



SNAICC NEWS

SNAICC NATIONAL CONFERENCE

27-29 July 2010, Alice Springs



Please join us in Mbantua – Alice Springs – for the Third SNAICC National Conference

The conference draws us to the red heart of Australia. We can meet, share and celebrate our stories with people from around the country and overseas. It is an opportunity to support and hear from those living and working under the Intervention. It will be an invaluable moment to pause together and marshal our strengths, plans and hopes for the challenges that lie ahead for all our children and families.

The conference objectives are around sharing and celebrating, growing our knowledge, challenging others to acknowledge history

and respect culture, and foster leadership. These are all essential building blocks as we plan to move forward together.

It promises to be a stimulating, inspiring and challenging three days set next to the stunning MacDonnell Ranges.

SLarkins

Steve Larkins
SNAICC Chairperson, CEO Hunter Aboriginal Children's Service



Bubup Wilam Early Learning Centre staff member Kylie Duggan with Courtney Shaw. Bubup Wilam is one of two new Victorian Aboriginal community controlled child and family centres funded under the COAG National Partnership. Read about Bubup Wilam on page 11, and more about what is happening with the 35 child and family centres being rolled out around the nation on page 5.

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Cheekydog



You might have already heard of Cheeky Dog, or have seen the eye catching designs. Drawn by seventeen-year-old Dion Beasley from Tennant Creek, his drawings are very popular and, with the help of Joie Boulter he has created a label for T shirts and other apparel called 'Cheeky Dog'.

Dion has drawn the SNAICC conference logo, and Cheeky Dog will be providing the conference satchels.

Dion has recently been awarded the 2010 Charles Darwin University Arts Award at the NT Young Achiever Awards.

What makes this story so remarkable is that Dion is profoundly deaf and suffers from muscular dystrophy. A trust fund has been established for Dion where he receives royalty payments for the use of all his drawings. The SNAICC Conference is proud to support Dion and Cheeky Dog. To see more about Cheeky Dog go to:

www.cheekydogs.com.au



Call for movies for the 2010 SNAICC national conference

SNAICC is seeking short digital stories, animations and other motion picture productions made by Aboriginal and Islander children and young people from your schools, from digital stories projects, from anywhere and everywhere.

The movies will be screened throughout our national conference and be a celebration of and a voice of our young people.

Some of them will also be screened at the film and meal night under the stars at the Yarrenyty-Arltere Learning Centre at Larapinta Valley town camp.

Contact: tatiana@snaicc.asn.au

Special General Meeting for SNAICC members

**1pm, 19 May 2010
Rydges Hotel, Carlton, Melbourne**

SNAICC and its work continue to grow. To reflect these changes, SNAICC has had its constitution redrafted by lawyers Arnold Bloch Leibler, who have given their time and skills to SNAICC.

The SNAICC Chairperson and National Executive have overseen the six-month drafting process. SNAICC and the lawyers have had considerable discussion, ensuring the intent of SNAICC's current constitution does not change, that legal requirements are met and the growth of SNAICC is reflected. Two documents have been drafted to replace the current constitution – the *Rules of Association* and the *Statement of Purposes*. The National Executive meeting 19 March 2010 endorsed the proposed documents, and SNAICC members will vote on the proposed *Rules* and *Statement of Purposes* at the SGM. SNAICC has mailed out notices of the SGM and these proposed documents to all SNAICC members, plus information on voting and the procedure for nominating proxy votes.

Contact: admin@snaicc.asn.au



2010 SNAICC National Conference

Ampe Anwwernekenheke

For Our Children

Alice Springs 27 – 29 July 2010



Shelley & Oscar from Awabakal Little Yarns

Some program highlights

Santa Teresa Horse Program

Join Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, BushMob and the young people of Santa Teresa for a discussion about ways of empowering local senior men and women in the delivery of programs for youth at risk.

Santa Teresa community, 90km east of Alice, has a long and proud tradition of horsemanship. Senior men, former stockmen, trained up young men in horse breaking and stock work.

Using these skills, a five-day horse trek was organised targeting at risk young people. The trek showed local and national youth workers, police and educational workers a local framework for healing. This program was run in partnership with Congress and BushMob.

Awabakal Little Yarns

The Newcastle region Awabakal Early Childhood Services and First Chance Inc will present their collaboration on a four year pilot providing prevention and early intervention for children in the Awabakal playgroups, preschools and child care centre. The aim is to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in facilitating children's speech and language development, social interactions and readiness for school.

International guest, Cindy Blackstock

One of the 2007 SNAICC Conference highlights was Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada.

We are honoured to have Cindy with us again and look forward to her inspiring and challenging presentations.

Two Tuesday night events

In addition to the convention centre conference program, we are pleased to offer two Tuesday evening events.

1. Film night at Yarrenyty-Arltere Learning Centre, Tangentyere Council, will be a memorable evening under the stars. *Kungas Can Cook* will provide a delicious dinner before you settle down to watching a two and a half hour program of local and national Aboriginal and Islander films.

2. A great evening at Akeyulerre, the Arrente Healing Centre, Alice Springs.

Alongside the BBQ dinner will be an introduction to cultural health, strength and healing, a bush medicine demonstration, dance, boomerang making, films and more.

Conference Dinner

Join us for the greatest do-it-yourself outdoor cooking event you have ever been to! Alice Springs cooking masters BushWok will run an evening of fine food cooked on their unique Bush Wok stoves under the stars on the banks of the Todd River.

The evening will be an alcohol free event and in lieu of this a donation will be provided to Ngarte Mikwekenhe who support the Great Victorian Bike Ride project run by Graham 'Tjilpi' Buckley.

Travel subsidies

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations can apply for a travel subsidy to attend the conference (one subsidy per organisation). We have a limited budget, so apply soon.

It can be cold out here!

Winter nights in Alice can be cold so make sure you bring winter woollies to keep warm by the fireside.

Be an early bird

Early bird rates are available until 31 May. Book early to take advantage of cheaper flights and accommodation.

For more information and to book your ticket visit:

www.snaicc.asn.au/policy/conference

FOR OUR CHILDREN

Local Strengths, National Challenges



AMPE ANWERNEKENHEKE

Rlierrke Akwete Aneye



Bush Wok dinner setting



Get those entries into the SNAICC Conference soon!

ART AND STORIES COMPETITION STORIES OF GROWING UP STRONG IN CULTURE

CALL FOR ENTRIES

SNAICC is asking young people, from prep to Year 12, to enter their photographs, art or essays on the theme **'How I was grown up strong in my Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture'**.

Prizes: Individual, school and group.

One entry from each category will be awarded a prize. The winning school will receive a prize of art materials and books for their library. Every entrant will receive a certificate of appreciation. An additional prize will be awarded at the SNAICC National Conference for the People's Choice. Winning entries will be used in SNAICC *Child Rearing Stories Project* publications and on-line.

What the stories will be used for

Stories and artwork will be displayed at the SNAICC National Conference at the Alice Springs Convention Centre 27-29 July 2010.

SNAICC needs positive stories about **'how young fellas grow up strong in culture'** as part of the 'Aboriginal Child Rearing Stories Project'. SNAICC, the national body representing the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, has a strong commitment to collecting and sharing these positive stories that will be drawn from a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities across Australia. The stories will cover many themes like 'how our children learn by watching and listening' or 'how young ones learn respect from their Elders'. It's all about the stories young fellas want to tell. The aim is to build value and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and help people who work with Aboriginal children to understand the many ways young fellas grow up.

Ways of sharing stories

Individual or group entries accepted.

Art Competition:

Any media e.g. drawing, collage, painting or printmaking.

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Prep, years 1 & 2 | Years 3 & 4 | Years 5 & 6 |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|

Photography Competition

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Years 7, 8 & 9 | Years 10, 11 & 12 |
|----------------|-------------------|

Essay Competition

| | | |
|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| Years 7 & 8 | Years 9 & 10 | Years 11 & 12 |
|-------------|--------------|---------------|

Competition Judges

SNAICC 2010 National Conference Delegates (People's Choice)
Jane Harrison SNAICC

Richard Frankland – Author/Film maker
Wayne Quilliam – Photographer

Submission Dates and Delivery

Opening Date: 1 March 2010

Closing Date: Friday 18 June 2010

Post: PO Box 1445 North Fitzroy VIC 3068

Courier: Suite 8, Level 1 252-260 St Georges Road North
Fitzroy VIC 3068

Email: snaicc@vicnet.net.au

Photograph of artwork may be submitted electronically as an attachment to snaicc@vicnet.net.au (max 7 MB) or posted to SNAICC (max A3 or on a disk). All entries must have a completed entry form and signed consent form attached to back where posted and as an attachment where submitted electronically. Teacher instructions, entry forms and consent forms can be downloaded www.snaicc.asn.au/policy/conference

Project Officer: Jane Harrison, at SNAICC on (03) 9489 8099 or jane@SNAICC.asn.au



What's happening across the nation?

The 35 Children and Family Centres

Photo: Tyler Booth and friends from the Solid Young Fellas Program. Photo courtesy of Gungahlin Child and Family Centre. ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services are developing their West Belconnen CFC model based on their existing child and family centres in Gungahlin and Tuggeranong.

