

FAMILY WELLBEING [FWB] NEWSLETTER

Issue 1

August 2016



Image adapted from Spiritual Connection by Senimelia Kingsburra

Hello,

I'm Yvonne Cadet James. I'm Professor of Indigenous studies at James Cook University (JCU). Over the past 16 years I have worked as part of different teams facilitating and researching the FWB program in many communities and organisations across Australia.



The purpose of this newsletter is to give the FWB network the opportunity to share information and work out ways we can better support each other. This newsletter is intended to connect the FWB network nationally. We'd like your suggestions and ideas on how we can make the newsletter meaningful to the national FWB network.

"The FWB is really good. You get to meet new people & bond with them. Learn more about your Culture and responsibilities in life to be a good man. You get to feel safe and have a yarn whenever you need too"

Participant 2015

"I considered myself illiterate. I was pretty insecure. Once I did [the program] I had more than I believed I had. Then I went to college and studied counselling. I had to write assignments. I hadn't been to school since I was 14"

Course participant

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NSW CCPC FWB participants earlier in 2016

What's been happening since the Adelaide Roundtable

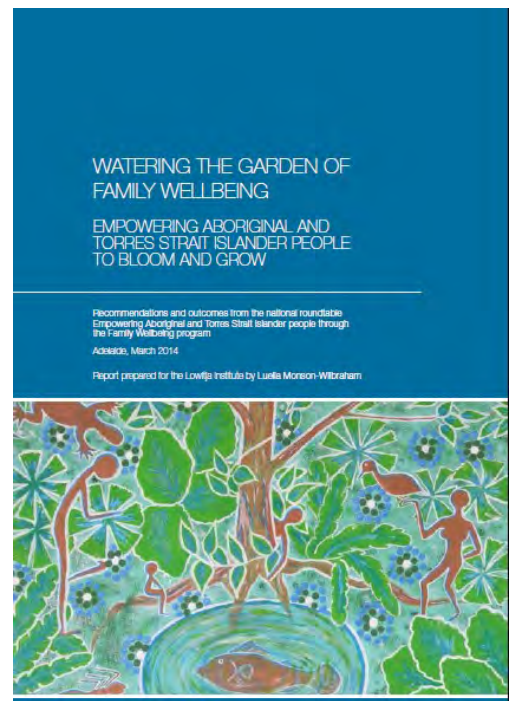


Participants at the Lowitja National Roundtable for FWB in Adelaide 2014

In March 2014, [The Lowitja Institute](#) convened a national roundtable in Adelaide to consider the impact of FWB and opportunities for future development. Approximately 50 participants attended the Roundtable from across community, training and delivery, research and policy sectors, and shared their experiences of FWB and focused on finding strategies to support the delivery, research and uptake of the FWB program.

Roundtable discussions underlined how the program's empowerment model builds the evidence base that social and emotional wellbeing programs effectively improve people's lives and provide a promising and practical way to help bridge the gap between Australia's First Peoples and the non-Indigenous population.

One of the recommendations from the report [[click on the report to download it](#)] is to build a sustainable FWB support network. This FWB newsletter is the first baby step towards that goal and hence people should feel free to use the newsletter as an opportunity to help build a network. Northern Territory and South Australia we hope to see your stories in the next edition. We would like to canvas interest for a workshop to help you with writing short FWB newsletter stories. Please email catherine.brown1@jcu.edu.au if you are interested in the workshop also tell us other ways we can help spread the FWB Program sustainably. **[NEXT FWB NEWS-LETTER DUE OUT DECEMBER 2016](#)**



Participants at the Lowitja National Roundtable for FWB in Adelaide 2014



Participants at the Lowitja National Roundtable for FWB in Adelaide 2014

NSW Central Coast Primary Care FWB Program

NSW Central Coast Primary Care has been running FWB for young people since 2014. They produce their own newsletter. The contents of this page is reproduced from their newsletter so it can reach the wider FWB network.

