Strengthening collaboration and practice across the early years
10-11 September 2015, Cairns, AUSTRALIA

The Conference is financially support by the Australian Government
Early Years Conference

Today’s Children Tomorrow’s Future

Strengthening collaboration and practice across the early years

The Conference Organising Committee would like to welcome you all to the Early Years Conference 2015. It is an honour and a privilege to be part of this wonderful conference. We are especially fortunate to be able to host the conference at The Cairns Institute, James Cook University in Tropical North Queensland, where the rainforest meets the Great Barrier Reef.

The conference has been developed and co-funded through a unique collaboration of government and non-government agencies who are leading the way in supporting children and families in the region and beyond. The five year vision is for this national conference to be the number one conference choice for practitioners, policy makers and senior managers to both enjoy the Region’s attractions but collaborate and disseminate best international research on strategies to improve outcomes for children and families.

We are excited that the conference has attracted such a high calibre of keynote speakers and we take this opportunity to thank them for their participation.

We would also like to thank all of the presenters who have submitted extremely relevant and engaging papers and believe that the papers and workshops that will be held will benefit all who attend.

We have worked tirelessly to develop a program and format that we hope will showcase Australian research, effective parental engagement programs, and examples of flourishing communities as well as programs that centre on prevention, early intervention, evidence and a commitment to the child (birth to 12).

We hope you enjoy the Conference and look forward to receiving your feedback

2015 Early Years Conference Committee
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Brown</td>
<td>Program Manager, Communities for Children, Mission Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phil Flint</td>
<td>Mission Australia Area Manager, North Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Giacomi</td>
<td>Principal Community Services Officer, Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwen Kemp</td>
<td>Child Youth &amp; Family Health Team, QLD Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damien Knight</td>
<td>Benevolent Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Leafa</td>
<td>Mission Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer McHugh</td>
<td>Events and Project Manager, The Cairns Institute, James Cook University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April Schipke</td>
<td>Director, Early Childhood Education and Care, Department of Education and Training, Far North Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claudine Wiesner</td>
<td>Benevolent Society, Acting Manager, Cairns Early Years Centre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contents

OPENING CEREMONY .............................................................................................................. 1
PROGRAM .................................................................................................................................. 2
VENUE MAP: Ground Floor .................................................................................................... 7
VENUE MAP: First Floor ........................................................................................................ 8
KEYNOTE BIOGRAPHIES ....................................................................................................... 9
KEYNOTE ABSTRACTS ........................................................................................................... 11
PRESENTER ABSTRACTS ....................................................................................................... 13
PANEL ....................................................................................................................................... 31
Panel Biographies .................................................................................................................... 31
PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES ................................................................................................... 33
AUTHOR INDEX ..................................................................................................................... 45
OPENING CEREMONY

DATE: 10 September 2015
VENUE: The Cairns Institute
TIME: 8:45-9:15am

Professor Stewart Lockie is the Director of The Cairns Institute, James Cook University. Bringing together the expertise and intellectual resources of more than 20 disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, The Cairns Institute is a uniquely robust and vibrant hub of research, capacity building and public debate in the tropics, for the tropics.

The Welcome to Country performance will be by Traditional Owners, the Wuba Red Ochre Dancers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:15 - 9:00am</td>
<td>Conference registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45 - 9:15am</td>
<td>Conference opening&lt;br&gt;• Welcome to The Cairns Institute, James Cook University by the Director, Professor Stewart Lockie&lt;br&gt;• Traditional Welcome Performance&lt;br&gt;Welcome to The Early Years Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15 - 10:15am</td>
<td><strong>Keynote Presentation</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;strong&gt;The critical importance of early childhood in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health&lt;/strong&gt;&lt;br&gt;Dr Mark Wenitong&lt;br&gt;Public Health Medical Advisor at Apunipima Cape York Health Council, &amp; Adjunct Associate Professor, JCU, School of Tropical Public Health&lt;br&gt;MC, Professor Stewart Lockie, The Cairns Institute, JCU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15 - 10:40am</td>
<td>Morning Tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes</td>
<td>Australian research &amp; evidence based practice &amp; Pedagogy&lt;br&gt;Session Chair: Sarah Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective parental engagement programs&lt;br&gt;Session Chair: Damien Knight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Australian research &amp; evidence based practice&lt;br&gt;Session Chair: April SchipkeTBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prevention &amp; early intervention &amp; Examples of flourishing and sustainable communities&lt;br&gt;Session Chair: Claudine Wiesner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective parental engagement programs &amp; Multiple Themes&lt;br&gt;Session Chair: Rebecca Giacomi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:40 - 11:00am</td>
<td><strong>20 minute papers</strong>&lt;br&gt;Lynden Lauer&lt;br&gt;Australian Early Development Census (AEDC): From evidence to action&lt;br&gt;Gwenneth Yeatman &amp; Graham Burridge&lt;br&gt;Footprints in the Sand&lt;br&gt;Tess Boyle&lt;br&gt;Transitions to school: Reframing professional relationships&lt;br&gt;Brett Lush&lt;br&gt;The Nerang Early Years Network Story&lt;br&gt;Danielle Waugh &amp; Alisha Lyngcoln&lt;br&gt;Parenting strategies to help support young children through parental separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:05</td>
<td>Short break to switch sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 11:05 - 11:25am  | 20 minute papers                                                        | Jessie Jovanovic, C. Brebner, A. Lawless, & J. Young  
Relational pedagogy with infants & toddlers: The foundation of childcare teachers’ early communication development & learning work  
Kathryn Mannion, Rosetta Brim & Ben Walker  
Families as First Teachers  
Denise Angelo & Cath Hudson  
Knowing what we don’t know: evidence-based claims about English language learners and absent language data  
Kathryn Rendell, Jane Harpley & Paula Dickson  
…and the children’s songs echoed: Using Evidence Based Social and Emotional Wellbeing programs to enhance outcomes for children  
Cassie Kemp, Emily Welham & Fiona Hiatt  
Young Parents Group: An Early Intervention Program Engaging Vulnerable Parents |
| 11:30 - 12:15pm  | Keynote Presentation                                                    | Research on teaching and learning in the early years – some evidence to provoke local debate.  
Professor Collette Tayler  
Chief Investigator on the E4Kids study and Chair in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) at the University of Melbourne’s Graduate School of Education  
MC, April Schipke, Department of Education and Training |
| 12:15-1:15pm   | Lunch                                                                   |                                                                                               |
| 1:15 - 2:15pm  | Keynote Presentation                                                    | How are our children, families and communities doing?  
Dr Yasmin Harman-Smith  
Research Fellow at the Telethon Kids Institute and Deputy Director of the Fraser Mustard Centre in South Australia  
MC, Claudine Wiesner, Benevolent Society |
| Themes         | Effective parental engagement programs & Multiple Themes                | Chair: Phil Flint  
Prevention and early intervention  
Chair: Gwen Kemp  
Australian research & evidence based practice  
Chair: April Schipke  
Multiple Themes  
Chair: Claudine Wiesner |
| 2:15 - 3:00pm  | 45 minute workshops                                                      | Claire Campbell, Leanne Dalley-Trim & Lorraine Cordukes  
Engaging with families and strengthening learning partnerships: A Case Study  
Linda Shannon  
Mental health and wellbeing in Early Childhood – shared understandings and our role as early childhood educators  
Amanda Croker & S. Fox  
The Nest – National Development; Local Application  
Eve Harris, C. Glass-Pattison & Cherie Nay  
Closing the gap: How we can all do more: Improving outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, clients and their children in early year's settings |
<p>| 3:00-4:15      | Afternoon Tea                                                           |                                                                                               |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3:30-4:15pm</td>
<td>Kathryn Meldrum</td>
<td>Finding quiet time: Strategies to support the mental health of young children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Damien Knight</td>
<td>Reimagining the service system – How the ingredients of an interdisciplinary approach, sustained collaboration and a universal service platform can achieve better outcomes for families and children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Courtney Farley &amp; Cassy Nancarrow</td>
<td>Enabling school policy implementation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are learners of Standard Australian English as an additional language/dialect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kym Macfarlane, Geraldine Harris &amp; Debbie Miscamble</td>
<td>Innovation in a research partnership: Enacting high quality early intervention and prevention in a Communities for Children program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DAY 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 - 9:15am</td>
<td>House keeping Phil to MC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15 - 10:15am</td>
<td><strong>Keynote Presentation</strong></td>
<td>Advancing Collaboration And Evidence-Based Practice To Promote Children's Healthy Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brian Bumbarger</td>
<td>Assistant Director for Knowledge Translation and Dissemination at the Prevention Research Center at Penn State University, and Adjunct Research Fellow at the Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance at Griffith University (Queensland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MC, Phil Flint, Mission Australia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15-10:45am</td>
<td>Morning Tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes</td>
<td>Multiple Themes &amp; Australian research and evidence based practice</td>
<td>Effective parental engagement programs &amp; Multiple Themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chair: April Schipke</td>
<td>Chair: Phil Flint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective parental engagement programs &amp; Multiple Themes</td>
<td>Chair: Rebecca Giacomi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Australian research and evidence based practice</td>
<td>Chair: Damien Knight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45-11:05am</td>
<td><strong>Rebecca Hand, Rowena Shirtcliff &amp; Melissa Kidd</strong>&lt;br&gt;Great Start, Great Futures: A lead model to activating high quality Principal leadership in early childhood development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15-11:20am</td>
<td>Short break to switch sessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:20 - 11:40am</td>
<td><strong>Siek Toon Khoo, M. Meiers &amp; A. Fraser</strong>&lt;br&gt;Monitoring developmental growth with Early Start</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:45 - 12:30pm</td>
<td><strong>Sarah Brown, Jenny Chaves &amp; Kerry Banks</strong>&lt;br&gt;Tailored localised approaches to early learning and parental engagement through a Communities for Children lens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30-1:20pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: It appears there may be a typographical error in the time period for the 10:45-11:05am, 11:15-11:20am, and 11:45 - 12:30pm sessions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:20 – 2:05pm</td>
<td><strong>45 minute workshops</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Main Theatre</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Prevention and early intervention</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chair: Rebecca Giacomi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Multiple Themes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chair: Claudine Wiesner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Prevention and early intervention &amp; Pedagogy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chair: April Schipke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Australian research and evidence based practice/ Pedagogy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Session Chair: Damien Knight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>D3.063</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>D3.059</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>D3.144</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>D4.149</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:20 – 2:05pm</td>
<td><strong>Joanne Borg &amp; Amanda Ireland</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Taking Responsibility, a Roadmap for Queensland Child Protection: A Regional Perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:20 – 2:05pm</td>
<td><strong>Marie Stuart &amp; Susan Todhunter</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Transition to School – a shared partnership’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:20 – 2:05pm</td>
<td><strong>Kia Morton</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Response to Intervention in the Early Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:20 – 2:05pm</td>
<td><strong>Ros Moriarty</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- How an innovative change in paradigm from program-centric to connectedness and wellbeing is underpinning sustainable gains in early childhood development, in partnership with remote region Aboriginal families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:05 – 2:10pm</td>
<td>Short break before community panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:10 – 3:40pm</td>
<td>Community Panel: Improving collaboration to address complex issues and achieve better outcomes for children and families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Panel members:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Brian Bumbarger, Assistant Director for Knowledge Translation and Dissemination at the Prevention Research Center at Penn State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Amanda Croker, QLD Coordinator for Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Jennifer Sewter, Apunipima Health Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Siobhan Jackson, Principal Lockhart State School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- April Schipke, Director, Early Childhood Education and Care, Department of Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Geoff Woolcock, Manager, Research &amp; Strategy at Wesley Mission Brisbane and Adjunct Associate Professor at Griffith University and QUT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Each panel member will discuss their views on how to improve collaboration to address complex issues and achieve better outcomes for children and families. This will be followed by questions from the audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A collaborative approach represents an acknowledgement of the limitations of a siloed service system. Agencies that work alone (i.e., in &quot;silos&quot;) often struggle to tackle significant, intractable problems or meet the needs of those with multiple and complex issues. A siloed service system typically cannot meet the needs of families with multiple and complex problems as effectively as agencies that work in collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:40 – 3:50pm</td>
<td>Close of Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:50pm</td>
<td>Afternoon Tea and close of conference networking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VENUE MAP: Ground Floor
VENUE MAP: First Floor
KEYNOTE BIOGRAPHIES