SNAICC has long promoted the development of Aboriginal community-controlled children and family centres as the best model to achieve good outcomes for our children, families and communities.

Accordingly SNAICC was very supportive of the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood which announced the funding of the COAG Children and Family Centres.

The Agreement clearly commits governments to work closely with community in developing the CFCs, noting that 'community engagement with the Children and Family Centres is integral to their successful implementation'.

As the implementation process begins, SNAICC is following the progress of the centres with interest and some concern.

All parties are pleased to see funding directed to our child and family services, and SNAICC is aware how hard the lead state agency officers are working under a very tight time schedule. However, we have had early reports from a services across the country revealing a lack of consistency in the way that CFCs are being developed, particularly regarding community involvement in planning and management of the centres.

While SNAICC has not spoken to all services and communities involved, there some issues are being consistently raised to us. Many services have expressed concerns regarding governance, planning, poor or token consultation, duplication and failing to build capacity through existing trusted services, many workforce issues (including concerns about awards and staff poaching). Other issues include potential absorption of services and infrastructure into schools

and other mainstream services and service take over by non-Aboriginal clients. Some community organisations in South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia and have been so unhappy with the process that they have written formally to their respective Ministers and / or media about the lack of consultation and the directions being taken.

There is also confusion about the impact of the National Quality Agenda workforce requirements on the CFCs and budget based services such as the MACS and some other early childhood services. The implementation of National Quality Agenda workforce requirements and requirements for our non-CCB services is a complex issue in the early stages of being rolled out.

SNAICC will continue to talk with DEEWR to clarify these issues in the coming months and we will give an update in our next issue of *SNAICC News*. This report will also include information on the model legislation that Victoria is developing and responses from other states and territories developing their own legislation from that model.

We believe that those who are responsible for implementing the CFCs should learn from the strengths of existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood services.

To achieve this, each Children and Family Centre should have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and involvement in all stages of its planning, governance and daily management. IPSUs or similar professional advisers should be adequately resourced to support CFCs, once they are established.

SNAICC thinks that the CFCs will benefit many Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander families, providing they are responsive to community needs and feedback.

We know that any move to develop services that are not Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-designed, led and run may mean that the centres will fail to achieve their potential.

Working with families, children and communities to make sure that their interests and involvement are central will go a long way to making the Children and Family Centres a success.

CFCs have the potential to be the basis for the good practice community controlled/government partnerships that SNAICC champions. We are keen to hear of other services' experiences and will provide an update in the next *SNAICC News*.

As the CFC roll-out is still in early stages for many communities, there is time to address these concerns.

Contact: felicity@snaicc.asn.au

The Quality Framework and the CFCs

More information particularly with respect to the requirements or otherwise of the Framework on the new Children and Family Centres, is available at www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Policy_Agenda/IECD/Pages/ChildFamilyCentres or you can email queries to ECECQualityReformEnquiries@DEEWR.gov.au

The CFC story continues

SNAICC has recently requested and received stories from most state and territory lead agency officers with respect to their CFC roll-out. Some community services have also provided comment. We wanted to reproduce these stories in this issue, however deadlines have meant this

AbSec & NSW Community Services sign agreement

17 March: A landmark agreement has been signed between NSW Community Services and the NSW Aboriginal, Child, Family and Community Care Secretariat (AbSec) recognising the need for better collaboration to protect our children.

In announcing the agreement NSW Minister for Community Services Linda Burney said: 'This is the first formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to be signed by AbSec, the peak body representing Aboriginal children in care, and Community Services. This MoU formally recognises the partnership required to ensure a culturally appropriate and effective response to protecting Aboriginal children at risk. This MoU identifies AbSec as the lead organisation assisting NGOs and Aboriginal organisations provide services and support to Aboriginal communities.'

The MoU underpins the NSW Government's *Keep Them Safe* reforms to the child protection system. *Keep Them Safe* outlines two projects to be developed in partnership by Community Services and AbSec, with any arising services be run by Aboriginal NGOs following a tender process. The two projects are:

1. The development of an NGO-run Aboriginal specialist advice and support service for child protection, based on the Victorian Lakidjeka model (VACCA) which emphasises an Aboriginal perspective and the need to work directly with families.
2. The establishment of four new Intensive Family Based Services (IFBS) run by NGOs, providing an intensive, home-based program for Aboriginal families whose children are at risk of entering care or whose children have been placed in care and are to be restored to their families.

Minister Linda Burney said:

'An important undertaking of the *Keep Them Safe* reforms in NSW is for greater cohesion between the government and sectors. It acknowledges Aboriginal communities are best placed to inform how to make effective change that works to ensure children and young people are safe and appropriately cared for. Aboriginal extended family members and communities have been doing this already for over 50,000 years.'

L-R Front: Steve Larkins, Glendra Stubbs, Dana Clarke, Minister Linda Burney, Michelle Lester, Gail Pencheff, Angela Webb, Lyn Gall
Back: Damian Matcham, Shandel Tarabay, Narelle Gurney, Bill Pritchard, Samantha Joseph. Didjeridoo performer Glen Timbery:

AbSec CEO Bill Pritchard said:

The MoU signifies a new way forward for the provision of child protection and wellbeing services for Aboriginal children and young people. He said, 'It recognises that Aboriginal people and communities have an right and the knowledge and experience to provide culturally appropriate services that will lead to better life outcomes for our kids. We have had 222 years of 'solutions' for our peoples and there have been many good intentions that have led to poor results. We hope that this signing is a final recognition that Aboriginal children belong with their families and communities whilst always ensuring that the safety of the children is paramount in our thinking.'

Dana Clarke – AbSec Chair said:

'This MoU signifies a new way forward for child protection and well being services for Aboriginal children and young people. It recognises that Aboriginal people and communities have an inherent right, the knowledge and the experience to provide culturally appropriate services that will lead to better life outcomes for our kids.'

'This was originally mooted when AbSec came into existence 12 years ago and we are on our fourth DG since then! So good on Annette Gallard for stepping up, and to Jenny Mason who started the ball rolling after the recommendation by Justice Woods. And good on the government for including this recommendation in *Keep Them Safe*.

'*Keep Them Safe* and this MOU both recognise that it is no one person or agency's responsibility to ensure the safety and well being of our children. The MOU is inclusive of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peaks and agencies – whilst acknowledging that community based solutions are the real solutions.'

'If we are going to reduce the number of our children entering the system and ensure their safety then we need to work in partnership.'

'I want to mention those that have made this possible – Jenny Mason and Annette Gallard, Simon Jordan and Michael Higgins from the Aboriginal Services Branch who with Jo Grisard and our CEO Bill Pritchard have written this final version, the AbSec board who guided/drove Bill to make sure this was a priority. To Linda and her team... 'champions of our people'... There has never been anything quite like this MoU and it had to be developed out of the ground. The wheels of bureaucracy have turned a little quicker than normal.'

Steve Larkins, SNAICC Chair and AbSec Board member said:

'This has the potential to be a huge story, and a big part of it is based on the 2008 *SNAICC Service Development, Cultural Respect and Service Access Policy*. Our biggest challenge now is how the MoU will be enforced, to make it worth while.'

'The hope is that, no matter who is there, there should be lots of good contact and communications and it's not about mainstreaming. That is a huge step forward. Certainly DOCS has signed the MoU, but what happens when there is a change in ministerial appointment?

'Now the NSW agencies have signed up to the *Service Access Policy*, the next step is for mainstream services to form a partnership with Aboriginal organisations, help them build their capacity to take on more kids.'

'So how do we make that happen? That is the next issue for SNAICC to work on! The National Executive seems keen to take on the *Service Access Policy*, but what we need is to have the next step made clear.'

'We want future Ministers to evolve the MoU with Aboriginal organisations, after all, over 33% of the kids in care are Aboriginal and we need to make sure that 33% of the discussions are with Aboriginal organisations.'





Steve Larkins

National standards for Out of Home Care

SNAICC has recently participated in a consultation on National Standards for Out of Home Care (OHCC) conducted by KPMG for FaHCSIA. The standards are being developed under the COAG National Child Protection Framework 2009—2020, with a view to ensure that children in Out of Home Care receive the same opportunities as those not in care. SNAICC strongly commends this COAG initiative.

The placement of children in Out of Home Care (OHC) is the most severe form of child welfare interventions. As of 30 June 2009, there were 10,512 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Out of Home Care across Australia – a number that has significantly increased over the past decade and is nine times the rate of other children. Our children are more likely to be placed in OHC, enter care younger and remain in care longer than other children.

SNAICC contributed to KPMG's development of the consultation paper for National Out of Home Care standards, and was pleased to see our input reflected in the final document and have made a submission based on our guiding principles for children in care. As SNAICC Chair Steve Larkins said: 'We have been calling for National Standards in the area since 1982. We maintain that National Standards should apply regardless of the provider.'

