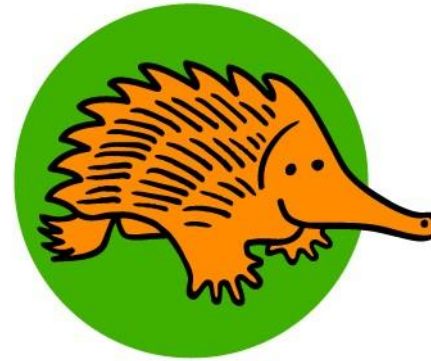


The Thread of Literacy

How Felix Library lays the groundwork for braille literacy through connection....

vision
australia
felix
library



I can feel the words
⠠ ⠨ ⠠ ⠨ ⠠ ⠨ ⠠ ⠨ ⠠ ⠨

- One of the most remarkable sights that biologist Peggy Rismiller has seen in her years exploring the Australian bush is that of an echidna sunbathing. The short-beaked echidna, or spiny anteater, ordinarily resembles a spiky ball, like some kind of terrestrial sea urchin. To warm up on a cool morning, however, it will stretch out on the ground, its body flat, and lift its spines to let in sunlight. “It’s amazing to see,” Rismiller says. “It looks like a rug with spines.”

Each ball of wool represents a primary group that allowed Felix to weave it's mat of Early Literacy





Pilot Families



Working Party



Readers



Authors



Publishers



Educators



Donors



Patron



Audio Team



Tactile graphics experts



Proof readers



Pre-school Educators



Community Events



Pre-schools



Volunteers



Fund Raising staff



Public Libraries

Patron

Sigrid Thornton has been the patron of Felix since it's beginnings. She attends large and small events involving Felix. She always reads stories and becomes involved with the hands on experiences involved.



Community Events

- Launch in 2003
- Morning Teas
- Story days
- Saturday story mornings for the National Year of Reading.
- Felix's 10th Birthday Celebration



Launch at the Melbourne Zoo.

Sigrid, Pilot families and other families attended, Donors were there, Vision Australia staff members, readers, members of the audio team and extended family were there. A mother said “I felt like part of a big family at last”.

Donors, Authors, Publishers.

- A family's donation was the seeding money that spring boarded the project.
- Many donors large and small have contributed since 2003.
- Publishers agreed in Australia, Great Britain and the US that their books could be used as long as it was a free resource.
- Publishers spoke with authors before this was decided.

Founding elements

The Pilot Families.

5 families with children who would be braille users, tested the materials and sent their feedback on

- The suitcase container
- The Braille layout
- the tactile books

The Working Party.

Educators, donors, marketing personnel and managers were involved. Decisions on, packaging, braille format, materials to be used, budget and potential postage arrangements were made.

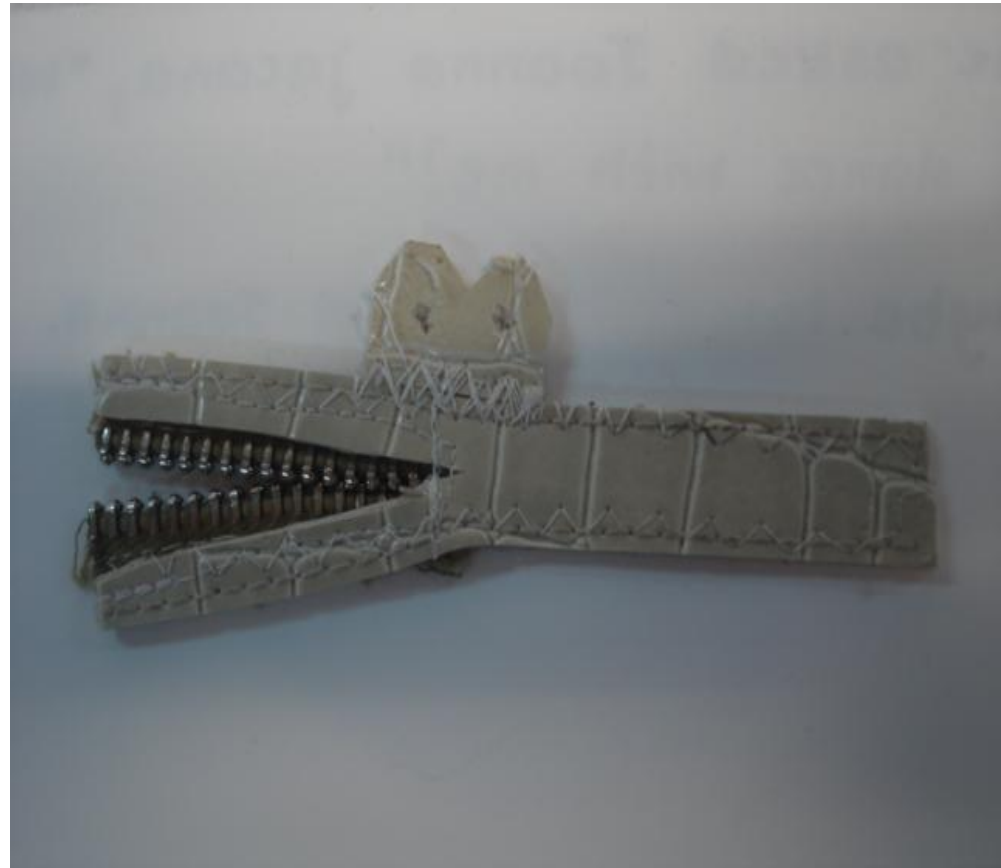
Audio Team; Readers; Proof Readers.

- Professional sound engineers have recorded all stories. They have remained consistent with the original guidelines.
 - Readers have all volunteered their time.
 - Readers use engaging voices to involve children
- Proof readers quality control the braille and the formatting of each page.



Tactile graphics experts.

- Educators who have worked with braille using children have given us clear guidelines about symbol layout.
- Books are reviewed by them and early childhood educators for clarity and simplicity.



Fundraising Teams; Volunteers; Preschools and Public Libraries.

- The fundraising teams were vital in the early days as Felix was an unbudgeted project that was required to fund itself.
- Since 2005 it has become included in the Children's Services budget, however it has regular ongoing costs that continue to be supported by our Fund Raising Team.
- Regular communication with our fund raising teams has allowed for a clear understanding of a young blind or low vision child's needs.
- Volunteers have helped us right from the start, resourcing materials, mending tactile books, exchanging returned kits and making tactile aids. This is done on the production site to ensure quality items.
- Preschools began borrowing in 2008. They have become proactive in sharing braille books with our young members and their kinder friends.
- Public Libraries have requested Felix kits for display and use them for Book Week and simultaneous reading events.



Listening skills

Language

Bonding

Memory Skills

Organizational skills

Tracking skills

Rhythm skills

Book Handling

Experiential learning

Trust to touch

Retelling stories

Shared Interaction

Fine Motor skills

Making rhymes

Searching Fingers

Connecting words and braille

Choosing favourite stories

Independent listening skills

Vocal play

Story telling

The final woven mat of Literacy skills



