



Help us continue a success story

In 2009 Mary Ward International Australia launched “Mary Ward in the Kimberley – Supporting Reading Recovery in the Kimberley”. However we need the help of our Loreto friends and networks to continue funding this successful program.

“Reading Recovery” is an early intervention literacy support program that has helped improve the literacy of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in the Kimberley. Six schools have benefited from this program, funded over three years through the generous support of Julianne Maxwell (Roarty '76) and the Roarty family.



In 2008 Mary Ward International Australia (MWIA), in partnership with a number of organisations, including the Western Australia Catholic Education Office and the Kimberley Land Council, approached government and corporations to extend this program to all schools in the Kimberley. This school year (2009), the Federal government provided funding to train more teachers in the Kimberley. We are also calling on our Loreto friends and families to help advocate for the continuation of this worthwhile and proven program.

The Loreto Sisters began their work in the Kimberley in 1973 in response to an invitation from Bishop John Jobst to administer and staff St Mary's School. The sisters taught in the Kimberley for 25 years, first in Broome and then in the more remote communities of Lombadina and Kalumburu. The Loreto Sisters left the Kimberley in 1998.

While the Loreto Sisters are no longer able to work in the Kimberley, they continue to carry the needs of the children in their hearts. A relative of one of the sisters who spent many years in the Kimberley sought the help of the Loreto Sisters to shape a response which would continue the work begun by her aunt and develop the Loreto connection in a vital way.

The Reading Recovery Program uses a systematic approach to overcoming literacy issues with proven outcomes in countries such as New Zealand, Brazil, Britain and Australia. It provides one-on-one tutoring for each student identified as having difficulty with reading and writing. The program requires a tutor to mentor and train teachers in Reading Recovery principles.

Reading Recovery has been operating in Catholic schools in the Kimberley since 2006. Currently the Reading Recovery Program is funded by six schools in the Kimberley. This includes schools in Broome, Lombadina, Kununarra, Derby, Wyndham and Beagle Bay.



Their financial contribution provides them with the opportunity to access Reading Recovery training for their teachers. Each school is also expected to cover the cost of travel, accommodation and salary of each teacher attending the training in Broome. St Mary's School Broome has also constructed a special room with the necessary equipment. These costs are substantial.

The Reading Recovery program has proved over a two year period to be successful for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Kimberley children who have struggled with literacy. Based on a 2007 report by Janet Scull and Trish Bremner (Reading Recovery in the Kimberley), the program has shown to have a positive impact in literacy teaching. For example, in 2006, of the 23 Year 2 students undertaking the program, 18 reached their Year 3 Reading Benchmarks.



By the end of 2009, 30 teachers will have undertaken initial training and follow-up training (Reading Recovery teachers need to keep attending training even after they are qualified). All 30 require 0.5 of their salaries to be covered. This is because Reading Recovery teachers are also classroom teachers so time spent on Reading Recovery is taken away from their classroom duties. We are now seeking funding beyond 2009 for the salary and training of 30 teachers.

This year's federal government funding will ensure that three Catholic, two independent and one state school will be able to provide Reading Recovery to their students needing literacy intervention.

MWIA, in partnership with a number of organisations, hope to extend this program to more schools in the Kimberley. Various government agencies and corporations have been approached for funding to achieve this. We are also calling on the assistance of our many Loreto friends and networks. We want ALL students in the Kimberley in need of support to able to access the Reading Recovery Program.

There are many ways that you can help continue this program:

- raise awareness about the education gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children by talking to your friends and family
- focus on the Reading Recovery project as a part of your social justice or special interest groups
- write to your local member of parliament or the Department of Education advocating for the continuation of this program
- use your corporate contacts to ask for a financial contribution or encourage them to organise a fundraising activity
- make a donation by visiting the Loreto Sisters website.



An example of how to write to your local member of parliament is available on our website.

When you support MWIA you join a global network of like minded individuals, families, groups and businesses, who value social justice, health access and education for all.

Join us and make a difference.



For further information about MWIA please visit www.loreto.org.au and click on Mary Ward International or click on:
http://www.loreto.org.au/works/mary_ward_int.html