

# Caring for our Children and Families

Profiling the set up of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Family Centres

AUGUST 2012



Secretariat of National  
Aboriginal and Islander  
Child Care



**SNAICC**

**SECRETARIAT OF NATIONAL  
ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER  
CHILD CARE**

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FAMILIES**

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SNAICC IS THE NATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENT  
PEAK BODY THAT ADVOCATES ON BEHALF OF  
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES  
STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

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## Overview

Enthusiasm, optimism and energy abound with the development and opening of 38 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Family Centres (Centres) across Australia by June 2014. With four Centres already open and many more to open in the coming months, this is a time of significant anticipation and hope for increasing access to quality, culturally competent, community-based, integrated support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. SNAICC has prepared this resource to support information sharing on the set up of all of the Centres. SNAICC hopes that this resource will also help to increase awareness of the Centres, their objectives, the set up process and the support that these and other services require to provide quality, accessible and sustainable services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

In 2008, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to a series of reforms to close the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage.<sup>1</sup> Early Childhood is one of seven interrelated 'Building Blocks' developed to support these reforms, recognising the critical importance of early childhood for a child's development outcomes. In 2009, COAG entered into the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development (IECDNP) to contribute to the agreed outcomes for early childhood. This included "ready access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to suitable and culturally inclusive early childhood and family support services."<sup>2</sup>

Integration of early childhood services through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Family Centres is the first of three elements contained in the IECDNP and is the major initiative created through this National Partnership Agreement.<sup>3</sup> The Centres are also a primary action in support of Outcome 5 of the National Framework for the Protection of Australia's Children 2009 - 2020. The Government has contributed \$292.62 million<sup>4</sup> to establish "a minimum of 35 Children and Family Centres in urban, regional and remote areas with high Indigenous populations and high disadvantage"<sup>5</sup> by June 2014. Thirty-eight Children and Family Centres in total have been planned, with 23 Centres in regional or remote areas and 15 Centres in urban areas.<sup>6</sup> All of the Centres are located on map 1 over the page.

The IECDNP identifies the following key elements of the Children and Family Centres:

- (a) Centres provide services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families;
- (b) Centres provide an integrated delivery of services, including antenatal services, child and maternal health services, parenting and family support services, and early learning and child care, as the best delivery platform to ensure families actually receive the support they need;
- (c) Centres are responsive to community needs; and

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<sup>1</sup> Council of Australian Governments (COAG) (2008) National Indigenous Reform Agreement, Commonwealth of Australia.

<sup>2</sup> COAG (2009) National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development, Commonwealth of Australia, p.7.

<sup>3</sup> COAG (2008) National Indigenous Reform Agreement, Commonwealth of Australia, p.4.

<sup>4</sup> COAG, (2009) National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development, Commonwealth of Australia, p.11.

<sup>5</sup> COAG (2008) National Indigenous Reform Agreement, Commonwealth of Australia, p.7.

<sup>6</sup> For location details see Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2011, Children and Family Centres (Factsheet), Commonwealth of Australia, p. 2.

- (d) Community engagement with the Children and Family Centres is integral to their successful implementation.<sup>7</sup>

State and territory Governments are responsible for establishing the Centres, which is now well underway. Each state and territory has adopted its own processes and structures for the set up of the Centres, responding to local community contexts. In Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory the implementing government departments have chosen to open tenders for the appointment of service providers to develop and operate the Children and Family Centres at each site.<sup>8</sup> Alternatively, in the Australian Capital Territory, South Australia and Tasmania, the implementing government departments will retain responsibility for the management of each Centre.

It is an exciting time with many Centres finalising preparations and opening their doors. Four Centres are now operating services from purpose built facilities. These Centres are located in: Whittlesea, Victoria; Halls Creek, Western Australia; West Belconnen, ACT; Mareeba, Queensland; and Bridgewater, Tasmania. A number of other Centres will also be opening very soon, including in: Doomadgee, Queensland; Mornington Island, Queensland; and Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia. A number of Centres are also currently operating from temporary premises.

Map 1: Locations of the Centres



<sup>7</sup> COAG, (2009) National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development, p.4.

<sup>8</sup> Tenders are not yet open, but planned in the Northern Territory.

This resource provides an update on the development of the Centres to date and some key strategies used to support their effective establishment. It covers thirty three of the thirty eight Centres<sup>9</sup> and details significant aspects in the set up phase, including: Centre construction; management structure; service provision; and employment and workforce development. Contact details for each Centre are included to facilitate further information sharing.

The resource aims to promote information sharing for all of the Centres and learning from experiences. It will also be relevant to other stakeholders seeking to build relationships with and support the work of the Centres, including: organisations providing, or with the potential to provide, services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in the Centre areas; government departments; researchers; and policy makers.

The information in this resource was compiled through telephone interviews conducted with management representatives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Family Centres, and a review of the fact sheets and implementation plans on the Centres developed by each state and territory. Where staff have not yet been engaged at the Centre or the government is retaining management of the Centre, telephone interviews were conducted with the responsible government representatives. The information contained in this overview reflects the information provided to SNAICC in the interviews.

SNAICC considers quality, holistic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander developed, designed and delivered integrated early childhood and family support services fundamental to support the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. SNAICC is committed to supporting the sustainable establishment and operation of the Centres, equipped to be accessible to and meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in the relevant communities.

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<sup>9</sup> Information was not provided on the set up of the West Belconnen Centre in the Australian Capital Territory or from four Centres in New South Wales, namely in Blacktown (2), Campbelltown and Shoalhaven.



# VICTORIA

## Whittlesea Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: The Centre has been called Bubup Wilam For Early Learning Incorporated. Bubup Wilam means 'Children's Place' in the Woi Wurrung language. Local traditional owner, Ian Hunter (Wurundjeri), named the Centre.



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### Management Structure

The City of Whittlesea is the lead agency, having been successful in the tender. Negotiations are underway regarding the nature of the partnership between Bubup Wilam and the City of Whittlesea.

Bubup Wilam for Early Learning Inc. was incorporated under the Incorporation Act in Oct 2010. The board of management is made up of nine local Aboriginal members and provides governance and direction for the Centre. There is no separate Local Reference Group (LRG). The board in itself represents the local Aboriginal community. Ongoing consultation takes place to gain direct input from families and parents.

### Centre Construction

Traditional Owners of the land signed off on the design for the building following extensive consultations with local Aboriginal community, VAEAI, City of Whittlesea, Department of Education and Early Childhood, and the Department of Planning and Community Development.

The building was completed at the end of January 2012 and services commenced on 1 February. The Early Learning Centre is located on Council land, and has four rooms dedicated to specific age groups between babies and 6 year olds. The rooms are named after the languages of the Kulin Nations.

No accommodation will be built for visiting specialists, as this is an urban centre.

### Service Provision

Currently the Centre caters for 58 children, all Aboriginal, and intends to maintain services exclusively for Aboriginal families.

*"This is the first established Aboriginal organisation out this way. We've got an Elders group comes here. When the kids come from school they'll call in. It's a comfortable place for everybody. Bubup is starting to be the meeting place in the northern suburbs. It's accessible and good."*

### Services provided now:

- Child Care services with a strong focus on the Early Learning Framework



- Long day-care and ¾ year old kinder, with operating hours of 7:30am to 6:00pm to suit the needs of families
- Maternal and Child Health
- Speech pathology
- Audiology
- Child behaviour

Bubup Wilam is currently working with the Whittlesea Council, Northern hospital, and the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service to plan future services. Recently the Centre undertook a parent survey to further identify what services parents' want and will be responding to that.

#### Employment and Workforce Development

The Centre currently employs:

- Aboriginal Centre Director
- Pedagogical Leader
- 4 x Bachelor Qualified Teachers
- 4 x Diploma Qualified Educators
- 4 x Certificate III Aboriginal Early Childhood Educators
- Cook
- Administration Coordinator
- Cleaner/maintenance person

All staff are supported and encouraged to further their training. Bubup Willam is also working with the TAFE sector to commence Certificate III in children's services.

There is an approximate ratio of 50/50 Aboriginal to non-Aboriginal staff.

A key initiative is starting next year at Deakin University where Aboriginal people will be able to access the Deakin degree program in Early Childhood as school leavers without needing to have a diploma. They will be able to do intensive learning periods at Deakin University and stay in community outside of these periods. It is believed this will contribute significantly to workforce development locally and nationally.

*"We need to skill Aboriginal people up at the same time as bringing in people who are already qualified. You need to have a mechanism that builds Aboriginal people up. That's the hard part, that's the unpaid for part and that can help to keep the organisation sustainable."*

# Bairnsdale Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: The Centre is called Dala Yooro Children and Families Early Learning and Development Centre. Dala Yooro means Little Red Gum in the Gunai/Kurnai language.

## Management Structure

The Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative (GEGAC) is an Aboriginal community controlled organisation and is the lead agency for the Centre. GEGAC leads partnerships with Uniting Care Gippsland, Gippsland Lakes Community Health and East Gippsland Shire Council.

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GEGAC has finalised a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Uniting Care Gippsland, while the roles and responsibilities of Gippsland Lakes Community Health and the East Gippsland Shire Council are still under development. Uniting Care Gippsland will play a supportive role, while GEGAC will lead in developing and delivering the Centre. It is anticipated that Uniting Care Gippsland will transition out of the running of the Centre over the next 3-5 years, while helping GEGAC become a registered childcare provider.

The governance structure for the Centre has not been yet finalised. Currently a Project Steering Committee manages the development of the Centre. This Committee consists of senior management from the partners, as well as community representation. A small minority of Committee members are Aboriginal at this stage. A Service Development Group has also been established to advise on the development of the model for service delivery. This group has approximately one third Aboriginal representation, and is made up of key stakeholders and service providers who will be working with the Centre.

## Centre Construction

The building is currently under construction and is due for completion by the end of 2012.

The Dala Yooro Centre will house a large training and meeting space, a kindergarten, childcare area, allied health rooms and a community kitchen. The community requested the Centre feature earthy colours, not bright colours. The childcare rooms are decorated with depictions of Dala Yooro leaves, the river and lakes system and the sun and stars.

The Centre will also house an indoor and outdoor cultural space. It is anticipated the outside area will have a fire-pit, talking circle and native vegetation planted and designed by the community members. The cultural space will not meet childcare registration standards, so it will be treated as an excursion space for the children. Elders and other respected community members will be able to utilise the space and teach culture to the younger generations.

The Centre will have no accommodation for visiting specialists. GEGAC is currently building a new Medical and Dental Centre close by, so there will be dentists and other medical practitioners already available locally.

## Service Provision

It is planned that there will be around a 70/30 split of Aboriginal to non-Aboriginal clients. It is recognised that the Aboriginal children in the community need to get used to being in a mixed cultural environment leading into school age.

The Service Development Group is still developing the service model for the childcare facility. Two of the three rooms will be kindergarten rooms for 3-5 year olds, while the other is designated for 0-3 year olds. It is anticipated that a flexible service can be achieved for the community by providing a qualified kindergarten teacher in each kindergarten room throughout the whole day. Children will be able to come and go as their parents or carers need, to the extent that the service will be able to provide a long day care service. The service for 0-3 year olds is still under negotiation as different sections of the local community are asking for different things.

GEGAC already offers a suite of integrated family services:

- Integrated Family Services
- Aboriginal Family Preservation
- In home support
- Home based learning
- Supported playgroup
- Support to the existing kindergarten, for example,
- transport, family services working with parents if children have issues
- Speech therapy
- Dieticians
- Doctors and Dentists
- Maternal and Child Health

*“We do a lot of work already and we will just be expanding that as the Centre opens and grows.”*

#### Employment and Workforce Development

The Centre is not currently employing any staff. It will be possible to start planning for recruitment once the governance model is finalised. The first position to be recruited for will be the Centre Coordinator and then the administration staff.

It is anticipated the kindergarten rooms will require:

- 2 x Bachelor qualified childcare workers
- 2 x Diploma qualified childcare workers
- 1 x support childcare worker

The staffing requirements for the 0-3 year olds’ room have not been finalised.

GEGAC have been working towards getting more local Aboriginal people interested in becoming qualified in Children’s Services. GEGAC are currently supporting 6 students to complete their Certificate III, and 2 of those are planning to continue to the Diploma.

*“We recruited these students through talking and knowing community. One Committee member is really keen on workforce development so she has been going around and door knocking to engage young people.”*

# New South Wales

## Ballina Aboriginal Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: Ballina Aboriginal Children and Family Centre.

### Management Structure

The lead agency of the Ballina Centre is Bunjum Aboriginal Cooperative. Bunjum is a local Aboriginal community controlled organisation that won the Government tender for operation of both the childcare and integrated services of the Centre.

