



Co-location and Integration of Koorie Early Childhood Services

Ampe Anwernekeheke: Rlterrke Akwete Aneye
For Our Children: Local Strengths, National Challenges

2010 SNAICC National Conference
Mbantua, Alice Springs, 27-29 July 2010



Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development



*Every child,
every opportunity*

- Integrated approach
- High quality early childhood development
- Smooth transition
- Best start in life



Current Government Policy

At a Federal level, national priorities include:

- increasing participation rates, particularly for Indigenous and disadvantaged children
- increasing program hours
- ensuring cost is not a barrier to access, and
- fostering service integration and coordination across stand-alone preschool and childcare.

» National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education

Table 1 – Allocation of Integrated Children and Family Centres across the Country.^[1]

^[1Source] National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education

Proposed Centres	NSW	QLD	VIC	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	Total
regional/remote	4	5	1	2	4	0	4	0	20
urban	5	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	15
Total	9	9	2	3	5	1	5	1	35

- Children
- Families
- Community




Benefits of Integration

- Better outcomes for children and families, particularly hard-to-reach families
- community building and local connections
- holistic programs for child and family
- One-stop-shop for busy parents and parents with multiple and complex needs.

Benefits of Integration

- Less confusion for parents about where to seek help
- More comprehensive service delivery and less delay for access to services
- Professionals learning from and with each other – transfer of knowledge and practices.

