The Jack Brockhoff
Child Health
and Wellbeing
Program

2014
ANNUAL REPORT



MELBOURNE SCHOOL OF POPULATION AND GLOBAL HEALTH

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FROM OUR DIRECTORS

2014 has been another successful year for The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program. We would like to acknowledge that the contributions and outcomes detailed within this annual report wouldn't be possible without a wonderful team, stimulating and supportive colleagues and partners, and support from various funding organisations and individuals.

A number of organizational changes occurred this year which build on the recommendations of our 2013 5-year review. We improved the visibility of our expertise and work in the area of evidence and public health which resulted in rebranding, naming and clustering members of the team within a new initiative called Public Health Insight. Already we are seeing signs of this paying off with a greater profile and engagement internationally and nationally, particularly in the area of knowledge translation. We also moved from being a group within the McCaughey Centre to an independent Unit within the new Centre for Health Equity. This will provide an interdisciplinary, organizational context that collectively advocates an increased focus on health equity within Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, as well as within the University more broadly.

Further, there is no question that sustainable solutions to the significant complex issues of our time, whether the outcomes sit within health, education, justice, or other sectors, cannot be addressed by sectors alone. We have recognized that this requires a new way of working within the University, with government and non government agencies. Together with the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, the Melbourne Law School, RCH Education Institute, Paediatrics, and Social Work, we have worked to examine and develop opportunities to improve the way in which University members, and stakeholders, can conduct and pursue developments to improve the lives of children living in the 21st Century.

Internationally, nationally, and locally we are working more closely with groups who have a similar vision and approach to making a difference to child health inequalities. Breakthroughs and rigorous innovations will result from a critical mass of ideas and a focus on solutions. The context is a challenging one, but contemporary issues require contemporary system focused solutions and voices.

2015 will bring with it an increased focus on families and children with disabilities and a closer engagement with schools and the community sector; and an ever strengthening focus on engagement, knowledge translation, and research partnerships for every child.



Professor Elizabeth Waters

Jack Brockhoff Chair of Child Public Health
Director, The Jack Brockhoff Child Health & Wellbeing Program



Associate Professor Lisa Gibbs

Deputy Director, The Jack Brockhoff Child Health & Wellbeing Program

FULFILLING A LEGACY

The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program is the grateful recipient of the 2008 Jack Brockhoff Centenary Gift. This gift has made a significant contribution to building long term human resource investment in our program and enabled substantial developments to novel and important ways of working. The gift also included the appointment of Professor Elizabeth Waters to The Jack Brockhoff Chair of Child Public Health.

The Jack Brockhoff Child Health & Wellbeing Program provides a wonderful legacy to Sir Jack Brockhoff, who through his generosity established The Jack Brockhoff Foundation. The Foundation's purpose is to provide philanthropic support to organisations whose activities are designed to have a positive and enduring impact on the health and wellbeing of communities.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

Within The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program is a multi and interdisciplinary team of leading public health researchers, working to address gaps in knowledge about child health and wellbeing, and answer key questions that will inform decisions in policy and practice at the community, national and international levels.

Our research projects are driven by a passion for justice, equity and human rights. We are concerned with the key drivers of child health; the influence of culture and social contexts on a child's early years that impact health, educational, social and employment prospects later in life.

Our research shows that the best solutions for tackling big issues in child health are rarely found solely within the health system. We believe it is essential to look at child health issues in a broader cross-sectoral context – how they relate to areas such as the economy, education and urban planning for example.

The foundation of the Program commenced in 1995, and has been based on the principle of collaboration in Australia and internationally. We have formed strong practice-research partnerships across a wide variety of sectors and disciplines, including government, education, community health, dental health, disability, emergency management, social welfare and childcare.

We engage members of the public, including children and their families, in decision-making because research must be inclusive and broadly relevant if it is to contribute to community wellbeing. Through our partnerships we build the capacity of organisations to use research and evidence more effectively to improve child health and wellbeing.

Funding for this work requires great ideas, wonderful people, significant and important findings. We wouldn't be able to achieve this without our philanthropic contributors, who share this vision for prevention, and recognition of the need for research in solving 'the wicked problems'.



OUR VISION, MISSION, GOALS & RESEARCH AREAS

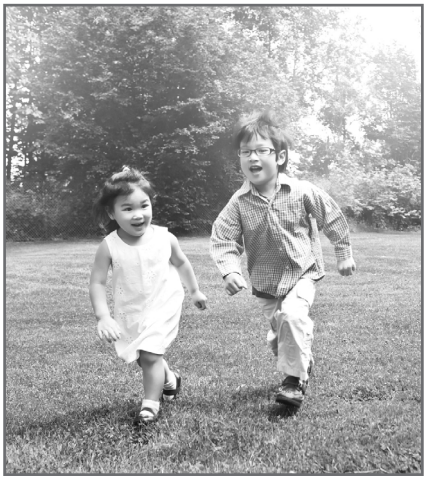
VISION AND MISSION



The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program works towards a vision of every child having the opportunity for a fulfilling and healthy life.

Our research, through partnerships and an evidence-informed approach, aims to improve child health and reduce gaps in health inequalities.

OUR GOALS



We have five goals that drive our work:

1. Advancing Knowledge
2. Building Capacity
3. Informing Decision-making
4. Informing Practice
5. Improving Health

Many of our projects will work towards multiple goals. Our research areas have evolved due to the burden experienced by children and families, the potential for prevention and the fact that these health issues are experienced unequally.

For the purpose of our annual report, we have grouped projects according to where they have made the greatest impact.

