

FAMILY WELLBEING [FWB] NEWSLETTER

Issue 5

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CEO's Report

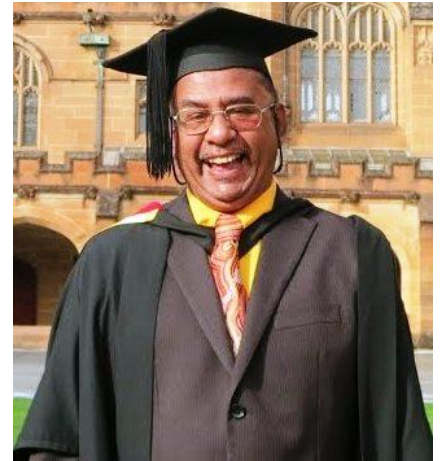
In the last three months all of the staff have been very busy at the National Centre for Family Well Being [NCFWB] in The Cairns Institute at James Cook University located in Smithfield. Myself and Leigh-Ann have had our contracts increased to manage new projects and build up our NCFWB.

I would like to give you some background as to how the National Centre for Family Well Being became established. In March 2014, Lowitja Institute conducted a two day Family Well Being roundtable in Adelaide in which they brought together 53 stakeholders who have been involved in FWB as a trainer, facilitator, or researcher; the idea was to share their knowledge and experience of Family Well Being over 21 years.

The aim of the Adelaide FWB roundtable was to develop collaborative partnerships to support longer-term implementation and evaluation of FWB. Some of the things covered were stories from community organisations in different states who ran FWB programs. Researchers talked about FWB research and their findings, and training organisations such as Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, TAFE SA and James Cook University Empowerment Research Program shared their experience regarding FWB.

The workshop was exciting as this was the first time that people came together for the one common purpose of talking about FWB and everyone agreed that FWB is the best practice model of social and emotional well-being program and that it needs to be promoted.

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"I have a bigger family now, my Family Wellbeing mob are everywhere.

The two days shared by people from all over Australia confirmed that the Family Wellbeing Program has all the essential ingredients of a highly valued, very powerful program that helps individuals, groups and communities achieve positive change and better outcomes. It should be supported to achieve its full potential.

Thank you Lowitja – the sharing of stories, being inspired again, and networking."

Lowitja Family Wellbeing Roundtable participant , March 2014

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Image adapted from Spiritual Connection by Senimelia Kingsburra

CEO's Report cont'd



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Participants were asked to jot down key messages. These messages were collected and analysed bringing together five themes; or calls for action to take forward: 1. Strengthen the evidence base; 2. Strengthen links to policy; 3. Coordinate the program; 4. Promote and advocate FWB; and 5. Connect the FWB family.

As a result of the Adelaide roundtable, Lowitja Institute gave funds to James Cook University to address the five key themes within the National Centre for Family Well Being. So the foundation of NCFWB comes from the Adelaide FWB roundtable's Momentum for Action.

One of these messages was, *"FWB survived 21 years of ad hoc spread and it hasn't died away like other programs. This indicates that there is a significant case of worthwhile and meaningful activity for Aboriginal people that needs to be focused and amplified in a coordinated way in the future."*

It has been an honor and privilege to be the first CEO of the NCFWB. We are currently working on our business model, our vision, our commitment, our values and principles. As we grow and develop we will keep you informed every step of the way. One of our major goals is to establish collaborative partnerships with FWB organizations such as TAFE SA, Batchelor Institute, James Cook University, La Trobe University, Griffith University and our three innovation hubs that we support. Innovations hubs, located in Gosford, NSW, Mildura, Vic, and Cairns, Qld, are all working on delivering Family Well Being to clients to bring better outcomes for their families. We held an Advisory Group meeting in August this year which our partners attended.

As we move towards the close of the year for 2017 I would like to say Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our Family Well Being Family and look forward to a deadly 2018.



The journey of connecting through Aunty Jeans & the Family Wellbeing Program (Walking two worlds)



Nigel Millgate prepares the group for the day

In September, the Family Wellbeing [FWB] duo Nigel and Ben lead the NSW Central Coast Primary Care [CCPC] [Aunty Jeans Chronic Disease Outreach Program](#) on a cultural journey through Wonnarua/Awabakal/Darkinjung country (Yango National Park - Laguna NSW) on a beautiful spring day.

With the CCPC bus loaded to max capacity, and my Subaru Forester, we transported 11 elders and James (Aunty Jeans Exercise Physiologist) lead by Aunty Dianne O'Brien & Bridgette Roberts onto a spiritual journey of cultural discovery at Yengo National Park. Upon arriving at our first destination (Finchley lookout), the elders group were greeted to local cultural stories which spoke of the creation animals and the role they played in local Aboriginal dream time, right through to stories of "Baiame" – the creator also known as Father to our people who stepped off beautiful Mt Yengo and walked country.