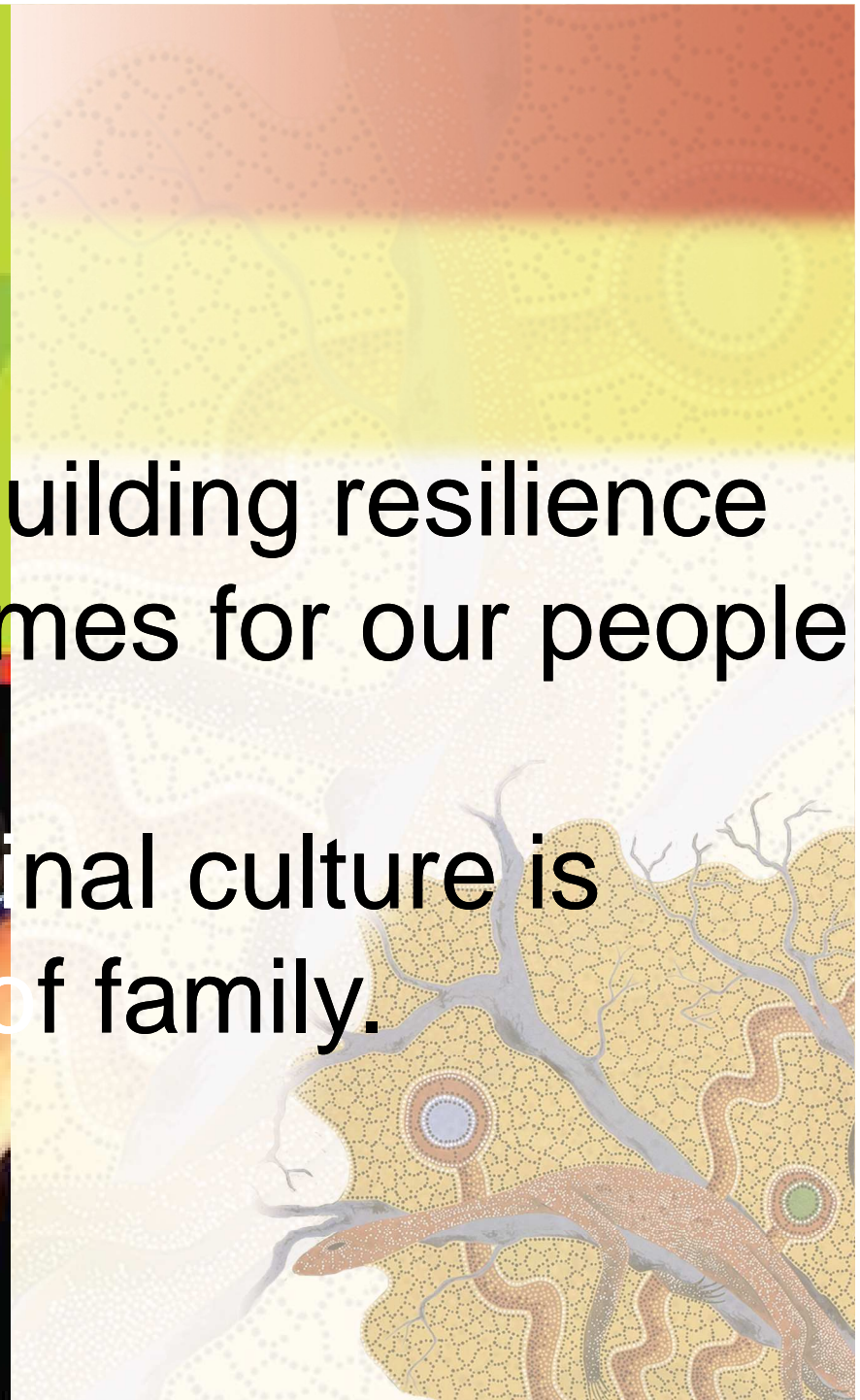


High quality early childhood education services for Koorie children make the promotion of culture a central aim.

Dardee Boorai: **Victorian Charter of Safety and Wellbeing for Aboriginal Children and Young People**

Culture is central to building resilience
and improving outcomes for our people

At the heart of Aboriginal culture is
the vital importance of family.



Building cultural identity

The cultural identity of a Koorie child can be developed in a variety of different ways, including:

- Family presence within the child care service
- Koorie staff/ faces at the service
- Providing a place where children learn about kinship structures
- Koorie programs – stories, art, music
- Providing an environment that is free from racism.

MACS centres

- **Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services (MACS)** were conceived as early childhood service hubs and have operated as such since they were first established in 1987 – with playgroup, occasional care, long day care, after school care, vacation care, outreach service, transport (bus) and culturally appropriate programs.

MACS Philosophy

MACS Centres are based on a philosophy that:

