



EYES WIDE OPEN

Honouring Teenage Parents and their Children 2017

(Funded by: DSS – Children and Parenting Support Services)

Funded by Department of Social Services (2015 to 2020)

The Team:

| | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Amy MacDonald - | Facilitator |
| Tamika Cope - | Facilitator |
| Rachel Nairn - | Mentor |
| Tanya Langford - | Family Support |
| Jane Armstrong | Kitchen Technician |



The focus for Eyes Wide Open is to assist young mothers to be resilient and strong women. To accept their role as a parent and to honour themselves as beautiful young women. Many of the topics covered within the programs are based on self-esteem, positive relationships, strengths building, parenting, child development and coping mechanisms. Facilitators cover many topics, accessing specialist and professions in the fields of health, recreation, nutrition and wellbeing, to share their knowledge, wisdom and expertise. Facilitator; Tamika Cope, was successful in completed studies this year to achieve her Diploma in Counselling.

104 young mothers and their children participated in programs being offered through Eyes Wide Open Project for 2016.

Programs offered 2015/2016 were:

- Young parent's playgroup
- Peer mothers group
- Engagement Program
- Parenting program
- Outreach
- Mentoring
- Home and hospital visiting.



In 2017 the model of support was altered due to the needs of the young women attending the services. The Pregnancy Program was again to be an element of the project. This being due to the nature of support and information being sourced from young pregnant women.

The Life After Birth program was also re-introduced so that specific content could be shared appropriately for the young mothers attending. A desire for a family night came from the young mothers resulting in a monthly family night being offered on site, the first Monday of the month. This has been extremely successful with up to 9 families attending. Youth fathers are now experiencing the need for a space for themselves. In Term 2 2017, Dad's Night was started on a fortnightly basis.

Action Research has always been the model that drives this project. Year after year changes are made to meet the every changing needs of those attending any of the Eyes Wide Open programs. The current funding agreement with the Department of Social Services required for Eyes Wide Open to deliver:

- ✚ Home Visiting
- ✚ Parenting Skills and Support
- ✚ Peer Support Groups
- ✚ School Rediness Programmes
- ✚ Supported Playgroups

The Peel Youth crèche is surrounded by nature, creating a stimulating environment for children to learn. Children are exposed to vegetable gardens, chickens, nature walks, nature gathering, nature art and natural weather elements.

The crèche is available to all young parents who participate in Eyes Wide Open Programs being offered 4 days per week from 9am to 1pm.



Below are statics drawn from the Eyes Wide Open Project and the Peel Youth Creche (funded by the Department of Education).

March to June 2015

| AGES | NUMBERS |
|---------------|----------------|
| 0 to 1 years | 19 |
| 2 – 4 years | 27 |
| 5 - 12 years | 0 |
| 13 – 19 years | 27 |
| 20 – 39 years | 31 |

March 205 to June 2016

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Home Visits | 51 new referrals |
| EWO programs | 40 referrals maintained further connections after home visits |
| Pregnancy | 23 pregnant referrals |
| | |
| | |

July 2016 to June 2017 – Crèche Attendance

| Age Group | Numbers |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Birth to 24 months | 34 |
| 25 to 35 months | 20 |
| 36 months to school age | 9 |
| School Age | 3 |

Participation is not constantly reaching these numbers. These numbers relate to those coming with their mothers to one of the Eyes Wide Open programs. Some weeks there may be only half of these numbers attending. These numbers are the combined numbers for all Eyes Wide Open programs.

The Eyes Wide Open project and the Crèche have been running cohesively together for the past 15 years. The partnerships formed with the varying governments departments has proven to the essence of success for these young families.

The investment in young families is expanded through the offering of transport to our site and through the creation of programs that include the needs of all participants, so information is relevant to their lives.

Further discussion regarding these project will be shared at the Perth Roundtable with the National Children's Commissioner.

Kind Regards
Be Westbrook
Executive Officer
Peel Youth Services

