



5th SNAICC National Conference

# For Our Children: Living and Learning Together

4 – 6 June 2013, Cairns

## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS - SUMMARY FROM PRESENTERS

<b>Session Number</b>	<b>13 Child and family services – fostering community engagement and self-determination.</b>
<b>Your Presentation Title</b>	<b>The Midtha Goothalins Women’s Network – a case study of Seizing Self Determination</b>
<b>Abstract /Summary of Presentation (1/2 to 1 page)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• objectives</li> <li>• main ideas, topics and findings</li> <li>• evidence?</li> <li>• Outcomes?</li> </ul>	<p>The Midtha Goothalins and Good Beginnings is an arrangement between an emerging Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Organisation and a National Provider. The 2 organisations work together to deliver programs in Townsville Queensland Through an auspicing agreement,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Midtha Goothalins provide Cultural expertise, local expertise, advice on program development and delivery.</li> <li>• Good Beginnings provides organisational governance, employment structure for staff and support in program delivery and development.</li> </ul> <p><b>Who are we?</b></p> <p><b>The Midtha Goothalins Women’s Network</b> The Midtha Goothalins (‘many Black sisters’) Women’s Network is a group of strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female leaders who take a proactive interest in their community. The Network identified a need for building school attendance and in 2009 asked Good Beginnings to auspice it to deliver the Indigenous targeted Parent and Community Engagement (PaCE) program.</p> <p><b>Good Beginnings Australia</b> Good Beginnings is a national children’s charity building better outcomes for children in vulnerable communities through effective early intervention and practical parenting programs, so that every Australian child has the opportunity for a good beginning in life.</p> <p><b>The Parent and Community Engagement program</b> <i>“The difference in mean scores between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students is estimated to be equivalent to approximately two full years of schooling” (Thomson et al. 2011).</i> The program is effective in improving school attendance by engaging parents and the broader community by being responsive to local circumstances and need.</p> <p><b>What has Worked and Why?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly defined organisational values that truly allows local decision making is the key to the success of this arrangement</li> <li>• Having prominent local female leaders has increased engagement from Aboriginal Torres Strait islander parents</li> <li>• The Midtha Goothalins includes Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Community Leaders who are decision makers in their communities</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An auspicing agreement that clearly defined each organisations role</li> <li>• A clear direction of intended outcomes</li> <li>• An authentic two-way dialogue supported through well designed processes</li> <li>• Clear understanding of roles and responsibilities</li> </ul> <p><b>Summary</b>  Currently this arrangement suits the Midtha Goothalins Women’s Network who is essentially a volunteer group. This model of self determination allows local Aboriginal Torres Strait Islanders to be the decision makers in their community without the bureaucracy of running an organisation.</p>
<b>References if applicable</b>	
<b>Presenter Contact Details (email address and telephone number)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monique Perusco (Good Beginnings Australia)  <a href="mailto:Monique.perusco@goodbeginnings.org.au">Monique.perusco@goodbeginnings.org.au</a> 02 92116767</li> <li>• Jeanette Smallwood Wyles (the Midtha Goothalins Women’s Network)</li> <li>• Jacqueline Bennett (The Midtha Goothalins Women’s Network and Good Beginnings Australia)</li> </ul>