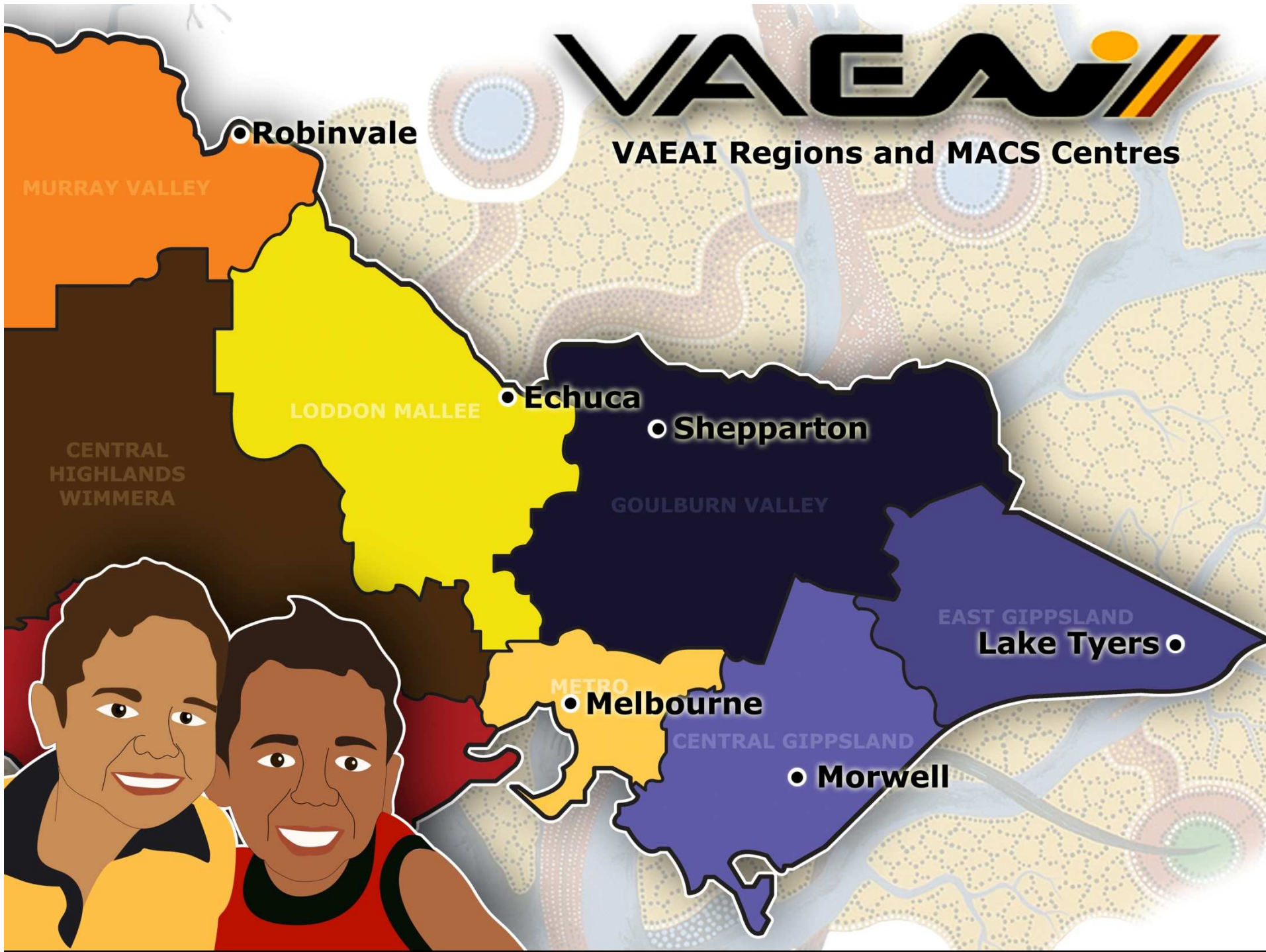
- recognises the rights of Koorie children to access culturally appropriate learning
- nurtures and monitors their educational process
- provides programs that enhance culture, physical, socio-economic, language and learning development.

MACS services

- Quality childcare
- Culturally appropriate programmes
- Pre-school
- Before and after school care
- Vacation care
- Homework centres
- Health and early intervention programmes
- Nutrition programmes
- Family support
- Outreach services
- Transport (bus)



VAEAI Regions and MACS Centres



• Robinvale

MURRAY VALLEY

LODDON MALLEE

• Echuca

• Shepparton

GOULBURN VALLEY

CENTRAL
HIGHLANDS
WIMMERA

EAST GIPPSLAND

• Lake Tyers •

METRO

• Melbourne

CENTRAL GIPPSLAND

• Morwell

MACS integrated services and co-location

- **MACS** recognise the importance of physical co-location of services.
- The Victorian DEECD identifies the co-location and integration of services as a central aim for the future of early childhood services in the State.

Lulla Children and Family Centre



Lidje Batdja Shared Vision

- Lidje MACS and Batdja Preschool combined on one site to provide an integrated service.
- The integrated approach is based on a philosophy of making education accessible and welcoming to Aboriginal families.

Lidje Batdja Project



Lidje Batdja Project

Phase 1 – Project Planning and information gathering

- Meet with stakeholders (Batdja, Lidje, DEECD, DEEWR and FaHCSIA).

Phase 2 – Develop a vision and identify desired outcomes

- Discussion with staff and management.

