

## Case study | Starting a Hub

### Working together

Learn more about Community Hubs with these real-life examples. In this case study, Salwa Salem, leader of the Meadow Heights Primary Hub, tells us how she worked with families, school staff and the community get her Hub off the ground.

#### What was the challenge?

It took me about three months to understand the school and talk to the staff about what's been happening at the school and what the needs of families were. I also met with community agencies and families in the area. The school wanted parents to be more involved in their children's learning and to have more routine for children at home, like going to bed at a set time. Children were not settling, not learning and had behaviour difficulties. In some cultures there's a tradition that parents don't have much to do with their child's education, they see that as the responsibility of the school. Parents cook and look after their children but they don't read, sing or spend time with them the way other parents do. Most of the mothers felt very isolated. Those who had kids misbehaving felt very embarrassed about it, they were upset that their child wouldn't listen to them.

#### What worked? What didn't?

Parents didn't like it when I talked to them outside in the playground or at the school gate. I realised that if I had a parent to run the playgroup who had kids at the school, she could talk to other parents and get more people attending sessions. That's worked well. We've noticed a big difference in the children who've attended playgroups. They settle into school better. From the playgroups we created coffee and chat sessions for families to come and talk about their concerns. From there we've organised lots of positive parenting sessions.

"At playgroup we encourage parents to read and play with their children."

#### Your advice?

A playgroup is a good way to start because it's not threatening and fathers are supportive because they like to see their children learning.

View all case studies at  
[www.communityhubs.org.au/resources](http://www.communityhubs.org.au/resources)

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Community Hubs is a national program that links families and their preschool children to services and support, learning opportunities or the wider community. Community Hubs makes it easier for families to access the assistance they need by bringing local education, health, community and settlement information and services into a familiar and friendly place such as a school or community space.

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