Dr Mark Wenitong
Mark Wenitong (Adjunct Associate Professor, James Cook University, College of Medicine & Dentistry) is from Kabi Kabi tribal group of South Queensland. He is the Public Health Medical Advisor at Apunipima Cape York Health Council, where he is working on health reform across the Cape York Aboriginal communities. He was the Senior Medical Officer at Wuchopperen Health Services in Cairns for the previous nine years.

Dr Wenitong is a past president and founder of the Australian Indigenous Doctors’ Association and was a member on the National Health and Medical Research Committee - National Health Committee for the last three triennium. He is Chair of the Andrology Australia- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Male Reference Group and sits on several other committees. He is a council member of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and a member of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council.

Professor Collette Tayler
Collette Tayler is a Chief Investigator on the E4Kids study and she holds the Chair in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) at the University of Melbourne’s Graduate School of Education. She researches child learning and development, program effectiveness, policy and strategy and is the academic leader of the Master of Teaching Early Childhood (0-8 years) course.

Collette is the Deputy Chair of the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority, and a Board member of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Other projects include the development and conduct of lead assessor training to support the implementation of the National Quality Standards Assessment Rating process across Australia.

Dr Yasmin Harman-Smith
Dr Harman-Smith is a Research Fellow at the Telethon Kids Institute and is the Deputy Director of the Fraser Mustard Centre in South Australia. Since joining the Institute, Yasmin’s work has focused on measuring collaborative approaches to service provision in the community; with an interest in developing an understanding of what works and what doesn’t work for service providers and importantly for children and families. Presently, Yasmin manages national support services to AEDC Coordinators and the Australian Government Department for Education and Training for the Australian Early Development Census programme.
Brian Bumbarger

Brian Bumbarger is the Assistant Director for Knowledge Translation and Dissemination at the Prevention Research Center at Penn State University, and an Adjunct Research Fellow at the Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance at Griffith University (Queensland). He is the Principal Investigator and Founding Director of the Evidence-based Prevention and Intervention Support Center (www.EPISCenter.org), an intermediary organisation supporting the scale-up of more than 300 evidence-based program replications and community prevention coalitions throughout Pennsylvania.

For nearly two decades, Brian has conducted research on the dissemination, implementation, and sustainment of evidence-based programs and practices. He has been the principal investigator on several longitudinal studies of program implementation, effectiveness and sustainability, and has published a number of articles, book chapters and state and federal policy papers on prevention and implementation science. Brian serves on federal Expert Panels for the National Institute on Drug Abuse, US Department of Education, the Centers for Disease Control, and the Administration for Children and Families, and regularly provides testimony before state legislatures, Congress, and to governments internationally. In 2012 Brian was elected to the Board of Directors of the international Society for Prevention Research, and was the recipient of the Society’s 2014 Translational Science Award for his research on evidence-based practices.
KEYNOTE ABSTRACTS

The critical importance of early childhood in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health

Dr Mark Wenitong
Public Health Medical Advisor at Apunipima Cape York Health Council, & Adjunct Associate Professor, JCU, School of Tropical Public Health

The contemporary narrative of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health may be significantly related to emerging themes in terms of both in-utero and early childhood events. In applying this emerging evidence, particularly in the remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community context, we may be able to develop more sophisticated interventions that can address both current health and generational health issues. While we use the SNAP (stop Smoking, better Nutrition, less Alcohol, more Physical exercise) framework for mostly adult chronic disease prevention, this may be too late for most effective health gains, and we may need to concentrate more effort and resources on early childhood approaches. This presentation summarises some of the emerging evidence and the potential application in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

Research on teaching and learning in the early years – some evidence to provoke local debate.

Collette Tayler
Chair of Early Childhood Education and Care, The Melbourne Graduate School of Education

Recent evidence on how Australian young children aged 3-5 years are tracking as they move into school, and the kind of learning and development programs they experience will be described in order to explore a number of active ingredients for advancing early learning, development and wellbeing. Early education ‘method’ used by educators and teachers to facilitate children’s development is the subject for critical review. Evidence from the E4Kids longitudinal study, some small experimental studies to promote children’s attention and language, 3a (Abecedarian Approach Australia) studies in Aboriginal communities and a leadership and improvement study - the Victorian Advancing Early Learning project - will be used to highlight active ingredients for conference participants to consider. Some priorities for improving the effectiveness of working with young children and families are posed, and open to debate in light of the evidence provided.

How are our children, families and communities doing?

Dr Yasmin Harman-Smith
Fraser Mustard Centre in South Australia

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a national triennial data collection of child development for children in their first year of full time school. The AEDC provides a holistic picture of children’s development and is a predictor of later health, wellbeing, and academic achievement. The environments and experiences children are exposed to from pregnancy shape their development. Recognising the influences on children’s development can provide communities with the opportunity to consider what is working well and what needs to be improved or developed to better support children and their families. The AEDC shows that families in all communities need supports and services. The data helps service providers consider what supports families may need, how best to identify and reach families who need supports, and what barriers families face to accessing services and supports. Although there is a social gradient in child development and there are challenges in
improving these outcomes in the face of complex and compounded disadvantage, there are communities that are doing better than would be expected. Understanding what is happening in these communities can help us to better support children and families

**Advancing collaboration and evidence-based practice to promote children’s healthy development**

Brian Bumbarger

Assistant Director for Knowledge Translation and Dissemination at the Prevention Research Center at Penn State University and Adjunct Research Fellow at the Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance at Griffith University (Queensland)

Every day new research emerges that increases our understanding of how to promote the healthy development of children and young people, and the important role of both individuals and communities in achieving the best outcomes for every child. But the social safety net of service systems, schools, and community providers we rely on to help children and families has existed, relatively unchanged, for decades...even centuries. Any time a significant new technology is introduced, it takes time to fully develop and optimize the infrastructure necessary to take full advantage of that new technology. Our recent “enlightenment” about healthy child development is no different. How can we re-imagine and re-structure our child-serving systems to reflect the latest research and how can we support communities to maximize their collective impact on children in the early years and beyond?
Australian Early Development Census (AEDC): From evidence to action

Lynden Lauer
Early Childhood Education and Care Division, Department of Education and Training
Lynden.lauer@dete.qld.gov.au

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) provides vital information about how children are faring as they enter their first year of schooling.