What an amazing journey it has been for the Family Wellbeing mob. As some of you may know, our Term 2 2016 High School Male, and Female Groups are coming into their final fortnight for the program. FWB conducted its first ever Pilot Female only group program which demonstrated the need for empowerment in our young Aboriginal Woman. With this opportunity it has given Central Coast Primary Care a snapshot into the data needed to look at opportunities for the future around an ongoing Female only group



As per funding confirmation, FWB has been given another green light for ongoing work over the next financial year. This is great news moving forward into the much needed development of our young Koori lads into Central Coast Leaders. With this being said, myself (Ben Glover), and Nigel Millgate would like to open up our Term 3 2016 registrations to Central Coast High Schools for our Young Men's Program. Term 3 Program will see FWB utilising Wyoming Youth Centre as per the fantastic opportunities provided to us by RYSS (Regional Youth Support Services) once again. Use of this facility



FWB Female Program RYSS Wyoming Youth Centre Elders Art Day, and visit to The Rig 24/7 Gym The Entrance



has allowed for a comfortable and friendly space in which FWB is able to deliver their program to Young Aboriginal Men between the ages of 14-18 years. If you have a young fulla who meets this criteria, and feel that with some positive role models, leadership, culture, socialising, and a great feed can attend our 9 week program in Term 3, then please don't hesitate to contact me prior to the end of School Term 2 (01/07/16). Places will be very limited to 10 spot only for the next round of Program so be sure to refer on as soon as possible. This terms registrations saw a large number of young men having to miss out due to late referrals. If your School missed out on this opportunity this term, please be sure to refer on asap for next term to secure a place.



With School based relationships strengthening within the FWB Program, we will be looking at opportunities to expand into in-School mini programs consisting of condensed program packaging and cultural exposure. There has already been some talk of this with some of the Schools on the Central Coast. If you would like to take part in some of these fantastic opportunities for the future please contact me (Ben Glover) on 0432 353 451, or via email

FWB Female/Male Program Culture Site visits, Wishing Nails Pamper Day, and visits to Sommersby Falls & The Glen

ben@ccpc.com.au to arrange for a meet and yarn at your School to



NSW Central Coast Primary Care FWB Program cont'd

discuss FWB and its future Cultural Development with our Youth. As an addition to this, under certain circumstances you may have young offenders who require Work and Development Orders to help clear some accumulating debts. FWB is an approved activity which can allow for WDO's to be issued. **Don't forget, all programs by Central Coast Primary Care Family Wellbeing Program are free of charge!**



FWB Male Program RYSS Wyoming Youth Centre, and Wyong Golf Club Pro Trainer Program for FWB Leadership Group



Towards a sustainable FWB practice framework

Act for Kids are familiar with the FWB Program because many of their staff have been through the program previously and provided positive feedback. In fact, former participants encourage others to do the program, creating an opportunity for continued engagement with FWB facilitators. With this in mind, a team at JCU lead by Komla Tsey are exploring ways to use Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) principles to develop, implement and evaluate a sustainable approach to incorporating FWB in the practice framework at Act for Kids, so that Indigenous children in remote communities can have brighter futures.

Still in its initial stages of development, the JCU team will work closely with Act for Kids, the Centre of Research Excellence in Quality Improvement (CREQI) and the local communities to identify and implement FWB in a sustainable way to promote continued benefits for the community, families, young people and the Act for Kids staff working in community-based Safe Houses. The team envisage that a 'sustainable way' will reflect a practice framework that is embedded in Act for Kids' existing work systems. Therefore, in the long-term, maintaining the FWB practice framework will be feasible using existing financial, human, infrastructure and community resources. Once implemented, the collaborative (JCU, Act for Kids and CREQI) will evaluate the sustainability of the FWB practice framework, with a view to sharing these findings which contribute to our understanding of how FWB can be implemented sustainably in different communities across a variety of service organisations and sectors. Please see the Act for Kids appeal for funds on page 5

Left to right: Madeline Lea, Komla Tsey, Victoria Drew, Paul Harris and Robyn Moylan, Leigh-Ann Onnis





6 WAYS YOU CAN (EASILY) SPREAD THE WORD AND HELP RAISE \$150,000 FOR CHARITY



For every \$2,000 raised via the 2016 Mental Health Super Summit, **Act for Kids** can help a child overcome their experiences through integrated therapy. With your help, we can have a **direct impact in the lives of at least 75 children** across the nation - helping them lead safer and more fulfilling lives, free from abuse and neglect.