Lidje Batdja Project

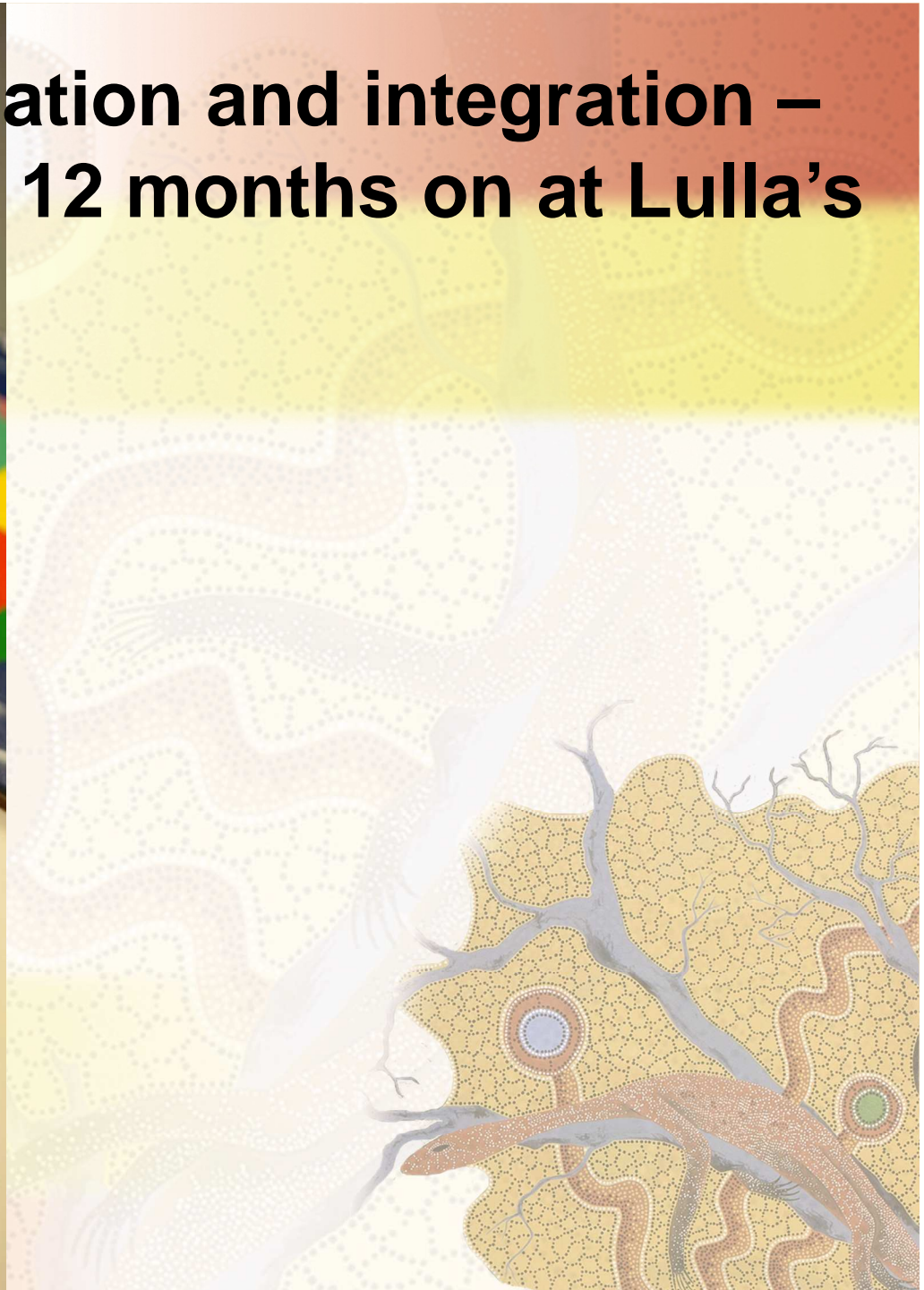
Phase 3 – Governance Arrangements

- Work with the existing governance bodies to consider options for governance arrangements.

Phase 4 – Action Plan

- Developing a training and professional development plan.

**Since co-location and integration –
12 months on at Lulla's**





Babies at play



Best practice

- We have looked at what is currently available for Koorie families seeking early childhood services.
- The focus has been on how holistic, integrated models work best. The best services take into account culture, family, education and health.

Co-location and Integration of Koorie Early Childhood Services

Geraldine Atkinson - President
Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc.

355 High Street
Northcote Vic 3070
P.O Box 113
Northcote Vic 3070

Ph: 03 9481 0800
Fax: 03 9481 4072

geraldine@vaeai.org.au