Collected every three years by teachers in Prep, the Census instrument measures children’s development across five domains that are strong predictors of later life outcomes:

- Physical health and wellbeing
- Social competence
- Emotional maturity
- Language and cognitive skills (school-based)
- Communication skills and general knowledge.

Since the release of the first national AEDC data in 2009, communities around Australia have used the AEDC to inform their efforts in supporting young children and families to get the best start in life.

The presentation will showcase how Queensland early childhood educators and services, community groups, schools and governments have used AEDC data to:

- Plan and support children’s successful transition to school
- Raise awareness of the importance of children’s early years
- Inform programming, planning and quality improvement at early childhood education and care centre-based services
- Act as a platform for collaborative community partnerships.

Footprints in the Sand

Gwenneth Yeatman and Graham Burridge (Dip. Management, Dip Public Safety)
graham.burridge@pcyc.org.au

“Footprints in the Sand” (FITS) is a family oriented program developed for residents of the discrete Indigenous community of Yarrabah in Far North Queensland by resident Gwenneth Yeatman. It aims to connect families, youth and children with counselling, advice and relaxation away from the subtle and not-so-subtle nuances of community lifestyles in an “on-country” beachside camp. The program is delivered through the Yarrabah Police Citizens Youth Club under the supervision of Branch Manager, Graham Burridge. FITS connects with local, state and NGO stakeholders to deliver practical sessions on finance, health, culture, lifestyle choices, drugs, alcohol and gambling. Sessions are informal and can be as simple as a walk along the beach yarning about issues with professional guidance.

A raft of activities such as fishing, hunting and gathering, arts and crafts and board-games for the little ones is developed for each camp. Camps are held in school holiday periods and normally last for one week. The program has now been developed for expansion to any community whether indigenous or not—the principles remain constant—simple life skills and advice in a non-confrontational camp setting. FITS has run successfully in Yarrabah for six years and won a Regional Crime Prevention Award in 2014.
Transitions to school: Reframing professional relationships

Tess Boyle
Southern Cross University
tess.boyle@scu.edu.au

Discontinuities in children’s experience arising from systemic splits between pre-compulsory and compulsory early years education impact on transitions to school. Split systems have adverse effects on children due to differences in understandings of children, program content and pedagogical approaches. However, transitions are influenced not only by the structural context, but also by relationship factors, which include both linkages between stakeholders and the personal interactions through which linkages operate. Respectful professional relationships provide a context for negotiation of transitions approaches that enhance continuity for children and empower teachers as collaborative decision-makers.

This paper presents data from a teacher participatory action research project about transitions between the year before compulsory schooling and the first year of schooling in New South Wales, Australia. The project’s aim was to investigate how transitions to school might be enhanced by deeper professional relationships and shared understandings between teachers from both sectors. The participants, four teachers and two executive staff, drawn from both sectors, were supported by the school education authority through the provision of release time to meet as a professional learning community (PLC). Data analysis identified factors influencing the formation of cross-sectorial professional relationships as meeting places for teachers to interrogate opportunities for continuity. The participants negotiated differences within the communicative space afforded by the PLC to establish shared understandings of program content and approaches, and co-develop transition practices while respecting pedagogies valued in their settings. Affording opportunities for these teachers to develop more equitable relationships has led to transformative change to transition practices and policy.

The Nerang Early Years Network story

Brett R. Lush
The Benevolent Society
Brett.lush@benevolent.org.au

The absence of a well-coordinated early childhood service sector in a community considerably reduces the opportunities to intervene early in children’s lives. This is especially true for vulnerable children and families.

The transition from Kindergarten to Prep can be a time of susceptibility for many. Yet with some planning, a community can work together to make this time of transition a real strength for children, families, Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services and schools. Transition to Prep is a perfect and unique opportunity to engage meaningfully and deliberately with vulnerable children and families. Creating a platform in a community to help facilitate discussions and build relationships between ECECs, Schools, Health services and a community delivers substantial benefits.

Recognising the overwhelming evidence of the critical and fragile nature of the first five (5) years of a child’s life, the North Gold Coast Early Years Centre built an Early Years Network, a community platform to enable and encourage key foundation builders in a child’s life to work more collaboratively.

The connections and relationships built through this community platform not only supports smooth school transitions, but it also helps the sector identify children who may not be reaching their developmental milestones and intervene early to help them reach further toward their potential.

This presentation is a summary of our journey, the obstacles we faced and how we overcame them, the expansion of our model across other parts of our city and some suggestions on how others can do the same.

Parenting strategies to help support young children through parental separation
Danielle Waugh and Alisha Lyngcoln
Relationships Australia (QLD) FNQ Venue
RADMIN@raq.org.au

Our 20 minute presentation will discuss parenting strategies for helping to support young children through parental separation. The presentation will cover the impact of separation and conflict on children, their developmental needs and skills for parents and carers to support young children through parental separation. Research has shown that a close co-parenting alliance and parents’ focus on children’s needs will enhance their sense of security, safety and stability and is key to a child’s adjustment to separation. Potential signs and symptoms indicating children are struggling with adjustment, guidelines of age appropriate care arrangements and strategies to support young children will be explored. The presentation is based on Relationships Australia (QLD) effective post-separation programs which include Parenting Orders Program, Children’s Contact Service and Family Dispute Resolution.

Workshop

Relational pedagogy with infants & toddlers: The foundation of childcare teachers’ early communication development & learning work

Jessie Jovanovic, C. Brebner, A. Lawless, and J. Young

1School of Education, Flinders University
2School of Health Sciences, Flinders University
jessie.jovanovic@flinders.edu.au

Relationships with children are an established component of early childhood education and care, and are deeply embedded in the contemporary national and international policy contexts. Recent changes to Australian national law, regulations, curriculum, and quality standards espouse secure attachment relationships as a foundational requirement of interdisciplinary work in the early years. Yet the advanced discipline-specific knowledge and practices that childcare teachers bring to this work has largely gone unrecognised. This paper seeks to give voice to their professional expertise, presenting focus group data from a recent South Australian study (n = 8 Early Childhood Education & Care Services (ECECS); n = 19 teachers) that sought to investigate how infant-toddler childcare teachers understand and support very young children’s early communication and attachment development.

Infant-toddler childcare teachers described strategies and approaches to their early communication teaching and learning that were inextricably bound to their relational pedagogy, seeing secure attachment relationships as a supportive mechanism for speech development and language-learning. Their grasp of very young children’s sophisticated socio-emotional and linguistic capabilities and the subtle nuances of forging and sustaining effective, ongoing communication with families were at odds, however, with the conflicting and contradictory range of pedagogical practices they described to elucidate such early learning and development. Building on the depth of these childcare teachers’ expertise, we will explore the implications that this relational pedagogic knowledge may have on their professional development training needs, and on the wider positioning of their emotionally-intensive work within a broader social milieu, using a strengths-based approach.
Families as First Teachers

Kathryn Mannion, Rosetta Brim & Ben Walker
Department of Education and Training
kathryn.mannion@dete.qld.gov.au

The Families as First Teachers (FaFT) program is designed to empower Indigenous families and nurture children within the context of early years education. The FaFT program was developed in Kuranda in response to the specific literacy and numeracy needs of Indigenous children. There is a plethora of current research that identifies the first years of a child’s life as being critical learning years.

FaFT is a holistic program that addresses the importance of engaging families in their children’s early literacy and numeracy development and at the same time building parental skills. This program offers a culturally responsive pedagogy whereby FaFT presenters model child centred activities, to build parental understandings and make the transition from home to school a little easier. Adult participants are empowered to engage in activities that add value to their children’s formal school education. Indigenous social and learning styles value intergenerational activity which is utilised in the FaFT model.

In this presentation we will present the FaFT approach, our framework for operation and briefly outline how Yunkaporta’s (2009) Eight Ways Pedagogical Framework for Indigenous learners has influenced our practice. The Eight Ways Framework, acknowledges Indigenous ways of knowing, being, doing and valuing. FaFT has embedded these foundational elements into our early childhood space.

Knowing what we don’t know: evidence-based claims about English language learners and absent language data

Denise Angelo and Cath Hudson
Australian National University
denise.angelo@anu.edu.au

Children’s early years profoundly affect their education and life trajectories. Systems are, therefore, increasingly using data to ensure optimal evidence-based practices in this sector. But herein lies a snag. To what extent is our data really able to illuminate issues accurately and to discern improvement? Does our data include the most operative variables? Is our data in fact accurate? How is our data filtered and obscured by the understandings of participants and stakeholders?