Here's what you can do to help:

1 Join the Summit Facebook Event page. Invite all your professional friends to join too. And post something on your Facebook wall about it! Here's the link to the page: <http://bit.ly/2016mhss-fb>

2 Email your professional friends, colleagues and wider email contact list a link the Summit registration page, and invite them to join the event: <http://bit.ly/2016mhss>

3 If you're on Twitter, tweet about the Summit, sharing a link to the registration page, using the hashtag: **#2016MHSS**

4 Print the Summit flyer and pin it on your workplace notice board and other relevant places. You can download a copy of the flyer here: <http://bit.ly/2016mhss-flyer>

5 Post a link to the Summit on LinkedIn - or any other social media outlets you use. If you have a blog or website, write about it. If you have an email list, let your subscribers know.

6 Talk to your workplace supervisors and managers, and ask if they could send out information about the Summit to company staff and relevant industry contacts.

What you choose to do can make a real difference in young lives around the country. Thanks for your support.

Find out more about the Summit at: www.mentalhealthacademy.com.au/summit





[Interview with Mr Leslie Baird on the Family Wellbeing Program \(video\)](#)

[Mr Leslie Baird on the Family Wellbeing Program \(video\)](#)

The journey of Family Wellbeing into western NSW

Since the start of 2014, researchers from the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) at the University of NSW have been working closely with local Aboriginal community members and organisations to implement a variety of activities within three core programs, all aimed at reducing alcohol related harms among Aboriginal people in Griffith, Narrandera and Lake Cargelligo/Murrin Bridge (regional NSW). The three program areas are designed to reduce the opportunities for alcohol harm to occur, to increase people's sense of empowerment and to better utilise the existing services in the communities.

To increase the sense of empowerment, the Family Wellbeing has been implemented as part of this project. In November 2014, eight workers from the [Griffith Aboriginal Medical Services \(GAMS\)](#) and Centacare started their journey in FWB. Led by [Melissa Haswell](#) and co-facilitated by Teresa Gibson, Lyndon Reilly and Megan Williams they completed all five stages of the program. Though not all of them have delivered their own groups since then, they have highlighted that FWB has had a big impact on how they work with their clients in a one-on-one basis or in other group settings. Even when they are not delivering FWB groups as such, they have found it to be really beneficial to pick FWB topics and integrate these in their service delivery, such as the group agreement, the relationship triangles and the life journey.

Four of the eight facilitators have spread the FWB love to Narrandera and Lake Cargelligo by providing FWB groups to the local community and workers, resulting in another 7 local workers completing the 5 stages. Since then, FWB groups have been delivered to girls who are disengaged from school, men returning to the community from prison and clients at Tirkandi Inaburra (a residential youth centre aiming to build cultural identity and empower young boys). The program has been received positively by the participants in these groups. They report to feel more confident and they love the way FWB makes them look at situations differently. The facilitators are looking forward to delivering more groups to the community soon.



The first eight FWB facilitators in Griffith are proud to have finished the whole program — *The Area News* 9/8/16

If I had a wish.....!

Over a series of workshops in 2015, staff members of the [Indigenous Empowerment Team](#) at The Cairns Institute, James Cook University, Cairns administered all 4 stages of the [Family Wellbeing Program](#) to Department of Education and Training Transition Support Services staff.

As a research officer in the team and a non-Indigenous woman originally from Germany, I felt privileged to have been invited to participate in all workshops and activities. As well as being awarded a Family Wellbeing certificate at the end, I found the course content to be of immense value to my own personal growth. As the course is structured in way that all new knowledge is to applied straight away in group activities, role plays and feedback, I felt a sense of wholesomeness and empowerment.

The session "Life Journey" at the beginning of the training was the most profound experience for myself and probably also for other group members. Hearing about my fellow participant's lives, allowed me to put my own story into perspective. Everybody's story is valuable, and everybody's story is real. There is no judgement on who's got it worse or better than me. This particular activity created trust and respect among participants and facilitators, which set the scene for the journey we embarked on together.

Family Wellbeing makes you think about your behaviour, your thoughts, and actions in order to create new solutions for some of the problems you are facing. It also empowers you to get clear about your boundaries; how far you are prepared to go and when to say 'NO'. If I had a wish, I would like to see Family Wellbeing become part of Primary and High School Curriculum across the country to create a new generation of resilient individuals.

