

MEDIA RELEASE

21st October 2008

St John believes our children's literacy skills are life skills - Step Into Their Life, St John Community Care Conference 2008 -

Children's Author Libby Gleeson will show how to make reading fun for children to help increase their literacy skills.

Photo opportunity

Date: Saturday 25th October 2008

Time: 10.00am – 10.30am

Location: Guthrie Theatre, UTS, City Campus, 15 Broadway, Ultimo

With children's health and schooling being priorities for all Australians, St John is encouraging people from all walks of life to volunteer with their Program To Aid Literacy and Immunisation Programs during their 2008 Community Care Conference to be held on Saturday 25th October at the University Of Technology Sydney.

The theme for the day is 'Step Into Their Life' and children's author Libby Gleeson will be addressing existing and potential volunteers on the art of storytelling and how to make reading fun for children.

St John (NSW) Community Care Manager Marcia Chalmers believes that helping our children with their literacy skills are essential for success later in life.

"Literacy skills are life skills. Our volunteers are well trained to help children who are having trouble with literacy to gain their confidence and understand that reading and writing can be fun.

"We also have volunteers supporting the Immunisation Program in secondary schools. They provide a helping hand for the young people and the NSW Health Nurses who carry out the immunisations" Marcia said.

Participants will be taking part in workshops to encourage volunteers to use new techniques to engage children in reading as well as explaining the myths surrounding Immunisation.

The Program To Aid Literacy gives volunteers the skills and confidence to be able to help children who are struggling with literacy at school. After completing the course, all that is needed is an hour a week in a local school during term time with a child or children assigned to them.

The Immunisation Program supports secondary students across the state during the NSW Health Immunisation Team visit to their school. Volunteers support the students and assist the NSW Health nurses with paperwork.

Everyone is welcome to attend the conference and the workshops.

Date: Saturday 25th October 2008

Time: 8.30am – 3pm

Location: Guthrie Theatre, UTS, City Campus, 15 Broadway, Ultimo

For more information or to register for the conference and/or workshops, please contact:
Marie Hopkins, 02 9219 6846, marie_hopkins@stjohnnsw.com.au

- Ends -

Notes to the editor

- **Journalists are invited to attend and to send a photographer.**
- Libby Gleeson, volunteers & trainers from around the state and Community Care Manager Marcia Chalmers will be available for interview between 10.00am and 10.30am.
- Please contact Ellen Ward if you wish to take up this opportunity on 02 9219 6865 or ellen_ward@stjohnnsw.com.au