This paper offers a glimpse into the demonstrably largely invisible world of language data in Australia, particularly—but not exclusively—for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with contact language backgrounds. We explain that there are complex and costly ramifications when children who are adding proficiency in Standard Australian English to their existing language repertoires are positioned not as flourishing multilinguals but as (failing) monolinguals with deficits. We propose that the term “evidence-based” cannot be applied in contexts of linguistic complexity when language data is lacking or inaccurate. Minimally, where systems deliver services through English, these systems need to critically examine whether their data is able to differentiate between children who speak English fluently and those who are acquiring English in addition to their first language(s). For this to occur, relevant policies, professional capacities and systemic processes need to be developed and consistently supported. These steps are no quick fix. However, they are vital to prevent what we don’t know from being inflicted on young and vulnerable learners and impacting on their futures.
...and the children’s songs echoed: Using evidence based social and emotional wellbeing programs to enhance outcomes for children

Kathryn Rendell, Jane Harpley and Paula Dickson
Goodstart Early Learning
krendell1@goodstart.org.au

In 2014, Goodstart Early Learning introduced an intensive approach in high priority areas to increase the proportion of children whose learning, development and wellbeing outcomes at school entry support them to be fully participating citizens.

Goodstart’s Manunda and Innisfail centres have drawn from a menu of evidence based programs to enhance the capacity of our educators to provide the best possible opportunities for children’s learning and development.

Educators have used the Wings and MindUp programs to improve children’s social and emotional wellbeing and have developed stronger links with other community services to facilitate a no wrong door approach.

Evaluation of the approach is being undertaken by the University of Wollongong.

This presentation tells the story of the change in both centres that has resulted in more engaged and connected early learning services that provide a range of supports for children and their families.

Young Parents Group: An early intervention program engaging vulnerable parents

Cassie Kemp¹, Emily Welham¹, and Fiona Hiatt²

¹Cairns Early Years Centre, The Benevolent Society
²Cairns Early Years Centre, Queensland Health

cassie.kemp@benevolent.org.au

The Young Parents Group at the Cairns Early Years Centre is designed as a multidisciplinary, relationship-based program intended to engage parents under the age of 25. The Young Parents group, grounded in attachment theory, utilises the practices of Marte Meo, Circle of Security and Incredible Years and other early intervention approaches to create a safe environment where parents can strengthen relationships with their children through play and learning together. We aim to empower parents and increase parenting confidence while supporting them to take an active role in their community and improve their own quality of life.

This presentation will introduce the context of young parents; outline the development of a young parent group including our multidisciplinary team, outcomes and goals; discuss findings from our young parent survey and present a case study that illustrates the effectiveness of a holistic approach to early intervention and parenting as a young person.
Workshop

Engaging with families and strengthening learning partnerships: A case study

Claire Campbell, Leanne Dalley-Trim, and Lorraine Cordukes

College of Arts, Society and Education, James Cook University, Townsville

Claire.campbell2@jcu.edu.au

This presentation will discuss the findings from a research project that investigated how one regional state school in Queensland, Australia strengthened its approach to parent engagement to develop effective learning partnerships with families. The Principal of Sunshine State School (pseudonym), a medium sized P-6 school in a regional town, had identified the need for gaining further understanding of parents’ perceptions of, and engagement with, the Early Years Education Programs delivered in the school. Also, she was keen to include parent perspectives in the school’s customised approach to parent engagement. Therefore, a small team of researchers at James Cook University were engaged to conduct the research.

Data were collected via a qualitative case study method that included six semi-structured focus group interviews with consenting parents of children enrolled in the Preparatory year level at the school. Interview recordings were transcribed and thematic data analysis revealed that parents identified three key barriers to their engagement with the school—communication, consistency and family commitments. This presentation will reveal how the participants transformed the three identified barriers to become ‘enablers’ that fostered the development of effective learning partnerships between families and schools. Furthermore, examples of how the school used the findings from this research to customise the school’s approach to parent engagement, Preparatory Orientation Programs and parent-school communication processes will also be explored.

This research contributes to the body of knowledge on parent engagement practices in early childhood education settings and emphasises the importance of a customised, evidence based approach to parent engagement that is informed by parents.

Workshop

Mental health and wellbeing in early childhood – shared understandings and our role as early childhood educators

Linda Shannon

Department of Education and Training

Linda.Shannon@dete.qld.gov.au

The purpose of the 20 minute presentation is to use the “Connections” materials to develop a shared understanding and language about mental health and wellbeing in early childhood and to develop an awareness of why early childhood is an important time to consider mental health. Activities will include:

1. reflecting on key concepts, e.g., mental health and wellbeing, social and emotional wellbeing, resilience, mental illness, mental health difficulties;
2. using case studies and the “Dual Continua Model of Mental Health” to understand the continuum of these concepts and the possible needs of students; and
3. outlining the role of early childhood educators in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children.


Workshop

*The Nest – National development; local application*

Amanda J. Croker and S. Fox

Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth

[amanda.croker@aracy.org.au](mailto:amanda.croker@aracy.org.au)

The Nest has been developed by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) through consulting with Australia’s children and youth about what matters to them about a happy and healthy life. It outlines six overarching outcomes and a set of common national indicators that all child, youth and family services can work towards.

The Nest sets some bold goals for action, providing evidence-based, preventive focussed priority directions, and supports the development of further evidence. Central to this agenda is working to get evidence-based programs, practices and tools into service delivery at scale and across the systems that ensure child and youth wellbeing. The Nest is foundational to a range of collective impact initiatives and accountability measures across Australia. This presentation will provide an outline of The Nest, how it is being used and future potential.

*Closing the gap: How we can all do more: Improving outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, clients and their children in early year's settings*

Eve Harris, Caroline. Glass-Pattison and Cherie Nay

Benevolent Society

[eve.harris@benevolent.org.au](mailto:eve.harris@benevolent.org.au)

The Benevolent Society's (TBS) vision for reconciliation is a journey of living, breathing and walking together to close the gap. Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Walking Together is our roadmap. Our RAP was developed in 2011 through a year long consultation with leaders in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, Reconciliation Australia and other not-for-profit organisations. The organisation committed to a three year plan from 2012-15 in the areas of relationships, respect and opportunities.

This workshop will provide an overview of TBS's RAP development and implementation, it's impact on our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, clients and their children in an early years setting plus Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partner organisations. By attending this workshop participants will gain:

- An understanding of the lessons learnt developing a Reconciliation Action Plan across a large, diverse organisation including the process of establishing an organisational Cultural Respect Committee.
- An overview of findings from a research project scoping best practice partnership models, including real life examples of best practice from our Early Years Centres (EYC) in Queensland. EYCs provide early intervention and prevention with a collaborative approach to early childhood education, family support and health services with integration and partnerships as the central theme in planning service delivery.
- Examples of how we are 'closing the gap' in service delivery at a local level to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait children and their families.
- Share best practice perspectives to generate ideas to take back to their workplaces.
Workshop

Finding quiet time: Strategies to support the mental health of young children

Kathryn Meldrum
Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement, James Cook University

Kathryn.meldrum@jcu.edu.au

Supporting the mental health of young children and providing them with strategies to ensure long term wellbeing should begin as soon as they are able to ‘make sense’ of an approach to practice. ‘Finding quiet time’ offers an approach to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of young children through a pedagogy, curriculum and an evaluation framework designed for children aged four to eight years. Suitable for home and care/school-based practice the aim of ‘Finding quiet time’ is to assist children to find a ‘space in their head’ for quietness, a time to stop and be still. The pedagogy, curriculum and evaluation framework have been developed through engagement with research and practice over several years.

The presentation will engage with links to research, provide a rationale behind the development of the pedagogy, curriculum and evaluation framework and an opportunity for experiential engagement with the resources.

Workshop

Reimagining the service system – How the ingredients of an interdisciplinary approach, sustained collaboration and a universal service platform can achieve better outcomes for families and children

Damien Knight
Integrating Community

Damien@integratingcommunity.com

The case for change within the child protection system has been made and we are all part of it- part of the problem and part of the solution. Re-imagination is required to optimise the opportunity that exists to safeguard children in Queensland. And while the evidence is now largely undisputed around the need to act early and the importance of an effective, universal service platform, parents continue to be bumped across the service landscape until their problems fit a certain criteria.

Challenges around collaboration are not new to anyone and there is no way around the competitive funding environment. So what is the starting point? This paper will bring together the lessons learnt in the rollout of the child protection reforms in the United Kingdom with particular emphasis on the parent’s role in the assessment process. It will also highlight current trends and recent national efforts to develop an interdisciplinary language and reflect on the role of interdisciplinary practice across the “tiers”, “issues” and “ages”. Lastly, the presenter will reflect on the lessons learnt from the last10 years of developing integrated early years services around effective, cultural collaboration. This paper will present considerations for policy, managers and practice leaders involved in the child protection reform, service redesign and partnership development. This presentation will also provide practical guidance on collaboration for frontline practitioners across the health, education and welfare sectors contributing to early intervention practices.
Enabling school policy implementation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are learners of standard Australian English as an additional language/dialect

Courtney Farley
Language Perspectives, Department of Education and Training

Henry.Fraser@dete.qld.gov.au

In state schooling in Queensland, we have policies at state and national levels to support culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Schools and educators are certainly supportive of these in general terms, but how are they put into practice so that students and their families are actually acknowledged and supported in ways intended by these policies?