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The Local Reference Group (LRG) is made up of representation from local Aboriginal organisations that deliver family and children's services, as well as Aboriginal community representation from surrounding areas such as Cabbage Tree Island, and the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group. Initially the LRG was set up to provide advice and to guide the NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) in the tender process for the construction and operation of the Centre.

Bunjum facilitates LRG meetings monthly. Bunjum also works with the LRG to conduct information days in the community, providing details on the Centre's design and construction. These events are also used to recruit LRG members as well as, obtain input from community on critical services the Centre should offer, what they feel are gaps in support for the community and how the Centre can assist to overcome them.

### Centre Construction

FaCS is managing the building process. The tender process was completed in January and land has been secured. Building will be commencing in the coming months.

The building design is linked to the local culture and heritage, influenced by the flora and fauna of the local land and sea areas. There is a central covered reception area that is warm and welcoming for the community. The designated childcare area is on one side and then the integrated services area with consultation rooms and activity spaces is on the other side of the Centre.

### Service Provision

The Centre will focus on services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. They will take non-Aboriginal children into childcare where there is a need. However, consistent with the objectives of the Centre, they would like to maintain long-term focus on supporting Aboriginal children.

Some interim services are currently being run out of premises not far from the Bunjum Head Office. Services running from the temporary centre include:

- In partnership with a supported playgroup
- Literacy and numeracy programs to empower parents to support their children throughout their education (in development)
- Promotion of the centre through a newsletter, and cultural and information activities.

The Centre is still in the process of negotiating with partners and developing relationships with community to best identify services needs and so do not yet have a full list of services that the Centre will offer. The final list will also build from a service mapping that occurred in consultation with all the stakeholders.

### **Employment and Workforce Development**

The Centre is currently advertising for:

- Project coordinator
- Family Liaison officer
- Literacy and Numeracy facilitator and trainee
- Supported Playgroup facilitator and trainee
- Father Support Worker

Bunjum and the LRG have been working closely on an employment and workforce development strategy.

Finally, Bunjum is mentoring trainees in the Literacy and Numeracy and the Supported Playgroup services as another way to ensure a strong local workforce to meet the Centre's needs.

Once the Centre is opened, the Centre would like to have an Aboriginal Cultural Director as well as a Director of Operations.

# Brewarrina and Lightning Ridge Children and Family Centres

Name of Centre: The Brewarrina Children and Family Centre and The Lightning Ridge Children and Family Centre.

## Management Structure

The lead agency is Brewarrina Business Centre (BreBC), a local Aboriginal community controlled organisation.

BreBC will start working with the Local Reference Group (LRGs) later in 2013, to develop a plan for the governance structure. If the LRGs would like to become constituted bodies operating the Centres themselves, BreBC will assist them in that process.

The project has two LRGs, one in each town.

The LRGs consist of a mix of service providers and interested local community members. Those groups meet on a monthly basis and are provided with a written report from BreBC. The LRGs were initially set up as advisory groups. And they advised on what sort of service they wanted to see, what the building would be like, etc. They also have group representatives on the BreBC governing board. The BreBC board is made up of entirely local Aboriginal people.

BreBC have established a partnership with Brewarrina Council for the childcare service. They set up another partnership at the outset with Succeed Consultancy, who are childcare consultants that operate 35 childcare Centres across the New South Wales (NSW) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). They provide childcare expertise. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) will be developed with each of the organisations represented on the LRGs, which will enable the providers to release their workers to be available for the Centre's activities.

## Centre Construction

The Brewarrina Centre will be located on the Department of Education land directly opposite a school. In Lightning Ridge the Centre will be on Lightning Ridge Aboriginal Land Council land, the access to which has been the subject of a native title process. The Centres are being developed concurrently, however the pace of each has been dependent on factors such as physical works and land ownership negotiations.

The designs are in place for both the Brewarrina and Lightning Ridge Centres however the tenders are yet to be allocated for their construction. At the request of the LRGs and BreBC, a percentage of local Aboriginal people will be employed to construct the site and there is currently a local skills audit being conducted in both locations for this purpose. The construction is set to begin late 2012 and to be completed late 2013.

Interim premises are being leased for both locations, and these are currently nearing completion of refurbishment. Some delays in service set up can be attributed to the remoteness of the locations.

BreBC are currently in negotiation around the provision of accommodation for staff. In Brewarrina, there will be two units allocated for staff and two for visiting specialists. Lightning Ridge will have a similar set up in time.

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## **Service Provision**

The service is not exclusively for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, however the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait people who live in the area is very high and so the Centre will cater for a majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients. Each Centre has a bus to provide transport for outlying regions.

### Services provided now:

The staff are very busy setting up the interim premises, however, they have started doing funeral books for community members. This gives the community something they need immediately and is engaging people with the staff of the Centre.

There is an Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) open day coming up in August where the Centre is hoping to do a small presentation. The Centre will also run a health services information day in August, building on a general information day held on the Centre in the local park.

### Services planned:

The Brewarrina Centre is in the process of taking over the Shire Council run childcare centre in Brewarrina. There are approximately 52 places for children and the handover is set to be complete in September. The existing premises will be used in the interim until the new facility is completed.

There is going to be no interim childcare service offered in Lightning Ridge.

Once the childcare services are set up, the Centres plan to integrate services that address the major community issues at a family level. These will include family violence, drug and alcohol programs, positive parenting programs, general health, diabetes and eye specialists. The Centres will also work with safe houses and the employment agencies of the area, and have already received interest from specialist services such as dieticians and nutritionists.

Prior to BreBC being involved there were extensive consultations in Brewarrina and less extensive but still solid consultations in Lightning Ridge. BreBC developed a service delivery model to address the issues that were raised in the consultations.

The Centre Manager and BreBC are currently working on a program for service provision to be discussed with the LRGs. Once the workforce is recruited, then the Centre will be able to determine exactly which services they can provide.

## **Employment and Workforce Development**

Currently Employed in Brewarrina are:

- Executive Director (permanent)
- Administration Officer (casual)
- Child Care Director

To be advertised for each Centre:

- Team Leader
- Administration Officer
- Trainee Administration Officer
- Family Support workers

The casual Administration Officer is being supported to complete her social work degree, and is anticipated to move into a family support role.



The Childcare Director has been brought forward from the previous childcare team employed by the Shire Council. It is anticipated that the rest of the existing staff will also apply for positions in the new Centre. The BreBC have formed a partnership with a childcare agency that has secured funding to train childcare staff. This will respond to the lack of trained childcare staff across the region, with training to provide support for all the existing childcare centres.

As there is going to be no interim childcare centre in Lightning Ridge, BreBC have set out to employ trainees in Lightning Ridge and to place them in existing childcare centres. The trainees will also train in the existing Brewarrina Centre, so they start to get an understanding of the policies and procedures of the Centre.

The employment and workforce development strategy at the moment is dependent on the team that is recruited. The strategy will involve training, mentoring and support for staff in gaining qualifications.

BreBC conducts employment nights in both locations, as well as advertising positions through Job Skills networks, local radio and newspapers. The employment nights are an opportunity to explain what the jobs are about, what the requirements are, how to go about applying and who would be eligible. When skilled people are employed, part of their responsibility is to help train up and mentor local Aboriginal staff who are coming on board without those skills.

BreBC can foresee there will be a need to recruit people from outside the area in order to get the services "off the ground", while ensuring local people are being effectively trained to take on the jobs further down the track and to ensure sustainability of the Centre in the long run. Within three years BreBC would like to see the project staffed by Aboriginal people who are either local or prepared to be local.

## Gunnedah Children and Family Centre

Name of the Centre: The Centre is called Winanga-Li Aboriginal Child and Family Centre. This means 'To hear, to listen, to know and to remember' in the Kamilaroi language. The name was chosen by the Local Reference Group (LRG) from a range of suggestions gathered at a community day in 2011.

### Management Structure

Uniting Care Children's Services and Relationships Australia are the lead agencies awarded the tender for the management of the Centre. Uniting Care Children's Services is developing and managing the early childhood service components, while Relationships Australia is managing the family services component and service integration of the Centre. Relationships Australia is developing this Centre in a similar manner to the Shoalhaven Aboriginal Family and Child Centre, for which it is also the lead agency.

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The Local Reference Group (LRG) has representation from Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal services and community leaders. The majority of members who attend LRG meetings regularly are Aboriginal. Original LRG community members invested significant time to create opportunities for other community members to become involved, including through Elders forums, family days and surveys. The LRG is specifically focussed on engaging with child care/early learning, health and other community service providers already established in the area. Its purpose is to promote involvement with the new Centre, while giving members the platform to voice their concerns, and make key decisions, including about the range of services to be delivered, projects partners, and culturally relevant education. It has played an important role in the development of the Centre so far, in particular in the design of the building and the selection of the successful tender.

Uniting Care Children's Services and Relationships Australia are in the process of transitioning management decisions to an Aboriginal Governing Board, with full responsibility for operation of the Centre to be handed over to the Board in July 2014. The Centre Coordinator, a Senior Manager in Relationships Australia and some LRG members will participate in an Indigenous Governance workshop, amongst other things, to gain greater governance knowledge and help inform decisions on the best way forward.

### Centre Construction

Building of the permanent facility in Gunnedah began in July 2012 and will be completed in around May 2013. It will have two areas, an early childhood section and a family support section, with a shared kitchen facility and interconnecting doors between the two service areas leading into the foyer.

A duplex has been purchased through the construction budget for accommodation for visiting practitioners.

### Service Provision

The Centre is anticipated to cater mostly for Aboriginal families and children, but is open to providing services to non-Aboriginal families when requested. Family services will be targeted specifically to Aboriginal families.

The Centre team ran a Family Fun day in April 2012, which attracted more than 300 local community members, including both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families. Another Fun Day is planned in the outlying community of Curlewis in late 2012.

Currently, the Centre is operating from a small temporary facility located at the local Uniting Church hall.

Services provided now:

- The Centre has partnered with supported playgroups and other services to deliver the Let's Read program from temporary premises.
- Wingang-Li supported playgroup commenced in July
- Walking the Talk language program is commencing soon
- A Young Mum's Groups is running once a week and allow young mum's to be exposed to the rest of the services available in the centre.

Services planned:

- The Centre proposes to link in with the transition to school program developed by the local primary school.
- A Young Dad's Group will follow the model of the Young Mum's Groups.
- Outreach programs for outlying communities close to Gunnedah, which would probably involve partnering with other services.
- Each term they are gradually building up what they are providing.

Services have been selected based on discussions with the LRG, and from general community networking, being out there and talking to people.

*"We have done a lot of background work with building relationships with other service providers."*

The young mum's group highlights a gap already being filled by the Centre. Women within the community identified a Young Mums group as a service gap. The first group started in mid June 2012 and ran for 6 weeks. The local school's Early Learning Coordinator developed an interactive kit for the mums to take home. Planned services for the young mums group includes: maternal health; speech pathology; health checks and immunisations; drug and alcohol; dietician; anti-smoking; budgeting program for young mums; diagnoses of children with learning disabilities; and re-accessing the workforce.

### **Employment and Workforce Development**

The current team is made up of all local Aboriginal people, except the Centre Manager who is Aboriginal but not local:

- Centre Manager
- Family Connector (female)
- Administration Assistant
- Family Support Coordinator
- Early Childhood Coordinator
- 2 x Early Learning Trainees

The position of a male Family Connector will be advertised in July. The Centre will advertise early next year to reach ten staff working in the Children's Services side of the Centre. All staff will be Aboriginal.

Uniting Care Children's Services in Sydney is handling the recruitment strategies. A reasonable number of applications have been received so far. They have had a lot of success through word of mouth, and there is good feedback from town that people want to apply for next recruitment round.

The Centre has the capacity to offer Certificate III and Diploma level training. They will provide in house training as well as linking in with available and relevant Uniting Care Children's Services training programs.

Relationships Australia has provided a range of training and ongoing support to the Centre's workers, including the training services of a family adviser and clinical specialist in Sydney. The Family Connector and the Administration Assistant have undergone compulsory training on drug and alcohol, and domestic violence support. A local Aboriginal counsellor contracted through Min Min Aboriginal Corporation has also undergone this training.

When running in-house training the Centre have invited other services and community members along to take part. For example, during NAIDOC week they ran a local language workshop in which community members shared local songs and stories. This provided all those attending with some background in the local language that can also be shared with the children. The Centre has found that other local services are keen to participate in such activities.

# Toronto Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: Nikimpa Awabakal Children and Family Centre.

## Management Structure

Awabakal Newcastle Aboriginal Cooperative Limited is the lead agency developing the Centre. Awabakal is an Aboriginal community controlled organisation operating in the Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Hunter Region.

### Centre Contact Details

Emma Beckett, Children's Service Provision, Awabakal  
Email: awabakal.pre-school@bigpond.com  
Phone: 02 4969 4711  
Mobile: 0419 604 171

The Local Reference Group (LRG) has formed the Toronto Aboriginal Corporation (TAC). The LRG is made up of community members, service providers and Elders.

