



Cooperative Research Centre for

Aboriginal Health

The Strength of Stories: Sharing knowledge between Researchers, Families and Tiwi People

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<http://menzies.edu.au/research/child-health/indigenous-parenting-and-family-research/lets-start-exploring-together-indigen>

Overview

- History & Background
- What is Let's Start?
- Evaluation tools
- Program Structure
- Aims and Rationale
- Weekly themes
- Indigenous Group Leaders
- Interactive activities & adaption
- Learnings & Future Development



Program history and background

Development



In the Northern Territory





Chief Investigator
Gary Robinson



Darwin based team
2008



Carmen Naivalu:
PhD, evaluation
project



What is Let's Start?

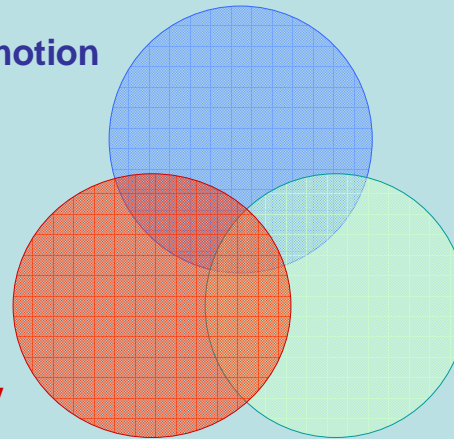
- Is a targeted, short term intervention for children 3-7yr & their parent/carer
- We work with schools, childcare centres, child protection authorities and communities
- Receiving referrals from over 40 schools in Darwin, Palmerston and remote areas
- Funded by FaHCSIA (FSP & NTER), CRCAH, NTG
- Linking theory, research and practice



Program Elements

Practice development
Information workshops
Group leader training
Referral process training

Training & promotion



Program evaluation
Datagathering & analysis
PhD project – parent-child
interaction

Program delivery

Engagement with schools & EC
teachers; clusters; Students
Services, FACS
Referrals - Programs – follow-up

Research & evaluation

Trained Indigenous Group Leaders

Mark West



Rebecca Papungamirri



Roger Tipungwuti

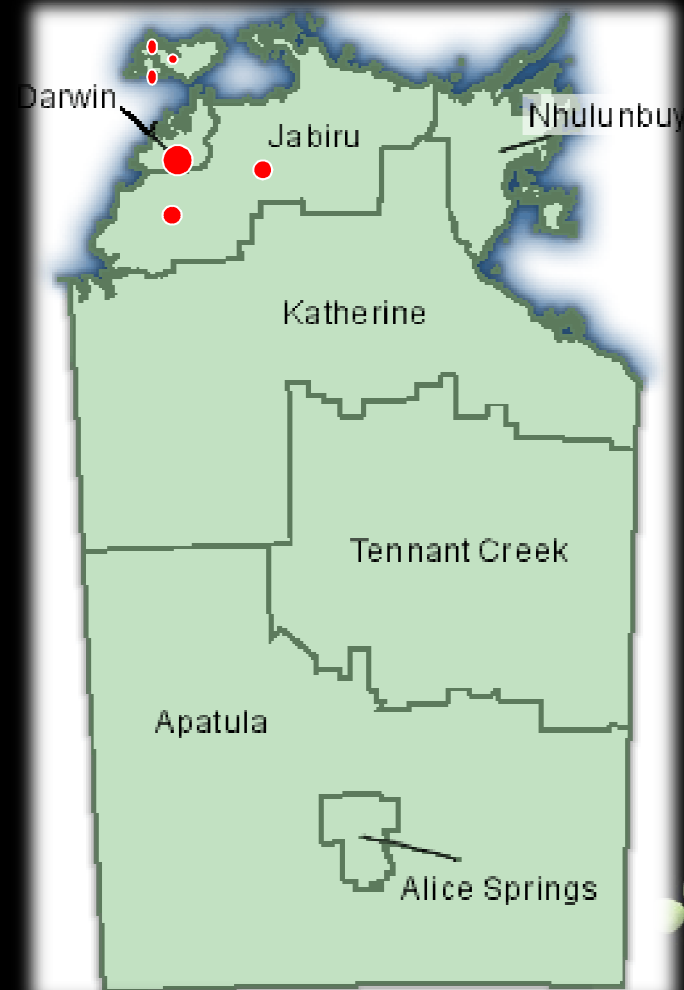


Barbara Nasir



Developing Partnership Models

- Mainstream urban
- Urban Indigenous
- Tiwi Islands
- Ngnanmarriyanga
- Jabiru



Program set up and community engagement

Referral by preschool workers, teachers or parents (at end or beginning of a school term).