The Language Perspectives team has been tasked with assisting schools to implement such policies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners who bring their family ways of talking to school with them and are still learning Standard Australian English. This paper reports on two specific learnings from this considerable body of work. The first is the three-way strong approach which provides a framework for conceptualising the complex shifting language ecologies of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and recognising the children as multilingual learners, whose traditional/heritage languages, family ways of talking and Standard Australian English needs are recognised, respected and responded to. The second is a chain of cause and effect whereby educators first become aware of such students’ language backgrounds, then understand additional language learning trajectories. These “requisites” clear the way for teachers to see their role in promoting sophisticated linguistic repertoires and to see the need to augment their teacher toolkit to include language teaching.

Workshop

Innovation in a research partnership: Enacting high quality early intervention and prevention in a Communities for Children program

Kym Macfarlane¹, Ms Geraldine Harris¹ and Ms Debbie Miscamble²

¹The Salvation Army /Griffith University Knowledge Partnership
²Communities for Children Logan, The Salvation Army

k.macfarlane@griffith.edu.au

In Logan City, Queensland, the focus on early intervention and prevention programs is burgeoning. Such a climate has seen The Salvation Army partner with Griffith University to establish The Salvation Army/Griffith University Knowledge Partnership (TSAGUKP) via its Communities for Children Logan (CFCL) program. This Knowledge Partnership has two main tasks. The first is to undertake research into the CFCL drop in centre, The Family Place, in order to design, implement and evaluate a Framework of Practice that will inform the practice of staff at the Family Place and also the CFCL Community Partners. This Framework of Practice will be designed by the main researchers and will be implemented and evaluated by an RHD student. The second task is to tell the story of the CFCL Facilitating Partner by examining the procedural practices that have been undertaken in the process of the design and implementation of its Strategic Plan and the movement to partnership across the sector in Logan.

This paper/workshop will detail the progress of TSAGUKP so far. The presenters will explain the processes that have been undertaken in relation to both of these tasks. They will also highlight how all of this innovation has been put in place against the backdrop of the Logan Together program, which is an initiative of the Logan City Council's City of Choice program. The way in which the two programs have aligned to pursue a common agenda, which is underpinned by a shared language and vision, will be explored.
Great Start, Great Futures: A lead model to activating high quality Principal leadership in early childhood development

Rebecca Hand, Rowena Shirtcliff and Melissa Kidd
Department of Education and Training, Darling Down and South West region
towoomba.oecce@dete.qld.gov.au

Our context: The Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment’s (DETE) Darling Downs South West (DDSW) Region is a vast area west of Brisbane. It covers about 28 per cent of Queensland’s geographic area (about the same size as Victoria). Nearly one in three children starting school in our region are AEDC developmentally vulnerable in one or more domains, compared with one in five children nationally.

A bridging approach: An unrelenting focus on improvement across education sectors has generated momentum in developing relationships between schools, early childhood education and care (ECEC) providers and community-based services to enhance outcomes for children and their transition to school education. However, sometimes the agendas driving initiatives, and the beliefs underlying partnerships and practices, are creating barriers between education sectors, rather than facilitating continuity. Issues such as push-down of foundation level curriculum and pedagogy to the kindergarten context, as well as the creation of school-based pre-prep programs that limit rather than facilitate access to the kindergarten curriculum, are emerging points of tension between ECEC providers, families and schools.

The Great Start, Great Futures Early Years Approach aims to ensure optimal development and learning experiences for all children from conception to 8 by guiding knowledge about early childhood development, and activating through 5 leadership pillars, purposeful use of data, partnership development and multi-level support for vulnerable children and families, optimal transition practices and pedagogical leadership. The approach strengthens the capability of school Principals and community leaders to engage in local partnerships to develop place based, contextualised responses to 0 to 8 within communities and to keep children’s learning switched on. Principals engaging in this approach are coached in approaches that have them stepping back into a ‘Platforms Approach’ to access voices through an ecological framework before proceeding to strategy.

Working together: lessons learnt and outcomes of a collaborative program evaluation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients

Shane Wallace, Lucy Corrigan, Sharman Backhouse and Claudine Wiesner
The Benevolent Society

The benefits of involving clients in the design, implementation and evaluation of programs are widely recognised in the literature. The participation of clients is promoted for reasons of social justice, empowerment, and utility. In particular, it is argued that greater stakeholder engagement results in stronger evaluation designs, enhanced data collection and analysis, and findings that stakeholders understand and use (O’Sullivan, 2012; Rodriguez-Campos, 2012). In addition, clients are considered instrumental to effective decision-making about program improvement, and to a learning process that has implications for social action and change (Cousins & Weaver 2001; Plottu & Plottu 2011).

This presentation will describe a collaborative evaluation pilot undertaken by The Benevolent Society Research and Evaluation team in partnership with program staff and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients on the Parent and Community Engagement (PaCE) program in Cairns. The pilot involved developing a map of community issues and a program logic with program clients and staff, school staff and other stakeholders; consulting with clients regarding appropriate data collection methods; and a community event with a range of stakeholders to disseminate the evaluation findings and facilitate a dialogue about collective community action.

This presentation will also report on the high level results regarding what has been effective in improving parent and community engagement in children’s education, and showcase the way in which our client and
community voices have shaped a number of innovative program activities in response to identified community barriers and needs.

This presentation will be of interest to evaluators, program staff and other stakeholders who are interested in incorporating community voices into evaluation and quality improvement processes with the ultimate aim of improving outcomes for children and their families.

Sing&Grow community partnership with Mission Australia Communities for Children

Jaye Odgers and Lorna Berry
Sing&Grow AUSTRALIA
jayeodgers@singandgrow.org

Sing&Grow AUSTRALIA is a community-driven music therapy project, working to reduce the impact of early adversity within some of Australia’s highest need populations. The project focuses on the parent-child connection in early childhood. Using music as our tool, we create an opportunity for shared music participation to celebrate daily parenting events, and build awareness of new ways to nurture through reflective parenting discussions. Sing&Grow works to promote the strength of family and community as participants experience for themselves the value of connectedness.

Sing&Grow is providing a Community Partnership with Mission Australia Communities for Children Cairns and Yarrabah, and will be delivering music therapy services in collaboration with other family support organisations in the Cairns area over the next 12 months.

The Sing&Grow Community Partnership model provides a Sing&Grow Music Therapist who works in the community for 8 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, delivering Group Programs, Off to School Programs, Workshops, Home Visits and Community Event and Engagement Sessions in areas identified as vulnerable or disadvantaged through recognised data sources and through consultation with other community partners.

This session will discuss the various Sing&Grow services and share referral processes to enable family support organisations to collaborate with Sing&Grow.

Describing preschool children’s numeracy understanding in the “Longitudinal literacy and numeracy study: Transitions from preschool to school”

Kate Reid, C. Ozolins, S-T. Khoo and M. Meiers
Australian Council for Educational Research
Kate.reid@acer.edu.au

The importance of mathematics expertise in education and more broadly in daily life is undeniable. Mathematical thinking is not just developed at school; infants show evidence of responding to quantitative cues. Many preschool children have a well-developed number sense before they start school, but wide variation in understanding is typical. Fostering children’s very early number sense is critical because of the strong connection to their achievement in school mathematics several years later.

For early childhood educators, understanding preschool children’s numeracy skills is important for designing learning contexts that encourage growth in mathematical thinking. Yet for educators, understanding preschool children’s numeracy skills is challenging. Much of the numeracy research has focused on describing individual concepts and rarely considers patterns of performance across a range of activities. There are also few instruments suitable for exploring the range of numeracy skills exhibited by preschool children.

This presentation describes evidence for preschool children’s numerical abilities, drawing on research from psychology, education and neuroscience. We include data from the ACER Longitudinal Literacy and Numeracy Study: Transitions from Preschool to School to describe the numeracy understanding of 219 Australian
preschool children gathered using a purpose-developed one-to-one numeracy interview. This data is from the first year of a longitudinal project investigating growth in literacy and numeracy skills in preschool and the first two years of primary school. Overall, the presentation aims to raise awareness of children’s informal mathematics, and to demonstrate the importance of fostering preschool children’s interest in numeracy.

**Monitoring developmental growth with Early Start**

S.T. Khoo¹, M. Meiers¹ and A. Fraser²

¹Australian Council for Educational Research
²Department of Education and Training

siektoon.khoo@acer.edu.au

DETE Queensland commissioned the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to develop a suite of Early Start literacy and numeracy assessment tasks for use in Prep to Year 2 in state schools across Queensland. The researchers at ACER developed the assessment tasks based on the model established in the ACER Longitudinal Literacy and Numeracy Study (LLANS). This model enables teachers to conduct assessments and collect data to inform teaching and learning based on one-to-one interviews with students. The focus is on monitoring and tailoring teaching to meet each student’s learning needs.

The Early Start assessment tasks developed are for On-entry to Prep, End of Prep, Year 1 and Year 2. The tasks are at increasing levels of difficulty as the students advance in their learning. The LLANS model has the different assessment tasks calibrated onto a common vertical scale to make it possible to compare scale scores from the different tasks over time and to track a student’s progress. With this, the Early Start assessment tasks present additional opportunities for educators to monitor achievement growth over time.

This presentation will describe how these assessment tasks can be used to measure and monitor achievement growth. The monitoring and modelling of developmental growth trajectories can be used to evaluate educational intervention, to assess effects of policy initiatives and in identifying factors influencing development. This presentation will outline some of the applications.