OUR KEY RESEARCH AREAS



Mental wellbeing
Oral health
Obesity prevention
Disasters
Disability
Refugee and asylum seekers
Family contexts
Life course data
Health improvement and prevention science
Interdisciplinary approaches and multiple methods

GOAL 1

ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE

Our research aims to address important gaps in our knowledge of child health and wellbeing. Through a social determinants lens we seek to understand the factors which influence health and wellbeing and also what works to improve health.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR WORK TOWARDS ACHIEVING THIS GOAL IN 2014:

- Elizabeth Waters was awarded the Cochrane Anne Anderson Award which recognises individuals contributing to the enhancement of women's visibility and participation in the Cochrane leadership. As part of the award, she awarded funding to Professor Subhadra Menon at the Public Health Foundation of India to establish a Cochrane Public Health journalism fellowship and to Melissa Lewis at Public Health Evidence South Asia who is completing her PhD on statistics in synthesising complex public health interventions.
- Lisa Gibbs was promoted to Associate Professor. A wonderful, hard earned achievement.
- Elizabeth Waters was awarded a 5 year Visiting Professorship at the Institute of Health and Wellbeing, University of Glasgow.
- Lisa Gibbs invited to participate in an international collaboration examining research for children and disasters.
- Lisa Gibbs was invited to join the International Collaboration on Participatory Health Research.
- Kim Gilson and Emily Steele were both awarded University of Melbourne 2015 Early Career Researcher Grant, in life course, mental health and wellbeing, and disability.
- Shauijun Guo joined us from Peking University in Beijing after being awarded the prestigious University of Melbourne International Engagement Award. Jun's PhD will examine adolescent health literacy from a cross-cultural perspective, with Australian-based and Chinese students.
- Simon Crouch completed his PhD which looks at the health and wellbeing of children from same-sex attracted parents, and made a significant contribution to international policy and advanced evidence in this area.
- Lara Corr completed her PhD on mental health, working conditions and family day care, advancing the understanding of working conditions in the childcare context.

RESEARCH AREAS

Examples of important new areas of work and findings:

Refugee & asylum seekers

- The role of sports participation in fostering social inclusion, wellbeing and increased physical activity for refugee-background young people in Victoria.
- Development of a best practice model for education and community agencies.
- Understanding of the lived experience of refugee-background children in Australia.

Disability

- Evaluation of a new model of care to support the health and wellbeing of children with a disability and their families for disability service providers.
- Evidence to support the wellbeing of young adults with disabilities.
- Development of a new measure of quality of life for parents and carers of children with disabilities for service providers.
- Development of a clinical tool to measure the quality of life of children with cerebral palsy.

Life course data analysis relevant to health and education services

- Improved outcomes for children resulting from attendance at Maternal and Child Health.
- Impact of child health and illness on education outcomes and transition to work.
- Value of second year of kindergarten on transition to school and education outcomes.
- Impacts of Victorian 2009 bushfires on child health, wellbeing, development and academic outcomes.

Oral health

- The contribution of bacteria to dental decay: the first group internationally to identify full microbiota patterns in the mouth.
- The natural history of emergence of dental decay in children less than 3 years, and identification of soft drink consumption as key behavioural determinant, with identification of protective factors.
- Development of new measure of cariogenicity ie how you might predict whether a diet would contribute to dental decay.



Photo of Callignee from Beyond Bushfires study

TWO OF OUR KEY PAPERS THIS YEAR ARE:

Disasters

Bryant R, Waters E, Gibbs L, Gallagher C, Pattison P, Lusher D, MacDougall C, Harms L, Block K, Snowdon E, Sinnott V, Ireton G, Richardson J, Forbes D (2014) Psychological Outcomes Following the Victorian Black Saturday Bushfires. Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry 48(7): 634-643.

Following the Black Saturday bushfires in February 2009, we wanted to understand the impact of the fires on residents' mental health and to identify predictors of poor mental health. Over 1000 residents living in high, medium and low fire impacted areas participated in our survey. Our research showed that several years after the bushfires, the majority of participants were not suffering from significant mental health issues caused by the fires. However, in communities which had been badly affected by the fires, a significant minority of people reported persistent PTSD, depression, and psychological distress. These findings suggest the need for promotion of health and complementary services, community-based initiatives, and family and other informal supports to target persistent problems in communities which are badly affected by bushfires. We are now working with local and State governments, the Australian Red Cross and other service providers and community groups in bushfire affected areas, to ensure that support for mental health at a community level is promoted in the medium to longer term after a severe bushfire experience.

Family contexts

Crouch S, Waters E, McNair R, Power J, and Davis E (2014) Parent-reported measures of child health and wellbeing in same-sex parent families: a cross-sectional survey. BMC Public Health 14:635

We wished to understand the health and mental wellbeing status of Australian children with same-sex attracted parents. In this paper, The Australian Study of Child Health in Same-Sex families (ACHESS) revealed children with same-sex attracted parents are doing well in terms of their health and wellbeing and in some factors better than children from the general population. However, the study found that these children were affected by experiences of stigma which is related to poorer outcomes on some emotional and mental wellbeing measures. The findings of this study have been reported in almost 600 different news outlets internationally, including significant press attention in Victoria. We are now working to raise awareness of these findings to ensure future health policies and services can address stigma and therefore maintain positive outcomes.

GOAL 2

BUILDING CAPACITY

Through a commitment to genuine exchange with research users, we build the capacity of community services, government departments and non-governmental agencies to use evidence in their decision-making.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR WORK TOWARDS ACHIEVING THIS GOAL IN 2014:

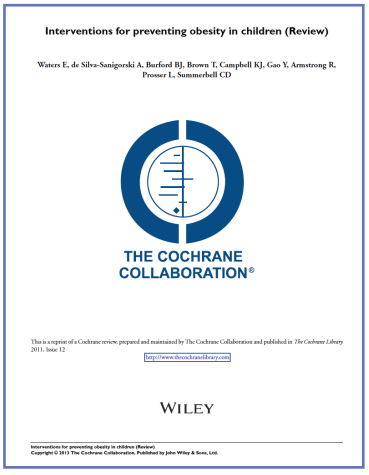
- Elizabeth Waters led and taught into the WHO-Cochrane-Cornell University short course on systematic reviews of public health nutrition, food fortification and supplementation.
- Karen Block was appointed the co-chair of the University of Melbourne's engagement working group for the new Melbourne Refugee Studies Program which provides a teaching program to refugee and asylum seekers; and appointed as a committee member and the events organiser for Researchers for Asylum Seekers (RAS). She coordinates the annual conference bringing together postgraduate students, early career and experienced researchers working in refugee and asylum seeker research from across Australia. This year's conference asks 'Asylum Seeker and Refugee Policy – What is the Role of Evidence?'.

