



5th SNAICC National Conference

# For Our Children: Living and Learning Together

4 – 6 June 2013, Cairns

## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS - SUMMARY FROM PRESENTERS

<b>Session Number</b>	55 Integrated training and workplace development in early childhood services.
<b>Your Presentation Title</b>	Stronger people, Stronger services: Building the Remote Indigenous Early Childhood Workforce in the Northern Territory.
<b>Abstract /Summary of Presentation (1/2 to 1 page)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• objectives</li> <li>• main ideas, topics and findings</li> <li>• evidence?</li> <li>• Outcomes?</li> </ul>	<p>This presentation introduced participants to a new, integrated early childhood training model, utilising the 'Learning at Work Approach' designed for remote Indigenous staff working across a range of community and children's services.</p> <p>The 'Learning at Work Approach' is a resource designed by Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BI) to deliver Vocational Education and Training Certificates in Community Services I, II and Children's Services III. It is modelled on a 'both-ways' delivery approach and provides the learner with a nested pathway allowing entry and exit at Certificate I, II and III levels.</p> <p>The Building the Remote Indigenous Early Childhood Workforce project commenced in 2011 as a partnership between Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) and BI. The context for the project included the new National Quality Standards for early childhood education and care services, national recognition of the need to improve the quality of the early childhood education workforce, recognition that new models of training needed to be trialled in the Territory to achieve a qualified workforce. The locations for the pilot phase of the project were determined as communities where new Aboriginal Child and Family Centres were being built under the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development.</p> <p>The project required community input to support the trainer living in the community as well as the students in an integrated approach. Students come from a range of services supporting children and their families (School, Families as First Teachers, Child care, play groups, child protection) as well as the senior school students in a VET in Schools model. Current enrolments are 51 students across 4 communities. The project is also monitored at a NT-wide level through a cross-agency advisory group.</p> <p>Insight into how the training is delivered and student perspectives follow.</p> <p>The trainer/educator Liz Banney (excerpt from presentation):          The LAWB approach is embedded in an understanding of the fundamental importance of developing and <u>sustaining authentic relationships</u> from which learning connections can occur. Authentic relationships allow for the sharing of thoughts and understandings, seeing things from each other's points of view. With the LAWB there is no assumption that the teacher is the possessor of the most desired knowledge. Using this approach helps to <u>integrate</u> and position the Warlpiri language, kinships system and <u>traditional</u></p>

ways into the everyday teaching/learning sessions. This is a powerful way of developing a sense of personal ownership over the study process by the students, strengthening a positive student/professional worker identity.

The allocation of time and the development of respectful, authentic relationships means that traditional frameworks and practices can be explored in an on-going way and incorporated naturally into formal lessons and the student's work practices. There is enabled a natural connection and 'sense-making' between the LAWB, the discussions held and what takes place with young children in the work place. In Yuendumu the students are also the mums, grandmothers, aunts of the community's children. As a result the Warlpiri child rearing practices and values are further integrated into the community of learning, strengthening the community by strengthening the individuals within the community. The flexibility of the LAWB and living in the community, means that I can teach anywhere, any-time. I am able to teach students individually, hold small groups sessions and have full study days which bring together workers from all early childhood services within the community. We can all go out bush so that students re-engage with country and to strengthen relationships and learning. It is impossible to separate relationships and learning. Assessment of competencies can be integrated as much as possible into daily work practices, made through observations, with one assessment task often assessing more than one competency. The embedded and continuous nature of the teaching/learning experience allows a natural flow following daily experience or the context where the student is situated in both teaching and assessment. I can also take time to integrate the teaching of English speaking, reading and writing which is something that the students tell me is important for them. The BRECW project and LAWB enables an opportunity for rich both-ways interchanges necessary for successful learning experiences for students who live in very remote indigenous communities who have traditionally been disadvantaged and disengaged from mainstream education and training. It also enriches and extends the skills of the educator.

Student Jessica Napanangla Marshall (excerpt from presentation):

In my house lives Violet and me and my kids and Rosita and her kids. I am a Child Care Worker and I run the Playgroup at KurduKurduKurlangu Child Care. I have worked for 4 years. I started study in 2010 when Connie from Perth would come to Yuendumu. I didn't finish the study then. Then I started the Certificate 1 with Liz when she came from Brisbane to live in Yuendumu. Sometimes I go to Liz's office to study and sometimes she comes around to childcare. When we have study days we don't work and close the child care. We talk about health and the kids and the community.

We go always on bush trips for witchetty grub and bush onion. Liz teaches Kardiya way and we teach Liz Yapa way. It's better way to have Liz live in Yuendumu because we want to learn more and more about childcare.

I want to study so I can work to look after my kids. I want to stay in Yuendumu and work. I have my Certificate 1 and graduated in May.

Student – Erica Ross (excerpt from presentation):

Last year I thought about working back at the school and it made me happy. I'm working as TA, working with Preschool and Transition. I do Warlpiri reading with another teacher, and help the teacher to teach English to Yapa and Kardiya kids. I am a member of the Child Care Reference Group a Yapa group, a strong ladies group who meet on Tuesdays to talk about everything about child care and the early years in the school. Elizabeth Banney, Early Childhood Studies teacher asked me if I could study with the other

	<p>students and I agreed to my study. I did Certificate 1 and am working on Certificate 2. I will then do Certificate 3 in Children's Services. It's really good that we have Liz based in Yuendumu. It's better not to travel and to stay home to study rather than going to Darwin or Alice Springs Batchelor. It's really good to work as a teacher in the community so we can be really proud.</p>
<p><b>References if applicable</b></p>	
<p><b>Presenter Contact Details (email address and telephone number)</b></p>	<p>Millie Olcay, Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE); <a href="mailto:millie.olcay@batchelor.edu.au">millie.olcay@batchelor.edu.au</a>; 08) 8946 7122/0400 401 162  Kate Race, NT Department of Education and Children's Services;  Liz Banney, Early Childhood Trainer, Yuendumu  Erica Ross, Assistant Teacher, Yuendumu School  Jessica Marshall, Educator, Kurdu Kurdu Kurlangu Child Care Yuendumu, NT</p>