**Infant abusive head injury - prevalence and prevention in Queensland and lessons for Australia**

William Liley¹ & Anne Stephens²

¹Cooktown Medical Centre and Cooktown Multipurpose Health Service, Queensland Health
²The Cairns Institute, James Cook University

William.liley@gmail.com

The ongoing and under recognised disaster within Australian families of inflicted head injury, or Shaken Baby Syndrome, has an evidence based intervention. The Period of Purple Crying intervention was developed in the multicultural Canadian context and is used across North American jurisdictions and various places globally. Delivered without cost to new baby families, the strengths based, education intervention has a growing evidence base, and is available in a not for profit structure for multicultural contemporary Australia. It is also in use in Far North Queensland.

This presentation will discuss the epidemiology of this form of injury, which is similar to the road toll, and many times more frequent than other more highly prioritised paediatric injury. We will describe the program, and trial methodology and practical implementation ideas from what we have learned so far.

We urge primary care professionals of all persuasions in the Australian health and child protection sectors to recognise and intervene to prevent infant head injury, before it is too late.

**Trauma healing at the Clay Field**
Work at the Clay Field is a kinaesthetic motor action combined with sensory perception that will have a lasting therapeutic benefit, especially in cases of developmental delays and trauma healing for adults and children.

Touch is the fundamental of human experiences; our first years of life are dominated by sense of touch. Tactile contact is the first mode of communication we learn. Our earliest body memories and our core attachments are formed, relaying on sensorimotor feedback to feel safe and loved. Sometimes life does not show us touch as a positive experience, this can cause long lasting negative effects on our internal working’s and therefore experience challenges in life.

Work at the Clay Field involves an intense tactile experience linking us to our preverbal stages of life. Clay's beneficial quality allows a therapist to address early attachment issues, developmental setbacks and traumatic events in a primarily nonverbal way, contained in the safety of the setting.

My presentation will include a DVD of a case study with a child at the clay field and my personal experience as a practitioner in working with children.

---

No language learning without language teaching: Standard Australian English use in a classroom in Central Queensland

Henry Fraser
University of Queensland & Language Perspectives, Department of Education and Training
Henry.Fraser@dete.qld.gov.au

In Queensland, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students do not speak English as a First Language. Often, the varieties spoken by these children are contact language varieties historically caused by English, so their language learning needs can be obscured by the similarities between their home language and the language of the classroom. Not being able to fully speak or understand Standard Australian English (SAE), the language of instruction and testing, has been shown to negatively affect success in ongoing education.

My current research describes the experience of a group of Aboriginal students who speak an English-lexified contact language variety as they undertook their first three years of schooling in a Standard Australian English-instructed classroom in Central Queensland. By examining in detail when and why they use SAE articles and demonstratives, I show that, while they are aware that their teacher expects a particular kind of language use for certain classroom activities, they have not been adequately supported to identify this as a language distinct from their own, nor taught how to use it. I argue that this is further evidence for the need of a multi-pronged approach to support these students, including critical language awareness in schools and surrounding communities, policy responses and implementation at state and national levels, and most significantly some actual effective and ongoing language teaching embedded in the curriculum as it is delivered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who need to learn English as an additional language or dialect.
Workshop

**Tailored localised approaches to early learning and parental engagement through a CfC lens**

Sarah Brown¹, Jenny Chaves², Kerrie Banks³ and Nicole Clancy³

¹ Communities for Children – Cairns
² Communities for Children – Inala to Ipswich
³ Communities for Children – Taree

brownsa@missionaustralia.com.au

The presentation will combine three unique and localised Communities for Children initiatives facilitated by Mission Australia and in collaboration with our community partners across Qld and NSW.

CfC Inala to Ipswich will firstly present an introduction to their innovation project 3EL – Early Learning Enriched Language and Early Literacy. Using an innovation design framework to guide each stage—the project focuses on improving engagement with parents and children—achieving “buy in” around early learning literacy and language—acknowledging the significant role parents/carers play in children’s early development. The project will focus on 3 key communities working with soft entry platforms of playgroups to layer evidence based approaches such as the Abecedarian Approach, alongside the Dolly Parton Imagination library to enrich the early learning environment and improve parent child interactions.

CfC Cairns South and Yarrabah will follow and introduce attendees to Paint Cairns South Red along with their new reading trailer resource. In partnership with Paint the Town Red, the Cairns South campaign is aiming to change the culture about early literacy through talking, rhyming, singing, reading and engaging parents in play with their little one every day from birth. The presentation will allow attendees to join the journey and hear about the strategies they are rolling out in the Cairns South Community and how people can get involved. Linkages will also be made to a transition to School project.

CfC Taree will finish the presentation talking about the Barra Marruk program (Circle of Security, Triple P, and Drumbeat). The aim is to increase the early identification of those children at risk, vulnerable and/or in families that highly disengage or difficult to engage, through soft entry points, and personal support to each parent upon first entry to ensure connection is made and comfort level established. There will be a particular focus on practice approaches and principles that prioritise and value relationship based connections.

Apunipima’s “Baby One” Program

Lorraine Ahmat and Jennifer Sewter

Apunipima Cape York Health Council

Lorraine.ahmat@apunipima.org.au

The first 1000 days of life is a critical period when the developing brain sets up the architecture to think, speak, learn and reason and the foundations for development required for a good education and health are laid. Apunipima’s Baby One Program (BOP) initiative is a preventative population based family education program that compliments the maternal and child health programs. It aims to empower health workers to lead and promote positive early development. Preventative education begins during pregnancy and is continued through ‘yarning topics’ during regular family visits up to 1000 days. Quarterly training and support to health workers aims to empower and build their capacity to deliver education.

Pedagogy within the Baby One Program is used by the health workers to exchange health knowledge from the clinical space, quarterly training blocks and external agencies (e.g., Deadly Ears) to the BOP participants in a language that can be heard and understood. Through this process of pedagogy they are taking the mysticism out of the complex health system and empowering families to keep their children healthy and well preventing chronic disease. The health workers assist in keeping clinicians culturally safe and respectful with the families they work with. The clinician/health worker partnership learns from each other by exchanging knowledge in an inclusive way.
This program has come from best practice evidence offering excellence in health care. Apunipima is currently working with JCU and research staff in program evaluation and is currently working on the development of a cohort study through the Baby One Program.

Workshop

*Early writing and English language learners. How mainstream approaches miss the mark and what to do about it*

Tempest Richards-Timoti\(^1\), and Denise Angelo\(^2\)
\(^1\)Language Perspectives, Department of Education and Training
\(^2\)Australian National University and Language Perspectives, Department of Education and Training

Tempest.Timoti-Richards@dete.qld.gov.au

Across Australia, many teachers work in linguistically complex classrooms, but most whole-class literacy programs and teaching resources are not tailored to meet this linguistic diversity. In this paper, a researcher and an educator each offer perspectives on how mainstream approaches to literacy teaching in classrooms typically overlook students who are acquiring English as an additional language/dialect (EAL/D). We unpack the common elements of classroom literacy teaching (with an emphasis on writing) and explain how these can be re-worked to be more inclusive of EAL/D learners who are being taught in whole-class contexts.

This work is of considerable significance to Early Years teachers, advisers and policy makers, because students’ proficiency in Standard Australian English feeds directly into their literacy development and also relates more generally to their understanding of instructional language in classroom learning (where this is delivered through English). If, as some argue, education is becoming increasingly commodified, then we need to ask how educators and administrators are encouraged to interrogate the benefits and pitfalls of ready-made literacy products/programs “for all”.

Workshop

*Kids in Community Study (KICS) – Why do some communities’ children fare better than others?*

Geoff Woolcock\(^1\) and G. Smith\(^{2,3}\)
\(^1\)Wesley Mission Brisbane
\(^2\)Murdoch Children’s Research Institute
\(^3\)Children’s Health Queensland

g.woolcock@wmb.org.au

The Kids in Communities Study (KICS) was established in 2014 to better understand how different factors in our communities—physical environment, social environment, socio-economic factors, access to services, and governance—influence the way that children develop. KICS stemmed from the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) findings. Formerly known as the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), the AEDC is a national census of early childhood development that was conducted across Australia in 2009 and 2012, and is carried out every three years.

This year, KICS is collecting data from at least 18 communities in five states and territories: VIC, NSW, QLD, SA, and ACT. The KICS research team includes academics from six universities, and policymakers and child development professionals from 12 government and non-governmental partner organisations. Two of the three community locations selected in Queensland are Earlville and Manoora and the project is particularly eager to better understand and capture what it is about these areas that might better predict healthier child development.
We have funding from the Australian Research Council and other government and non-government organisations (NGOs) to collect the data we need to learn more about how communities influence child development. We are using a mix of research methods to collect community surveys, surveys with early childhood services, conducting focus groups with parents and practitioners, and holding interviews with local stakeholders. We would also like to map the community’s services and destinations. The conference audience responses to how to most effectively collect the information we need is very important to us, and is essential to the success of our study.

**Workshop**

*Taking responsibility, a roadmap for Queensland child protection: A regional perspective*

Joanne Borg¹ and Amanda Ireland²

¹Far North Queensland Region, Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
²Regional Intake Service, Far North Queensland Region, Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

Joanne.borg@communities.qld.gov.au

The Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry was established on 1 July 2012 with the Honourable Tim Carmody SC appointed as Commissioner. The Inquiry was established to review Queensland child protection services and develop a roadmap for the next decade.

