



## WELCOME

This newsletter is designed to share questions, queries, stories, feedbacks and any news regarding PIPS.

## STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Updates from the PIPS Project Coordinator

Greetings! I have now been with the PIPS Project for over a year. It has been an exciting adventure for me going through each project cycle and dealing with the queries from schools and system clients.

A few of the milestones reached:

- The number of schools participating in PIPS has reached a new peak in 2006.
- PIPS On-entry Baseline Assessment is used by schools in all Australian states and territories for the first time.
- A new member, Antony Gray, has also joined the team at Murdoch University.

I am looking forward to another great year ahead and many more after.

Warm regards  
Eva Tam

### Meet the New Project Officer

Hi everyone! I joined the PIPS Project as Project Officer in February this year in place of Danny Sherman. I am excited to be involved and amazed at the commitment of those schools who are taking part in the project.

We strive to make things easier for all of you who are participating in the Project, and we would love to hear any comments and suggestions you have on how to improve our services. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you ever need help, no matter how big or small the problem.

Kind regards,  
Antony Gray

## WHO USED PIPS IN 2006?

This year we have 704 schools participating in PIPS across Australia. More than 23,000 Australian students have been assessed with the First Assessment in 2006.

The number of students per cohort appears below. Please refer to the PIPS Manual for a further explanation of cohort.

Cohort	Pre-primary or equivalent year group	Year 1
ACT	2,916	0
WA+	10,430	0
TAS	5,974	0
QLD	2,234	1,150*
VIC	1,064	0

Note: WA+ contains more than 300 WA schools, 3 from SA, 3 from NT and 2 from NSW.

\* Queensland schools are moving towards the inclusion of state wide pre-primary programs. Currently the program is available in some, but not all schools. Therefore, some Year One students in Queensland are assessed.

\*\*\*\*\* REMINDER \*\*\*\*\*

Undertake Final Assessment between:

ACT	23 October – 3 November
NSW, NT, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC	16 October – 3 November
WA	17 October – 27 October

## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN YOUR STATE

### ACT – Review of PIPS Assessment

At the end of 2005, a review of the ACT Early Years assessment program (PIPS) was conducted. Consultation with principals, teachers, the union and other representative groups has recommended the continued use of the PIPS assessment.

This meant all ACT Government school kindergarten students participated in the PIPS Baseline Assessment in 2006.

Professional development workshops were conducted to assist schools with interpreting the feedback data as well as exploring teaching and learning implications. Teachers have also been impressed by the changes made to PIPS this year, in particular the PIPS + website where the submission of data has been simplified.

### QLD – Continual Success in Queensland

As popularity of the PIPS On-Entry Baseline Assessment grew, so did the demand to run workshops to demonstrate interpretation of the feedback received by schools. Dr. Helen Wildy, PIPS Director, has already traveled twice to Queensland presenting to school teachers, principals and other staff members.

### TAS - Progress of PIPS Usage in Tasmania

PIPS has been administered in Tasmanian government schools for the past four years. University students undertaking a teaching degree in early childhood are provided with professional learning for PIPS. Reporting of PIPS is incorporated into the Reporting Agreement that schools have developed with their school community.

### VIC – Welcoming Victorian Schools

Victorian schools are participating in PIPS for the first time this year. It is exciting as this inclusion contains all Catholic schools in the Sale Diocese. We look forward to more schools (Catholic, Government and Independent) joining in the future as the word spreads.

### WA – Enrolments from all Catholic Schools

In WA, for the first time all Catholic schools are assessing their students with PIPS. The registrations also show an increase in the number of Government and Independent schools. Recommendations from current PIPS users to non-PIPS users accounts for majority of new enrolments.

## CURRENT ISSUES

### New Reading Ceiling - CATS

A new reading section, 'Cats' has been added after 'Walking to School'. Many students were able to complete 'Walking to School', especially at the end of the year. It was deemed vital to see just how far these students can go, hence the introduction of the new reading section.

Please note: 'Cats' contains very hard questions. We do not expect many students to see this screen, although some will.

### Utilising PIPS+



PIPS+ allows quick access to view/print feedback in pdf format over the Internet and submission of data without the hassle of posting floppy disks.