SNAICC's key submission points

- Ensure consistent reporting on the Standards in all jurisdictions
- Strengthen compliance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (ACPP)
- Require an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective for case planning, with a life course approach
- Provide case management tools and resources for cultural and spiritual development for our children in care
- Facilitate non-Indigenous carers' and agencies' cultural competency
- Ensure our children's participation in decision-making and planning
- Streamline information and establish a national database for information-sharing.

Child safety is paramount

SNAICC's submission highlighted the significance of child safety for our children, and is deeply concerned that this has not been reflected in recent discussions on poor placements.

The Aboriginal Child Placement Principle maintains that a child's involvement with their family and community is vital, but never more important than the child's safety.

Maintaining connections to family and community is not a justification for leaving a child at risk of harm, nor is making a placement that puts them at risk of harm.

Strengthen compliance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

SNAICC is also concerned about the lack of consistent monitoring and reporting across jurisdictions on our children in placements and compliance with the ACPP. We recommended the appointment of independent positions in all jurisdictions to perform these functions, including that of a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner.

Steve Larkins said: 'This would encourage vigilance and a national perspective on our children's health and wellbeing and guard against the damaging effects of removal and separation from family, land and culture on our children.'

SNAICC recommended that Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Agencies (AICCAs) or similar organisations always be contacted whenever our children are notified as abused or neglected or subject to a child protection order. None of our children should ever be removed from home and placed in care without close consultation with an AICCA.

SNAICC also advocated that the National Standards include training and licensing requirements for agencies and professionals dealing with our children at risk of removal to increase awareness of, and to strengthen, compliance with the ACPP. This would include periodic reviews of Out of Home Care placements and identifying greater opportunities to place our children within their family and kinship networks.

Support decision-makers & carers

Steve Larkins said the submission also drew attention to the need for support for decision-makers, carers and communities. He noted, 'Successful placements require adequate support. While there is a significant pool of potential Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers, many cannot formalise care because there is a lack of support and resources.'

The cultural competency of non-indigenous carers and agencies also needs to be increased. These professionals and agencies should be able to demonstrate their ongoing commitment to developing their ability to work effectively in cross-cultural settings and to provide culturally-appropriate care for our children.

With this in mind, SNAICC advocated

for the creation of a national resource for cultural care of our children, in partnership with the AICCAs, carers and communities that draws on existing research and knowledge. Cultural awareness training and accreditation programs for non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander agencies and carers should also be provided.

Keep family & community connected

SNAICC recommended that case planning should acknowledge the importance of family, community and cultural connections to ensuring the long-term resilience and wellbeing for our children. The National Standards should require transition plans for children leaving care, which include resources for their ongoing support as adults. Children should also be involved in decision-making and be active participants in the development of their own care plans

Steve Larkins said 'Children need to feel comfortable about all stages of their Out of Home Care journey. Children need to be regularly kept up to date about what is happening so they do not feel alone, unwanted and unloved by their families.'

It is also essential to develop case plans specific to a child. In this regard, AICCAs play a vital role in helping our children maintain their connections to family and community, and develop their cultural and spiritual identity. Large national or state-wide non-Indigenous services cannot provide the appropriate support and cultural education to maintain connections to country, mob and culture.

Steve Larkins said 'For Aboriginal children to grow up strong in culture in Out of Home Care, they don't just know "Aboriginal" or "Torres Strait Islander" culture generally. They need to know where they belong: where they fit in the environment, who their mob is, their stories and songlines, and their specific rights and obligations to their community.'

National standards finalised soon

KPMG's final report is to be presented to Community Services' Ministers in mid-2010. We hope SNAICC's principles and contribution will be reflected in the new national standards to be finalised late this year. See online: www.snaicc.asn.au/policy
Contact: felicity@snaicc.asn.au

The new Early Years Learning Framework

By Yorganop, WA IPSU



Donna Edgar, Janelle Brahim, Bessie Ejai and Kate Stack, Early Childhood Educators from around WA at the March Aboriginal Play & Learning Forum in Perth

Here at Yorganop IPSU in West Australia we are feeling very happy with the new Early Years Learning Framework. The EYLF has a big vision: 'to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to five years' so that 'all children have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves and for the nation'. We know that the Aboriginal services we support are committed to seeing that their services provide the very best opportunities for kids, families and communities and we think that the EYLF is a great tool to help them do so. The EYLF also gives opportunity to validate in a formal framework many of the current practices already happening in our services. It is a case of fitting programs and planning into the outcomes and therefore recognising current good practice where it already exists.

The EYLF gives them a flexible framework for doing their job; to look at what they do, to think about what is good and what might be changed and to plan and implement new programs. It will help our services further to support current skills as well as develop new skills in understanding and working with children, families and communities.

We have had no trouble adapting it for our Playgroups, and all the IPSUs, Inclusion Support Agencies and PSCs are now in dialogue about it. All the IPSUs around Australia are getting together in Perth in early May for the National IPSU Alliance. The EYLF and the Quality Framework will form a part of the agenda.

For many of our services there is a lot of new language in the document and some new and complex ideas for them to

learn about. They are more than capable of adding new skills and knowledge to their practice and our job as an IPSU is to help them do so. We have developed a series of Resource Sheets which we not only distribute in print in our monthly newsletter but also make available on our web site. These sheets explain language and concepts in practical and concrete ways; show services how they are already using practices that fit within the EYLF and provide questions and prompts for continued progress on the path to excellent Early Childhood practice.

The EYLF is also useful to the wider Early Childhood sector in that it promotes and in fact requires conversations between the Education sector and the Early Childhood sector of Child Care. We are hopeful that this will result in Child Care and the wider Early Childhood sector gaining more respect and professional standing. It gives us a chance to talk with the education sector in a new way, using a common language.

YIPSWA and other early childhood agencies have worked closely with the Department of Education to put together an Aboriginal Play and Learning Forum. It was an extremely successful one day forum that connected early education and care practitioners on many levels.

Of course we think that childcare is starting in a special position in relation to the EYLF – after all we have always seen the importance of play based learning, whereas the education sector has traditionally been seen as having a much more formal approach. However this framework has the potential for both sectors to learn from each other and the results of this relationship will, it is anticipated, lead to much better

outcomes for our kids.

The National Quality Framework move to increase the need for qualified staff in licensed services is another issue altogether, and it's a problem for any regional or remote service. Finding qualified staff for rural and remote services is already a huge issue and legislating for the inclusion of more qualified staff is unlikely to make this any easier.

There will be a series of forums about the National Quality Framework around Australia in this April and May. We all need to learn about these new frameworks and be involved in any discussions to ensure that the services we support are represented and the issues and challenges of rural and remote areas are not forgotten.

In the Early Childhood sector we have had many changes over the past 10- 20 years. There have been changes to accreditation and licensing in all states. They can be excellent changes, but each time it is the role of us the IPSU to support our services through the changes so that they are seen as opportunities and not threats.

Contact: admin@yipsuwa.org.au



Early Childhood Educators, Donna Edgar from Ardyaloon & Seakeema Taylor from Ngunga Women's Group in Derby - March Aboriginal Play & Learning Forum in Perth

SNAICC National Conference

27-29 July 2010, Alice Springs



FOR OUR CHILDREN

Local Strengths,
National Challenges

AMPE ANWERNEKENHEKE

Rlterke Akwete
Aneye

The new Early Years Learning Framework: the next steps

By: The Office of Early Childhood, education and Child Care – DEEWR

***Belonging, Being and Becoming: the Early Years Learning Framework* is Australia's first national curriculum framework for early childhood education. It is part of the Council of Australian Government's reform agenda for early childhood education and care and a key component of the Australian Government's National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care.**

The Framework underpins universal access to early childhood education and will be incorporated in the National Quality Standard.

Once this is in place, early childhood education and care settings will be expected to provide evidence of their use of the Framework in the development and delivery of their early learning programs.

The EYLF seeks to ensure delivery of nationally consistent and quality early childhood education and guide educators in developing their programs.

It describes the broad principles, practice and outcomes required to support young children's learning from birth to five years and transition to formal schooling.

The Framework has an emphasis on play-based learning and supports early childhood educators to work in partnership with families.



Bethalia Dingley (Tabuai), SNAICC finance admin officer is on maternity leave and would like to show all her friends & family on the islands her nine week baby son, Angus Kenneth Zey Dingley.

Support to help services implement the EYLF includes:

- an *Educators' Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework* has been developed and is expected to be released in mid 2010;
- the Australian Government-funded Professional Support Coordinators program and the Indigenous Professional Support Units will provide training and mentoring for child care services; and
- a web-based training package and professional development materials for remote Indigenous settings are under development.

The *Educators' Guide* is in two parts: The first part focuses on curriculum decision-making, promotes reflective practice and inquiry, and provides best practice examples and case studies.

The second part contains educators' stories and models of their plans for the outcomes of children's learning, with questions to provoke thinking and generate discussion in relation to the principles, practices and outcomes of the EYLF.

While the *Educators' Guide* to the EYLF will provide all early childhood educators with guidance on growing cultural competence in working with Australian Indigenous communities, the Remote Indigenous Professional Development

package is being developed to support locally engaged staff in remote Indigenous communities with a detailed interpretation of the EYLF as it applies to the Indigenous context. It will support programming, build capacity of staff and strengthen professional knowledge.