LAUNCH OF PUBLIC HEALTH INSIGHT

In 2014 we established and launched a new initiative called Public Health Insight. Public Health Insight brings together all the work relevant to evidence, knowledge translation and exchange, systematic and other evidence reviews, training and teaching in areas relevant to evidence, knowledge translation and public health decision-making, and research in relevant areas. Creating Public Health Insight involved the examination of what this program offers by comparison to others, and then a new logo and position statement. The logo (below) represents a funnel and the process of selection, synthesis, connection and interpretation that occurs when carefully selected information from a variety of sources, accounting for differences and influencing factors, is synthesized and contextualized, connecting cause and effect, and where data is interpreted to create insights that can be put to practical use.

Public Health Insight is defined by the statement 'inclusive research for healthier decisions', in both our approach and positioning to other organisations. The word 'inclusive' refers to insights gained from a more comprehensive approach to research that considers questions of public health from a range of perspectives and includes different viewpoints. 'Healthier decisions' refers to decisions made by policy makers, practitioners and populations. The phrase alludes to decisions based on evidence as being more healthy, and that these decisions will lead to better public health.

The overall process, and work with Fenton Communications, was enormously constructive and positive. We hope you like the outcome and look forward to working with organisations interested in this approach and services.



Interventions for preventing obesity in children. One of the Cochrane Collaboration's most widely cited reviews.

PublicHealthInsight

Inclusive research for healthier decisions

GOAL 2



Post-bushfire view of Melbourne city from Kinglake from Beyond Bushfires study

KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION FOR RESEARCHERS: SHORT COURSE

Public Health Insight

For researchers to participate in a genuine exchange with the end-users of their research, specific skills and understanding are required. Following extensive scoping and research, we recognised the need within the academic community to support public health researchers in their knowledge translation efforts.

As part of the NHMRC Research Translation Symposium in November 2014, we ran an intensive half day training workshop to work with researchers to enhance the impact of their research and provide practical support to build KT skills and understanding within the research community.

In 2015 we will expand on the course and provide a broader two-day short course.

INCREASING RESEARCH CAPACITY IN THE DISASTER RESPONSE SECTOR.

Disasters

Since 2009, our Program has worked extensively to provide an evidence base to inform responses to disasters. As part of our research we have worked in partnership with organisations across Victoria to ensure our research is relevant and useful. In working in partnership, we have also sought to build capacity within the organisations we work with, to carry out their own research.

Kate Brady, the National Recovery Co-ordinator at the Australian Red Cross, is now carrying out her PhD with the Program. Kate's research on disaster recovery will inform her role co-ordinating all recovery services that the Red Cross provides in communities affected by disasters across Australia.

John Richardson, Emergency Services Co-ordinator at the Australian Red Cross, and Greg Ireton, Principal Adviser, Health and Human Services Emergency Management, Department of Human Services, were both appointed as Honorary Fellows with the Program to support the collaboration and their efforts to engage in evidence-based service delivery and policy advice.

GOAL 3

INFORMING DECISION-MAKING

As research knowledge in child public health increases, we work to ensure that our research is part of the decision-making process at all levels of government.

Through dissemination and dialogue with decision-makers we aim for our research to help set policy agendas, inform policy debates, planning and the development of new policies.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR WORK TOWARDS ACHIEVING THIS GOAL IN 2014:

- Elizabeth Waters was invited to be a member of the NHMRC Synthesis and Translation of Research Evidence Advisory Group (STORE), which provides advice to the NHMRC Council on the standards and resources needed to improve Australian practices in the development and implementation of clinical practice guidelines, public health guidelines, systematic reviews and decision-making. Elizabeth was also invited to Chair the NHMRC Parenting and Mental Health Evidence Group, which guides the development of advice aimed at supporting parents of young children as a means of promoting the child's social and emotional development and wellbeing. In addition, she was invited to be on the Victorian Public Health Evaluation Advisory Group for Prevention. This group supports the Victorian Department of Health in its efforts to build evidence on Healthy Together Victoria.
- Lisa Gibbs was asked by the Victorian Government Department of Health to conduct a Qualitative Analysis of Public Submissions responding to the "Grow Learn Live Well: Promoting the health of Victoria's children and young people" Draft Policy Framework. The framework informed government decision-making about finalisation and implementation of the policy.
- Lisa Gibbs was invited to be a member of the Dental Health Services Victoria Population Health Advisory Committee. The committee provides advice and direction to the Board of Directors of Dental Health Services Victoria (DHSV) on population health matters and population-based health planning initiatives and other relevant programs.
- Lisa Gibbs and the Teeth Tales team were awarded a Melbourne School of Population and Global Health Open Award for Knowledge Transfer on the influence of research findings for community health decision-making.
- Simon Crouch is working with the Rainbow Families Council Victoria to provide an evidence base for same-sex adoption campaign; and with various organisations (local, national and international) to provide evidence base for marriage equality debates.



CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION COCHRANE REVIEW

Obesity prevention

One of the hallmarks of our long term evidence work program has been the leadership, conduct and translation of a Cochrane review on 'Interventions to prevent childhood obesity'. Whilst this review commenced in 1998 soon after the birth of the Cochrane Collaboration, it has been continuously updated which has coincided with the increased international focus and arguably, increased international burden of childhood obesity. What has also co-occurred is an increased recognition and acceptance of the value of using evidence from research to help inform solutions and policy directions. There is now also recognition of the 'upstream' determinants of obesity and the need to examine the potential influence on health outcomes from strategies that range from legislation to peer-led behaviour change.

In 2011 we published our last update on the Cochrane library, which is currently approaching 2000 citations in the international literature and continues to be downloaded more than 20,000 times per year. In 2014-15 with support from the World Health Organisation we will complete an update which comprehensively includes evidence that is necessary for deliberations in the WHO Commission to End Childhood Obesity.

TEETH TALES

Oral health

Since 2006 we have worked with Merri Community Health Services to understand how to better support child oral health promotion in culturally diverse communities. The Teeth Tales study was completed earlier this year making significant impact across policy and practice within Victoria, as well as contributing to the academic literature. Working with Merri Community Health Services, we developed and trialled a new model for community-based child oral health promotion in culturally diverse communities. Partners on the study included Dental Health Services Victoria, Arabic Welfare, Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS), Pakistani Association Australia Melbourne, Moreland City Council, Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health, North Richmond Community Health, and Yarra City Council.

As result of our work there have been a number of key outcomes. The study's early findings contributed to the development of Dental Health Services Victoria's policy for priority access for families with a refugee-like background attending government funded dental services. Merri Community Health Services has changed its dental service model to include child dental screening conducted in community settings; this initiative is called Little Smiles and has now been rolled out. Merri Community Health Services has also changed its access and equity policy and adjusted its client feedback survey in response to Teeth Tales findings. The cultural competency organisational review (CORe) guidelines published in October will be available through the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health. The Teeth Tales child oral health education manual published in October will be available through Merri Community Health Services. This manual will be available to other health service providers for community-based oral health education programs. In addition, Teeth Tales findings are directly informing Dental Health Services Victoria child oral health clinical guidelines.

GOAL 4

INFORMING PRACTICE

We aim for the resources we produce to be utilised by practitioners, for our research to inform workforce and organisational development and for our research to inform how services are delivered.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR WORK TOWARDS ACHIEVING THIS GOAL IN 2014:

- Lisa Gibbs was invited to become a board member of Smouldering Stump, a charity which aims to support children across Australia affected by disasters; and invited to be a member of the disaster preparedness advisory committee for Australian Red Cross.
- Lisa Gibbs was invited to be a member of the Melbourne Health Human Research and Ethics Committee.
- Elise Davis and Kirsty Jones were awarded a Melbourne School of Population and Global Health Open Award for Knowledge Transfer on the use of theatre to engage with parents and service providers.
- Tahna Pettman was awarded a Melbourne School of Population and Global Health Early Career Award for Excellence in Knowledge Transfer achievements as a result of Tahna's work and collaborations in implementation research and evaluation, facilitation of workforce development, and stakeholder partnerships.
- Lara Corr has been invited to a number of early childhood conferences and panels in relation to recommendations for improvements to practice in child-care, focussing on mental health, working conditions and quality of care; and contributed to Australian Government Productivity Commission on Education and Early Childhood.
- The first Beyond Bushfire Study Research Symposium took place in October 2014. This symposium celebrated and presented the extraordinarily productive outcomes and findings of Beyond Bushfires, examining recovery, resilience and rebuilding post Black Saturday in Victoria. The symposium attracted a significant government, non-government, community, study partner and participant attendance, providing results of the Beyond Bushfire study and discussion of the implications and applications of research for disaster and bushfire policy and practice.



RAISING AWARENESS ACROSS THE DISABILITY SECTOR OF THE MENTAL WELLBEING OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.

Mental wellbeing

Within the disability sector, the mental health and wellbeing of parents of children with disabilities has often been overlooked, yet up to 49% of parents report mental health problems. In 2013, as part of the launch for the National Disability Insurance Scheme, we developed an evidence-based resource for parents of children with a disability to support their mental health and wellbeing.

To promote the use of the resource within the disability sector, we worked with Melbourne Playback Theatre Company and parents to create a theatre production, which brought to life the stories of parents and highlighted the need for better support for parents. This year we received philanthropic investment to create a film of the stories, to share with a far broader audience across Australia. The engaging and often emotional film aims to raise awareness across the disability sector of the challenges parents face and increase engagement with this important issue. This arts-based approach to knowledge translation, highlights the Program's aspirations to continue to innovate and work with new partners to share our research findings in compelling and creative ways.

THE COLLABORATION OF COMMUNITY-BASED OBESITY PREVENTION SITES (CO-OPS)

Obesity prevention

The Collaboration of Community-based Obesity Prevention Sites (CO-OPS) is an initiative funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and is a collaboration between Deakin University, our Program, The University of Sydney and Flinders University. CO-OPS is a national knowledge translation and exchange platform which aims to support community-based obesity prevention initiatives in Australia by providing advice, promoting best practice, disseminating and translating knowledge and by offering networking opportunities.

This knowledge translation and exchange (KTE) platform creates the links between academic, policy and practice professionals to ensure best practice and ongoing cooperation in the promotion of healthy eating, regular physical activity and healthy weight as key factors to help prevent chronic disease.

CO-OPS has nearly 2,000 voluntary members which in turn provide services to 1.4 million Australians. Since 2007 the CO-OPS Collaboration has made strong advances in supporting communities and individuals in the promotion of physical activity and healthy eating. This contribution includes; development and application of best practice principles, evidence summaries and support for non-communicable disease (NCD) prevention with disadvantaged, remote and rural populations; an online resource library; support and advice line for prevention practitioners; national and state-based training and national awards for best practice in NCD prevention.