The report, *Taking responsibility: A Roadmap for Queensland child protection* was handed down on 1 July 2013 and made 121 recommendations for comprehensive systemic reform to reduce the number of children and young people in the child protection system; revitalise child protection front line services and family support; and refocus oversight on learning, improving and taking responsibility.

Following endorsement of the recommendations, the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services are progressing a range of initiatives to build a new child and family support system where vulnerable families and children have access to high-quality services at the right time to help them to maintain the family unit.

Children and young people are at the centre of the new system, with supported and supportive parents, families and communities.

This presentation will outline the child protection continuum and how decisions are made; and will showcase the implementation of reforms in the region and the vision for children and families in Far North Queensland.

**Workshop**

*Transition to School – a shared partnership’s.*

Todhunter³ and Marie Stuart²

³Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth
²Early Childhood Education and Care, Metropolitan Region Department of Education and Training

Marie.stuart@dete.qld.gov.au

There is evidence that suggests that children who have a very positive start to school are more likely to engage well with all aspects of school and have later academic and social success. We also suggest that schools who engage well with families and community networks also result in children having a positive experience, which results in better life outcomes.

The Metropolitan Early Childhood Education and Care team in the Queensland Department of Education and Training has engaged in a number of research activities that will support more intense understanding of how we can better support children and families as they enter the school years.
A partnership of government and non-government agencies, the Metropolitan Early Childhood Education and Care Reference Committee was formed to support the region to meet the commitment to optimise learning, wellbeing and development outcomes for children aged 0–8 years. An initiative of this group was a forum ‘Children First—it’s everybody’s business’ where a broad sector of the metropolitan region came together to discuss, prioritise and identify actions to improve the wellbeing and development of children in the Metropolitan region.

200 Voices is a project that investigates how children like to learn from a child’s perspective. We partnered with Griffith University to collect children’s voices within the 3–8 year age range about the ways in which they like and prefer to learn.

We will share information about the development of the two projects and provide preliminary findings.

Response to intervention in the early years

Kia Morton
Department of Education and Training
Kia.morton@dete.qld.gov.au

This presentation will explain how educational organisations can use a Response to Intervention framework to support all students to improve by minimising the risk of long term negative learning and social outcomes. The framework provides support to all students through layers of intervention that increase in intensity and individualisation.

The framework is defined by the principals of high quality curriculum and intentional teaching, the use of valid and reliable assessments aligned with early learning and program standards to make sound instructional decisions, the need for collaboration with families and professionals to guide decision making and the importance of intervening early with children who need additional instructional or behavioural supports.

Workshop

How an innovative change in paradigm from program-centric to connectedness and wellbeing is underpinning sustainable gains in early childhood development, in partnership with remote region Aboriginal families

Ros Moriarty
ros@jumbana.com.au

Children develop in the context of their families and communities. Indigenous children in remote Australia are the nation’s most vulnerable. On every measure of parity, including numeracy, literacy, and physical and mental health, they fall significantly short. Most programs in remote towns focus on specific areas of disadvantage such as literacy, nutrition and school attendance, or operate in single ‘context’ environments such as the crèche or primary school. The Nangala Project operates in the remote NT communities of Borroloola and Robinson River, and has moved away from program-centric thinking, towards an enabling platform of connectedness and wellbeing in partnership with the remote region Aboriginal families the NFP serves.

Daily program delivery of Indi Kindi (early literacy) and John Moriarty Football (soccer) is underpinned by intensively mentoring staff and caregivers to establish highly functional protective relationships with the participating children. Rather than top-down delivery where change is elusive, this organic approach is creating an environment within which families are supported to progress their own change.

The presentation will share the Nangala Project’s methodology and findings, as we develop and apply innovative tools from neuroscience and emotional self-management, to improve child, family and community wellbeing in a remote Aboriginal context. We will present the tenets of our platform: protective relationships,
skill mastery, mental and emotional resilience, nutrition, physical fitness, and leadership of a collective community approach. With an Indigenous-owned parent organisation that has operated for thirty years in remote Australia, The Nangala Project is both an innovator and a realist.

Language for learning

Tempest Richards-Timoti and Rose Callaghan
Language Perspectives, Department of Education and Training
Tempest.Timoti-Richards@dete.qld.gov.au

In Queensland, many classrooms represent linguistically complex spaces where students have a variety of different language backgrounds and varying levels of Standard Australian English proficiency. Mainstream classroom teachers are trained to deliver mainstream curriculum, including literacy and numeracy. They are usually not specifically trained to teach the English language in addition to these other curriculum demands, yet this is actually what policies require.

I report on the Language for Learning (L4L) pedagogical approach which provides a scaffold for teachers’ practice. This consists of a gap analysis for determining students’ learning needs (inclusive of language) in relation to the projected assessment task, a spiral curriculum that revisits and augments language and curriculum concepts, specific example language teaching strategies and activities and a teacher reflection tool for encouraging discussions which triangulate language teaching and teacher confidence with student language proficiency and student achievement. As I have a long history of engagement both as a classroom teacher of Indigenous learners of Standard Australian English and as a coach for teachers in these contexts, I also offer a personal and critical perspective on these elements, how they build on previous initiatives but also how they could be modified in future to improve teacher uptake and student achievement.
About the Panel

The panel brings together a group of experts from diverse backgrounds. Sharing their views about how collaboration can be achieved to address complex issues ensuring collective impact and the best possible outcomes for our families and children. It takes a village not only to raise a child but to ensure the best possible outcomes for our vulnerable children and families. Listening to the views of this group of experts, from a variety of fields, is complemented by the opportunity for the audience to ask questions of the panel to seek greater understanding and clarification of the impact of moving from “siloes” to “communities” of practice.

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much” (Helen Keller-Educator and Journalist)

Panel Biographies

Brian Bumbarger

Brian Bumbarger is the Assistant Director for Knowledge Translation and Dissemination at the Prevention Research Center at Penn State University, and an Adjunct Research Fellow at the Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance at Griffith University (Queensland). He is the Principal Investigator and Founding Director of the Evidence-based Prevention and Intervention Support Center (www.EPISCenter.org), an intermediary organization supporting the scale-up of more than 300 evidence-based program replications and community prevention coalitions throughout Pennsylvania.

For nearly two decades, Brian has conducted research on the dissemination, implementation, and sustainment of evidence-based programs and practices. He has been the principal investigator on several longitudinal studies of program implementation, effectiveness and sustainability, and has published a number of articles, book chapters and state and federal policy papers on prevention and implementation science. Brian serves on federal Expert Panels for the National Institute on Drug Abuse, US Department of Education, the Centers for Disease Control, and the Administration for Children and Families, and regularly provides testimony before state legislatures, Congress, and to governments internationally. In 2012 Brian was elected to the Board of Directors of the international Society for Prevention Research (SPR), and was the recipient of the Society’s 2014 Translational Science Award for his research on evidence-based practices.

Ms Amanda Croker

Amanda Croker is an experienced senior executive across the health, disability and social service sectors. She has held senior executive positions in large not-for-profit and government organisations.

Amanda was the Director of Social Services at Anglicare Southern Queensland, and provided leadership and management for services, including child protection and youth, homeless women and children, counselling and education, mental health, HIV AIDS, employment, disability and refugee programs with over 400 staff and a revenue of $33 million.

She has served as a non-executive director on a range of boards, runs her own consulting business and is the current Qld Convenor for ARACY.
Siobhan Jackson
Siobhan travelled from tropical Far North Queensland to study education in Brisbane in 1982. She began her teaching career in special education in Rockhampton in 1986. Her career has taken her to many places in Australia and overseas, including the UK and Canada. She has worked in many facets of education from infant to adult education. Her leadership roles began in 2005 in rural schools back in Far North Queensland. In 2006 she was appointed to Murray River Upper State School as principal, where she was able to fulfil a life time’s ambition – to work with indigenous students and community.

In 2014 Siobhan moved to Lockhart River State School as principal.

Siobhan is the proud mother of 3 adult children Lucy, Jim and Ned.

She is passionate about education and learning and the opportunities they provide. She is also passionate about closing the gap for indigenous students through respect, high expectations relationships, quality teaching and cultural connection.

She is looking forward to many more years on Cape York Peninsula working in and with indigenous communities.

April Schipke
April commenced her career in 1984 as a preschool teacher in Far North Queensland. With extensive knowledge of and strong passion for the early years, she continued to work in a variety of roles across early childhood education and schooling. Roles included teaching, consultancy and leadership across the Far North Queensland Region.

April is now the Director of Early Childhood Education and Care (FNQ) with a focus on Regulation and Transition. Her role spans the birth to 8 years space, focussing on the early year’s sector, schooling and community. Collaboration and collective impact is at the forefront of her thinking with the best possible outcomes for our families and children now and in the future.

Jennifer Sewter
Mrs Jennifer Sewter is an Aboriginal woman who is employed in the Family Health team at Apunipima Cape York Council. In 2008, she successfully completed a Graduate Diploma in Indigenous Health Promotions at University of Sydney. Jennifer has worked as a Community Development and Health Promotion Officer in the Gulf community of Mornington Island, with Oxfam Australia in the Gulf Regional Health Service, North and West Queensland Primary Health Care as a Community Wellbeing Officer in the Wellbeing Centre and currently Baby One Program/Cairns Home Visiting Team Leader with Apunipima Cape York Health Council.