## Centre Construction

The construction is going to tender in July 2012 and the building will be complete in mid 2013. Interim services are running out of a home that used to be a doctor's surgery. So there are consultation rooms for health and children's service providers. However, playgroups and pre-school services will be run out of the local Biraban Community Centre where there is more space.

In the design for the three rectangular buildings are set out in a triangle form with a central meeting point in the middle with a fire pit and gathering place. The buildings house:

- The child care centre
- Community facility with computers, a kitchenette and meeting rooms
- Centre Manager's office, consultation rooms for health services

No accommodation is being built, as it is an urban area.

## Service Provision

It is anticipated the client base will be majority Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

### Services provided now:

- Playgroups
- An extra day of pre-school programs: Stories in the Street, Parents and Learning
- Parenting programs
- Literacy

### Services planned:

- The Birallee Aboriginal Birthing Centre is going to visit the centre once a week
- Early intervention service through a partnership with a local service provider, First Chance.

## Employment and Workforce Development

Awabakal has a partnership with the local TAFE provider. They are offering Certificate III courses and a Diploma course with the aim of training up additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's services workers.

Awabakal has three other licensed children's services so the TAFE trains their workers at those venues. If the students are not already staff, then they do their practicum's in the Awabakal services.

## Queensland

### Cairns Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: Depending on the decision of the Wuchopperen governing board, either a naming competition will be held during NAIDOC week and/or the Elders of the area will be invited to name the Centre.

#### Management Structure

Wuchopperen is an Aboriginal community controlled health organisation and is the sole managing agency for the Cairns Children and Family Centre. Wuchopperen have an established governance committee, which provides the governance structure for the Centre.

Each service Wuchopperen provides in the Centre works under guidance from a Partnership Advisory Group (PAG). The PAG will also provide advice around the operational aspects of the Centre. The PAG has had input into the interior design of the building, including artworks and decoration. Two PAG members are representatives of the Aboriginal and Islander Elders Group and Boopa Werum Kindergarten, both Aboriginal community controlled organisations. Other members include representatives from the Office of Early Childhood Education and Care Department (OECEC), Autism Queensland, Ark Disabilities, the Crèche and Kindergarten Association, Playgroup Queensland and the Benevolent Society.

#### Centre Contact Details

Nancy Long, Director Business Development,  
Wuchopperen  
Email: nlong@wuchopperen.com  
Phone: 07 4080 1000

Marie Matu, Centre Manager  
Email: mmatu@wuchoperun.com  
Phone: 07 4041 0805

#### Centre Construction

The new building will be within the grounds of the Wuchopperen facility, where there is already a general health service, as well as social and emotional wellbeing services, child wellbeing services, foster care and kinship care services. Construction of the new building will hopefully start in September 2012 and it will be open from around June 2013.

Wuchopperen consulted widely as to the location of the Centre, and were concerned about building on a school given that many schools would miss out. The Queensland (QLD) Department of Education and Training (DET) allocated the design of the Centre but there was some flexibility on aspects like location of rooms. They will be very close to the social and emotional wellbeing facility and all the buildings will be linked via covered walkways. The Centre will have consulting rooms, as well as a childcare facility, an open office area, and training area for parenting classes with a space for adjunct care.

The Centre will have no accommodation, as there is sufficient access to allied health workers and other specialists in Cairns.

## Service Provision

Wuchopperen would prefer the Centre to cater for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families almost exclusively. They consider that a multicultural Centre that is open to other disadvantaged groups will create another barrier for access for the extremely disadvantaged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Services will be running out of the temporary premises by the end of July 2012. The Centre is using its brokerage to help families enrol children in kindergarten. There are also promotional activities for the Centres' services, such as a Fun Day in June 2012 with 250 local children.

The Centre plans to provide early childhood education and care services, including:

- Playgroups
- Adjunct Care
- Cultural workshops involving the Elders group
- Mobile services – supported playgroups and toy libraries

As well as Child and Maternal Health Services:

- Health promotion and education
- Child health checks
- Child Health Worker
- Links with all the other services
- Healthy Eating Programs with a dietician – Good Quick Tucker program
- Speech pathology

And Parent Support:

- Parenting classes
- Literacy and numeracy
- Job search assistance – computer lab

The Wuchopperen Centre is a one-stop shop in itself so the Children and Family Centre will link in with all of the services available. However, the Centre will link in also with Autism Queensland through the Centre's Child Health Worker and with existing Wuchopperen partners, such as the Allied Health services in Cairns. They have also been promoting the service with the kindergartens in Cairns.

Decisions on the scope of services that the Centre will provide are being refined through feedback at promotional events and surveys of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families that already access the Wuchopperen service. Discussions are also taking place with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support workers at schools.

## Employment and Workforce Development

Currently employed are:

- Centre Manager
- Administration Assistant/Receptionist
- Early Childhood Educator
- Family Support Worker
- Child Health Worker

The Centre Manager is currently interviewing for a second Family Support worker. A second Early Childhood Worker will also be employed in a partnership with the Benevolent Society, who runs an Early Years Centre in Cairns.

This partnership will allow for skill sharing, with the Centre drawing on the Benevolent Society's resources, such as the larger pool of staff, and the Benevolent Society drawing on Wuchopperen's cultural skills and expertise.



All current employees are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and this remains an important objective for future employees. Wuchopperen are very active in developing their staff and follow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Training Strategy that the OECEC has developed. Current workforce development initiatives include child development training of the Child Health Worker through Queensland Health and completion of a Certificate IV in Children, Youth and Family Support by the Family Support worker.

## Doomadgee Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: The Centre is currently in consultation with the community about the Centre's name. The feeling is they will go with the traditional spelling of Doomadgee, to name the Centre Dumaji Children and Family Centre.

### Management Structure

Save the Children Australia (SCA) is the sole agency that won the tender. SCA plans to support the set up of the Centre and then hand it back to the

community. SCA have set up a management committee of key stakeholders identified by the Centre Manager, namely five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees of the local Aboriginal community controlled children and family service providers. It is envisaged that this committee will assume leadership, however while SCA is planning governance training, there is no timeline for the handover process at this stage.

#### Centre Contact Details

Lana O'Keefe, Centre manager  
Email: [lane.okeefe@savethechildren.org.au](mailto:lane.okeefe@savethechildren.org.au)  
Mobile: 0400 783 549

### Centre Construction

The building is in the later stages of construction with expected completion in early August 2012 and the Centre opening in late August.

The facility is entirely prefabricated and consists of one large building with dedicated areas. Childcare is not included in the design as there is a childcare facility already operating in Doomadgee. There is an area for playgroups and adjunct care, as well as staff offices, medical consultation rooms, a community kitchen and a large meeting/training room that is open for use by the community. There is also a space with computers available for community access. Outside there is a large deck area for barbeques and other activities.

At the moment there is no accommodation being developed for visiting specialists. There is a Council run guesthouse at Doomadgee, but it is often booked out.

### Service Provision

The vast majority of clients will be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, but non-Aboriginal people will be welcome.

Currently, SCA are running Family Support services and Playgroups in the community, as well as Financial Wellbeing and Pride in the Home programs. The Centre will link in with these services.

The Centre Manager has approached most of the visiting services that come into the community, and is currently developing partnerships and Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with service providers for service delivery.

The focus of the Centre will be on early childhood, family support, and child and maternal health. Playgroup will run 9am-12 Monday to Thursday and adjunct care will be available when meetings and training sessions are held.

Health services will complement what is already in the community, reaching out to those not accessing the existing services. Education around teenage pregnancies and support for young mums to care for children will be central, in response to identified need. At the moment, the Centre is targeting playgroups for young mums, in order to provide a comfortable environment to interact with their little ones.

## **Employment and Workforce Development**

Currently employed are:

- The Centre Manager, a local Indigenous woman

Positions advertised or being developed:

- Senior Community worker
- Cleaner
- Receptionist
- Driver/Maintenance Person
- Adjunct Care Worker
- Bus driver

All positions are only advertised internally to local Aboriginal community members at this stage. Comprehensive training is an essential part of the employment packages. Once staff are recruited, any training needs will be identified and appropriate training programs provided.

SCA have registered trainers that will deliver training required at the Centre, opening trainings not only to staff but also to the broader community. Recently SCA held Domestic Violence and Child Protection training for staff and the rest of the community.

## Ipswich Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: Ipswich Child and Family Centre.

### Management Structure

The Kambu Medical Centre is the lead agency developing the Centre. Kambu is a local Aboriginal community controlled organisation.

#### Centre Contact Details

Lillian Garrett, Centre Manager  
Email: [lillian.garrett@kambumedical.com.au](mailto:lillian.garrett@kambumedical.com.au)  
Mobile: 0458 035 736

Kambu Medical Centre has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining its partnership with the Red Cross. Red Cross have been engaged to support Kambu in delivering programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

The Centre is guided by a Local Reference Group (LRG), which is made up of a majority of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives and services providers. The LRG has had a lot of initial input on what the Centre would deliver.

### Centre Construction

The purpose built facility will be added onto the existing Kambu Medical Centre. Construction of the new building will start in September 2012 and is expected to be completed by 2013.

The front of the building will feature a wall for the children to contribute individually painted tiles. The entrance will consist of a large foyer and a family area with foldaway tables, lounges and a television. This space will also be used for community meetings. The building will house medical consultation rooms, an open plan office and a community kitchen, with a playground outside.

The Centre has been running some services out of a temporary site. This site includes office space, an assessment room, waiting area and a family room for mums/dads and bubs programs.

### Service Provision

The Centre will focus on delivering service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, however they will not turn anybody away. It is anticipated that the client base will be mostly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

#### Services provided now:

- Young mums and young dads groups
- Healthy teeth and hygiene programs
- Mobile playgroups for the rural areas
- Transition program from childcare to school

*"The women's group from Kambu sometimes runs out of the Centre. It's a good way of getting the women to talk about what programs are offered to their grand daughters and daughters. So we've got a lot of posters on what's happening and what programs are being delivered so that the women at the women's group can go home and tell their families what's going on. And we have the women's group over there about twice a month. And we've had one grandmother bring her grand daughter back who was pregnant. And she'll have her baby soon, so word of mouth is working."*

#### Service planned:

- Child and maternal health specialists (currently engaged by the Kambu Medical Centre)

- Paediatrician clinic
- Triple P Program for the parenting skills
- Drop in clinic for the midwife, one day a week, to provide services such as lactation consultancy and baby weighing
- Immunisations
- “Mante-natal” program– preparing fathers for new children

The Kambu Medical Centre has a hospital liaison worker who will inform the Centre about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies born at the local hospital. The Centre staff will visit the mothers in hospital and discuss options for aftercare and other services available through the Centre.

With the help of Red Cross, the Centre will offer accredited and flexible training programs to parents and carers. For example, the Centre may provide accredited cooking programs so that the parents can learn to cook for their children but also gain qualifications for employment later down the track. The development of training is contingent on what the parents say they want to learn.

*“What we really would like is just a one-stop-place where integrated services are being delivered so that the mother doesn’t have to worry about going here there and everywhere. So that they can come to one place, be familiar with the same faces, and everything is there. That’s our plan – less stress on the mothers.”*

### **Employment and Workforce Development**

Of the current team at the Centre, 7 out of 10 staff are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Currently employed:

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| ○ Centre Manager         | ○ Family Support worker                         |
| ○ 2 x Receptionists      | ○ Family Support worker (provided by Red Cross) |
| ○ New Directions Manager | ○ Family Coordinator (provided by Red Cross)    |
| ○ Registered Nurse       | ○ Child and Maternal Health worker              |
| ○ Midwife                |   |

The Centre is advertising for an Aboriginal Health Worker and a Family Support worker.

The Kambu Medical Centre already employs strong workforce development strategies. These continually train staff up through culturally appropriate training programs. The Centre had a good selection of local Aboriginal people apply for the positions at the beginning of the year, and there is no foreseen shortage of staff. The Red Cross has offered to provide training to all the staff at the Centre as required.

# Logan Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: Logan Child and Family Centre

## Management Structure

Ganyjuu are the sole lead agency for this Centre. The Centre is working under a collaborative model set out in the service agreement. There are 11 collaborative community partners within the model, a minority of which are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations. Ganyjuu have completed partnership agreements with all of their community partners.

The decision-making responsibility sits entirely with Ganyjuu. The Ganyjuu Board is the governing Management Committee for the Centre, comprised of 100% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The community partners are part of the Advisory Committee for the Centre, along with local traditional owners and other significant community members. The representation on the Advisory Committee is 65% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. The Centre staff relay ideas and information to the Advisory Committee and receive feedback that is taken to the Ganyjuu Board.