In addition to providing leadership for CO-OPS KTE implementation and delivery methods, we have led a key research activity for CO-OPS, a national survey of community-based initiatives to describe the characteristics, quality and likely effectiveness of obesity prevention in Australia. Importantly, we are also leading the evaluation of the process and impact of CO-OPS as a KTE platform, which will generate evidence about the value of a national-level KTE platform to support best practice. We have disseminated 18 presentations and posters on CO-OPS implementation, research and evaluation at national and international conferences since 2013. We have also published two collaborative papers, and have two other publications under review on the CO-OPS evaluation and national survey.

GOAL 5

IMPROVING HEALTH

Our research is guided by three thematic questions: what are the risk and protective factors which influence child health and wellbeing, what works to improve child health and wellbeing, and how can an evidence-informed approach to decision making be promoted. The answers to 'what works to improve child health and wellbeing' are derived from the studies that are interventional or result from program implementation and evaluation.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR WORK TOWARDS ACHIEVING THIS GOAL IN 2014:

- We submitted a proposal to the University of Melbourne Hallmark Research Initiative to develop the University of Melbourne's 'Collaboration for Improving Children's Lives in the 21st Century'. The aim of the collaboration is to develop a world class interdisciplinary, cross-sectoral program to understand the challenges experienced by children growing up in the 21st Century, and potential solutions and appropriate responses to these challenges.
- The Jamie Oliver Ministry of Food 10 week cooking skills program resulted in a range of health improvements, presented by Jamie Oliver on his website, in national media news outlets and his youtube channel. Together with colleagues at Deakin University (Marj Moodie, Anna Flego, Jess Herbert and Boyd Swinburn), Lisa Gibbs and Elizabeth Waters worked with the Good Foundation and Queensland Health to design this evaluation which worked alongside the program deliverers. Journal publications are imminent.
- We commenced a long term study to develop and evaluate a new model of care focused on improving the health and wellbeing of children and adults with a disability, led by Elizabeth Waters, Elise Davis and Jeff Chan from Yooralla.
- THRIVE, our long term program of research to examine social and emotional wellbeing in family day care led by Elise Davis and Lara Corr resulted in a multitude of findings that included recommendations for professional development content, stages of readiness for change, barriers to improving outcomes, educators knowledge, confidence and skills, development of a new program, improvements in caregiver interaction, and recommendations for what is required for the sector as next steps (as well as 12 significant publications).
- Findings from our birth cohort, VicGen, demonstrate the positive impact on use and participation in Maternal and Child Health Service Key Ages and Stages Visits over the first 3.5 years of the child's life as a result of participating in VicGen. Lauren Carpenter, Emily Amezdroz and Shae Johnson have also reported on how cariogenic children's diets are, and contemporary dietary patterns in the first 2 years of life.
- VicGen data was analysed to report on the contemporary patterns of dental caries and determinants that predict healthier versus less healthy mouths.
- Improvements in oral health and a range of other outcomes have been reported on and published as a result of the 9 year Teeth Tales Study.





TEETH TALES

Oral Health

Teeth Tales is a culturally competent approach to child oral health promotion, aiming to establish a model for feasible, replicable and cost-effective child oral health promotion for culturally diverse local government areas (LGAs) in Australia. The free community based dental screening offered for pre-school children was a key incentive for families to participate in the study. It also introduced the family to the dentist and raised parent awareness of child oral health care needs. Over 650 children from families from Iraq, Lebanon and Pakistan received dental screenings, 12% were referred for further treatment and 7% followed this up with partner organisation Merri Community Health Services. A total of 151 families attended the peer-led oral health education course that consisted of six hours of oral health education over two weeks, and a site visit to the local community health dental service the following week.

THE ANGLESEA CHILD INITIATIVE

Disasters

The Anglesea Child Initiative is a partnership demonstration project between the Anglesea CFA, Anglesea Primary School and the University of Melbourne. It aims to promote child mental and physical health by increasing their understanding of the local environment and training them in bushfire risk and preparedness. As part of this, students in Grades 4 and 5 are attending regular hands-on sessions at the local CFA Shed. They are also monitoring the environment using sensors developed by the University of Melbourne Department of Infrastructure Engineering and using the data to contribute to local CFA fire risk ratings. The next stage is to support the children in developing and leading a bushfire education program for parents, fellow school students, visiting students attending school camps in the area, and tourists of mixed ages. Research using visual mapping and interview techniques is being conducted to explore the impact of the program on parent and child attitudes, sources of information and support, and sense of agency.

SPORTS PARTICIPATION, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND WELLBEING FOR REFUGEE-BACKGROUND YOUTH

Refugee and asylum seekers

Sports Participation, Social Inclusion and Wellbeing for Refugee-Background Youth is a scoping study examining the benefits and challenges associated with the different ways that clubs, schools and other organisations include children and young people from refugee backgrounds in sports. Sports participation has the potential to offer a range of benefits likely to foster social inclusion, physical activity and health for refugee-background young people living in Australia. This group has low participation rates however, and identified barriers include costs, discrimination and a lack of cultural sensitivity in sporting environments, a lack of knowledge of mainstream sports services on the part of refugee-background settlers, lack of access to transport, culturally determined gender norms and family attitudes. Qualitative interviews with organisational representatives and young people are being conducted to identify the core elements of best practice in this area. Next steps will be to work in partnership with community based organisations to implement and evaluate a model based on findings from the scoping study.

GOVERNANCE

The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program is led by the Director, Professor Elizabeth Waters. The senior leadership team comprises Professor Elizabeth Waters, Associate Professor Lisa Gibbs, Dr Elise Davis and Dr Rebecca Armstrong. Senior leaders in the Program are responsible for the management of research projects, research strategy, development and operational issues.