The decision to develop the Remote Indigenous Professional Development package was based on advice from the EYLF national consultations and is being developed under an existing DEEWR contract by the NT Catholic Education Office in conjunction with Charles Darwin University.

The package will include a DVD, book, a set of 50 cards to support the learning outcomes, a set of posters and a CD ROM. Copies of the Remote Indigenous Professional Development package will be distributed around 900 remote and very remote services and other Indigenous services operating in remote areas of Australia with high numbers of Indigenous children and locally engaged Indigenous staff, who would benefit from the package.

On release, the *Educators' Guide* will be mailed to early childhood education and care services. The *Educators' Guide* and background information will also be available online at www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood
Contact: eylf@deewr.gov.au

Torres Strait Islands Childcare Licensing Project

A number of Children's Activity Services (CAS) in the Torres Strait Islands have developed over many years into services providing regular care for children. These services are now working to meet and maintain licensing requirements under the Child Care Act 2002 and Child Care Regulation 2003.

The Crèche and Kindergarten (C&K) Association in a joint project with the Office for Early Childhood, Education and Care (OECEC) is helping to support the

Regional Council with the licensing process.

The project is currently working to support childcare services in the communities of Hammond Is, Masig Is, Warraber Is, Poruma Is, and Kubin Village on Moa Is. Dedicated staff have been training and working in outer Torres Strait Islands for over ten years. These services are managed by the Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC).

Contact: l.miley@candk.asn.au

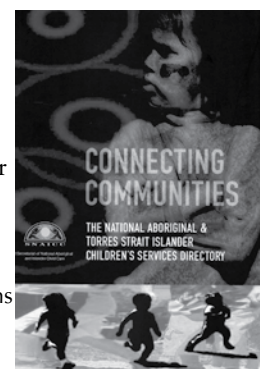
Connecting Communities – A Children's Services Directory by SNAICC

Connecting Communities lists contacts of over 5500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family and children's services, health and legal services, government departments, peak bodies and resource agencies from across Australia.

This resource is ideal for those seeking to network with other services and for those who cannot easily access material online. The fully indexed entries are ordered by state/territory and service type.

The directory is also online: <http://services.snaicc.asn.au/> You can add or update your service details on <http://services.snaicc.asn.au/add/>

Order on line: www.snaicc.asn.au/publications



Talking our children's issues in Canada

4-5 March: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's issues were represented at the International Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Indigenous Children and Youth in Detention, Custody, Foster-Care and Adoption in Vancouver by Natalie Hunter, a former SNAICC National Executive member.

It was the first time that Natalie has attended an international forum and courtesy of SNAICC friend, Cindy Blackstock, was also introduced to the snow. Natalie presented on the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle and the impact of NT Intervention to Indigenous representatives and other from over 20 countries – from Europe, New Zealand, Canada, Argentina, Porto Rico, Africa, Asia Pacific and many representatives from American Indian Tribes across USA. We all want the best for our children.'

'As the only Australian, I was deeply honoured to be invited to this event by the United Nations. To learn about the shared struggles, issues and journeys from other participants was invaluable,' said Natalie.

Now back in Darwin and continuing her work for Life Without Barriers, Natalie is optimistic about the opportunities that international forums represent, and the growing support for taking on the challenges facing our children and families.



Natalie Hunter presents a thank you gift to chair of the meeting, Grand Chief Edward John from the First Nations People who delivered the conference in partnership with the UN. The artist was Ameer Brahim from Darwin (story - Rainbow Turpin).

'Although we are a lucky country, Australia has a lot of work to do – starting with compensation for the Stolen Generations and reinstatement of the RDA in the NT. Human rights are a growing driving force, with – the Australian Government has to make good promises made when it signed the *Convention of the Rights of the Child* and other treaties.'

See www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/EGM_ICYD.html



Canadian Human Rights Tribunal - the case moves on

A ruling in favour of the First Nations Children & Family Caring Society (FNCFCS) has pushed aside the Canadian Government's legal challenge to have the case dismissed. (See background March SNAICC News.)

With the Federal Court judgment on 30 March 2010 upholding the ability of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal to hear the FNCFCS' case, the FNCFCS gained another victory in the journey seeking compensation for inequitable funding for First Nations' children. Witness the challenge before the Tribunal

with SNAICC and 4009 other supporters! Visit www.fnwitness.ca/ to:

- Read more about this historic challenge and follow the time line of events
- Access news and information on the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal
- Become 'a witness' and watch the Tribunal's proceedings.

Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place

Emma Dawson a recent SNAICC student placement, writes this story about her new job.

Thank-you SNAICC. Without doing my student placement with you, I would not be now working here at Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place (MMIGP) in the inner suburbs of east Melbourne.

The MMIGP concept originated 12 years ago when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members met socially at BBQs. The centre became a reality in 2006, based on a neighbourhood house model. It is now set amongst the leafy greens of Croydon, Victoria and at Ringwood East where we run our exciting and fun programs such as the very successful Food Bank, Op Shop, Women's Network, Men's Network, Burrai Playtime, youth activities, school holiday program, homework program and the Elders Network.

The MMIGP also has a building fund to purchase the property. This

will enable the community to expand their horizons into the business support sector and to run larger programs for our community. The MMIGP committee of management has representation from Elders and organisations across the eastern metropolitan region, funded from various state and federal funding sources.

The MMIGP purposes are: cultural learning, learning new skills, somewhere to yarn up, a sense of belonging and safety, bringing families and community together, a place to relax and enjoy yourself, and promote and enhance our Elders' status.

The MMIGP volunteer program encourages community members to participate in programs and creates opportunities to develop skills, build strong relationships and lasting friendships.

As the new Community Support Liaison Officer, I assist community members to locate services that meet their needs and link people with culturally respectful community services and maintain and build relationships between MMIGP and local service providers.

Contact: communitysupport@mmigp.com.au



Some of MMIGP team. L-R: Back: Keagan, Bec, Shannon, Di Front: Emma, Carolyn, Jenni, Bronwyn

Whittlesea – Bubup Wilam for Early Learning

The rollout of a community controlled, Aboriginal Child & Family Centre in Victoria

The Bubup Wilam for Early Learning Kinder started in September 2009, currently operates two days a week from an interim location in Lalor, supported by an Aboriginal Project Officer. It began when local Aboriginal community members advocated for an early years services as a priority. So it started as one of four Community Partnership Projects resulting from the Victorian Government's Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs.

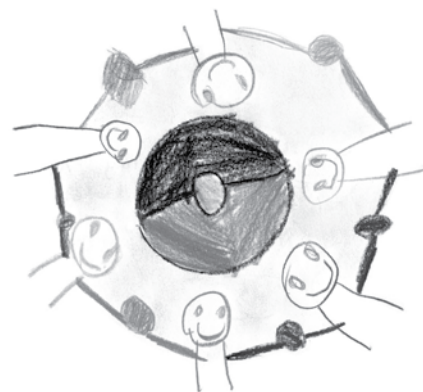
In a separate initiative, under the National Partnership on Indigenous Early Childhood, two Victorian services were funded for integrated Aboriginal Children and Family Centres (CFCs). The local Steering Committee then commenced planning for the expanded Bubup Wilam for Early Learning Centre which will be managed and controlled by the local Aboriginal community. The Project is directed by an Aboriginal Community Leadership Group and Project Steering Committee, auspiced by the City of Whittlesea.

Bubup Wilam in Woiwurrung means children's place/camp. Its services and programs, building and grounds, and leadership will all contribute to achieving the centre vision. This vision is to provide a thriving Aboriginal, family-based early childhood centre that creates strong

foundations of lifelong learning, health and wellbeing. Bubup Wilam emphasises the child's identity and emotional and educational rights and needs.

The expanded centre will have a purpose built facility on land made available by the City of Whittlesea in Thomastown, within a precinct which includes schools, library and recreational centre. The operational funding will provide a combination of pre-school and long day care places, plus a multipurpose space for training, playgroups, Elders and community meetings. Rooms will be included for partner organisations to deliver allied health and other services. The centre will be for Aboriginal children and families and will include quality indoor and outdoor spaces for community events.

Weekly steering committee meetings since November 2009 have meant the facility design is near completion. The final design work is to plan the outdoor areas so they work for Aboriginal children and the community as a whole and reflect the overall vision. The landscaping proposal will be discussed with Traditional Owners, and includes predominately local trees, plants and flowers. The Traditional Owners will give the final sign off with the committee before the construction of the new centre starts in June/July 2010, with the plan for the expanded centre to open in term 2 or 3 in 2011.



The centre will have to be financially viable and the steering committee is beginning to focus on governance, business planning, partnerships and workforce and training needs. The steering committee is chaired by a local Aboriginal community member and includes representatives from the local Aboriginal Community, VAEAI, City of Whittlesea, Dept. Education and Early Childhood, and Dept. Planning and Community Development.

We have continued with the MACS philosophy to provide a centre for our children to maintain their identity and grow into strong young people. It has always been a priority for Bubup Wilam for Early Learning to become incorporated and manage our own service for our community and we are in the early stages of this process. The MACS philosophy will continue to be the guiding light for the vision of Bubup Wilam.