### Centre Contact Details

Karen Dawson-Sinclair, Chief Executive Officer  
at Ganyjuu Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander Corporation for Family Support  
Services  
Email: karen.dawson@ganyjuu.org.au  
Phone: 07 3808 9957

## Centre Construction

The Centre is to be built on a local State school site. The construction of the building has commenced and will be finished by January 2013.

There will be a plaque on the path at the entrance of the building featuring the totems of the two major clan groups of the area. At the entrance, there will also be a floor to ceiling feature wall displaying photos of significant community members. The building will house an adjunct care facility, meeting rooms, a hub space and clinic rooms, staff areas and outside areas.

## Service Provision

Currently 95% of the client base is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. All staff work out of the Ganyjuu head office, providing in-house and outreach services.

### Services provided now:

- Grandparents program
- Homework hubs
- Playgroups
- Health awareness
- Foodbank with a nutritionist – with the development of recipes to go with the Foodbank

### Services planned:

The list of programs available will expand once the Centre opens, including outreach services.

The Centre plans to run Child and Maternal Health, Family Support and Early Education programs under a holistic model of universal access and integrated practice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families.

## **Employment and Workforce Development**

The Centre is funding seconded positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to work in Playgroup Queensland, Crèche and Kindergarten Association, the Benevolent Society and Burragah (a local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation).

The Centre has filled all of the positions necessary for the full operation of the Centre. The whole team is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and consists of:

- Centre Manager
- Family Support Worker
- Team Leader
- Early Education Workers
- Senior Practitioner

*“We work under the principles of career development as an organisation as a whole. It’s about ensuring that we do ongoing training needs analyses so that staff training, awareness and practice is up to date with best practice.”*

Ganyjuu are also writing practitioner guides in relation to integrated practice that will guide learning for staff. This covers integrating family services and children’s services. Ganyjuu have ongoing training calendars that are part of the organisational policy for career development. Staff are able to self identify training areas of interest and their line managers are constantly being updated with information regarding ongoing training and best practice.



## Mareeba Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: Mareeba Children and Family Centre. No traditional name has been discussed yet.

### Management Structure

Mulungu Aboriginal Corporation Medical Centre, an Aboriginal community controlled organisation is the lead agency of the Centre.

The Centre engages with a Partnership Advisory Group (PAG) that consists of key partners including: the Benevolent Society; Cairns Early Years Centre; four day care centres in Mareeba; Queensland Health (Maternal Health section); and Mulungu Aboriginal Corporation (supported parenting groups, etc).

This group meets quarterly and has had up to 15 representatives in attendance. Mulungu Aboriginal Corporation is the only Aboriginal community controlled organisation in the region. However, they have various units that are each represented on the PAG, for example the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Centre and Parent and Community Education (PACE).

The Centre also operates under guidance from Mulungu Aboriginal Corporation's board of directors, who are all local Aboriginal people and a soon to be established Family Support Steering Group of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

### Centre Construction

Construction is near complete and the Centre hopes to be open by the end of July 2012.

The building is in an 'L' shape and consists of an open-plan office, a manager's office, a reception area, two meeting rooms, one general consultation room, a health consultation room, a parent room, a playgroup hub and adjunct care area, a staff kitchen and a community kitchen. There is no facility for long day care. Outdoors, landscaping with sandstone blocks for seating and stepping-stones leading to a sand pit, complement the building. There is also a small outdoor stage area for performances and areas for outdoor group meetings.

Mareeba is a one-hour drive from Cairns so no accommodation is required for visiting specialists.

### Service Provision

Mainly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families have accessed the services so far, and it is anticipated that this will continue.

The Centre focus is for 0-4 year olds to have a smooth transition to school. This will be achieved not through a long day care service but an emphasis on parental training, supported playgroups and health support.

The Centre has been running services from an interim service for one month prior to beginning their move to the new purpose built facility.

### Services provided now:

The Centre supports disadvantaged or unemployed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to enrol their children in day care in Mareeba. It also pays their fees for one long day care day a week per child from their brokerage funding.

#### Centre Contact Details

Donna Grogan, Coordinator  
Email: [dgrogan@mulungu.org.au](mailto:dgrogan@mulungu.org.au)  
Mobile: 0499 011 231

The Centre also runs the Mainly Music program which is an outreach service bringing musical activities to young children in Mareeba and the outlying areas.

Staff have also organised community events that promote early learning and child health, including: NAIDOC celebrations, Under Eights Day, traditional Aboriginal Games at the Schools and a Deadly Day Out.

Services planned:

- Parenting programs with adjunct care
- Early Childhood Development programs
- Young Mum's group
- Supported Playgroups
- Carer's and Guardian's support group
- Fun and Fitness in the Park
- Health clinic on-site once a week
- Occupational and Speech Therapists on call

**Employment and Workforce Development**

The Centre aim is to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, succeeding so far with all six staff Aboriginal. These are the:

- Centre Coordinator
- Family Support worker
- Receptionist/Adjunct carer
- Early Childhood worker
- Assistant Early Childhood worker
- Transport Driver/Cleaner

There are no further positions to be advertised over the next year or so.

Both Early Childhood workers hold Certificate III in Children's Services, and the Centre plans to support both workers to gain higher qualifications.

They will be able to develop onsite with the help of different services in the Centre. For example, the Centre's staff will shadow and learn from qualified teachers who deliver special needs and music therapy programs through the Centre. The Centre Coordinator is also a qualified teacher who will assist in staff development. Professional development funding is allocated to each staff member.

Goal for the Centre *"Everyone freely accessing the service and taking advantage of the resources we have to ensure that every child's and learning outcomes are going to be of a very high standard."*

## Mornington Island Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: The traditional name of the Mornington Island Children and Family Centre is still to be decided by the local community.

### Management Structure

Save the Children Australia (SCA) is the sole agency appointed following the tender. There is no auspicing arrangement at this stage although SCA has a five-year plan to handover the Centre to a local community organisation. This is dependant on identifying an organisation that can complete the duties and responsibilities of the service agreement. The strategy for this is being discussed at the Regional Manager level.

#### Centre Contact Details

Farrah Linden,  
Centre Manager  
Email: farrah.linden@savethechildren.org.au  
Mobile: 0408 186 101

A management committee oversees SCA activities on the island. This committee was appointed in February 2011 when SCA first began delivering its current programs on Mornington Island. The committee is made up of four representatives of the various clan groups of the area, as well as local Aboriginal service staff. The Centre is also establishing a community committee made up of community members representing local clan groups, age groups & genders to provide advice and guide implementation & service development & review of the Children & Family Centre.

### Centre Construction

The building is currently in final stages of completion preparing for a launch of the centre on 28 August 2012. There are two large buildings that share a courtyard.

No accommodation is being built at this stage, given the motel available for visitors. There will be two units built at some point for staff in future. At this stage there no strong need for extra accommodation.

### Service Provision

The Centre will be opened for the whole community to use. It is anticipated that mainly local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families will use the services, but visitors and non-Aboriginal community members will also be welcomed. The Long Day Care Centre will have capacity for 39 children.

There are no services being provided at this stage. Once the Centre opens the following services are envisaged:

- Adjunct care
- Early childhood education activities running throughout the week
- Linking families with existing services in the community
- Integrated Child and Maternal Health Services
- Family activities and parenting programs
- Budgeting education programs.

## Employment and Workforce Development

Currently there is only the Centre Manager employed. She is a local Indigenous woman.

Recruitment for the following positions will begin closer to the opening date:

Long Day Care Centre:

- 9 x Childcare workers
- Childcare Director
- Teacher
- Senior Community worker
- Receptionist
- Early Childhood worker
- Receptionist
- Family Centre
- Driver
- Cleaner

Before the launch of the Centre, the Project Officer will finalise training requirements for staff recruited. The aim is for local people to be ready to commence the training that they need to fulfil their roles upon the opening of the Centre. The main focus envisaged at this stage will be Certificate III in Children's Services provided by Cairns TAFE trainers. There are also links with staff at the school, who can work as mentors in literacy and numeracy alongside the training programs.

An employment strategy is still in preliminary stages of development.

*"Our biggest issue is having people in the community who have the self-confidence to be able to apply for the jobs. To maximise the service you provide, you need the local people there regardless of what their numeracy and literacy background is. We want to support them and say, "Well hey, we'll give you 100% support if you come along and we can teach you." And I'm sure at the end of the day they would love the work that they do. So our biggest ongoing concern at this stage is around recruitment."*

## Mount Isa Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: The Mount Isa Children and Family Centre is in consultation with the Kalkadoon traditional owners to select a culturally significant name for the Centre.

### Management Structure

North West Queensland Indigenous Catholic Social Services (NWQICSS) are the lead agency for the Centre. The Catholic Diocese in Mount Isa have partnered with the Centre to operate the long day care service and Queensland Health provide the child and maternal health component. Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) are being finalised to reflect these roles.

#### Centre Contact Details

Glenda Duffy, Project Officer, NWQICSS  
Email: [gduffy@nwqicss.org](mailto:gduffy@nwqicss.org)  
Phone: 07 4743 7671  
Mobile: 0419 178 718

NWQICSS has 14 services running in Mount Isa already. One consultative group provides advice to all the NWQICSS services as well as the Centre. A management committee is also planned, consisting of the Centre's Project Officer, the Director of Child Care and the Manager for Community Health.

The consultative group will be complemented by a local Indigenous Consultative Group. NWQICSS is exploring how they can provide payment for members' expertise, as community members are becoming weary of joining reference groups. The Centre will conduct a survey during NAIDOC week focussing on the best way it can consult with the community. To date, informal consultations have been the most effective, for example, gathering a couple of mothers together for a yarn.

The Project Officer would also like to set up forums and yarning circles for wider community consultation and regular network meetings for other stakeholders, including NWQICSS.

### Centre Construction

The land is now secure and the construction contract will be up for tender at the end of June, with planned completion by mid 2013.

The Centre will consist of two buildings, side by side with the one entry point. The long day care centre will be purpose built but decorated with local cultural decorations and artefacts. There is a fireplace for yarning circles in the backyard, which backs onto a native forest. Both buildings will open onto the backyard.

The Centre has the capacity to pay for hotel accommodation for specialists but no funding at this stage for permanent premises for ongoing staff or visiting specialists. The Project Officer identified a need to work towards permanent accommodation to attract qualified people to the area.

Centre services will move into the temporary premises at the end of June, and until then are working in the community. The temporary premises will house an adjunct care facility, and parent support and training area. This space is open for use by other services and to the local schools.

### Service Provision

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families will have a priority for places in the Centre programs, but non-Aboriginal families will also be welcome.

#### Services provided now:

A mobile playgroup service for surrounding communities started in June 2012.

### Services planned:

When the interim premises are operational, the Centre will provide adjunct care to the men's and women's groups run by NWQICSS, as well as offer adjunct care service to all other support services and school programs in Mt Isa.

The Centre will coordinate with Isa Skills in its work with the mining sector to support mothers of families with husbands/fathers working long days in the mines, through respite care and supported playgroups.

Isa Skills will run induction courses for the whole family to prepare them for the husband/father going out to work long days. The Centre will be able to provide support to the mothers such as offering respite care and supported playgroups. The family support workers employed by the Centre are envisaged to be supporting these families.

In terms of events, the Centre will run a playgroup at NAIDOC, using it to also seek feedback from the parents about the Centre. A fun day will also take place later in 2012.

The Centre will prioritise views of Aboriginal controlled service providers in determining the service mix for the Centre. An audit of family support services has confirmed the existence of many services in Mt Isa. The Project Officer asked the family support workers what they would like from the new Centre. They have indicated: training and debrief support; and the family support workers working in non-Aboriginal services have indicated they would like more cultural awareness training. Non-Aboriginal service providers may also be looking to the Centre to provide the initial engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

The model of service delivery will remain flexible based on what families who access the Centre would like to see on offer in the future.

### **Employment and Workforce Development**

Staff currently employed:

- Centre Manager
- Administration Officer
- Family Support worker
- Outreach child care worker doing the mobile playgroup
- 2 x bush healing Elders for bush tucker programs
- Child Care Mentoring Office

The entire team is made up of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

By the time the Centre opens, it is anticipated there will be ten qualified local Aboriginal childcare workers ready to start work. Ten local Aboriginal women are currently studying to become qualified childcare workers by the time the Centre opens. When they finish their Certificate III and IV, they will be offered support to go into the Diploma while they are working. These students were recruited through advertisements in the local paper and through word of mouth. At first there were only two young women interested, but through positive feedback within the community this number grew to ten. Their courses are paid for and the Centre also takes care of their transport and caters their lunch.

The Project Officer anticipates however that they will not be able to attain a 100% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce for the family services component of the Centre. Few people are interested in this area of work.

## Palm Island Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: Once the building has been completed and the Centre is fully operational, the community will be consulted on naming the Centre.