The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program is grateful for the ongoing advice and expertise of our advisory panel:

Professor Robin Marks	The Jack Brockhoff Foundation
Professor Glenn Bowes	The University of Melbourne
Professor Terry Nolan	The University of Melbourne
Professor Paul Monagle	Royal Children's Hospital
Professor Christine Kilpatrick	Royal Children's Hospital
Mr Bernie Geary	Office of the Child Safety Commissioner
Ms Glenda Strong	Royal Children's Hospital Education Institute
Dr Robert Grenfell	BUPA

Professor Elizabeth Waters and Robert Symons at the launch of the Donor Wall celebration Nov 2014



OUR PEOPLE

DIRECTORS

- Professor Elizabeth Waters
- Associate Professor Lisa Gibbs
- Dr Rebecca Armstrong
- Dr Elise Davis

ACADEMIC STAFF

- Emily Amezdroz
- Dr Karen Block
- Lauren Carpenter
- Dr Bradley Christian
- Lara Corr
- Jodie Doyle
- Dr Colin Gallagher
- Dr Kim-Michelle Gilson
- Shae Johnson
- Dr Kirsty Jones
- Elise O'Callaghan
- Dr Tahna Pettman
- Tahnee Saunders
- Elyse Snowdon
- Dr Emily Steele
- Mandy Truong
- Dr Evelyn Wong
- Dana Young

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

- Alana Pirrone-Savona
- Hannah Morrice

HIGHER DEGREE

- Rachel Boak
- Kate Brady
- Dr Bradley Christian
- Lara Corr
- Dr Simon Crouch
- Shuaijun Guo
- Jess Herbert
- Connie Kellett
- Lauren Kosta
- Marian Lok
- Mandy Truong

HONORARY STAFF

- Dr Christine Armit, Menzies School of Health Research
- Dr Simon Crouch, Melbourne University
- Professor Mark Gussy, LaTrobe University
- Greg Ireton, Department of Health
- Professor Colin MacDougall, Flinders University
- Professor Laurence Moore, University of Glasgow
- Dr Bjorn Nansen, Melbourne University
- John Richardson, Red Cross

OUR PEOPLE



DIRECTOR ELIZABETH WATERS

Professor Elizabeth Waters is the Director of The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program and The Jack Brockhoff Chair of Child Public Health.

She is motivated by a number of factors, with the ultimate goal of reducing child health inequalities.

"What fuels me is justice; equity; vulnerability and rights," she said.

"Understanding the context within which children grow up, and the fact that so many health conditions we see are preventable and exist because of socioeconomic inequalities, appeals to me from an advocacy and prevention perspective."

Professor Waters' career in public health began in the mid 90s. A background in science, nursing and exposure to global health issues had provoked an interest in preventative health which, having been further stirred by her Masters in Public Health study, led her to closely examining child health and wellbeing.

Equipped with experience at the Royal Children's Hospital, VicHealth, Oxford and Deakin Universities, Professor Waters arrived at the University of Melbourne in 2007 with an established team of researchers passionate about government and community partnership approaches to preventative health.

Professor Waters and her team have since addressed key questions around child health and wellbeing.

"There are so many different dimensions of early life exposure that make a significant difference on everything from educational outcomes, to social outcomes, to employment outcomes later on," Professor Waters explained.

"Our work looks at the influence of culture and social contexts, both on people who prosper and those who suffer or don't benefit as a result of environmental factors."

From tackling childhood obesity and reducing the risk of diabetes, to improving oral health, Professor Waters and her team conduct research projects that reverberate and impact broader societal issues.

"A lot of the solutions to these issues don't exist solely within the health system," she said.

"We need to do more about how we contextualise health issues with broader cross-sectoral factors. It is often about understanding what is going on in commerce, transport, or planning, for example."

Professor Waters hopes this broad approach to child public health will be adopted into the future.

"We'd love to see the coming together of education, law, social policy, arts, health, architecture, to look at these big issues around child health problems and population health," she said.

This collaborative, grassroots approach correlates with the vision of The Jack Brockhoff Foundation, which Professor Waters said has been crucial to her team's success. "The Jack Brockhoff Foundation really validated that this kind of approach is one that makes sense, not just from a research and academic perspective, but one that makes sense for the community," she said.

OUR PEOPLE



DEPUTY DIRECTOR LISA GIBBS

Associate Professor Lisa Gibbs is the Deputy Director of The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program.

Prior to her PhD she worked in community education and services and valued the opportunity to have a positive impact on individual people's lives.

"When I did my PhD I began to appreciate the impact public health research and knowledge can have at a population level. From that I developed an interest in working in research," she explained.

Eleven years ago Lisa responded to an advertisement to work on a child health research project with Elizabeth Waters at the Centre for Community Child Health. Today they are now leading child health research at the University of Melbourne.

Lisa is driven by a number of factors. "Primarily I am interested in making a difference to people's lives by finding ways to improve health and wellbeing".

"On a day to day level I am motivated by great colleagues and partnerships, and by developing the best methods for the community-based research we are undertaking," she said.

Lisa believes that by working with government and service provider partners to translate research into policy and practice, research can have a positive impact on people's lives.

"But we have to remember these things take time. Sometimes we need to aim for generational change. When I feel like we are not getting anywhere, I remind myself of the advances that have been made previously over time as a result of public health research and health promotion – for example, safe drinking water, seatbelt wearing, and sunsafe policies," she said.

Lisa's research is already having an immediate impact on the lives of the communities involved in her research studies by increasing local knowledge and capacity. She also hopes her work will have a broader impact on the international evidence base and on decision-making in relation to government and service provider policies and practice.

"Specifically, I hope my research will increase equity in terms of health and wellbeing - this is what we are all striving for," she said.

OUR PEOPLE



POST DOCTORAL FELLOW - DR COLIN GALLAGHER

Colin Gallagher is a social psychologist and a social network analyst who joined The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program in 2012.

Colin's work aims to utilize social network analysis methods to answer pressing questions, namely, how people and communities recover in the wake of a catastrophe.

