respond. e. 100 community responses. f. 80% response from those in attendance on the day of the survey in each client program. g. New ideas for communication were generated. h. 100% provided feedback on awareness of CfC. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Events – Health Day</p>
<p>Inform – Advise stakeholders how their input was considered</p>	<p>To maintain and build trust with stakeholders who have participated in the consultation.</p>	<p>Information delivered as part of the consultation process.</p> <p>Clients are informed of the outcome by Community Partners.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Survey, Facebook, Events.</p>

RESULTS AGAINST THE SUCCESS MEASURES

Inform	
Reach and awareness	
Client survey: 100% of clients in attendance on the day of the survey are informed of the survey & invited to take part.	Achieved
Community Partners: 100% of Community Partners invited to participate in survey.	Achieved
Community: People who had not previously heard of CfC were reached.	Achieved - 79% new people = 102
Access	
Responses were received from a spread of demographic groups across the three different stakeholder group surveys.	Details in survey results
Consult	
a. Feedback collected from clients in all 7 programs.	Achieved
b. Feedback collected across all three survey types.	Achieved
c. 100% of Community Partners respond.	81%
d. 50% of service providers named on the mailing list respond.	(discuss)
e. 100 community responses.	129 achieved
i. 80% response from those in attendance on the day of the survey in each client program.	CP didn't complete
j. New ideas for communication were generated.	Achieved
k. 100% provided feedback on awareness of CfC.	Achieved
Inform	
Information delivered as part of the consultation process.	Achieved
Clients are informed of the outcome by Community Partners.	Still to take place

CONSULTATION EVALUATION

Evaluation criteria	Success criteria indicator	Evaluation tool	Results
Outcome criteria – What was achieved? Was it successful? Were there any unexpected barriers?			
Stakeholders completed the surveys	Broad cross section of community participated Expected numbers of involvement in surveys	Project team analysis	Feedback from pre-testing the surveys with clients was taken on board and few found the survey difficult (assistance of CP workers was factored in). Target numbers for completion of the survey were reached or exceeded. The main difficulty was slow uptake in the community. This could be due to low awareness of CfC.
Quality of the feedback / generate new ideas	Cogent responses. New ideas New information about communication habits and preferences Information about current knowledge of CfC	Project team analysis.	Quality did vary. Good and new ideas were collected on communication preferences and regarding current knowledge of CfC.
Increased awareness of the CfC 'brand'	More people know about CfC than did before.	Question in survey about this.	79% of community respondents and 70% of clients were previously unaware of CfC
Acceptance criteria – How well did stakeholders accept the process?			
Stakeholders provided feedback	Feedback received.	Project team analysis.	CP & SC – 20% found the survey moderately difficult Clients – 14% found the survey difficult or very difficult to complete

Greater Shepparton Communities for Children Communications Consultation Plan

Evaluation criteria	Success criteria indicator	Evaluation tool	Results
Stakeholders felt it was easy to participate and clients felt safe to do so	Completed surveys across all stakeholders groups	Question in survey for all stakeholders	<p>Clients – 2.8% were uncomfortable or very uncomfortable completing the survey</p> <p>CP & SC – 20% found the survey moderately difficult</p> <p>Clients – 14% found the survey difficult or very difficult to complete</p>
Process criteria – Was the process appropriate; enabling people to meaningfully engage? Were the consultation promises adequately kept? What have we learnt?			
Stakeholders have the necessary information, and resources	Feedback was provided with minimal negative comments about the process	Project team analysis.	Minimal negative comments about the process were received.
Consultation promise was adequately kept	Systems in place and followed to deliver consultation promise	Project team analysis.	Once the results are processed and decisions made on changes to communications for any of the stakeholder groups, it is important to ensure the loop is closed by advising CP & SC and adding information about the decisions on the website.