### Management Structure

The Palm Island Community Company (PICC) is a not-for-profit organisation with a skills-based board, which has a majority of Palm Island community representation including Traditional Owners. PICC is the lead agency for the Centre. The Joyce Palmer Health Service (Queensland Health) and Goodoo Child Care Centre (Townsville Catholic Education) will be key partner agencies in the delivery of maternal and child health and early childhood education services.

#### Centre Contact Details

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Palm Island Community Company  
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The Palm Island Elders Group, which currently provides input and guidance to the Palm Island Community Company in relation to service provision and cultural protocols, has agreed to undertake an advisory role for the Centre in conjunction with relevant key stakeholders. Formal relationships between the Palm Island Elders Group, stakeholders and the Centre are currently in development.

### Centre Construction

The prefabricated building was constructed in Brisbane and arrived on Palm Island on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2012. It is situated at Reid Lane on the old Bwngcolman preschool site and is currently to lock-up stage with an expected handover date of November.



The building includes a large open plan central hub, two consultation rooms, an adjunct child care room, dedicated rooms for parents, a toy-library and offices. A large covered deck has been built on the southern side of the centre and will overlook an outdoor play area.

It will be a safe and supportive Centre with a wellness focus.

### Service Provision

The Centre will be a safe and supportive with a wellness focus. It will aim to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with children aged from birth to 8 years by providing access to integrated services including:

- early childhood education and care

- parenting and family support services
- child and maternal health services

Services provided now:

Playgroup, parenting, counselling and family support services are currently being provided through PICC services.

Services planned:

- Universal services for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (pre-birth to 8 years).
- Early childhood education and care services: playgroup, adjunct care, transition from early childhood to school. In partnership with Goodoo Child Care: long day care services, childcare, early learning programs including kindergarten.
- Family and parenting support services: parenting resources and programs, home visiting, counselling, nutrition programs, healthy and safe home environments, individual support for children and families.
- Child and maternal health services: basic health and development screening, antenatal and postnatal maternal care, immunisation, well-being checks, child health, early childhood allied health (oral health, speech pathology, optometry).
- General advice and information on a range of early childhood and family issues.
- Linkages and referral pathways with other community and government services.

**Employment and Workforce Development**

Staff will be working out of interim premises until the building construction has been completed. Planned recruitment includes:

- Early Childhood Practitioner (worker will commence mid-August)
- Childcare Assistant (to be advertised August 2012)
- Senior Medical Practitioner currently engaged to develop the maternal health clinical model. Maternal and Child Health staff will be recruited in September
- Centre Manager
- Administration Assistant

The philosophy of PICC is to employ locally. As a result, the majority of staff are residents of Palm Island. However, where a suitable local worker cannot be sourced, staff may be employed on a fly-in fly-out basis with a shadow role established to skill up local workers.

PICC has induction training and an extensive and on-going training and development calendar for staff across all of its services, which will be extended to the Centre staff.



## Rockhampton Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: A local language name will be chosen for the Centre. In the set up stage, it is called the Rockhampton Children and Family Centre.

### Management Structure

Bidgerdii Community Health Service is the lead agency in partnership with Tarumbal Pre-Prep, Queensland Health Community Health, and Red Cross.

Bidgerdii is an Aboriginal community controlled health organisation, with responsibility for overall administration and organisational responsibility. Each organisation has the following expertise:

#### Centre Contact Details

Maleeta Richards, CEO, Bidgerdii  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander Health Services  
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- Red Cross: family wellbeing and support, capacity development, and a range of other family and community services;
- Community Health (CH): maternal and child health specialist services including maternity services;
- Tarumbal Pre-Prep: an Aboriginal community organisation affiliated with C and K. Tarumbal is governed by a Parent Committee and has early childhood education and care expertise.

The partnership governance mechanism rests with the Centre Advisory Group, with a number of additional partner organisations sitting at the table:

- Education Queensland to facilitate access to the state school system in Rockhampton
- Fitzroy Basin Elders to facilitate and involve the Elders in the Centre
- Central Queensland Indigenous Development (CQID) with expertise in family support and Recognised Entity services
- Reconnect which provides family support services to the Aboriginal community in Rockhampton.

Strategic decision-making rests with the Advisory Group. Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Group are currently being finalised which outlines the roles, responsibilities, data collection, information sharing, and conflict resolution processes for the Group. These ToR will be formalised within an overarching Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which all partners, outlined above, will sign. The Group is currently chaired by the Project Manager, but will be replaced by the Centre Manager once recruited.

The Centre Advisory Group have agreed that a Parent Committee will be established to inform the delivery of services by and through the Centre. This Group will be established after the Centre Manager has been recruited. The intention is that a representative from this Committee will also sit on the Advisory Group.

### Centre Construction

The Centre will be located on the Berserker State School site. The planning for the Centre was determined by the Office for Early Childhood, Department of Education and Training (OECDT). The expected completion date of construction is the end of 2012.

The key internal features include:

- Administration area and staff room
- Adjunct care room

- Consultation rooms for visiting health and wellbeing specialists
- Meeting rooms
- Playgroup activity room
- Kitchen area to support children's activities
- external landscape which supports children's activity areas and family support activities.

### **Service Provision**

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients accessing the Centre will be above 90% as the Centre will focus on providing a targeted response to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with children aged 0 – 8 years. The lead agency is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service and all partner organisations have agreed to Closing the Gap in Indigenous health outcomes. There are four other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations on the Advisory Group and the two mainstream organisations have a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce as well.

Bidgerdii is in the process of establishing temporary facilities to house Centre staff in the interim. The Advisory Group have agreed that initial services will be provided to the prep-three age group through Berserker, Frenchville and Mt Archer state schools. Family support will also commence through the Centre by a partner organisation.

The initial rollout of services is currently being negotiated with a number of service providers and is expected to occur by the end of August 2012. Service providers currently working with the Centre include:

- Red Cross Family Wellbeing Unit
- Education Queensland (Berserker, Frenchville and Mt Archer state schools)
- Bidgerdii maternal and child health team

### Services planned:

- Child health screening
- Family engagement (prep to 3)
- Family support (prep to 3)
- Breakfast Program
- Family Fun Day (5 October 2012)

The integrated service model is still being established as is staff recruitment. The intention is that the full range of family and parenting support, maternal and child health, and early learning activities will be provided through the Centre and in other locations across Rockhampton.

The Centre Advisory Group has facilitated the selection of initial services. A strategic planning day will be held on 3 October 2012 to develop the full goals, objectives, and key strategies for the Centre.

*"This leadership has been invaluable as it enables partner commitment, engagement, and ownership of the process."*

### **Employment and Workforce Development**

The Centre has recruited a Project Manager, who is Indigenous, on contract to assist with the establishment stage. The recruitment process is underway for the Centre Manager who it is hoped will be an Indigenous Early Childhood Educator. The Registered Nurse position is also being finalised with a non-Indigenous person.

Further positions that will be advertised in near future are:

- Child Health Worker (AHW)
- Family Support Worker
- Transport Driver
- Receptionist / Administration

The goal of the Centre recruitment is to employ local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. Where this is not possible, any non-Indigenous staff members will have cultural competency training and applied practice as part of their on-going professional development plan.

The Centre has not developed a workforce development strategy but will do so following recruitment of all initial Centre positions. The Centre Advisory Group will play a key role in developing the Strategy. The Group have already agreed to make strong links with the University of Southern Queensland to facilitate student placements through the Centre in allied health, children's services, and nursing.

# Western Australia

## Western Australia Jurisdiction Overview

### Contact Details

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The Office of Early Childhood Development and Learning (OECDL), Department of Education, are responsible for overseeing the development and establishment of the five Children and Family Centres in Western Australia.

The proposed governance structure for the Centres, 'the CFC Reference Group,' will vary slightly between locations and will be influenced by the Centre Operators. It is intended that through the Reference Group, community members will have the opportunity to voice their views and concerns. The exact detail of how this work has not been developed and will be something each Reference Group will need to establish and direct. The Centre Manager is likely to represent the Centre Operator on the Reference Group. The Reference Group is intended to act as an advisory group.

The five Centres will be established on crown land close to or on public school sites:

- Halls Creek
- Fitzroy Crossing
- Kununurra
- Roebourne
- Swan Region

OECDL is following a similar process for establishing each Centre. The OECDL leads the consultation process in each community, and through this establishes a site for the Centre, and allocates a builder through an open tender process. The tender for operation of each Centre is not allocated until 4-5 months prior to the building being completed.

As at July 2012, Halls Creek is the only community in Western Australia to have its Children and Family Centre operating out of a purpose built facility. The Fitzroy Crossing Children and Family Centre is set to become operational in August 2012. The OECDL are still driving the development of Kununurra, Roebourne, Swan Region Centres until management is allocated through the tender process. There have been no interim services run out of any temporary premises for the 5 Centres.

All of the Centres will have a licensed childcare facility. The number of places available and the kind of care available will vary based on what the provider determines is needed within the particular community. Each Centre will also house family areas, which will offer facilities for training, programs for parents and early learning, healthy living programs run in the Centre kitchen. In addition each Centre will have two health-consulting rooms, one to paediatric standards and one for more mental health counselling.

The successful Centre Operator will be responsible for employing staff required to manage the Centre and to deliver childcare.

*“We have put a strong message as part of the tender [for Centre operation] for local Aboriginal workforce development capabilities to be a very high consideration.”*

*“What we encourage and will certainly see in the applications for tender is the strong ability to provide training for staff. So for example, with Halls Creek, Save the Children Australia is proficient and able to provide training for the child care staff. And that is now one of their responsibilities, especially with the childcare component, to provide adequate training opportunities for the staff so that they can meet national quality standards in the long term. So that’s something that is part of our risk management – to ensure we have an organisation that takes care of the training component.”*

## **Roebourne Children and Family Centre**

Name of Centre: Roebourne Children and Family Centres

Swan Region and Roebourne are running concurrently at this stage. Through consultations run by the Office of Early Childhood Development and Learning (OECDL), key individuals have been identified to form the respective Local Reference Groups (LRG) for each community. The next step in August-September 2012 is to formally establish the LRG.

The tender for the building will be open by the end of 2012 so that building can commence in early 2013.

## **Swan Region Children and Family Centre**

Name of Centre: Swan region Children and Family Centres

Swan Region and Roebourne are running concurrently at this stage. Through consultations run by the Office of Early Childhood Development and Learning (OECDL), key individuals have been identified to form the respective Local Reference Groups (LRG) for each community. The next step in August-September 2012 is to formally establish the LRG.

The tender for the building will be open by the end of 2012 so that building can commence in early 2013.

## Fitzroy Crossing Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: The Centre's name, decided by the Bunuba Elders, is "Baya Gawiy Children and Family Centre", which is the Bunuba word for Freshwater Whip Ray.

### Management Structure

Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre (MWRC), a provider of a range of family support services in the community, is the lead agency for the Centre. As MWRC does not currently hold a childcare license, Save the Children Australia (SCA) are assisting by offering their child care license and support to build MWRC's capacity to obtain their own license and independently operate the Childcare and Early Learning facility in the future. This partnership means MWRC can take the lead as an Aboriginal community controlled organisation. There is no set timeline for full hand over to the MWRC.

#### Centre Contact Details

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Women's Marninwarntikura  
Resource Centre  
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The MWRC has a governing board made up entirely of local Aboriginal community representatives. This board receives advice for the development of the Centre from an Expert Panel of qualified early childhood educators, child health specialists and cultural leaders from every language group of the area. All the members of the Expert Panel have previously worked with MWRC.

There is also a Fitzroy Futures Forum where local service providers and community members get together to talk about issues and what they want to see change in the community. The MWRC's CEO is one of the committee members for this forum and notes that, 'more or less,' everything comes out in the open if the community are not happy with the way the services are running.

### Centre Construction

The permanent facility is located on the Fitzroy Valley District High School site, and is due for completion by the end of July 2012 and the Centre opening is planned for August 2012.

The Centre will comprise a purpose built Childcare Centre and a Family Centre, linked via a covered breezeway for shelter and shade. The Family Centre area has a playgroup facility, meeting rooms, consultation rooms for visiting practitioners and an industrial kitchen for parenting support programs. A large outside area with a playground will host community meetings and social gatherings.

The Freshwater Whip Ray (Baya Gawiy) that lives in the Fitzroy River is the reference and the metaphor for the building's architecture. The structure takes on the form of the fish with curved walls and organic forms. The two buildings represent the two wings of the Whip Ray.

Accommodation for visiting specialists was not included in the construction budget. However, the Centre will be working closely with Community Health, Population Health and Ningalingari Cultural Health who all have specialists on the ground. It is anticipated that any visiting practitioners will be provided to the Centre by these organisations and they will manage accommodation requirements themselves.