Colin says his motivation comes from building conceptual and methodological bridges between fields to address longstanding problems of substantive interest, thereby injecting real-world relevance into the use of cutting edge statistical methods.

"I often find that knowing the important questions to ask, and how to ask them is simultaneously the biggest challenge and opportunity within research generally; after that, answers will come," he said.

Looking to the future, Colin will continue in pursuit of these questions, both researching issues within social psychology and mental health, and teaching others to do the same.

"I see myself as a translational researcher, seeking to open up both the power, but also the limitations, of a network approach," he said.



POST DOCTORAL FELLOW - DR EMILY STEELE

Emily Steele is a Social and Life Course Epidemiologist, who joined The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program in 2013.

"When I looked for a research group, I had two priorities – I wanted to work with some big datasets in the area of women's and/or children's health, and I wanted to work with good people. The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program definitely ticked both boxes and I was thrilled to join the Program," she said.

Her work with the Program involves analysing the data sets of the Department of Education and Early Childhood and understanding how and when environmental, social, community and family factors influence childrens' health.

Emily says she is personally motivated by a desire to understand and untangle the complex array of determinants of health inequities.

"I hope to contribute to a wider public dialogue about these determinants and their role in health, ill-health and health inequities," she said.

Emily believes that generating evidence for the factors that contribute to health and ill-health is crucial if policy makers and programmers are to design and conduct effective intervention programs.

OUR PEOPLE



PHD STUDENT - LARA CORR

Lara Corr joined The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program in 2009 and is now in the final stages of completing her PhD. She joined the Program to work with researchers committed to improving child health equity in a high quality research environment.

"I admired the drive across the Program to produce and share high quality evidence to improve the lives of children and communities. There was a demonstrated willingness to think big and take calculated risks. I also knew of the warm and generous collegial environment," she said.

Lara's PhD research investigates the mental health of caregivers. "I wanted to understand the mental health of both parents and professional caregivers in child care settings, to strengthen the wellbeing of caregivers and in turn, the experiences and outcomes of children in their care," she said.

Lara is motivated by seeing the potential for research to underpin positive intergenerational change that could transform the experiences of children, families and care professionals and create a better world for us all.

'I believe my work is important because healthy, happy caregivers and children help build a flourishing society. Currently, the world is becoming less fair for many people- this injustice harms us all. My work produces knowledge to provide evidence for positive change," she said.



PHD STUDENT - DR SIMON CROUCH

Simon Crouch is a PhD student who joined The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program in 2011.

During the debate in the NSW parliament in 2010 on same-sex adoption, Simon realised that there was a lack of rigorous research internationally on children in same-sex families.

"My curiosity had been piqued, my inquisitive mind stirred, and a PhD beckoned," he said.

Having found a research area that captured his interest Simon was keen to place this work in a broader child health context; somewhere that provided robust methodological understandings of working with children and that shared his ethos of the wider social context of child health.

"No sooner had I discovered the work that Liz Waters had been doing at the University did I realise that this would be the perfect setting to build my own research experiences," he said.

Over the course of his PhD Simon has learnt a lot about non-traditional families and the benefits difference can bring. His work has also identified areas where not fitting into the norm can produce its own challenges.

"There is now scope to widen the research to understand how children in all families can benefit when traditional assumptions are abandoned and new ways of doing families are embraced," he said.

PHD TOPICS

RACHEL BOAK

Public Health Nutrition Policy: Potential to equitably influence parental food and drink choices for 0-2 year old children, NHMRC Postgraduate Scholarship (2010-2014).

KATE BRADY

What supports recovery from emergency events (in high income, developed countries) from the perspective of people affected by emergencies, APA Scholarship (2013-2016).

DR BRADLEY CHRISTIAN

Evaluation of innovative models of oral healthcare, APA Scholarship (2014-2017).

LARA CORR

Mental Health of Family Day Care Workers – understanding relationship between work stress, carer mental health and child health, NHMRC Postgraduate Scholarship (2010-2014).

DR SIMON CROUCH

The Australian Study of Child Health in Same-Sex Families (ACHESS), NHMRC Postgraduate Scholarship (2011-2014).

SHUAIJUN GUO

Understanding and measuring adolescent health literacy from a cross-cultural perspective. University of Melbourne International Engagement Award (2014-2017).

JESSICA HERBERT

What is the value of community-based cooking interventions? APA Scholarship (2011-2014).

CONNIE KELLETT

Anger, and anger support, for individuals and communities affected by the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires, ARC APAI Scholarship (2011-2014).

LAUREN KOSTA

What are parental experiences of parenting following a natural disaster? STRAPA Scholarship (2014 - 2016).

MARIAN LOK

A Network Society: The study of the use of Information and Communication Technology in long-term disaster recovery, May Stewart Bursary and IBES Top-up Scholarship (2011-2014).

MANDY TRUONG

Examining the impact of an organisational cultural competence intervention on a community health service: from individual and organisational perspectives, APA Scholarship (2011-2014).





PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

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- Alpine Shire Council
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- Australian Red Cross
- Australian Research Council
- Australian Rotary Health
- Barwon Health
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- Centrelink
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- Country Fire Authority
- Dental Health Services Victoria
- Family Day Care Australia
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- Yooralla