Marion Heyeres, July 2016



We are pleased to announce FWB will be delivered for the first time in Mildura in late August this year, through [Mallee District Aboriginal Services \(MDAS\)](#). MDAS was keen to pilot FWB after undertaking research on ice use in Mildura, with Sarah MacLean from [La Trobe University](#) and colleagues at the Onemda Koori Health Unit. This research highlighted the vital role of families in helping people to give up using ice, but also the need to support and strengthen families affected by drug use. MDAS are keen to learn if FWB can help families to cope with this really difficult issue.

Workers from a range of different early years and family services have RSVP'd to attend the training which will be run by [Mary Whiteside](#) from La Trobe and Sandra Nolan, manager of the Koorie Education West Division in Victoria. Sarah and Mary will lead the evaluation with support from other La Trobe researchers and members of the Mildura community. We'll let you know how it goes!



New publications

Connecting and strengthening young Aboriginal men: A family wellbeing pilot study

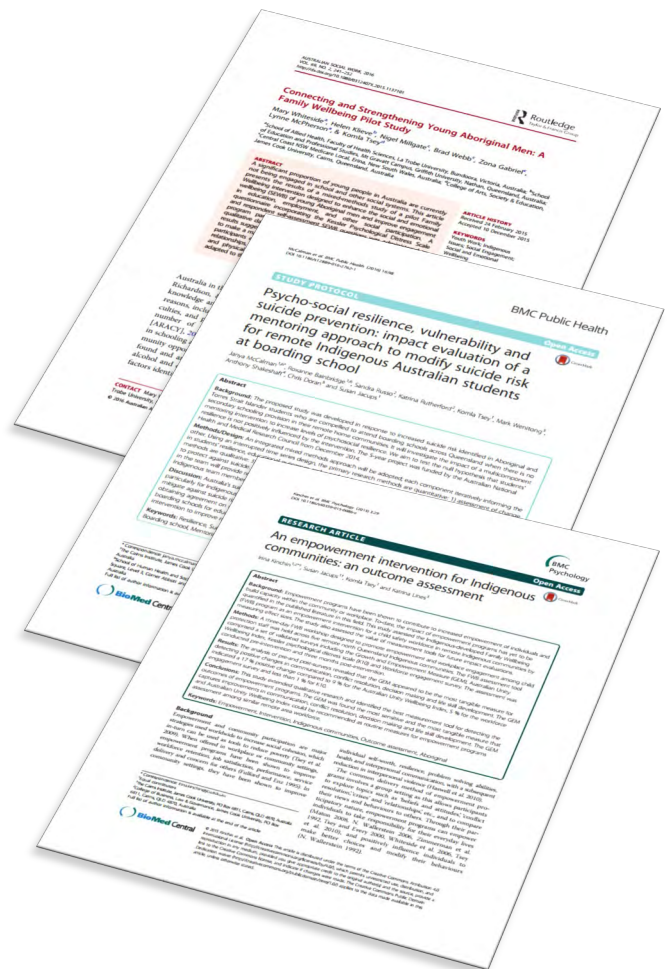
Mary Whiteside, Helen Klieve, Nigel Millgate, Brad Webb, Zona Gabriel, Lynne McPherson & Komla Tsey
Australian Social Work, 69:2, pp. 241-252
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2015.1137101>

Psycho-social resilience, vulnerability and suicide prevention: Impact evaluation of a mentoring approach to modify suicide risk for remote Indigenous Australian students at boarding school

Janya McCalman, Roxanne Bainbridge, Sandra Russo, Katrina Rutherford, Komla Tsey, Mark Wenitong, Anthony Shakeshaft, Chris Doran & Susan Jacups
BMC Public Health, 16:98
<https://bmcpubhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-016-2762-1>

An empowerment intervention for Indigenous communities: An outcome assessment

Irina Kinchin, Susan Jacups, Komla Tsey & Katrina Lines
BMC Psychology, 3:29
<https://bmcp psychology.biomedcentral.com/>



Contact Us

Give us a call to have a yarn about your FWB stories.

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Australia's National Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research

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