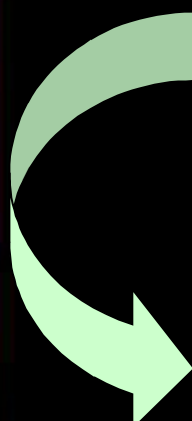
Parent Interviews & consents: behaviour rating; additional referral/assessment
Waiting List one term



Program Startup:
Next term parent & preschool teacher ratings & interviews

Program: eight – ten weeks multi-group program (parents', children's and combined groups) based on cognitive-behavioural and family systems therapy
Support person evenings in weeks 2 & 9.

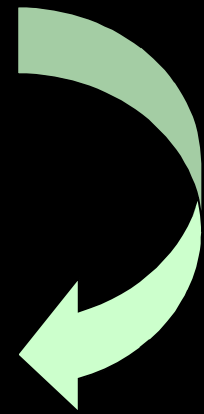
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Program conclusion: final preschool teacher & parent ratings; prizes for participants



Six month follow-up:
teacher/childcare & parent behaviour ratings



INSTRUMENT USED	INFORMATION RECORDED	At Referral	At Program end	At 6 month F/U
Referral Template				
Standard referral template	Referral reasons, presenting problems of child and/or parents.	✓		
Demographic and developmental data and family functioning				
Demographic Information and Parent Interview Questionnaire	The initial parent interview gathers demographic information, developmental history, current household composition, current life stressors of family.	✓		✓
The Parent Satisfaction Questionnaire (PSQ) (Littlefield et al., 2005)	The PSQ is a standard instrument developed for the Exploring Together Program.		✓	
Child behaviour and adjustment measures				
Ngairi-P behaviour measure (43 items, teacher scale; 36 items parents' scale) (Robinson and Tyler, 2006, Robinson and Tyler, 2008)	Reliable & culturally valid measure of child conduct to include both externalizing & internalizing behaviours. Adapted for the cultural and linguistic context of the Tiwi islands.	✓	✓	✓
Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ; Goodman, 1999) Behavioural screening questionnaire measuring primary caregiver's (teachers & parents) perceptions of pro-social and difficult behaviours in children aged 3 to 16	25 items relating to the frequency of positive & negative behaviours. Items are divided into scales measuring emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, peer relationship problems.	✓	✓	✓
Parent mental state				
K6 (Kessler et al 2003) Brief measure of psychological distress based on the longer K10 version.	Selected to test whether there is a relationship between parents' psychological distress & reported & observed parenting and child behaviour.	✓	✓	✓



Theoretical basis

- Based on the successful Exploring Together Preschool Program
- Comprised of effective components from empirically proven, well-researched programs:
 - parent-child interaction therapy (Eyberg)
 - parent behaviour management training (Patterson, Webster-Stratton)
 - children's social skills, emotion regulation & problem-solving training (Spivack & Shure)
 - group therapeutic framework

Structured, multi-group program

Group program components
Weekly 2 hour group over 10 weeks

**Interactive Group:
parents & children
(40min)**

**Parents' Group
(1h)**

**Children's Group
(1h)**

**Interactive Group:
parents & children
(20min)**

Individual program components

**2 partner/support
person meetings**

**2 teacher
meetings**

**home visits and
follow-up**

Work in Groups

- Interactive: children and parents; parents in control, leaders assist, manage transitions
- Child: peer play, feelings, stop-think-do, etc.
- Parents: passive, aggressive & assertive parenting; family strategies, family of origin etc.