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- A Centre for Research Excellence in Cerebral Palsy (CRE-CP). Reddihough D, Graham K, Imms C, Badawi N, Coory M, Waters E, Blaire E Carter R. CRE in Clinical Research Funding APP1057997, 2014-2019, $2,497,005.
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- Developing and evaluating a new cost-effective health and wellbeing model of care for disability service providers. Waters E, Davis E, Chan J, Reddihough D, Carter R, Williams K, Gibbs L, Reynolds J, Tracy J & McDonald R. NHMRC Partnership Project Third Call, 2014, $578,308.
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- Hearing the Voices of Parents – Extension, Jones K. MEPO Engagement Grant, 2014, $7385.50.
- Interventions to improve Community Food Security in developed countries: What works and why? Armstrong R. Canadian Institutes of Health Research grant outcome, 2014-2015, CAN $99,800.
- Ian Potter Travel Scholarship, Gilson, K-M. 2014, $2000.
- Melbourne School of Population Health, DEECD Research and Evaluation Partnership Tender, 2010, $1.5M.
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- Promoting community-led responses to violence against immigrant and refugee women in metropolitan and regional Australia. Vaughan C, Warr D, Block K, Kavanagh A, Murdolo A, Quiazon R, Murray L. Australian National Research Organisation for Women's Safety, 2014-2016, $350,488.
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- Teeth Tales: A culturally competent community intervention for child oral health in low SES area of urban Melbourne. Gibbs L, Waters E, Sanigorski A, Gussy M, Gold L, Moore L, Watt R, Armit C, Calache H, Hahn B, Younan N, El-Khoury A, Gondal I. LP100100223. ARC Linkage Grant, 2009, $491,000.
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- Refugee youth and sport. Marie Kinsella and David Connolly. 2014.
- Hearing the voices of parents. Springboard Endowment Fund. 2014.
- Child health promotion and prevention. Nichola LeFroy and Sam Riggall. 2014.
- The Jack Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program, The Jack Brockhoff Foundation. 2008-2018.

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17. Gibbs L, MacDougall C, Block K, Snowdon E, Ireton G. Children's worlds framed by disaster: a qualitative study of the ongoing impacts of the Black Saturday fires. 49th Australian Psychological Society Annual Conference, Hobart, 30th September – 3rd October 2014.
18. Love P, Pettman T, Smith E, Romanus A, Whelan J, Allender S, Gill T, Waters E, Coveney J, Swinburn B. Obesity Prevention Case Studies - Local Stories To Inform The Evidence-practice-policy Cycle. 12th International Congress on Obesity, Malaysia, 17th - 20th March 2014 (Poster).
19. Love P, Pettman TL, Whelan J, Waters E, Bell C, Allender S, Swinburn BA. Co-creating evidence on obesity prevention implementation through case studies. Australian & New Zealand Obesity Society 2014 Annual Scientific Meeting, Sydney, 16th - 18th October 2014 (Poster).
20. Nichols M, Waters E, Cleary J, Proimos J, Allender S. Feasibility Of Using Routinely Collected Height And Weight Measurements Of Preschool Children For Monitoring Overweight And Obesity In Australia. 12th International Congress on Obesity, Malaysia, 17th - 20th March 2014.
21. O'Callaghan E, Carpenter L, Porter J and de Silva A. A family centered approach using motivational interviewing to improve oral health and dietary patterns in early childhood: a pilot study. The 2nd World Forum for Nutrition Research Conference held in conjunction with the DAA 31st National Conference, Brisbane, 14th May 2014.
22. Pettman T, Waters E, Armstrong R, Gill T, Allender S, Love P, Boylan S, Whelan J, Bolton K, Coveney J, Booth S, Swinburn B. Impact of a national Knowledge Translation and Exchange platform to support community-based obesity prevention implementation. 2nd Australian Implementation Conference, Sydney, 17th – 18th September 2014.
23. Pettman TL, Waters E, Bolton K, Love, P, Armstrong R, Allender S, Smith E, Whelan J, Coveney J, Gill T, Swinburn B. Understanding Community-based Obesity Prevention Initiatives for Population Prevention. 12th International Congress on Obesity, Malaysia, 17th - 20th March 2014.
24. Pettman TL, Waters E, Bolton K, Love P, Gill T, Whelan J, Boylan S, Armstrong R, Coveney J, Booth S, Swinburn BA and Allender S. Scope and characteristics of obesity prevention initiatives in Australia 2013. Australian & New Zealand Obesity Society 2014 Annual Scientific Meeting, Sydney, 16th - 18th October 2014 (Poster).

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS 2014

25. Pettman TL, Waters E. Implementing and evaluating a National Knowledge Translation and Exchange platform for NCD prevention. Invited Speaker in symposium: Accelerating and Measuring the Application of Cancer Evidence. World Cancer Congress, Melbourne, 3rd – 6th December 2014.
26. Smith E, Whelan J, Love P, Allender S, Pettman T, Armstrong R, Waters E, Coveney J, Gill T. The CO-OPS Collaboration: Engaging the obesity prevention community. 12th International Congress on Obesity, Malaysia, 17th - 20th March 2014 (Poster).
27. Steele E, Waters E, Pettman T, Saunders T. An overview of systematic reviews of obesity prevention interventions. Australian & New Zealand Obesity Society 2014 Annual Scientific Meeting, Sydney, 16th - 18th October 2014 (Poster).
28. Waters E. Invited Plenary Speaker. Public Health: the context, the vision, the opportunities. 22nd Cochrane Colloquium, Hyderabad, India, 21st - 26th September 2014.
29. Waters E, Pettman TL, Armstrong R, Allender S, Smith E, Love P, Romanus A, Gill T, Coveney J, Swinburn BA, Impact Of A National Knowledge Translation And Exchange Platform For Community-based Obesity Prevention. 12th International Congress on Obesity, Malaysia, 17th - 20th March 2014 (Poster).
30. Whelan J, Love P, Romanus A, Pettman TL, Bolton K, Smith E, Gill T, Coveney J, Waters E, Allender S. A map of community based obesity prevention initiatives in Australia following obesity funding 2009-2013. Australian & New Zealand Obesity Society 2014 Annual Scientific Meeting, Sydney, 16th - 18th October 2014 (Poster).
31. Whelan J, Smith E, Love P, Romanus A, Bolton K, Pettman T, Allender S. Mapping The Obesity Prevention Landscape In Australia. 12th International Congress on Obesity, Malaysia, 17th - 20th March 2014 (Poster).

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- Nelson Mandela







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