



Bridge to Opportunity

The Rural City of
**MURRAY
BRIDGE**

Local Government Centre
2 Seventh Street (PO Box 421)
Murray Bridge SA 5253

T 08 8539 1100

F 08 8532 2766

council@murraybridge.sa.gov.au
www.murraybridge.sa.gov.au

ABN 90 501 266 817

MEDIA RELEASE

Subject: Paint Murray Bridge REaD

Contact: Kristen Manson
General Manager Community Development
08 8539 1140
k.manson@murraybridge.sa.gov.au

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The Rural City of Murray Bridge has been awarded \$30,000 through a Local Government Early Childhood Community Innovation Grant to work with a group of local organisations to launch the 'Paint the Town REaD' literacy program in the Rural City of Murray Bridge.

The network brings together the Rural City of Murray Bridge, Murray Bridge Library, the Tinyeri Children's Centre Safer Family Services, Murray Bridge Community Centre and AC Care to encourage literacy in the community.

Paint the Town REaD is a nationwide early literacy community program that encourages the whole community to read, talk, sing and play with children from birth, to help develop the skills they will need for reading and writing.

The program will feature a VERY special egg, which will be launched later this year and then nurtured with plenty of reading, rhyming and singing. The egg will visit local kindergartens, childcare centres and community events and once it grows to its full size, a mystery mascot will emerge at a Reading Day event early next year. The program will run until October 2023.

"More than 20% of Australian children arrive at school without the skills necessary to make the most of their education." said Paint the Town REaD Executive Director Barbie Bates.

"In some communities, like the Rural City of Murray Bridge the figure is much higher. Research shows that no matter how good their subsequent teaching, these children can fall further and further behind. They may struggle with literacy, employment, health and happiness for the rest of their lives. Paint the Town REaD works to overcome this by motivating communities across Australia to read with their children so they're ready to learn to read at school.

"Through the use of grant funding we will be able to establish the Paint the Town REaD program within the Rural City of Murray Bridge Council area, helping to increase the amount of reading undertaken by families in pre-school homes, improving the chances that these kids have during their schooling years and the years beyond."

For information about the program, contact Lee Prestwood, Community Safety, Wellbeing and Inclusion Officer at L.Prestwood@murraybridge.sa.gov.au, or visit the Paint the Town REaD website www.paintthetownread.info