



BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

with Children and Families (2nd edition)

*Edited by Karl Brettig
Foreword by Dr Sue Packer AM*

This book highlights key principles emerging from the process of implementing a whole of community and government approach to supporting families at risk of vulnerability. Drawing on the expertise of a collaboration of practitioners and researchers, it also examines the efficacy of some of the early intervention and prevention strategies developed through the Australian Communities for Children initiative. It will be of particular interest to community services, education and child welfare practitioners and policy makers involved with, or contemplating involvement in, implementing a place-based collective impact approach to child development, wellbeing and protection. How can we better engage with families at risk in a digital world? How can we deliver holistic, integrated support? How can we redesign our family support systems? What kind of leadership and governance will it take to implement the kind of systems change that delivers improved outcomes? These are critical questions we need to engage with if we are to collaboratively redesign inadequate siloed approaches and build family friendly communities that improve the lives of children and families.

“Possibly the most impressive aspect of Communities for Children is the fact that it has persisted through many political and economic climates and continues to grow and to learn about what works for young children and their families. This knowledge gathered over time continues to help families to enjoy their children and feel more confident as parents. This accumulated wisdom is available here in this book and is presented in a very readable way.”

Dr Sue Packer AM
Senior Australian of the Year 2019

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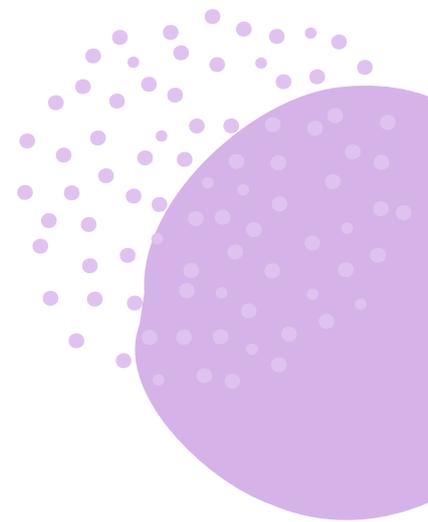
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REVIEWS:

“I have been hugely impressed by ‘Building Stronger Communities with Children and Families’. Addressing the laudable goal of its title, overall the book adopts a strong evidence-based approach through its various chapters that cover a wide range of contexts and situations from a variety of perspectives (such as the child, parents, local educators, health workers) and lenses of analysis (such as social functionality/dysfunctionality, cultural diversity and economic situation etc.). My work over many decades in a variety of roles both local and international through the aegis of both government and non-government positions has led me to an awareness of the primary need for a community-focus approach to the tasks of overall development of community along with the meaningful empowerment of its members; and to the recognition that such goals require the locus of agency to be the very community which external stakeholders seek to help. In addition, the various chapters reveal the benefits of moving from proprietorial professionalism not only to better collaborative arrangements but to integrated approaches between external stakeholders in engaging with the communities where they work.”

Hon Rev Dr Lynn Arnold AO

Former Premier and Minister of Education in South Australia,
Chief Executive of World Vision Australia and Chief Executive of Anglicare SA

“Overall, from Communities for Children lenses, this book gives great insight and depth of detail into the role, the processes and the success of CfC. Well done. The whole book is a mammoth achievement.”

Annie Adams

Team Leader, Advancing Families and Community
Uniting Country SA Communities for Children

“An amazing book I have enjoyed much more on the second reading perhaps because my own practice, awareness and understanding of the national and international literature and trends has greatly increased. Chapter twelve is the most exciting thing I have read for a long time. I truly hope that the government, corporates and other key stakeholders take heed.”

Jenni Brodie

Executive Officer
Swan Alliance Communities for Children

“Implementing the Wellbeing Classroom as a whole of school approach has been successful in supporting our students to identify and regulate emotions and develop character strengths including resilience, perseverance, creativity and bravery. This approach, evaluated in chapter seven, builds on and further develops what the students bring rather than being a programme focussed on “fixing up” the gaps. The Wellbeing Classroom transfers across all areas of the curriculum and has created significant shifts in our school culture.”

Carol Scerri

Principal
Salisbury Primary School

“There is a Chinese proverb that states, “A peaceful house will generate a million of happy returns”. From my experience working across diverse communities, I believe those wise words to be true because when a person has a greater sense of connection to their family, with shared values, cultures and trust – individuals, children and young people can feel a strong sense of belonging and inner worth which helps them to build resilience, confidence and pride at home and within our community. This book provides a great resource for policy-makers and stakeholders working with children and families. I commend all the authors for their remarkable work and furthermore, for challenging us to work together to ensure the children of our next generation are better than the one before. Thank You!”

The Honourable Jing Lee MLC

Assistant Minister to the Premier of South Australia

“Reading this book made my heart sing. The book both challenges and inspires thinking around possibilities for the child, family and community. Parents strive to provide the best for their child however there are times when this is tough and a struggle. Having a person to talk with is crucial in times like this. Universal programs provide spaces for families to strengthen their social network without stigmatisation. This book provides service providers and practitioners with information to become stronger advocates for co-producing services with children, families and communities.”

Joan Gilbert

Director Education and Care Café Enfield
President, Early Childhood Australia SA

