

# MEDIA RELEASE

17<sup>th</sup> November 2011

## WA Primary Schools receive early Christmas present

***Not-for profit organisation, Therapy Focus, hopes to spread the valuable messages of inclusion, participation, diversity and acceptance this Christmas, distributing complimentary copies of educational children's storybook, I Am Special / Jarrah's Jigsaw to Primary Schools across WA.***

Produced as part of Therapy Focus' 9<sup>th</sup> annual *Help a Child Grow* Art Competition, the *I Am Special / Jarrah's Jigsaw* storybook comprises two age-appropriate narrative stories, which help educate the community about disability and celebrates the unique talents of every individual.

With generous support from this year's Art Competition sponsors; Bendigo Bank, WA Department for Communities, and Disability Services Commission WA, complimentary copies of the storybook have been distributed to all Western Australian Primary Schools, including rural Schools, Community Schools, Learning Centres, and Education Support Centres.

Featuring the artwork of 56 West Australian Primary School students, the *I Am Special / Jarrah's Jigsaw* imparts key messages and values at an age when attitudes are shaped for life, encouraging children to focus on what peers with disabilities can do, not a perceived lack of ability or skills.

For the first time in the history of the Art Competition and storybook project, an accompanying DVD providing e-book and digital talking book versions of *I Am Special* and *Jarrah's Jigsaw* in English and eight other languages has been produced. The DVD aims to enhance accessibility, particularly for children and families of culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds.

"Translations into relevant languages is of great benefit to CaLD children and their families. Our school in particular has children from over forty countries and they represent over 70% of the school population. It is refreshing to see that inclusion activities and resources such as the storybook will cater for the diversity we have in our schools", said Mr. Chris Brackenreg, Principal at Mirrabooka Primary School.

Digital Accessible Information Systems (DAISY) formatting and downloads, commonly used by people with disabilities to read texts, have also been included on the DVD to further enhance accessibility.

Copies of *I Am Special / Jarrah's Jigsaw* and the accompanying accessible DVD are available for purchase from the Therapy Focus website. Proceeds from the sale of these items go to Therapy Focus' *Help a Child Grow* Fund, which provides equipment and resources to support inclusion and participation of children with a disability or learning disadvantage.

*Therapy Focus is a not-for-profit community service organisation providing therapy and support services to Western Australian children and young people with a disability or learning disadvantage. Therapy Focus actively seeks contributions to our Help a Child Grow Fund to provide specialised equipment and resources to thousands of children and families in need. To make a donation or find out how you can help, simply visit [www.therapyfocus.org.au](http://www.therapyfocus.org.au) and help Therapy Focus brighten the lives of children with special needs.*

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