## **Service Provision**

As noted above, the Centre will offer both early childhood and children and family support services. The MWRC's current focus is to open the Child Care and Early Learning facility as soon as possible because the other existing community facility, Fitzroy Valley Early Learning Centre, is set to close in early August 2012.

The Family Centre will focus on health education and providing a community meeting place. The integration of family services into the Centre will be intertwined with the expansion of current MWRC programs. An early focus will also be parent support services, including 'Blokes and Bubs' workshops to involve the community's men with the Centre. Existing community relationships are quite strong, with MWRC visiting outlying communities for existing mobile playgroup programs.

All local organisations, other non-government organisations and health providers focused on children and families in the area will be invited to use the Centre as a service hub and meeting place. For instance, nurses will be invited to perform health checks during playgroup sessions, instead of having to go to individuals spread out in the community.

## **Employment and Workforce Development**

The Fitzroy Valley Early Learning Centre currently employs a mix of local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff, and the Centre is anticipated to take on all of its staff and clients.

The MWRC will hire a Centre Manager and a Childcare Coordinator within the next few weeks. These new staff will then begin the process of identifying further recruitment needs. Currently the MWRC is very active in supporting the professional and personal development of all its employees and clients, providing flexible working hours to allow for training and study. The MWRC receives funding to support education and training and has relationships with the Kimberly Training Institute and other centres of learning in Fitzroy Crossing. A workforce development strategy for the Centre will be developed in time, once the Centre is open and the Centre Manager is employed.

## Halls Creek Children and Family Centre



### Centre Contact Details

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Name of Centre: The Kimberley Language and Cultural Centre in Halls Creek, in consultation with Senior Elders, decided on a culturally appropriate name for the Centre that speaks to its purpose and meaning to Halls Creek residents, "Ningkuwum-Ngamayuwu Children and Family Centre". This means "relatives" in the two local language groups Gija and Jaru.

### Management Structure

Wunan Foundation Incorporated is the Centre's lead agency, in a consortium with Save the Children Australia (SCA) and Early Learning Incorporated 'Little Nuggets'. The Wunan Foundation is an Aboriginal development organisation in the East Kimberley. Little Nuggets is an Aboriginal community controlled organisation and has been delivering childcare in Halls Creek for several years.

Little Nuggets is expected to take over control over the Centre in mid-2014, once management capacity exists for full operational management. However, it may take longer for this transition to be achieved successfully. The strategy for developing Little Nuggets is more focussed on workforce development and operational expansion at this stage, and a governance structure will be addressed later down the track.

One of Wunan's key roles is to provide governance and administrative support to build the organisational and operational capacity of Little Nuggets. SCA are using their expertise in developing local capacity in children's services to increase the number of qualified childcare workers within Little Nuggets, and assist them to apply the Early Years Learning Framework. SCA will also bring qualified short term and long term childcare workers to the area to support training and development of Little Nuggets.

An expression of interest is currently being circulated in the community to establish a Community Reference Panel. The membership will comprise a majority of Aboriginal community representatives with a mix of service providers. The Centre will be officially launched in the community in August 2012 and the Centre Manager hopes to have the Community Reference Panel up and running by then.

### Centre Construction

The Centre is located opposite Halls Creek District High School. The permanent facility was completed in November 2011 and the Centre has been operating since January 2012.



The facility consists of three separate areas housed within the one structure. The licensed childcare area is in the middle, while on either side are the medical consulting rooms and the family centre, which contains a dedicated education and training centre. Consulting rooms are decorated with local designs and artefacts and a point of pride is the outdoor landscaping, where a small irrigation system allows native grasses to grow and creates a lovely environment for social gatherings around the fire pit.

There is no accommodation being built to house visiting specialists. The Wunan Foundation operates a workers hostel that is located out of town and visiting specialists can also stay in the hospital accommodation in town.



### **Service Provision**

Wunan is focussed on networking with the existing Halls Creek services to draw them into the Centre and help make their services more effective for the Aboriginal community. The Centre has been hosting two key networks of service providers operating in Halls Creek, the early learning network and the early child health network. The Centre is becoming a one-stop shop and community hub: it hires out the facilities to an array of service providers and hosts network meetings, as well as offering adjunct childcare services to activities involving parents and carers.

#### Services provided now:

##### Education:

- Weekly nutrition training & healthy menus with cook-up classes run by Community Health and Yura Yungi Aboriginal Medical Services
- Mums & Bubs classes run fortnightly by Yura Yungi Aboriginal Medical Services Halls Creek
- Two different programs educating teenage women on health & lifestyle issues (run by Job Services organisations) being run 2 monthly
- Culture & Language education with older & younger generations from the community including music and dance workshops, run by Kimberley Language Resource Centre Halls Creek
- Cultural Awareness Training targeting non-Aboriginal staff of local organisations
- First Aid course organised for the community.

##### Medical:

- Allied Health Professionals (Physiotherapist, Occupational Health, Speech Therapist & Social Worker) from Kimberley Population Health Unit Kununurra (Dept Health) visit Halls Creek from Broome & Kununurra meeting clients fortnightly
- Paediatricians visiting Halls Creek monthly visiting clients
- Kimberley Mental Health Nurse visiting fortnightly to meet clients
- Kimberley Mental Health & Drug Service Team Drug & Alcohol Counsellor based in Halls Creek using Hot Office 3 mornings per week to counsel clients

- New strategies being tried (like Family Fun Days) to draw the clients to the Centre to engage with the medical professionals in a non-threatening way in order to build relationship & trust over time
- Medical Consulting Rooms being equipped with playgroup type furniture & equipment including large colourful rugs, large cushions, kids furniture, lounges, music & artworks by other kids.

#### Networking & meetings:

- Health Services Networking workshop with Kimberley wide attendance
- Coalition of Australian Governments meetings
- Inter-Agency Meetings twice monthly with 24 organisations in Halls Creek (20-35 people attending) to network, share and create joint ventures in programs.
- Early Years Learning Network meeting monthly (18 organisations) focussed on educational opportunities and needs
- Early Child Health Networking meeting monthly or 2 monthly to focus on needs, programs and joint ventures.

#### Other community uses:

- Kimberley Community Legal Services fortnightly visits meeting with clients
- East Kimberley Small Business Centre meeting clients to assist with commencing new small business ventures & improving existing businesses to grow. Meeting 2 monthly at present
- Information sessions on educational scholarships available in larger regional & capital cities for high school students & families
- Halls Creek District High School using training room for staff development monthly
- Skillhire using venue for networking and training Kimberley wide staff & clients
- Private Masseur using the room monthly
- Auskick Junior Football development & training day
- Kimberley School of the Air training workshops
- East Kimberley CDEP visiting with clients as team-building meeting
- Aboriginal Family Law Service Kununurra meeting clients at the Centre
- Western Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Council conducted Financial Literacy Workshop under the Parent & Community Engagement (PaCE) program

#### Services planned:

The Centre is still engaged in expanding the services offered to the community and is in consultation with the following:

#### Education:

- Mobile Playgroup operators for Halls Creek to setup operations at the Centre
- Strong Families Kununurra to implement programs in the Centre
- PaCE Program coordinators to implement programs at the Centre
- Two local organisations (school & community health) to commence two separate Playgroups for young mums in Halls Creek
- Unique playgroups based on language groups to be established in Halls Creek and a Dad's Playgroup

#### Medical:

- Networking meetings with hospital staff for future uses
- St John of God Health Care Kununurra to implement programs
- BOAB Health to implement programs
- Western Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Council conducted Financial Literacy Workshop under the Parent & Community Engagement (PaCE) program

## **Employment and Workforce Development**

All staff are local and Aboriginal, except the Centre Manager who has lived and worked in Halls Creek for a number of years.

The Centre currently employs four staff:

- Centre Manager (full time)
- Receptionist/Administration Assistant (full time)
- Gardener/maintenance (part time)
- Cleaner (part time)

They hope to recruit an Aboriginal Health worker to provide greater access to health and support services.

Little Nuggets currently employs:

- 1 x Senior Qualified Childcare worker
- 3 x Childcare workers undergoing training
- 1 x Additional trainee (funded externally)

And hope to recruit a second Qualified Childcare worker.

There is a desperate need for more qualified child carers in Halls Creek to meet the community's needs. Little Nuggets and Wunan are working to provide a supportive and flexible environment for the staff so as to encourage the completion of further training and skills development.

The Family Centre has a dedicated study and training area so the childcare trainer, who visits Halls Creek once every two weeks, can deliver the training to all staff on site. This allows the Childcare facility to stay open while all staff are accessing the training. The area is also used as a place to study on a daily basis by the staff, who are supported in their studies by the qualified childcare worker and also have the trainer available by phone.

## Kununurra Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: Kununurra Children and Family Centre

### Management Structure

The tender for the operation of the Centre is currently open and the Office of Early Childhood Development and Learning (OECDL) anticipate appointing the successful tender by the end of October 2012. The OECDL Project Officer has been working with the community in Kununurra to provide them with pre-tender information. Interest has been indicated in submitting the tender from local and Aboriginal organisations.

### Contact Details

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The Centre Local Reference Group (LRG) established in Kununurra has been advising OECDL staff and alerting them to issues around town that need to be resolved so that the Centre can be opened. The OECDL Project Officer chairs and coordinates those meetings. When the Centre Operator is appointed, she will be the action officer for the LRG with responsibility for continued effective operation of the LRG.

The Kununurra LRG includes membership from:

- Department for Child Protection
- Department for Communities
- Education, including the administration from the local Kununurra District High School. The local Catholic School receives meeting minutes.
- Legal services
- Local Aboriginal Corporation
- Local organisations and service providers

The proportion of Aboriginal representation varies at every meeting. When the meetings began, there was approximately a 50/50 mix, however Aboriginal participation has dropped.

### Centre Construction

The building is currently under construction. The OECDL hopes the building will be complete by the end of 2012 and the Centre open around February 2013.

### Service Provision

Posters up around Kununurra and radio have been used to explain what to expect from the Centre. OECDL believes this is very important.

*“What we are doing in Kununurra is to make sure the community expectations are aligned with what we can actually offer. Part of our messages in the flyers and posters is that when the centre opens, the number of childcare places will be dependent on staff availability. So we’re allowing the Centre’s operations to start off a little bit smaller and that’s what’s happening in Halls Creek at the moment. We are making that message clear. We are also making it clear that it’s not free childcare; there will be fees payable. So we are trying to make sure we get those messages out earlier so the community knows exactly what’s coming.”*

## **Employment and Workforce Development**

There is no formal training or workforce development directly linked with the OECDL. However, they have been involved in other initiatives run through other organisations and government departments. For example, in Kununurra the Wunun Foundation, the Department for Communities and the local TAFE have been looking at training options for staff in the childcare facility. The Community Services Officer for the Department of Communities (previous) had also identified a group of women to undertake a Certificate I course, to transition them into doing Certificate III in Children's Services.

# ***Northern Territory***

## **Northern Territory Jurisdiction Overview**

### Contact Details

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Five Commonwealth funded Child and Family Centres will be established in the following places, all of which are remote except the urban site of Palmerston:

- Palmerston
- Yuendumu
- Gunbalanya
- Ngukkur
- Maningrida

The Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) identified two communities for Centre sites and the remainder were chosen based on the following criteria: community identification of early childhood as a priority; insufficient community infrastructure to deal with rising early childhood numbers; and health and early development statistics.

The Centres were expected to be operating by the end of 2011, however the Northern Territory Department of Education and Training (DET) has informed SNAICC that difficulties in agreement on land tenure issues between the Northern and Central Land Councils and the Northern Territory Government have caused delays. The Government is required to have a 40-year lease over any infrastructure on Aboriginal land. Currently calculations of the formal land tenure arrangements are underway across the Northern Territory. DET says that building of the Child and Family Centres cannot commence until these calculations are finalised.

As of July 2012, no construction had begun. Consultations for the design of the Northern Territory's Child and Family Centres have been conducted for most sites. Additional steps have also been taken on workforce development and the integrated service delivery model.

### **Management Structure**

The Department of Education and Training has been undertaking consultations and planning within Child and Family Centre communities to establish partnerships, identify the strengths and needs of each community, develop a shared vision and consider governance arrangements. Each site has a Local Reference Group (LRG) of traditional owners, Aboriginal community members and local service providers.

The tendering process for service delivery has not commenced in the remote communities. It is hoped that the LRGs will be involved in the process and be equal chairs in decision-making on the outcome of the tender.

The LRGs will take the lead as key decision makers, and service providers will have to respect the LRG's recommendations and decisions.

