



## Early Childhood Program



### Key Components of the Early Childhood Program

- To support families by creating a “value” for reading.
- To motivate families and students to view reading as an “everyday” activity.
- To support families to increase reading engagement with their children.
- To create a legacy of books-of-choice in remote and low socio-economic homes.

### What is Books in Homes Australia?

The Charitable Foundation for Books in Homes Australia is a registered not-for-profit organisation committed to providing high quality fiction and non-fiction books to socio-educationally disadvantaged Australian children, many of whom come from bookless households.

The Book Selection Committee meets three times a year to choose the quality titles that make up the Early Childhood Book Catalogue. This committee includes representatives from the NSW Department of Education, the Children’s Book Council, notable children’s authors, teachers and librarians, and Aboriginal representatives to ensure that our books are diverse, as well as culturally and age appropriate.

Families chose their books from Preview Packs, containing 12 books per term. The children and parents / caregivers get to see and touch the books before making their selection. Children are empowered when they choose books they would like to own, and are delighted when they receive them with the knowledge that they can also keep them and build their home libraries. Shared family reading helps embed a love of learning and reading, and the development of early literacy skills prior to transitioning into preschool.

Since 2001, Books in Homes has distributed nearly 2.5 million books-of-choice to children across Australia. With your assistance, we can provide these benefits to families and guide young children to a rewarding literate future.

### What is the focus of the Program?

**Disadvantaged children and families** – Books in Homes provides nine books-of-choice per year for each family in a participating childcare centre or community. Children take these beloved books home to build their personal libraries. This links early learning back to each child’s home, independent of the actual centre, and helps foster self-driven learning, fun and a connection to books. The criteria for participating childcare centres and communities is that they are located in a socio-disadvantaged area.

**Remote and Indigenous communities** – The Program aims to break the education inequality found in remote and Indigenous communities where resources are scarce and generational poverty prevalent. The Program ensures these communities are kept in touch with current titles.

**Preservation of Indigenous culture** – Twenty five percent of all titles are written or illustrated by Indigenous creators, ensuring books are culturally appropriate.

**Refugee children** – The Program also provides families with refugee status who are not literate in Australian Standard English (ASE), the choice of new books they would otherwise not readily access. Exposing children to books in the home environment encourages and promotes a love of reading, as well as improves literacy and shared Australian values in the extended family.

## What does the Early Childhood Program deliver?

The Books in Homes Early Childhood Program runs during Terms 1, 2 and 4 and provides the following:

**Three Preview Packs of 12 books aimed at the 0 to 3 age group** – The Preview Pack allows families to view and touch all the books on offer prior to making their selections. The Preview Pack is then donated to the childcare centre or community library for all to access.

**Book Catalogues** – Glossy A4 Book Catalogues are distributed to each family each term. They include information on the book titles on offer, as well as an order form.

**Books-of-Choice for children** – Each family in a participating childcare centre or community receives nine books per year (three books in each of Terms 1, 2, and 4). These books are predominantly picture books and early learning or fun board books.

**Book Labels** – Books in Homes provides a personalised label or name plate for each book, which emphasises the two most important characteristics of the Books in Homes Program—choice and ownership.

**Book Bags** – Each term, the children receive a sturdy waterproof bag to keep and protect their books.

**Caught Being Good books and certificates** – Books in Homes provides additional books and certificates to childcare centres and communities to use as tangible incentives and rewards for students. This presents reading in a positive light and ensures it is at the forefront of the childrens' minds.

## Success Stories from Principals

**Cost Effectiveness** – *“This project has been one of the most worthwhile and cost effective programs! For \$151 per year we have families now sitting down reading together. Books in Homes has enabled families to spent valuable time together experiencing the joy of reading.”*

**Community Connections** – *“We use the Books in Homes Early Childhood Program predominantly through our community playgroup where the distribution of books helps to build community connections, as well as support attending family members to become more actively involved in their children’s learning. Having suitable, high-quality books available enables our staff to better model, teach and support family members to engage in pre-reading with their children. Books in Homes is also a key element of our engagement strategy as our staff can visit homes to make contact with families in a positive way—allowing them to receive a resource and enabling staff to make connections with potential clients.”*

**Reading for Fun** – *“Reading is the single most important skill that children can possess! The Books in Homes Early Childhood Program is encouraging awareness of, and promoting reading from birth.”*

## Cost

The Program is delivered in Terms 1, 2 and 4:

<b>Type of Program</b>	Early Childhood Program
<b>Cost per Family</b>	\$151.80 excl GST

The Program provides the following to each participating early childcare centre or community per year:

- **36 books via the Preview Pack**
- **9 Books-of-Choice per family**
- **9 personalised Book Labels per family**
- **3 sturdy waterproof Book Bags per family**
- **3 Book Catalogues per family**
- **Extra Caught Being Good books and certificates.**

## Further Information

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