Interactive Group: Parent & Child Responsiveness



Children's Group: Working with Differences & Strengths



No hurting
each other
We try to be
FRIENDS

Let's Have a go....



Evaluation: Let's Start Participants

Excluded = 20
Pending = 21

Total Referrals = 234

Children referred for:
Distractibility, Aggression & Oppositional Behaviour, Peer Relationship Difficulties &
Hyperactivity

Mean Age = 5.0 years; 70% Male, 30% Female

Intended to Treat = 193

Tiwi Indigenous = 60

Urban Indigenous = 46

Non Indigenous = 87

**Complete \geq 4 Sessions
= 37**

**Complete \geq 4 Sessions
= 9**

**Complete \geq 4 Sessions
= 41**

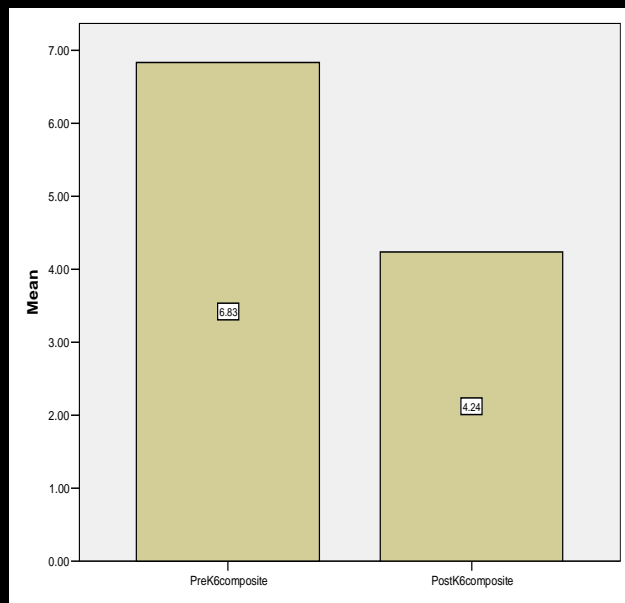
Completed \geq 4 Sessions = 87

Evaluation

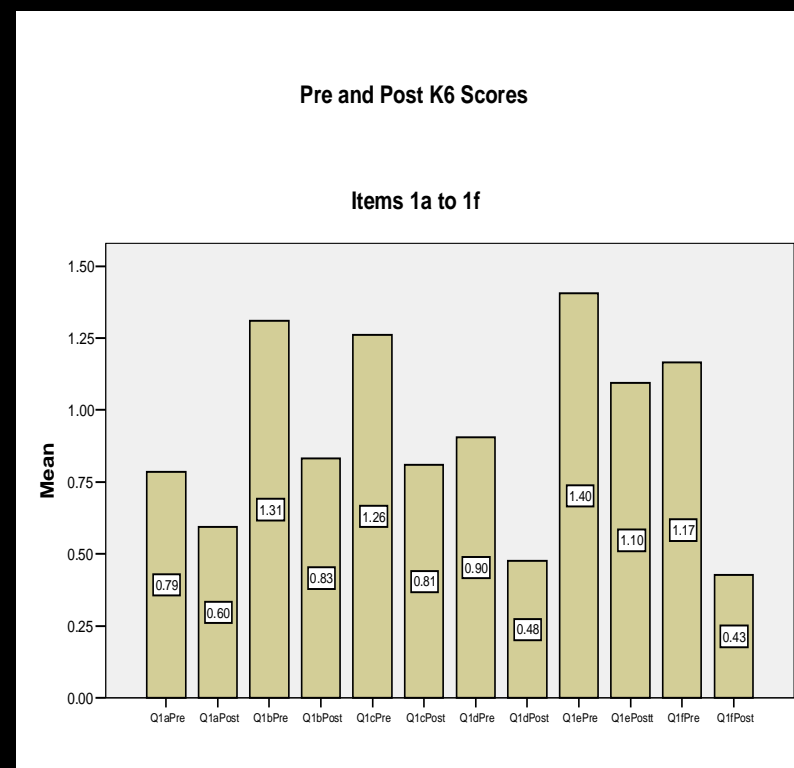


- Very high levels of parental satisfaction
- Improved parenting, reduced stress (K6)
- Reduced behavioural problems in primary and preschool children sustained or increased at six months' follow-up: moderate to large effect sizes
- Evidence of dose-response: people who attend more do better
- Improved family functioning
- Need to further develop the cultural “fit” of the original model