We introduced PIPS+ last year under a trial period for schools in WA who wish to participate and all TAS government schools. It was a huge success with great feedback and comments from users. Improvements have been made so the site is more user-friendly and easier to navigate. Checkpoints which act as 'Help' are readily available to assist with queries.

All schools have the option to use PIPS+ to view/print feedback and submit their data from this year onwards. We sincerely hope schools will embrace this feature and work it to their advantage.

The colour "purple" and logo of PIPS with a "+" in hand have been chosen to symbolise and represent PIPS+.

### Importance of PIPS Workshops

PIPS workshops are designed to help non-PIPS users, first time (new) PIPS users and existing PIPS users. The Manual contains all the necessary information, but a live presentation has added benefits.

The increase in demand for organising workshops for the First Assessment and the Final Assessment is becoming more evident. Spots fill up quickly and inter-state and regional schools always query when a workshop will be held.

This had lead to the production of a **PIPS Workshop DVD**. Currently, the PIPS team is creating a DVD of the PIPS workshop to accommodate and cater for:

- **WA Metropolitan Schools** – this can be shared with other staff members.
- **WA Regional Schools** – the long distance involved in travelling to Murdoch University is no longer required.
- **Inter-state Schools** – the expenses of conducting inter-state workshops are eliminated.

Benefits of a PIPS Workshop DVD:

- Sections of the workshop can be played and re-played numerous times.
- Refreshing memories of staff members who have attended workshops.
- More staff members can be exposed to the interpretation of the feedback and understand the usage of PIPS.
- It can be passed from year to year as concrete information rather than explaining by one staff member to another.

© May 2006 PIPS Australia, Murdoch University

## HAVE YOUR SAY

### When do I use what password?

There are two passwords PIPS users should be aware of:

- 1) **PIPS Program password** – this is for accessing the PIPS Program installed on your computer using the CD-Rom. This changes from year to year and will ALWAYS be stated in the Manual.
- 2) **PIPS+ password** – this is for accessing the PIPS+ website via the Internet. This changes from year to year and will be posted to your school at beginning of each year along with the PIPS Materials (Manual & CD-Rom).

### Can I obtain any reports before receiving the feedback?

Yes – you can print raw scores of the class or individual students. When you open the PIPS Program, under 'Assessment' tab, you will see three magnifying glasses. 

- **Class Report** – highlight the class name then click magnifying glass for Start of Year or End of Year. Report of the class raw scores is displayed.
- **Student Report** – highlight individual student's name then click magnifying glass for Start of Year or End of Year. Report of the student's raw scores is displayed.
- **Completed Summary Report** – highlight the class name then click third magnifying glass. A 'Yes' will appear next to the student's name if he/she has completed the assessment.

### Comments from PIPS users

*"I found the First Assessment workshop so beneficial in increasing my understanding and ability to read the PIPS First assessment data."*

*"I appreciated Helen Wildy as her knowledge of PIPS and ability to communicate made it so easy to understand."*

Ruth Gravestein (Christian Outreach College – QLD) 17 Jun 05

*"The workshop was valuable even though we have been doing PIPS for 3 years. We found we were able to really understand and absorb the interpretation of data and then apply it to our setting."*

Nerida Higgins (John Paul College – QLD) 27 Jun 05

*"I thoroughly enjoyed the workshop and thought the PD was excellently run, with Helen as a masterful teacher. The statistics were even easy enough for a 'non math' person to understand. The PD was enlightening and I now feel that I can do more with the data we have. Congratulations!"*

Kay Oswin (Grace Christian School – WA) 02 Dec 05

### ADMINISTRATION NOTE (Government ACT schools only)

ACT government schools need to check that student details have been entered correctly before undertaking the final assessment. The Student ID is a 6 or 7 digit maze number e.g. 6898731 not the Family code e.g. CAVAD. For guidance to edit details, refer to page 36 of the 2006 PIPS Manual.

#### PIPS Contacts:

Project Director: Associate Professor Helen Wildy  
PIPS Project Coordinator: Ms. Eva Tam  
PIPS Project Officer: Mr. Antony Gray  
Queries: (t) 08-9360 6991 (f) 08-9360 6150

Visit our website, download this newsletter or find out more info on PIPS from:

<http://www.education.murdoch.edu.au/pips/>