

The logo consists of a solid black vertical rectangle. The word "RURAL" is printed in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the rectangle. Below the rectangle, the year "2009" is printed in a larger, bold, black sans-serif font.

NOMINATION FOR RURAL HEALTH AWARD

Award Category: Rural Health WorkerNominee Contact Details: Sandra Higgs, c/- Triabunna District High School

1. State primary reason(s) candidate should be recognised

Ongoing commitment to the provision of support services and opportunities for parents and their young children.

Has the candidate been informed of his/her nomination? Yes

2. Attach specific information to be considered by award committee (Maximum 2 A4 pages, See Guidelines)

Nominator: Annette Parker
Address: Triabunna District High School
Phone Number: 62573199
Date: 28/8/09

Closing date for submissions: Monday 31 August 2009
Tasmanian Rural Health Awards
University Department of Rural Health
Locked Bag 1372
LAUNCESTON 7250
or fax 6324 4040

Nomination for Rural Health Worker Award 2009

Nominee: **Sandra (Harry) Higgs**

C/- Triabunna District High School
Triabunna Tas 7190

As Principal of our school, and a long-time member of our community, I wish to nominate Harry Higgs for the above award.

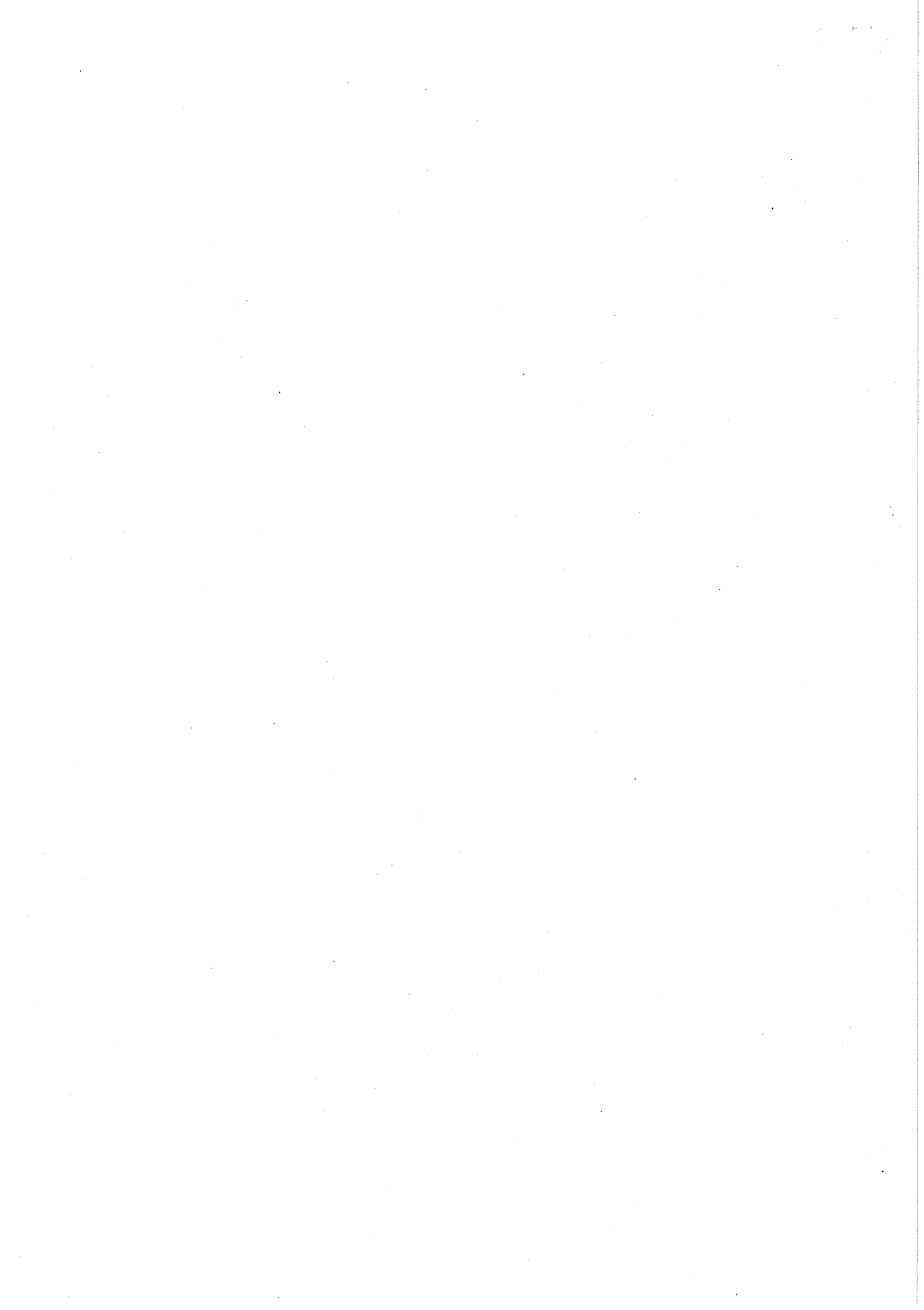
Harry first started working for our school in February 2008 as the deliverer and co-ordinator of our newly introduced birth-4 program, L'il Tackers. Harry's experience as a clinical nurse, community worker and educational instructor made her the ideal candidate to manage our pilot program. Harry conducted a series of community consultations resulting in the production of a strategic plan for the programs inception and delivery. The program has now been running with outstanding success for the past 18 months.

The broad guidelines for the program were that it had to be based on the needs of the community and was to have a parenting focus that encouraged our young families to establish support networks and access opportunities to advance their parenting skills and ultimately the health and wellbeing of both themselves and their young children.

Our target demographic included:

- Young families with children from Birth - 4
- Single Parent families with no access to extended family support
- Isolated, rural families that did not have ready access to community programs, support networks or connections
- Indigenous families with young pre-school children who needed assistance with the transition to school.

The appointment of Harry to this position was a brilliant move. She has totally embraced the principles of the plan and has programmed and facilitated sessions for children and their parents every week. We regularly have attendance of between



30-40 children (with their parents) who attend the sessions offered which include KidsMusic, Kidsgym and Kidsplay sessions.

As Harry is a qualified nurse, it is in this capacity that she has used her position within this program to provide guidance and advice to parents about their child's development, health and wellbeing. She can also talk to parents about their own difficulties with coping with the difficult job of parenting young children and assist in the provision of additional support services and contacts when needed.

Harry has also assisted several children who come to our L'il Tackers program access additional funding through the Early Child Intervention Scheme, as their attendance at the sessions provides an opportunity for a professional to observe the children and help parents recognise that their young child may not be achieving the appropriate developmental milestones.

How has Harry helped this program be so successful? She loves what she is doing and everyone she works with recognises her genuine care and concern for them. She is approachable, non-judgemental and treats everyone with the same level of respect and love. She wants everyone to love being a parent, enjoy their children and make the most of being a parent.

Her hard work has meant that our program has been able to offer trips to venues in Hobart including the Aquatic Centre, Botanical Gardens, YMCA and a planned trip to the Bicheno Wildlife Centre. These all help parents see the benefits of sharing experiences and healthy activities with their children from a young age.

Harry also works as a part-time practice nurse for our local doctor, Pranesh Naidoo, and in this role connects the school community and students to this service when and if the need arises.

Harry is a gem! She uses her knowledge, people skills and dedication to 'country' to ensure the best health and happiness for all our community members.

Annette Parker
Principal
Triabunna District High School