## **Service Provision, Employment and Workforce Development**

The 'Families As First Teachers' (FaFT) initiative is operating on each community where the Centres will be established, facilitating outreach and establishing programs that may ultimately be integrated into the Child and Family Centres. Maryclaire Milkins of DET suggests that *"we have worked very closely with FaFT around service integration. However, beyond that there is not much you can do until you have a facility built."*

Consideration of service integration has begun. Research has been a priority however to better understand and apply good practice principles within the new Centres, particularly in relation to integration of services, the importance of early childhood, culturally competent services, workforce development and measuring outcomes. The series of reports include:

- Northern Territory Results for the Australian Early Development Index 2009
- The First 5 years: Starting Early (Early Childhood Series No. 2. 2011)
- A Population approach to early childhood services: Implementation for outcomes (Early Childhood Series No. 3. 2011)
- The Value of investing in the early years: Balancing costs of childhood needs (Early Childhood Series No. 4. 2011)
- Effective Integration of Services for children and families: Making it happen: Symposium Report, 2010.
- Northern Territory Early Childhood Workforce Plan 2011-2021.

Child and Family Leaders have also been appointed for Gunbalanya, Yuendumu, Maningrida and Ngukurr, and have responsibility to drive the process to develop a service integration model appropriate for the community. They will be the "dedicated worker to be the glue between the services." Child and Family Leaders are working on developing an action plan for integrating services on community. They are working with the identified early childhood reference groups, to establish what the community wants in terms of service delivery and governance models. Basically the Child and Family Leader is a facilitator for that vision of the community.

## **Palmerston Child and Family Centre**

Name of the Centre: Palmerston Child and Family Centre

The Northern Territory Department of Education and Training (DET) started discussions with Danila Dilba Health Service two years ago around how the two could work together to establish the Child and Family Centre in Palmerston. The Danila Dilba Medical Service is an Aboriginal community controlled organisation that provides a range of free comprehensive primary health care services to the Aboriginal community of the Yilli Rreung area.

DET have begun looking for appropriate sites to build the new Centre, however nothing has been finalised. The Larrakia Corporation, representing the traditional owners of the land in Palmerston, has been included in these discussions.

DET have also formed a steering committee, of which Danila Dilba and Larrakia Corporation are members, alongside the local council and non-government organisations that deliver programs in the Palmerston area. The steering committee has engaged a consultant who is gathering advice from all relevant stakeholders including service providers for Palmerston and the outlying villages and camps, and parents who use these services. It is anticipated this phase of the consultation will conclude by the end of 2012.



## **Yuendumu Child and Family Centre**

Name of Centre: Yuendumu Child and Family Centre

In Yuendumu, the first Child and Family Centre community meeting was held in September 2009. This was the beginning of a continuing partnership - between the WETT ECCD Project, the Yuendumu community, the Yuendumu Kurdu Kurdu Kurlangu Child Care Centre, Central Desert Shire and Integrated Family Services – which evolved into the Early Childhood Care and Development Reference Group.

Throughout 2010 a series of community meetings were held in collaboration with Kurdu Kurdu Kurlangu, local service providers, and Integrated Family Services on the design of the Yuendumu Centre. These meetings were chaired by local Warlpiri women who provided feedback to Integrated Family Services and the architect regarding community aspirations for the new Centre. Kurdu Kurdu Kurlangu and Integrated Family Services presented the final design of the Child and Family Centre at the Local Reference Group meeting in June 2011<sup>10</sup>. Yuendumu has also conducted strategic planning around existing services, service gaps and community need through a series of community workshops.

Kurdu Kurdu Kurlangu already run integrated services for the community, including child and maternal health, working with the school and the health service. The Shire Council is supportive of the condition that Kurdu Kurdu Kurlangu is owned and operated by the community. The process of further integrating services with the school will be continued by the Centre. This level of integration will then transition over to the new Centre once it is built.

The Yuendumu Centre currently have two employees, a Child and Family Leader and a temporarily contracted Project Officer. The Kurdu Kurdu Kurlangu Child Care Centre employs young local people and it is anticipated that they will be able to work at the new Centre.

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<sup>10</sup> NT DET, Term 4, 2011 Newsletter: <http://www.det.nt.gov.au/parents-community/early-childhood-services/newsletters/term-4-2011>

## **Gunbalanya Child and Family Centre**

Name of Centre: Gunbalanya Child and Family Centre

A Child and Family Leader has been working in Gunbalanya since June 2011.

She has been developing virtual service integration, working in collaboration with early childhood development and parent support services, to deliver and develop integrated family services in the community. Families as First Teachers, have been delivering programs that link in with services in an integrated manner. An interim service opened in late 2011.

## **Ngukkur Children and Family Centre**

Name of Centre: Ngukkur Child and Family Centre

In Ngukurr, the recognised traditional owner group - the Yugul Mangi - are the established leadership group in the community. They cover the 7 language groups of the area and have had significant experience in local service implementation and working with Government. They have set up an early childhood reference group, made up of senior women, which guides the delivery of children's services in Ngukkur.

The community's only childcare facility has been closed down, so Families as First Teachers have been working outside in the community and providing outreach services. The Child and Family Leader has been negotiating with the Shire Council to get the childcare Centre up and running again. The Child and Family Leader has also been working in collaboration with early childhood development and parent support services to deliver and develop integrated children and family services in the community.

## **Maningrida Child and Family Centre**

Name of Centre: Maningrida Child and Family Centre

Maningrida have a Child and Family Centre Engagement Officer who is a local senior woman that has been employed in the community for 2.5 years. She has been working on the development of the Centre and community consultations since 2010. She has also been working with the 'Families As First Teachers' (FaFT) employees and the childcare Centre on service integration. The Child and Family Leader was employed in early 2012 and is continuing to develop the service integration model for the Child and Family Centre.

# South Australia

## South Australia Jurisdiction Overview

### Contact Details

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### Management Structure

The South Australian Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) will manage the delivery of four Children and Family Centres in South Australia.

The governance arrangements are exactly the same for all four South Australian Centres. South Australia is adapting their existing state-based model used for 23 existing integrated children's centres, in which the government works in partnership with a range of local providers to deliver the services that operate the Centres. There is no plan for hand over to any organisations.

DECD will lead the establishment of a Stakeholder Group and an Aboriginal Parent Advisory Group which will be responsible for key decisions about the Centres in partnership with representatives from State and Commonwealth governments and non-government agencies (SA Government Fact Sheet).

The Stakeholder Group is made up of representatives from government organisations and non-government service providers. Only a minority are Aboriginal community controlled organisations, however a local Aboriginal parents' representative is included.

The Leadership Team for each Centre will be made up of:

- Centre Director
- Community Development Coordinator (CDC)
- Family Services Coordinator (FSC)
- School Principal (all Centres are built on school sites in South Australia)
- Representatives from any organisation that is running a program on a regular basis at the Centre

The Leadership Team looks at requests for services to be run, they then make a decision and pass this onto the Stakeholder Group for endorsement.

The Centre Directors will establish the Aboriginal Parent Advisory Groups. Community Development Coordinators will then facilitate these groups, document their recommendations and pass them on to the Leadership Team for consideration.

### Centre Construction

The locations of Ceduna, Christie's Beach, Whyalla and Pukatja were selected as each have a significant Aboriginal population with a high number of families with babies and small children. These locations also have some existing services that can work together with the new Centre to meet the needs of the community.

All of the Centres are located on State school sites. Each Centre has a large central space for activities, including a kitchen, and then has rooms leading off. These include: staff rooms; 2 x medical consulting rooms; and a quiet activities/occasional care room.

Significant effort has been invested in ensuring that Aboriginal design principles govern the design of the Centre and that it connects with and is accessible for the local Aboriginal peoples. Researcher of Aboriginal architecture, Dr Elizabeth Grant, worked on the designs for Christies Beach, Whyalla and Ceduna in consultation with local community members and service providers. Pukatja will receive a prefabricated building, put together in Alice Springs. Each Centre will have a distinctive look featuring coloured panels reflective the surrounding nature.

See design reports here:

<http://www.childrenscentres.sa.gov.au/default.asp?id=42982&navgrp=4181>

### **Service Provision**

All the South Australian Centres will have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus but be open to everyone in the community.

The program set out in the national partnership is quite explicit: maternal child health; early years learning programs; and pre-school. They will all cater for:

- Occasional Care
- Pre-school
- Community Space
- Consultation rooms

The directors at each Centre are managing the “Learning Together” program – a literacy based program that supports parents to interact with their children. This is a birth to three year old, family engagement program that provides an opportunity for families to access the Centre before their children are kindergarten age, and access programs that will support their children’s learning and wellbeing.

### **Employment and Workforce Development**

A Community Development Coordinator and a Family Services Coordinator will be employed to work with families and agencies within the community. Community Development Coordinators will be responsible for community consultation and engagement, as well as service integration: they “will provide opportunities for parent participation and involvement in planning for the centre, link in with existing services, programs and projects, and engage families in employment, training and volunteering” (SA Government CFC Fact Sheet).

An Aboriginal employment register has been developed to recruit Aboriginal staff. Running alongside this is the Aboriginal workforce strategy, which is cutting across a number of agencies in South Australia. Aboriginal Community Development Coordinators have been recruited for three Centres through the register.

## Ceduna Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: The Partnership Advisory Group (PAG) has just formed a naming group so as to establish an appropriate name for the Centre.

### Centre Construction

Construction of the building started in June 2012 and is due for completion in early 2013.

Ceduna has bi-fold doors that open onto the outdoor play area, landscaped with native vegetation and a fire-pit.

Services are currently running from an activity space that is temporarily available at the school.

### Service Provision

The client base for the Centre will be made up of about 80% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children. The Centre will house the only pre-school service in town.

#### Services provided now:

Save the Children Australia (SCA) are currently running two playgroups, and will begin the "Circle of Security" program about mother and child attachment in July.

#### Services planned:

The "Learning Dispositions" program will begin in July 2012, working with parents to help them understand what level their child is at educationally, and to learn how they can help their children develop.

A recent Stakeholder Group meeting included 30 services that would be interested in or affected by the Centre. So discussions have begun around the service mix but nothing is set in place yet.

### Employment and Workforce Development

A local Aboriginal woman is employed as Acting Director on a contract until the end of the year.

A Community Development Coordinator (local Aboriginal) and a Family Services Coordinator were recently recruited and will start at the end of July 2012. DECD still plans to recruit a Centre Director and a Business Manager to oversee the administration of the programs.

Future recruitment goals are not set as DECD is waiting for clearer timelines for the construction and opening of the Centre. The advertised positions include resources to train up strong local Aboriginal candidates that do not have the necessary qualifications. However, in this remote location it has been difficult to fill the Family Services Coordinator position, which requires a degree in Social Services.

Once the Centre opens, DECD will need early childhood workers to run the occasional care program. If there is interest from the community, training or support will be provided for local staff to attain the necessary qualifications. The Stakeholder Group will address workforce development in time.

#### Centre Contact Details

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## Christie's Beach Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: The new local name is yet to be announced.

### Centre Construction

The Centre is located on a school site. Preparation for construction on the site has begun and DECD hopes to open the new centre in early 2013.

The Centre will be made up of two buildings: one will house the "Learning Together" program and function as a community centre, which will cater for parenting and training programs. The other building will house the staff area, medical and health consultation rooms and the kindergarten, which has a capacity to place 56 children.

#### Centre Contact Details

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Mobile: 0407 859 498

Currently some services are being run out of available facilities in the school.

### Service Provision

The Centre will be open to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal families.

#### Services provided now:

- Playgroups are run on the school site
- MyTime Program – a weekly wellbeing and support group for carers of children with disabilities or additional needs. The Centre provides adjunct care. This program is run from a sister kindergarten close by.
- Food handling and safety workshops, as well as Police Clearance and Responding to Abuse and Neglect (Mandatory Notification) workshops.
- Workshops helping local people to identify their life skills that can be translated into work skills, thus furthering their employment opportunities.

#### Services planned:

The Centre will continue to expand the training programs available, including Senior First Aid courses and Certificate III in Children's Services.

*"It's just making sure that when we're ready to recruit, we'll have local people who have the required basic skills, but also have an association with the Centre as well. And this is certainly targeted to community people – people who are in our community."*

When the Centre opens the focus will be on making sure the pre-school is running really well.

*"Ultimately it will be a culturally safe space for all the community, young and old and across the different groups of families, both locally and in the outlying areas. The Centre will be a place where people can come in and access services in a comfortable, non-clinical environment."*

## **Employment and Workforce Development**

Currently employed are the Director of Education and Care and the Community Development Coordinator. The Centre is currently advertising for a Family Services Coordinator.

Remaining staffing will not be decided upon until later in 2012 when there is a date for completion set for the facility. This will include a range of roles from administrative to teaching positions.

A workforce development plan will ensure that the Centre is always providing opportunities for training, development, support and mentoring for families that want to work or volunteer at the Centre, other service providers or schools.