Contact: mike.webb@whittlesea.vic.gov.au or lisa.thorpe@deakin.edu.au

Awabakal Early Childhood Services and First Chance Inc – Little Yarns

Little Yarns is a four year ADHC funded innovative pilot project aimed at providing prevention and early intervention for children within the local Awabakal Aboriginal community in the Newcastle region NSW.

Awabakal Early Childhood Services and First Chance Inc will be presenting on their collaboration at the upcoming SNAICC conference. The project is implemented through a collaborative partnership formed between Firstchance Inc Early Intervention Program and the Awabakal Early Childhood Services Program.

Little Yarns operates within the Awabakal playgroups, preschools and child care centre focusing on supporting local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in facilitating children's speech and language development, social interactions and readiness for school.

The project comprises three early childhood intervention teachers and a speech pathologist, with teachers based at the Awabakal services three days per week whilst the speech pathologist works across all services on a consultative basis. Part of the Little Yarns

project has also been running parent education courses focusing on supporting Indigenous parents in helping them facilitate their children's speech and language development.

Contact: ruth.geoff@bigpond.com



Maali and mum Polly from the parent education course



L-R: Outgoing SNAICC SA Nat Exec member Debbie Bond and incoming member Leona Smith

SNAICC Exec says goodbye to SA early learning rep Debbie Bond and hello to Leona Smith

Debbie Bond's story

Debbie has been a very active SNAICC Executive Member for many years as the South Australian Early Childhood representative. Debbie and her husband Robert are moving into 'semi-retirement' in Victor Harbor – a lovely sea change. After 17 years of service, Debbie will resigning as Co-ordinator of ARMSU at the end of June 2010. She is also standing down from the National Executive of SNAICC in May. Debbie's position on the SNAICC Executive role will be filled by Leona Smith from the Kaurna Plains Early Childhood Centre in Elizabeth.

My time spent on the SNAICC Executive has been a big learning curve and at times challenging but mostly exciting and fun. It has left me with a sense of achievement and pride and I recommend it as a very worthwhile and rewarding experience. Along the way I have met many different people and shared many laughs and good times together.

On a serious note we as an Executive have had the opportunities to meet and make accountable many politicians who have the portfolios of our children's needs in their hands and to me this is what SNAICC is all about.

As our national peak body SNAICC has done a remarkable job advocating for our children and families and I feel very privileged to have been a small part of that and a little sad at the same time that I no longer will be able to contribute. However, these achievements and memories will stay with me forever.

I would also like to pay my respects and thanks to the SNAICC CEOs and the wonderful, dedicated staff team they have (both past and present). Without them the Executive would cease to operate and they are a formidable staff team who are dedicated to the cause of SNAICC.

I have every confidence the ongoing

committee and the staff team will continue on down the path being a vital voice for Aboriginal families and children.

I wish them all the success in the future and will think of them from time to time sitting on my back verandah sipping a wine, looking out over the sea views. A very BIG 'thanks' to all and I hope to keep in touch.

Deb names some SNAICC achievements

- SNAICC's successful conferences
- The 7 Priorities which are now 8
- To witness the National Apology, which had long been a SNAICC priority
- The consolidation of the constitution
- The voice on national issues for our Aboriginal early childhood services
- The many SNAICC achievements in resource development and distribution
- The opportunities to meet face to face with many politicians and to contribute to some policy changes
- The many changes to the child protection area for the better
- Watching the profile of SNAICC increase and gather momentum
- Seeing a national executive share and contribute together on all levels
- Working alongside some pretty awesome, strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from all walks of life

Additional bio details:

In 1999 Debbie was contracted for six months by SNAICC to write the *Multifunctional Children's Services National Report 2000*.

Other advocacy venues have been SA Aboriginal Consultative Committee, SA Universal Access Committee, SA EYLF Advisory Committee, SA Education Consultative Committee Member, 2008 SNAICC Conference Steering Group, WIPCE Conference Steering Group, SA Aboriginal War Memorial Steering Committee.

Leona Smith's story

Leona Smith has been the Director of Kaurna Plains Child Care Centre in Adelaide since 1999. Kaurna Plains is a MACS service licensed for 40 places. With Debbie Bond standing down from the SNAICC Executive, Leona has been nominated by the SA MACS and Aboriginal children's services to take up the state early years position on the SNAICC Executive. This is not new for Leona, who has stood in for Debbie Bond before on the SNAICC board in 2003-04.

I am a Narrunga woman from the Point Pearce community in the York Peninsula region of SA. I have four children plus my youngest, my 15 year old great nephew, and two grandchildren. I've been at Kaurna Plains Child Care Centre for over 18 years now. I started in 1990 in relief, got permanency in 1992 in an unqualified position and went on to get my Diploma in Child Care and manage the nursery. I then did a Certificate in Management and Organisational Leadership Skills with a group of Aboriginal woman at Salisbury University. Debbie Bond did it with me. It gave us all skills to work with people, to understand people.

We all had to write something you could see about another individual in the group. I have still got that little card. Somebody wrote something like: 'You will go on to do really good things, maybe in the future you will be the manager of a child care centre.' I wasn't even qualified at that time. I was thinking 'No way!' Where I am today – I wasn't going down that road! But somebody saw something.

But it wasn't something I strived for. I just had my own self-determination, and good opportunities – I had a really good director who came alongside me and nurtured me. She put in place three years of mentoring support through Network SA/ARMSU

Continued next page

when I became service director in 1999. I could pick up the phone any time and my mentor, Bev Pope, was always there. She gave me choices, she empowered me to make the decisions. Over those three years the friendship grew and she's still there, though her job has changed.

When I went to Kurna in 1991 I had no vision or goals, I was a broken person, but I've been growing and acquiring skills with my faith at the forefront of my journey. I have just completed my Bachelor of Early Childhood at Macquarie Uni as an external student.

I stood on the SNAICC Exec briefly in 2003, then I left because I was studying and wanted to give someone else in SA an opportunity. We had one of our regular ARMSU/IPSU meetings this March in Port Augusta, and all the SA childcare directors were there. When Debbie told us she was leaving ARMSU and SNAICC, the job came to me. I really want to honour Debbie for her knowledge and commitment. We will all miss her greatly.

As an Aboriginal person, when I face those things we all know happen every day, I look inside myself and feel strong to overcome them. I have learned to move around those difficulties.

I really feel like I'm like a bird out of a cage these days. My kids are all grown up and I have two grandchildren. I wait to see what doors will open now. I really want to work between that area of both keeping the culture strong for our children and helping them achieve the literacy skills – bridging these two goals.

As the new SA SNAICC early learning representative, I encourage all our services to tell me what they would like brought to the table at a national level, just as Debbie has done over the last years.

Contact: leonasmith@optusnet.com.au

Working and Walking Together – out now

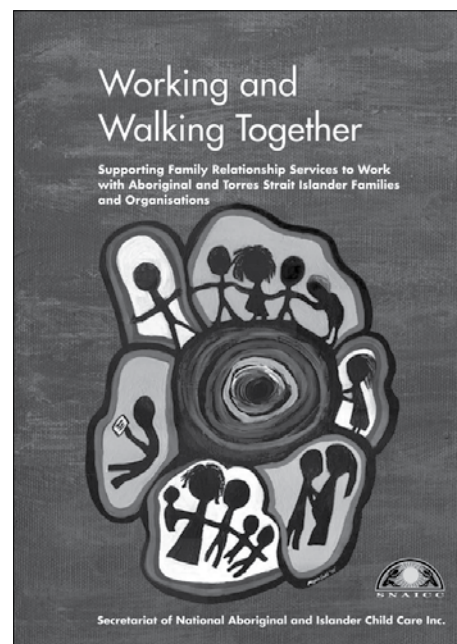
SNAICC's latest resource supporting non-Indigenous family relationship services to work in culturally appropriate ways with our families and communities is out now.

Working and Walking Together: Supporting Family Relationship Services to Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families and Organisations provides non-Indigenous organisations and workers with information, ideas and guiding principles to develop culturally appropriate services and professional practice respectful of our people and culture.

Well-structured chapters offer a guide to practical tips on:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and families;
- The social and historical context of contemporary issues facing our communities;
- The importance of personal professional reflection and tips on cross-cultural communication approaches;
- Our cultural protocols;
- Approaches for non-Indigenous organisations to develop their cultural competence in engaging with our families and community-controlled organisations;
- Developing culturally appropriate programs and professional practice;
- Using action research evaluation for organisations to document, reflect on, evaluate and report on their initiatives to engage more effectively with our families and develop partnerships with our community organisations.

Targeted at family relationships services, the resource is for all staff and practitioners, from admin, frontline and intake staff, to counsellors, mediators and dispute resolution practitioners, to relationship and parenting educators, to managers.



The resource will also be useful to other non-Indigenous staff and organisations working with our people in family and community services.

The resource features four case studies highlighting family relationship services successfully engaging with our families and offering culturally appropriate services and programs as practical examples to draw on.