Parental Wellbeing

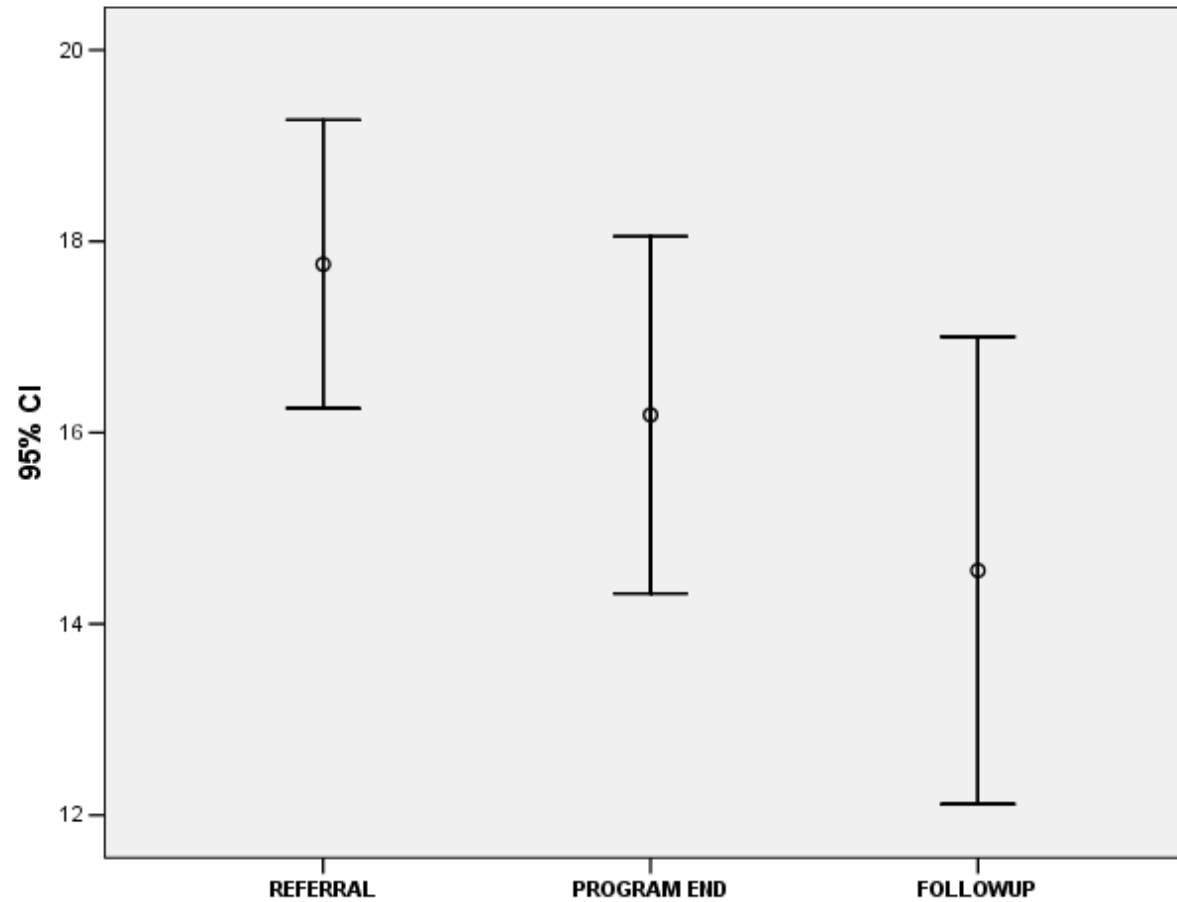


- Improvement in all dimensions: reduced feelings of depression, worthlessness, anxiety