After taking in the stories, sites, and sounds we travelled across to Finchley Campground where the group was treated to a traditional smoking ceremony to welcome us as guests onto Country, and to also gain a better understanding of the significance a smoking ceremony has from a cultural perspective. Nigel conducted a tour for the group which enabled them to access a small

cave embedded into the mountain with modern day ochre hand prints and discuss the traditional meaning behind how this ceremonial practice takes place. While this experience was happening, Bridgette and I prepared a beautiful 5 star BBQ experience for the group. Unfortunately being a high wind and high fire danger kind of day, we did resort to some modern day instruments known as the two burner BBQ and a gas can to cook up some sangaz, chicken, and beef patties!

To finish the day, the group were taken to a special family site known to the local groups as "Map Site" which was used for thousands of years of traditional learning and ceremony through rock site engravings - now I can't give away too much of what they

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CCPC staff and clients at Laguna NSW

The journey of connecting through Aunty Jeans & the Family Wellbeing Program (Walking two worlds)

CCPC group at the lookout



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experienced at this site so maybe you might have to take the time to come out for an experience yourself one day.

Overall the group respected and appreciated the knowledge that us young men had shared with them, and it was an honour for myself and Nigel to be given the privilege to share knowledge with our local elders group which has been passed down to us through our ancestors, and cultural Uncles/Aunties.

In October, eight members of the Aunty Jeans program attended Central Coast Primary Care to engage in their Day 1 of Family Wellbeing Train the Trainer program. During this time the group were provided education and background into the foundations of the Family Wellbeing origins, and guided through the course content delivery just like we would for our current high school groups. The group was able to gain insight into the training techniques that Nigel and I incorporate into the program through counselling foundations of motivational interviewing, and cognitive behavioural therapy used to empower participants of the FWB program. The group is due to complete their 2nd day of training later on in October where they will be tasked with a topic in pairs to present to the others as facilitators.



CCPC group attending Train the Trainer program at Gosford

Ben Cheniart
Family Wellbeing Project Officer CCPC

Success with Family Wellbeing training in Mannum

The Mannum Community Hub recently opened its doors to offer Family Wellbeing training to the local community for the first time.

TAFE SA's Aboriginal Access Centre delivered a Certificate II in Family Wellbeing, a course that has long been sought after by the Mannum Community College for their community.

Students, parents and community members gathered for a ceremony in September, that saw seven participants graduate in Mannum. The day was celebrated with the presentation of certificates and a shared lunch.

The Family Wellbeing program was designed by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and is an education and counselling skills program focused on relationship skills, coping with grief and loss and understanding the issues of family violence.

The course was part of the Family Wellbeing: Strengthening Aboriginal Identity Project, funded by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

TAFE SA Family Wellbeing lecturer Shirley Prider said the focus of the training is always on 'healing'.

"This Mannum group have been on a journey together with each taking a different pathway but coming together to support each other," Ms Prider said.

Graduate, Angela Cooper, was asked about the changes she had made in her life and the skills she had developed since starting the course.

"I see things from a more positive view now, more than I used to."

"I know more about myself and I am more resilient. I consider I am better at listening, have more empathy, feel I understand people more and am able to help them," Angela said.

TAFE SA's Aboriginal Access Centre will continue to offer the Certificate II in Family Wellbeing across South Australia in rural and metropolitan regions.

For information about the course or how to enrol please contact Robin Pedler, TAFE SA Aboriginal Access Centre, Family Wellbeing lecturer on 08 8688 3607.



Picture from Left to Right: Tamiera Giles, Gloria Ebsworth, Lorraine Kartinyeri, Bindi Barker, Rohann Scott (behind), Angie Cook (front), Angela Cooper and Shirley Prider (Lecturer)

Managing social change in China

During September, I travelled to China where Komla Tsey has been supporting Family Wellbeing research and teaching with Li Yan and Yang Yinghong from the Shenyang University of Chemical Technology, Liaoning Province. It was a fascinating trip. A highlight was meeting students in the Colleges of Economics and Management. Komla, Li Yan and I ran a 'refresher' workshop for students who had done Family Wellbeing previously and also some students new to the program. Students particularly liked the Human Qualities topic and it was interesting to hear



Shenyang University students writing human qualities

some of the human qualities they identified as being important to them. These included being dutiful, humorous, gentle, frank, honest, kind, hardworking and optimistic. We are currently writing up the Family Wellbeing China intervention for publication. A key finding is that Family Wellbeing is very relevant for preparing people to manage all of the social change occurring in China and that they are keen for the program to continue. In the first photo you can see students writing these qualities on the board, in Mandarin and in English. In the second photo, Li Yan is summarising these qualities for students.



Li Yan reading students ideas about human qualities

Mary Whiteside
La Trobe University

Publications & links

- Kinchin, I., Doran, C. M., McCalman, J., Jacups, S., Tsey, K., Lines, K., . . . Searles, A. (2017). Delivering an empowerment intervention to a remote Indigenous child safety workforce: Its economic cost from an agency perspective. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 64(Supplement C), 85-89. doi:[10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2017.05.017](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2017.05.017)
- McCalman, J., Heyeres, M., Campbell, S., Bainbridge, R., Chamberlain, C., Strobel, N., & Ruben, A. (2017). Family-centred interventions by primary healthcare services for Indigenous early childhood wellbeing in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States: a systematic scoping review. *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, 17, 1-21. doi:[10.1002/14651858.CD012463](https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD012463)
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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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