SNAICC encourages Family Relationship Services to share their stories about achievements in working with our families and organisations on SNAICC's website.-

You can order this resource online via credit card, EFTPOS or purchase order. www.snaicc.asn.au/publications

Contact: mark@snaicc.asn.au

VIYAC Young Koori Parents Forum



Chantelle McGuinness and baby Eli were part of the action at the Victorian Indigenous Youth Advisory Council, talking about and celebrating being a young Koori parent. Welcomed to Wurrundjeri Land by Ringo Terrick, the panel members presented, talked over and documented concerns important to young Koori parents, whilst the babies peacefully slept through (mostly). Organised by VIYAC staff Clarisse Slater and Tim Kanoa as part of National Youth Week.





The Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Services (OVAHS) is a comprehensive Primary Health Care facility servicing Aboriginal people in the remote township of Kununurra and surrounding communities in the Kimberlies. The town has around 7,500 people, half of whom are Aboriginal.

The OVAHS Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Project was developed in response to the high incidence of alcohol consumption during pregnancy in the Kimberley, and the resultant suspected high prevalence of FASD. Awareness of FASD among many health professionals and the general population is poor or absent. Diagnosis and management of FASD is virtually non-existent. In some remote communities women continue to drink throughout their pregnancies ignorant of the consequences to their children.

The local Traditional Owners Miriwoong and Gajirrawoong agreed to provide funding for a one year pilot project at OVAHS to combat the lack of culturally appropriate services providing FASD education to women.

The FASD team, made up of Penny Bridge RN and Josie Ward ACW are part

of the OVAHS Social Support Unit. This unit offers case management, counselling and education to Aboriginal individuals and groups needing assistance with alcohol or drugs, mental health, domestic violence, relationship problems, youth and mental health. The FASD team also work with antenatal clients seen through the OVAHS Aboriginal Child and Maternal Health Unit.

The project has been running since August 2009 providing FASD education, alcohol screening and AOD counseling, if applicable, to pregnant women; to all women of childbearing age through the school and an out-reach program; to all OVAHS staff on alcohol awareness and FASD, motivational interviewing and contraception. Out-reach programs are run for local men in supporting women to make alcohol-free choices throughout pregnancy and the team is working with other organisations to develop their capacity to prevent, diagnosis and manage FASD.

Our new resources include an antenatal screening tool for us to get baseline data to evaluate the extent of alcohol consumption during pregnancy in the community along with knowledge of FASD; a soon-to-be completed 10 minute locally focused and

Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service FASD pilot project

Story by Penny Bridge RN, OVAHS
FASD Project Coordinator



produced DVD on FASD, developed by the FASD team; leaflets, posters and project merchandise for our public education drive.

OVAHS nursing and medical staff have all begun FASD diagnostic training (4-Digit Diagnostic Code Training through the Washington University, USA), to increase our capacity to identify FASD and reflect the extent of the problem. Cases are to be referred to a paediatrician for diagnosis and treatment.

Developing links with national and international FASD networks has been vital in our progress and contributes to the growing impetus in addressing FASD in Australia; and local community consultation is paramount to the project success.

The feasibility of setting up a pilot FASD screening unit at OVAHS will also be explored in conjunction with the visiting paediatricians, OVAHS Child and Maternal Health Unit and the staff.

Contact: pennyb@ovahs.org.au

SNAICC starts new young women's resource

SNAICC recently received \$18,000 from the Alcohol Education Rehabilitation Foundation (AERF) to contribute to the development of a new resource for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

The project aims to reduce fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) by developing strengths-based resources using a community development approach. The project will work with groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women around the country (14–18 years old) with respect to keeping healthy and safe and becoming new mothers. The resource will

be developed in partnership with some key regional and academic stakeholders, using SNAICC's innovative approach to resource development. We hope these workshops form the basis for future training development. Three Monash Uni medical student placements are helping SNAICC with the initial research, looking at existing resources. The resource/s will be based on the widely used SNAICC booklet, *You're A Dad: 7 Storylines About Being a Dad* and will incorporate culturally appropriate messages for young women. This project will start soon and run for about one year. Contact: rosie@snaicc.asn.au

Risky Times research project

Our Risky Times Research Project by Save the Children will look at the street presence of young people in Kununurra, particularly late at night, and their risky behaviours. We will interview young people to find out why they prefer to be on the street and will interview key stakeholders to find out what services they would like for young people as an alternative to wandering the streets after dark. **We seek any literature** and any suggestions on alternatives eg a refuge, a 24 hour drop in centre, a home based sleep over space.

Contact: polly.banks@savethechildren.org.au

SNAICC Early Days Project on Autism Spectrum Disorder

Training workshops for parents and carers of children

SNAICC is working with the Parenting Research Centre to help ensure that the Early Days Program, which provides training and workshops for parents and carers of children (6 or younger) who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder, is culturally inclusive of Aboriginal children and families. This work helps achieve SNAICC's broader policy priorities including:

**Supporting families to care for children, and
Supporting children to thrive by five with culture alive**

The SNAICC Early Days Project involves training and workshops at our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child care centres for staff and other community members.

The training provides information about autism to better support families, children and the staff working with them. Workshops are taking place from April to June in Alice Springs, Cherbourg, Woolongong, Broome, Melbourne and Adelaide. The first workshop was held on 14 April at Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Ampe Kenhe Apmere MACS Centre.

The project also involves researching the experiences of our families bringing up children with autism because having a child with autism isn't the same for every family.

It's early days, but some themes are emerging:

- Being part of a supportive Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander extended family can make it easier to bring up a child with autism because of the love and help of family and community members.
- Our families and communities are emerging as very accepting of

children with autism.

- Families feel the child is safe and made one of the family when respite care is within an Aboriginal community setting.
- Lack of understanding about autism can lead to the child and family being misunderstood or criticised by extended family and community when there are difficult behaviours.
- Lack of support services and skills within communities means that families are not getting enough respite care.
- General knowledge about autism seems to be very low within our communities.
- Our parents with children with autism have mixed experiences with mainstream medical, early intervention services and children's services such as child care.
- Our families face many barriers to a child being diagnosed early and receiving appropriate early intervention support.
- These barriers do not seem to be generally well understood by mainstream service providers. This is an area that requires further research.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with children with ASD worry about their children's behaviour resulting in the parents being negatively judged for who they are and where they come from.
- Our families with children with ASD also worry about how well the child will be accepted by mainstream Australian society given low levels of acceptance of disability, along with racism towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in general.

Contact: julie@snaicc.asn.au or sbeecheer@snaicc.asn.au

New SNAICC project - Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander KidsMatter Early Childhood

SNAICC has secured a contract worth over \$490,000 with the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing to begin a new early childhood social and emotional wellbeing project. This project aims to build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled early childhood services to improve the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from birth to five years. Initially, this project is funded for one year and will work with four pilot sites.

SNAICC will deliver this project in partnership with the Australian Psychological Society (APS), building on the strengths of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled early childhood sector and addressing identified barriers. In consultation with key sector and community stakeholders, this project will deliver training and produce culturally appropriate resources and training materials using an action research approach.

This first year (Phase 1) of the project will develop resources and

training materials to promote the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

These materials will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood services to address the four components of KidsMatter, namely to provide a positive and healthy environment, assist children, families and communities to develop children's social and emotional skills, support workers' self-care and enable them to build partnerships with families, other child and family services and the community to collaboratively respond to mental health difficulties in children, including through supporting early intervention.

To achieve this, the project will map and document current initiatives, undertake a literature review and sector training-needs research paper, develop, test and refine resource materials through a series of stakeholder training events and consultations, and produce a detailed plan for Phase 2.

Contact: mark@snaicc.asn.au



Grant-seeking tips for your organisation



As we near the end of the financial year, departments and charities can be looking to find good ways to use any unspent funds for the financial year. This can be a good time to contact your friends in high places and see if they support your ideas, or have any ideas of their own for new projects or funding they would like to discuss. But before you do this, here are some tips to successful grant-seeking.

First decide what you want

It is always best to decide what you want BEFORE you start applying for funds. While it can be tempting to apply for any grants you see advertised, your applications should be driven by your organisation's pre-existing priorities as much as possible.

One suggestion is to have an annual planning day where you draw up a wish list of new projects, staffing or other needs, such as renovations, vehicles, etc. Then, when you see new funding sources advertised, you are ready to respond by matching items on your wish list with the funding source.

When developing your wish list, be as specific as you can about what you want. Identify what your organisation most needs funds for and will be able to follow through to completion.¹

Be careful what you wish for

Make sure the project is something you have the time and resources to implement, and that it matches with your organisation's mission and values. It is counterproductive to get funds only to realise that the project is more of a drain on your organisation than it is a benefit to the community, or that it draws you away from your core work too much.

Gather your evidence

Know what you are doing and what you are up against before you start applying for funds.

Being well connected with your community, you are probably pretty sure that what you want is truly needed, but you

need to be sure, AND you need to be able to convince the potential funders. Gathering good evidence helps you check that your wish list is spot on.