*“There is no better place than being on-site with a Children’s Centre to involve families that are emerging into the workforce. The Centres have got the capacity to support these families. We want Aboriginal people to work with our families and believe that really good outcomes happen when communities work with each other.”*

## Ernabella Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: Ernabella Aboriginal Children and Family Centre

### Centre Construction

The building is a transportable, built in Alice Springs and transported to Pukatja in early 2012. Currently it is being furnished and resourced for opening in August 2012.

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### Service Provision

The Centre has been operating within the existing facilities at the school. The Centre works closely with the Child-Parent Centre and the school. Each of these services makes informal referrals and connections in and around the area. It has also partnered with the Child, Youth and Women's health service to provide home visits to community families and linked with a family support and education worker. A nurse from the health service will also be engaged to work with the families in the Centre on a regular basis.

### Employment and Workforce Development

Employed currently are a Community Development Coordinator, and a support worker who is Aboriginal.

Pukatja is a remote community so the workforce capacity and requirements are different to the other urban Centres. The Community Development Coordinator facilitates services at the Centre.



## Whyalla Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: Whyalla Aboriginal Children and Family Centre

### Centre Construction

Construction of the Centre is underway, with an expected completion date of December 2012.

The Rainbow Serpent is depicted on the linoleum floor throughout the building, and out into the sandpit. In the community room there are traditional basket designs represented in the linoleum to show the community room as a gathering place. The community room is a kitchen and a meeting space that can be sectioned off into two separate areas or kept open as one.

#### Centre Contact Details

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### Service Provision

Many services will focus on engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, however the main focus is engaging all disadvantaged families in the area that may not be accessing services already.

The Centre staff are running interim services out of existing childcare facilities in Whyalla.

#### Services provided now:

- Aboriginal Playgroup
- Grandma's Cup of Tea and Yarn Session
- Working with a Learning Together Playgroup located at the local Hincks Kindergarten, which is set to close once the new Centre opens. Centre staff are trying to engage parents to help them transition over to the new Centre
- A healthy eating program is being delivered by the Obesity Prevention and Lifestyle program to prepare a healthy nutritious and cost effective evening meal with families that they can take home afterwards – using the Deadly Tucker Cookbook and the Food Sense program.

The Centre will focus on increasing playgroup staff in the lead up to the Centre opening. The Centre plans to consult with Aboriginal families to develop the Companionable Learning program

produced by Doctor Rosemary Roberts. They would like to adapt this resource to make it more culturally appropriate for Aboriginal families. This program will then be delivered by Learning Together.

Services planned:

- Pre-school
- Parenting and Intervention Groups
- Occasional Care
- Bungala Local Language Group
- Playgroup

The process for selecting services has been informal for the most part. However the Local Enabling Group (LEG) has been engaged and some community consultation has taken place. The Community Development Coordinator and Director have presented to relevant service providers, letting them know about the Centre and how it can support their services.

**Employment and Workforce Development**

Currently employed are the Director, the Community Development Coordinator and the Family Services Coordinator. Once the Centre opens further positions will include a Business Administrator and a cleaner.

Currently the only person who is Aboriginal on the team is the Community Development Worker. The Centre is working with the local university and the Aboriginal Skills Register on workforce development, however there are no students currently enrolled in any training who are supported by the Centre.

# Tasmania

## Bridgewater Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: The Child and Family Centre in Bridgewater is called Tagari Lia. This means family in the local South East Tasmanian language.

### Management Structure

The Tasmanian Department of Education will continue to manage the development of the Bridgewater Centre.

All major decisions for the Centre are issued through the Local Enabling Group (LEG). A local Aboriginal Elder currently chairs the LEG, which has a membership of 55 representatives, including two local Aboriginal community members in addition to the Aboriginal chairperson. The composition of the group is currently under review. It is hoped the group will continue to be chaired by an Aboriginal Elder.

The Centre is developing partnerships with various non-government organisations including: Good Beginnings; Smith Family; Uniting Care; and LINC Library Service, as well as all of the primary schools in the area.

The Centre Leader indicated that: *“the challenge for the Centre is to bring more Aboriginal people on board. There are a number of local Aboriginal community controlled organisations in Tasmania. Some members of our community are strongly connected with them. However, we have to go slowly with partnerships at this stage. The Aboriginal community controlled organisations see us as working like “ticking boxes. We need to build the relationship with the Aboriginal organisations over time.”*

Currently the LEG are developing the core values for tagari lia. All service providers who operate from the Centre will have to work according to those values. In addition the LEG has been working on objectives and outcomes for the first year.

### Centre Construction

The Centre officially opened in early July 2012. The Centre will be fully operational in August 2012.

The building is collocated with LINC Tasmania, the local library. The Centre has access to training rooms located in the library, one features an arts and crafts area and the other two have technology available for presentations and meetings, etc.

The Centre entrance comprises an open kitchen and dining area with a very large kitchen table. There is no reception desk and the layout creates a feeling of entering a large family home. The Centre incorporates two children’s play areas. One room could function as an adjunct care room however it is currently used as a ‘quiet/babies’ room. The other is the active ‘play and learn’ area. This contains an internal sandpit for children in winter, as requested by community. Both rooms open out onto a playground with another sandpit and an exploratory playground. This playground can be cordoned off to create two separate play areas, one for each children’s play area.

The building also houses an Aboriginal cultural training room, three consultation rooms, a family room and an open plan office area. An Aboriginal bush tucker and healing garden has been planted outside the Aboriginal cultural training room. It is important that the Child and Family Centre acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal culture in this community, and it is the intent of the

#### Centre Contact Details

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LEG that we work with the Aboriginal people in this community to do this. Students at the local primary schools were given the opportunity to name all the rooms after endangered Tasmanian animals, and the artwork in the rooms and mosaics around the centre reflect the chosen names.

### **Service Provision**

The Centre will operate as a hub for integrated children and family services. It will not run a childcare service. Staff are not aware of the proportion of Aboriginal people who access the Centre at this stage, as there is no system for recording numbers of people who identify. However 13.5% of people in this area identify as being Aboriginal.

The Centre leader considers that *“the community has a misperception that it is an Aboriginal “childcare” centre. The community think that we only see Aboriginal children and we need to get the message out that we are open to all young children and their families.”*

For the past year the Centre has used a temporary space at a local primary school to offer limited services such as a baby massage program and family partnership training.

#### Services provided now:

- Parenting program called Tuning into Children, about parenting with emotional intelligence
- Learning programs are run in four local primary schools. The Centre supports by holding a fun day
- Good Beginnings playgroups
- Good Beginnings “Contact Play and Learn”
- Good Beginnings Family Support Services
- Open sessions for Launching into Learning programs for the 4 local primary schools
- Child Health and Parenting Services
- Speech Pathology services

#### Services planned:

- Baby Chat Café for new parents
- Paediatrician
- Paediatric Registrar
- Midwife one day a week
- Physiotherapy/ occupational therapy and speech pathology from St Giles
- Pregnant and Young Parent Support (PYPS) by Uniting Care
- NEWPIN (uniting Care)
- Local knitting group and other community groups
- School psychology support
- The Centre hopes to bring a circus to Bridgewater during the school holidays for workshops for children
- FUTI/POP program about standing up against violence
- Mosaics workshops
- PCYC police youth club sessions with young mums, such as makeovers and ‘zumba’ exercise classes while waiting from PYPS
- The Centre may deliver the ‘On Our Patch’ program, developed by the Smith Family. Participants are awarded Certificate /Certificate 2 in Community Services.

The LEG determine what services should be provided by the Centre. In most cases, the service providers approach the Centre and will attend the LEG meetings to discuss opportunities for running programs.

*“Our vision for the Centre is a strong, proud place, caring for children and families. We want to ensure that Aboriginal Children and families are connected to culture, community and country. We want for children and families to be safe and healthy. We want children and families to access quality learning experiences and be confident in making choices.”*

### **Employment and Workforce Development**

Currently the Aboriginal Community Facilitator is the only Aboriginal person on the team. This is an identified position. Currently employed are: the Centre Leader; the Aboriginal Community Facilitator; speech pathologists (0.5); and 3 x Teacher’s Assistants (casual). The Centre will still recruit a few more Teacher’s Assistants (casual) and a Community Inclusion Worker.

The Centre Leader is looking to fill the casual teacher’s assistant positions with local people but not specifically Aboriginal people. The Department of Education does not specifically target Aboriginal people for casual positions.

The Tasmanian Early Years Foundation has training and development strategies in place, which the Centre is working with. The Centre is also engaging with the Family Partnership Training Program and the Platforms Service Redevelopment Framework, and Empowering Parents / Empowering Communities.

## Geeveston Children and Family Centre

Name of Centre: The Centre is called the Wayraparattee Child and Family Centre. This means forest ground in a traditional Tasmanian Aboriginal language. It is representative of the fact that the area used to be densely forested and Geeveston is a forestry town. The Local Enabling Group (LEG) chose the name out of four choices provided by the South East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation (SETAC).

### Management Structure

The Tasmanian Department of Education will continue to manage the development of the Geeveston Centre. However, any Aboriginal cultural matter, service decision or partnership development is approved by SETAC before it goes ahead. The Department of Education recognise SETAC as critical to the Centre's success, as the leading Aboriginal body for South East Tasmania.

#### Centre Contact Details

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SETAC have also had input into the LEG who have been consulted on issues such as heritage, protocols and procedures. The LEG meets fortnightly. The local community has elected all its members: 10 are community members (5 Aboriginal) and 10 are representatives from a range of health, education and family support service providers, SETAC being the only Aboriginal community controlled organisation. Once the Centre is completed and fully operational, the LEG will most likely transition into an advisory board for the Centre.

### Centre Construction

The Centre has been running interim services for two years. The Centre is currently operating out of a pre-existing complex made up of three buildings, including a purpose built kindergarten and health clinic built in the 1950s. The old kindergarten has been converted into a playroom that houses playgroups 4 days a week. The old health clinic is being used as an office and toy library storage area.

The Huon Valley Council in partnership with the Child and Family Centre are building a 30 place childcare facility. The Huon Valley Council Childcare Services will be co-located at the Centre to provide childcare.

An adjunct care room and a training room will be part of this building as well. This stage of construction should be finished by December 2012, to coincide with the expansion of the maternal health services.

### Service Provision

The Centre is providing services to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families and children. Currently the regular playgroup consists of 44 children, 17 of which are Aboriginal.

#### Services provided now:

- A fortnightly playgroup called Oonah is run by an Aboriginal person from SETAC and provides cultural activities
- Dad's Day Out group once a month facilitated by the Aboriginal Community Inclusion Worker (CIW)

- Parenting group called Empowering Parents and Empowering Communities – this group is facilitated by trained community member
- Young Parent’s Activity Group (YPAG) – co-facilitated by the Aboriginal Community Inclusion Worker (CIW)
- Baby chat café – a volunteer run baby’s group with the support of a Child a Health Nurse
- A mobile story book library that services other local playgroups
- Outreach in the form of home visits
- The Mooditj Sexual Health program will run at the high school for 10 weeks and then moving around Southern Tasmania – the Centre’s Aboriginal Community Inclusion worker will facilitate this
- The Centre staff coordinate the annual Billy cart derby, with more than 300 people in attendance
- The Centre has partnered with the LINC to facilitate adult education programs– e.g. Certificate I and II in Computer Literacy.
- Good Beginnings is also based at the Centre – they are establishing the Volunteer Family Support Program for the Huon Valley.

Services planned:

- SETAC will have a room at the Centre, in which they will deliver Early Childhood Development/Learning programs for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families. SETAC will also be responsible for delivering cultural awareness training for the Centre staff.
- The midwife and pregnancy support services will be up and running by the end of 2012.
- Child health services will run out of a room in the long building.

Down the track, further partnerships will be explored with services within the community, such as Community House at Geeveston. The Centre is also developing a framework for a referral network for youth services in the Huon Valley region.

The LEG is largely responsible for deciding on the service mix for the Centre. The LEG have run workshops in the community to ask, ‘what services do you wish for that will help realise your dreams for your kids?’ The LEG has identified a checklist and is ticking off the projects as they go. The Centre staff continually refer to the checklist with the LEG and assess what’s working and what’s not.

**Employment and Workforce Development**

All workers, with the exception of the Centre Leader, are Huon Valley locals and one of the Community inclusion workers identifies as Aboriginal.

Currently employed are:

- Child and Family Centre Leader
- Provisional Psychologist
- 2 x Community inclusion workers
- Good Beginnings Family Support Coordinator trains community members to be able to support families with young children.

- Volunteer: Aunty Cheryl, an Aboriginal Elder supporting various programs, an inspiration for the centre.

One young Aboriginal woman is hoping to commence training as a pregnancy support worker. The Centre is hoping to work with the child health nurse from SETAC.

SETAC are always on the interview panel for any recruitment that takes place. The Centre is very keen to employ more local Aboriginal staff in the future.





**Secretariat of National  
Aboriginal and Islander  
Child Care**

The national peak body for  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander child and family services

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