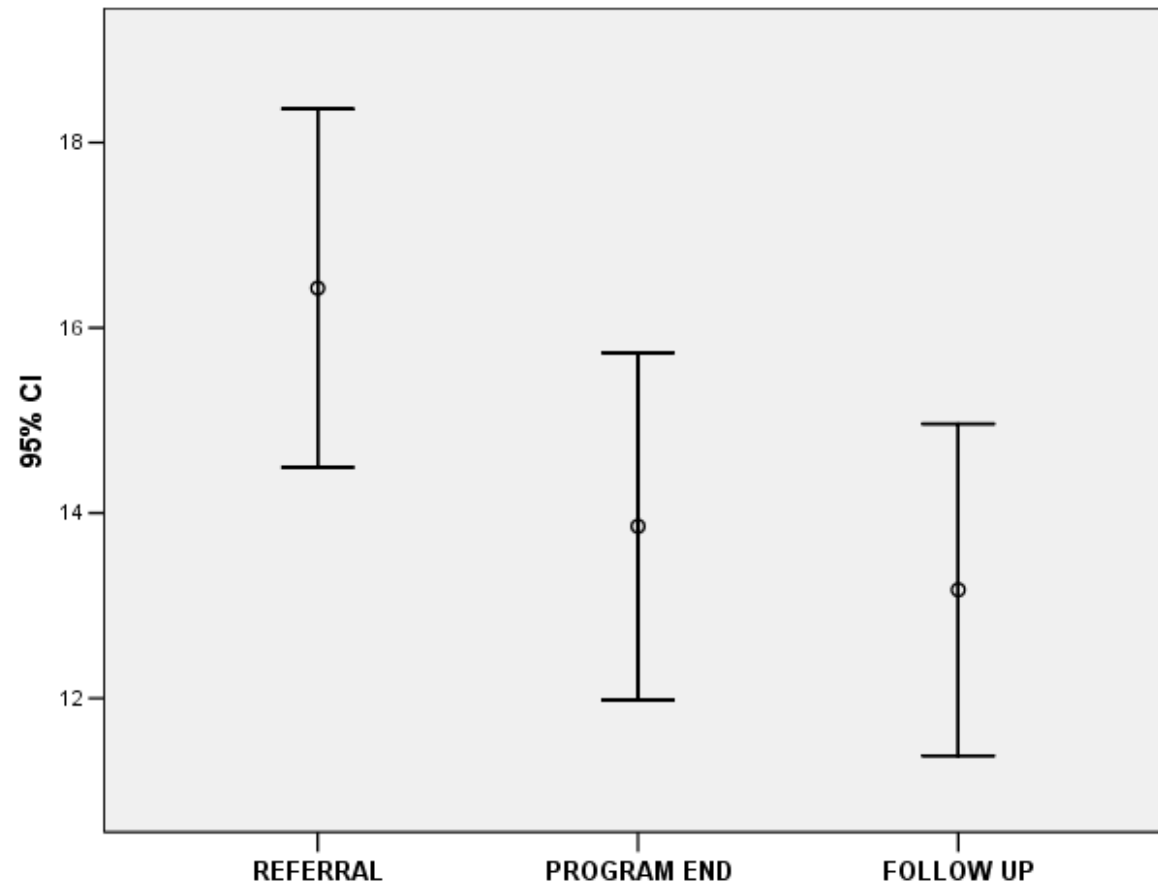
Children's Behaviour (teachers)

95% Confidence Limits Teacher SDQ Scores at Referral, Program End and Followup



Children's Behaviour (parents)

95% Confidence Intervals Parent SDQ Scores at Referral, Program End and Followup





Service learning

- Social-emotional programs are important for school readiness and the transition to school
- The program can be delivered by local teams with centrally provided training, supervision & support
- It is possible to implement evidence-based interventions in diverse contexts through attention to engagement and by building local partnerships with health centres, schools and childcare centres

I liked best...

"Talking to others. Fun things to do. Looked forward to each week"

"Interacting with other parents, knowing you've got support"

"Great way for us to spend time together, quality time while learning"

"The program structure-time with children/time with other parents - a good balance"

"Spending time with (my child) and doing things together.... because we can't do it at home"

"Sharing stories with other parents and leaders"





Let's Start

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