Useful evidence may include:

- **Facts and stats.** Hard facts about the need for your request is essential, eg. census data, research evidence, results of evaluations, client feedback surveys or client use data.
- **What else is out there?** What other similar projects have been undertaken and did they work? It is helpful if you are able to say, for example, that a similar project somewhere else has worked really well, but there is nothing like it in your area.
- **Who's on your side?** Make sure you have evidence of your support. This may involve checking with key organisational partners, community leaders, service users, etc. to make sure they support your proposal – and will support your new project when it's up and running. When you do so, make sure you ask for letters of support (from possible partners, community leaders) and gather any evidence you have of service users' views eg. feedback surveys, client interviews, case stories.

Build relationships

The most important aspect to seeking funds is the relationship you have with potential funders. For example, if you have strong relationships with your local departmental representative, they may be open to your ideas and suggestions to address community needs. If you regularly communicate these needs, you may not need to wait for an advertised funding round, but may be invited to submit a proposal any time.

A good government representative will always have their ear out for opportunities to improve services in their area, and if your wish list is in their head, it can't hurt.

If you haven't yet established

relationships with potential funders, you might consider seeking a meeting with relevant person after you've got a clear idea of your wish list.

But, it is important not to assume that just because you have good relationship, you can bypass the organisation's established, formal, channels for applying for funds.¹

Other relationships which are important are relationships with other service providers, researchers, etc. who could work with you on your new project.

Proposals which have strong partnerships are often very well regarded by funding bodies. You might consider putting in a joint applications with another well-regarded organisation – but make sure you have are very clear about your relationship with them first, and if possible start work towards an Memorandum of Understanding with potential partners. For more on partnerships and MOUs, see the SNAICC clearinghouse or SNAICC's new resource *Working and Walking Together*.

Who to ask for funds

Some ideas of people to get to know are: Your local state or federal member, the community services director at your local council, a representative of the department that already funds you, an Indigenous Co-ordination Centre contact, or other local government, state government, or commonwealth government officials. Some foundations might have offices in your area, too – or you could make appointments to visit their offices when you visit a regional centre or capital.

There are also various web sites, email lists or published guides to organisations that give grants, such as government departments' regular funding streams and philanthropic groups. There are some links to these on the SNAICC clearinghouse.

Do your homework on funders

Learn all you can about the group you are approaching for support. If you are aware of its interests, aims, objectives and criteria for selecting successful



submissions, this will help you a lot. Read the organisation's brochure or handbook for funding before you begin writing your proposal. Determine from their literature what kind of projects it supports. Make sure the grant maker's goals and objectives match your funding idea. Don't send the same submission to a number of organisations – it is best to apply to them one at a time (they will often ask if you have applied somewhere else, and this will work against you) and always tailor it to the specific organisation you are applying to.^{1,2}

Write your proposal

When it is time to put your ideas in writing, always follow any guidelines set down by that organisation and use their application forms if supplied. Then, attach any extra information or support letters, if possible. Your submission should contain enough information for the funding body to make an informed decision on your proposal. Don't expect who you know to substitute for what you know.^{1,2}

Top tips for writing a good proposal

- If you have a well researched and planned idea, this will show. Do not expect passion to hide weaknesses in the project proposal.
- Be specific about your goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes.
- Explain clearly who you are and your organisation's goals and past successes.
- Present a clear, concise budget, preferably with the help of your organisation's accountant. Be realistic about what you need – don't under or over quote on your budget.
- Keep it simple and concise, use correct grammar and spelling and do not use abbreviations or jargon.

- Remember the reader might either be an expert in your field, or they might know nothing about your field of work.
- Using writing techniques such as paragraph headings, dot points, contents pages or appendices help your submission be understood and evaluated.
- In your attachments, share photos from your service, stories of past successes, examples of past work, your promotional materials, or any other materials which highlights your organisation's strengths and past achievements.
- Before sending your application, check you have answered these questions: Who are you? How do you qualify? What do you want? What problem will you address and how? Who will benefit and how? What specific objectives will you accomplish and how? How will you measure your results? How does your funding request comply with the funding body's purpose, goals and objectives?
- Check that you've addressed everything in the guidelines for the application or the form's completion checklist.
- Always have your draft submission read by another person, preferably someone not involved in your project.

More information if seeking funds

See SNAICC clearinghouse

www.snaicc.asn.au/resourcing under:

*'Governance, Management, Capacity'
/ Subheading 'Budgets and financial
management'*

References:

1. *Ready, Set, Go. Action Manual for Community Economic Development.* Municipal Association of Victoria. 1994, cited on 8 April 2010 at: http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/finding_funds/submissions/submissions.html
2. *Non-Profit Guides: Grant writing tools for non-profit organizations*, cited on 8 April 2010 at: <http://www.npguides.org/guide/index.html>

Have you applied for REACH funding yet?

Yorganop IPSU notes: This REACH funding opportunity is too good to miss. The Rural Early Childhood Program (REACH) can fund, not for profit community groups with up to \$20,000 for Early Childhood Services in remote and rural areas. They fund things like, community gardens; indoor and outdoor equipment; heating/cooling and much more. Applications close 14 May. Act fast.

Lowitja Congress

On 24 March Jane Harrison, Project Officer, represented SNAICC at the inaugural Congress of the Lowitja Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research. Lowitja will incorporate the Cooperative Research Centre of Aboriginal Health (CRAH), which has been re-funded until 2014 but will be then phased out.

On day one, its namesake, Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue, addressed the congress, consisting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and senior health representatives from government and NGOs. The afternoon session presented new understandings in Indigenous health delivered by researchers who had in-kind projects supported by the CRAH.

On day two, new Research Director, Prof. Ian Anderson, outlined the research strategy for the Lowitja Institute and its focus on three key areas; Healthy Start, Healthy Life; Healthy Communities and Settings; and Enabling Policy and Systems.

The second day saw discussions of proposed by-laws for the Institute, including membership. Pat Anderson, the Chair of the Institute's interim board, said the intention is to open the membership more widely than the CRAH has done previously. The forum opened up the questions around categories of membership, entitlements and fees, and agreed to give delegates further time to respond.

SNAICC will keep in touch with Lowitja Congress as our work with children and families increasingly falls into the health domain, with our projects on social and emotional wellbeing and healing and the like. Membership offers benefits including research and information sharing, partnership possibilities and wider opportunities to disseminate research.

See www.lowitja.org.au

Port Augusta Children's Self Publishing Workshop

One of the arts-based methods developed to collect stories for SNAICC's Child Rearing Stories project is children's self publishing. Project Officer Jane Harrison delivers a train the trainer and the community style workshop that provides new skills in children's self publishing to workers from Aboriginal early childhood services. The aim is to inspire workers to offer book publishing activities with the children from their services. Capacity-building is further encouraged by giving the trained participants an opportunity to co-facilitate subsequent workshops. In other words, Jane is trying to design herself out of a job as facilitator!

Judy Kirby was a participant in the first children's self publishing workshop in Melbourne August 2009. She then co-facilitated a subsequent workshop in Port Augusta March 2010, with members of the South Australian Aboriginal Resource & Management Support Unit (ARMSU). Here's what Judy has to say about her involvement in Children's Self Publishing:

Judy's reflections

The children's book making workshop has been a project close to my heart. As an Aboriginal primary school teacher and reading recovery teacher the power of the written word is clear to me. My first experience with the children's self-publishing workshop was as a participant in the 'train the trainer' workshop held at our local Maya healing centre in Thornbury.

At the time I was employed as

Indigenous Professional Support Unit Project Worker for Victoria, and I was stationed at Yappera Children's Service in Thornbury. My job was to provide training opportunities for the staff of the Multifunctional Aboriginal Childcare Services in Victoria. To participate in the children's self publishing workshop and gain skills I could pass onto indigenous workers in the childcare industry was exactly one of the key functions of my position.

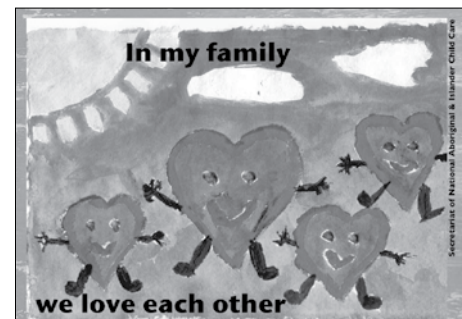
In the training workshop we discussed the topic of the book we were to publish. It was about telling how we felt particularly proud about how we lived our culture, then doing the art to go with the story. We were taken through several exercises that enabled us to deconstruct how we connected to our culture which helped in the relating and telling of our stories. This process was done using culturally symbolic methodology using the strength and structure of an old gum tree. Everyone loved this analogy, especially me, as I am also an artist who paints river red gums from the Barmah Forest. The final product was a beautiful little book called *I am Strong in my Culture* and a room full of very proud participants.

As a teacher I know that there is a desperate need for cultural reading materials within the school system. Firstly to encourage our children to associate themselves with the practice of reading by the validation of themselves as subject matter in the reading material and also to enlighten the non-Aboriginal community to the nuances of our lived experiences.

I love to watch community member's faces as they read stories collated from the

book making workshops. They read intently, they read with a certain knowing and belonging, and they often read with a smile on their faces. As an Aboriginal teacher, this is what I want for Aboriginal children.

In the Port Augusta workshop Jane Harrison and I worked with 28 enthusiastic



IPSU and early childhood workers who eagerly took part in learning about children's self publishing.

After some discussion around the topic, the group decided to publish a book titled *In my family*. It was lovely to see the simple yet significant stories and illustrations.

Also participating were new managers in the region who also experienced the special opportunities of connecting, collating and communicating cultural lived experiences.

From developing skills in facilitating Train the Trainer workshops I have gained skills and have since been offered contract work to facilitate the program with other services. I have gained confidence and look forward to many new projects and in many different formats that will capture cultural knowledge in a culturally appropriate setting and be available for use for everyone.

Contact janeh@snaicc.asn.au



Judy Kirby, bottom right, with participants from the Port Augusta workshop displaying their art.

Talking Up Our Strengths special offer

Talking Up Our Strengths is a set of 22 theme based photomontage cards that celebrate the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, urban and remote, past and

present. SNAICC members and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisational subscribers have been mailed an offer of one free copy of this beautiful new resource. Other SNAICC subscribers have been

offered one copy at 50% off. These offers are available until 30 June. Other agencies or individuals can purchase a set for \$49 (including postage and handling) via credit card or purchase order online www.snaicc.asn.au/publications Contact: sandy@snaicc.asn.au

NT Inquiry into the Child

Protection System

The Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory was announced on 11 November 2009 and the Board of Inquiry was appointed on 9 December 2009 to conduct a broad-ranging public inquiry.

SNAICC has been actively following and participating in the process, presenting a submission to the Inquiry.

The Inquiry is being cochaired by Professor Muriel Bamblett AM (former SNAICC Chair of ten years), Dr Rob Roseby and Dr Howard Bath, with the support of a specialist Secretariat. An expert Reference Group will provide specialist advice.

Community forums explaining the process were held on 11–18 February 2010 in Nhulunbuy, Palmerston, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs and Darwin, and formal hearings were held in the same locations from 18–26 March 2010. Some further hearings were scheduled into April.

The Board has also visited some Aboriginal communities; and will draw on the recommendations of other recent Inquiries and Coronial hearings; look at interstate and overseas child protection models; conduct its own research; and seek additional information as required.

The closing date for written submissions was 12 March 2010. The Board of Inquiry is due to complete its work by 30 June 2010 and the report will be provided to the Chief Minister prior to being tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

See: www.childprotectioninquiry.nt.gov.au/submissions

I want to help



Zero tolerance

www.caac.org.au/stoptheviolence

Journey of Family Violence

Prevention Workshop

Ross River via Alice Springs 10–14 May

“Our challenge is to make sure that what we seek as a network of positive Aboriginal males - a violent free family environment and safe communities - is within our power to action, pursue and achieve.”

Over 100 Aboriginal males from across thirty nine Central Australian communities will meet at Inteyerrkwe (Ross River) to:

Better understand violence, what causes it, and ways we might **Stop the Violence**

Find out what services are available that can give support to **Stop the Violence**, and which communities get those services and which are missing out.

Plan how Aboriginal males can work together to help **Stop the Violence**.

May 10 – 13 restricted access – Aboriginal males and facilitators only. **Open Day invitation to all** to learn how CA Aboriginal Males intend to Stop the Violence.

May 14 9.00am – 12.30pm Ross River

Contact: aboriginalmalehealth@hotmail.com

Web: www.caac.org.au/stoptheviolence

Mothers, Children and Change: Strengthening Service Support & Safety

4 June Sydney

The Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse is hosting a one day national forum on the intersection of domestic violence, child protection and family law.

This national forum will explore child protection in families where domestic violence is a factor present challenges to keeping both children and women safe. Domestic violence, child protection and family dispute resolution workers, researchers, advocates and policy makers are all invited.

See: www.adfvc.unsw.edu.au

Our workforce needs study

The Productivity Commission will research factors impacting on the early childhood, schooling and vocational training workforces. They will look at current and future demand and supply within these sectors and investigate ways to structure and develop these workforces.

The Productivity Commission will report on each workforce sector separately over the next two years, beginning with vocational training. Research on the early childhood sector will be available later in 2011 and into schooling in 2012. The commission will consult with interested parties as part of its research.

See www.pc.gov.au

National Congress of Australia's First Peoples

The new national representative body recommended by Aboriginal Social Justice Commissioner Tom Calma was formally unveiled Sunday 2 May.

The National Congress of Australia's First Peoples will be the first representative body since 2005, when the Howard government abolished ATSIC. The Congress will be made up of 120 people who will be elected by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Members of the new body will be subject to probity checks, with an ethics council expected to scrutinise office holders. Setting up the new National Congress of Australia's First Peoples will require a development

phase until the end of 2010. The Steering Committee continues to focus on:

- establishing the Ethics Council;
- selecting and appointing the interim National Executive to lead the development phase;
- completing the preparatory work to incorporate the company, including the constitution and the rules;
- finalising selection documentation and the CEO duty statement, with the CEO recruitment process starting soon.

The Ethics Council will recommend to the Steering Committee the suitability of candidates for the 8-person Interim National Executive and their appointment would follow a merit based selection.



George Laughton, AFSS, in respectful consultation with his daughters about things that must really matter.



4 August – National Aboriginal & Islander Children's Day

The theme for National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day (NAICD) in 2010 is *Value My Culture, Value Me*.

This theme seeks to draw attention to the need for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to know they are loved and valued, and to have every opportunity to nurture and explore a healthy and strong sense of self and community.

The theme is also about communicating to the broader Australian community the need for action at the government, community and personal level that shows to our children that our people and culture are valued.

'When children know their culture is valued, they know they are valued', and this is an important part of children developing positive feelings of self worth and indeed an integral part of achieving social justice for our children.

Value My Culture, Value Me is about valuing the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to our families, our communities and our future. Our children will grow, learn and excel when their cultural needs are met, valued and respected at home, school, child care and all aspects of their lives. It will always be in the long term best interests of our children to foster strong identity enriched with a sense of belonging and connection to history, culture, family and kin.

Value My Culture, Value Me is about

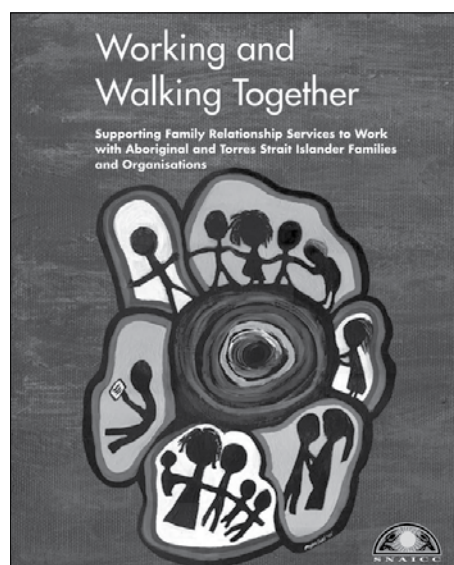
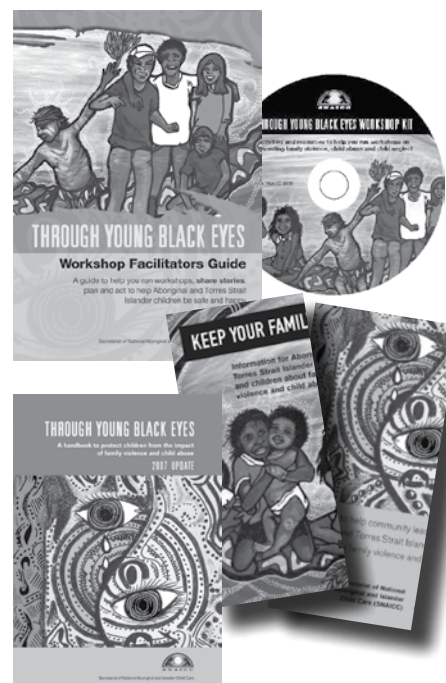
acknowledging the value and strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. Past practices of forcibly removing Aboriginal children and forcibly relocating Aboriginal communities continue to impact significantly on Aboriginal people. Understanding and appreciation of the history and traditions within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures is essential for supporting our families looking after their children.

Value My Culture, Value Me is about promoting new attitudes and forging a new pathway of understanding for the benefit of all Australians. Building and improving relationships based on mutual respect, ending disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families creates equality for all in the broader Australian community.

Value My Culture, Value Me is about finding new ways of responding to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and community.

All SNAICC members and subscribers working directly with young children will be mailed resources closer to 4 August. School departments interested in placing substantive orders should email us early.

Contact: admin@snaicc.asn.au



Working & Walking Together

Supporting Family Relationships Services to Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families and Organisations. See page 13 inside this issue for details.



SNAICC resources for our child & family services

Order or subscribe online
www.snaicc.asn.au

Talking Up Our Strengths

22 image sets to start conversations about keeping strong in culture and in cross cultural dialogue.

-SNAICC members and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisational subscribers have been mailed an offer of one free copy, so make sure you have returned your free offer!

Other non-government SNAICC subscribers will be offered a half-price copy this month. Available for \$49 online for all other services. Developed in a SNAICC / St Lukes partnership.