Geoff Woolcock
Geoff Woolcock is Manager, Research & Strategy at Wesley Mission Brisbane and Adjunct Associate Professor at Griffith University and QUT. He works with a diverse range of public and private sector organisations helping develop whole of community outcome measures for a variety of social interventions, particularly in socio-economically disadvantaged communities. Geoff is especially interested in building more effective evidence of what place-based approaches work to improve children’s wellbeing. He’s a partner investigator in two large national research projects, the Kids in Community Study (KiCS), and CREATE, testing the conditions for collective impact in child wellbeing in a range of Communities for Children sites.
PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

Lorraine Ahmat
Ms Lorraine Ahmat is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman from Cape York who is employed in the Family Health team at Apunipima Cape York Health Council. I am currently studying a Diploma of Business at James Cook University. I have worked in Finance and Administration at Cape York Land Council, KPMG, Tjapukai and CEC Constructions. I am currently employed as Acting Baby One Program Coordinator at Apunipima Cape York Health Council.

Denise Angelo
Denise is currently undertaking a PhD at the Australian National University researching North Australian Kriol. Previously, Denise worked as a linguist in the Northern Territory, where she set up the Katherine Regional Aboriginal Language Centre which supported traditional Aboriginal languages, including school programs, and trained Aboriginal interpreters in Kriol and Warlpiri. Later, she qualified as a primary school teacher and also worked in the early years. Denise went on to work with Language Perspectives for over a decade, focussing on schooling for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who have complex language contact backgrounds and who are learners of Standard Australian English (SAE). She started the Vernacular Language Poster project which depicts ways of talking in various speech communities around Queensland, and has developed classroom teacher resources such as Break it Down, Build it Up planning framework for classroom teachers. She has managed a number of federally funded projects, including the Understanding Children’s Language Acquisition Project which involved early childhood educators from over 50 rural and remote early childhood sites learning about the language backgrounds and multilingual practices of young Indigenous children.

Joanne Borg
Jo was born and raised in Melbourne, Victoria. Her cultural heritage is both Aboriginal and Maltese origin. Jo’s extended family are from Biripi country in Taree NSW, however she has been raised within the Wurundjeri (Melbourne) Aboriginal community. Aside from connections to all Victorian Aboriginal community, Jo also has connections and networks to all Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities in Australia. Jo has worked with many communities over the years, and her networks and connections are extensive. Jo’s current role is the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Regional Practice leader for FNQ. She looks forward to achieving region and system wide improvements in the delivery of culturally responsive child protection practice for the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander children and families within FNQ region and in Queensland. She is enjoying the challenge of the position being a totally new role for Child Safety Queensland, and the opportunity to improve outcomes for all children and families who are clients of Child Safety.
Rosetta Brim
Rosetta is an Indigenous woman from the Djamugay tribe in Kuranda far north Queensland. Born close to MonaMona mission (established in 1913) in Far North Queensland, Rosetta went to Kuranda and Cairns schools. She trained and worked as a ranger with National Parks for some years before commencing work at Kuranda high school as a teacher aide. There she saw firsthand how Aboriginal students find Western schooling so hard. Rosetta co designed the Families as First Teachers program with Kathryn Mannion and Roz Owen in 2005 and works to develop productive partnerships between indigenous families and schools.

Sarah Brown
Sarah Brown works for Mission Australia and has managed the Cairns South and Yarrabah Communities for Children Program for over seven years. Sarah graduated at James Cook University with a Bachelor of Social Work and has added a dual Diploma of Management and Business. Sarah’s previous work in the child protection system initiated her passion for early intervention and prevention and she strives to improve service delivery and outcomes for children and families.

Graham Burridge
Sergeant Graham (Buzzy) Burridge has been a career police officer for 38 years. He has been shot at three times, stabbed twice and has two vertebrae fused in his neck. He wouldn’t swap a minute of it! The past ten years have been spent as the Branch Manager of Yarrabah Police Citizens Youth Club, some 55kms to the south east of Cairns. Yarrabah is the largest discrete Aboriginal community in Australia. Buzzy discovered his passion for Aboriginal and Islander culture when stationed in the Northern Peninsula Area and Torres Strait in the late 1990s, and found a way to further that passion through youth advancement at Yarrabah. He implements licensed and accredited Outside School Hours Care, programs for teenagers until late, sports and recreational activities and oversees many projects for youth and the wider community. He is proud to say that some of the youth who have gone through the club are now university graduates, NRL players or achieving in their chosen careers.

Tess Boyle
Tess Boyle is a Lecturer in the School of Education at Southern Cross University, Australia. Tess has extensive experience across early childhood, primary and secondary education sectors as a teacher, author and teacher educator. Tess’ research interests include transitions to school and university, change theory and critical participatory action research.
Dr Claire Campbell
Dr Claire Campbell is the Early Years Specialist Lecturer within the College of Arts, Society and Education at James Cook University’s Townsville campus. She is the Coordinator of key third and fourth-year subjects in the Bachelor of Education (ECE) degree and Advisor of higher degree by research students. Claire researches: young children’s development, achievement and wellbeing; family-school engagement and effective learning partnerships; and quantitative research methods in education (Item Response Theory [IRT], particularly Rasch analysis).

Claire has contributed to conferences and research symposia across Australia and internationally. She is a member of a number of advisory groups and holds memberships with multiple early years associations and organisations.

Jenny Chaves
Jenny is the Program Manager for Mission Australia’s Communities for Children Inala to Ipswich. Jenny has a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Queensland and a wide range of other professional development certificates and qualifications including community, child and family practice issues, training, management and supervision. Jenny has worked in both the community government sectors for over 25 years in positions focusing on Community Development, Outreach and Engagement, Community Education, Training and Counselling and Management. Jenny has a passion around Early Years Intervention and Prevention utilising an approach which focuses on building Community Capacity through existing Community strengths and assets and has a strong belief in collaborative practice within a strengths and solution focused approach.

Nicole Clancy
Nicole Clancy is the Team Leader for the Connected Families team at Manning Support Services. She manages a team of 11 workers funded under 5 different funding streams who primarily support vulnerable families. She has a Graduate Diploma in Human Services (Child and Adolescent Welfare) obtained from Charles Sturt University in 2002 and also qualifications in Early Childhood. Nicole has previously worked in the Early Childhood setting managing large childcare centres throughout Newcastle. After travelling extensively throughout Australia, Nicole and have family have settled in the Great Lakes Area (NSW). When not working Nicole spends time with two children and husband.

Ms Amanda Croker
Amanda Croker is an experienced senior executive across the health, disability and social service sectors. She has held senior executive positions in large not-for-profit and government organisations.

Amanda was the Director of Social Services at Anglicare Southern Queensland and provided leadership and management for services, including child protection and youth, homeless women and children, counselling and education, mental health, HIV AIDS, employment, disability and refugee programs with over 400 staff and a revenue of $33 million.

She has served as a non-executive director on a range of boards, runs her own consulting business and is the current Qld Convenor for ARACY.
Courtney Farley
Courtney manages the Language Perspectives team under Education Queensland, which supports the language needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students: maintaining and respecting traditional languages, documenting and raising awareness around new contact language varieties and teaching English as an additional language. Courtney has worked as an early years teacher in regional areas of Queensland, both in class and later in lead-teacher advisory roles.

Henry Fraser
Henry completed a linguistics degree in 2009 before working on language documentation, maintenance and revival programs for language centres in Western Australia. He has worked as a researcher for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra, and more recently returned to the University of Queensland to continue research into teaching English as a Second Language to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. He has worked with the Department of Education and Training’s Language Perspectives team in the Indigenous Schooling Support Unit for the last five years as a researcher, materials writer and on community engagement projects. He currently also helps teach the “Teaching English as a Second Language to Indigenous Students” subject to Education students at James Cook University.

Caroline Glass-Pattison
An advocate of rights and social justice for Australian’s First People, Caroline has followed in her Grandmother Polly Moylan-Smith’s footsteps. With an extensive professional career, Caroline has experience working within Indigenous Affairs both government and non-government systems.

With 20 years’ experience working in the Community Services sector, with both Local Government and Not For Profit areas in community development Caroline has now shifted her professional focus to Reconciliation and healing our communities.

Her greatest hope is for the future as a collective of First Nations Peoples, living on the same continent, to recognize the unique environments and differences of all peoples and cultures as a great source of pride for all of us.

Her vision: To hear language of ‘disadvantage’ and ‘gaps’ disappear to be replaced with resilience, survival, excellence and innovation.

“We should acknowledge our past in full, and embrace our future”.

Rebecca Hand
Rebecca Hand is a Director for Early Childhood Education and Care within the Department of Education Training and Employment, Queensland. She has over 25 years’ experience with the early childhood sector. Her roles in early childhood have included teaching K-2, Director of Early Childhood Education and Care Family Service Hubs, and lecturer in Children’s Services. Rebecca has worked in both South Australia and Queensland at both the regional and state-wide public service levels and has enjoyed being involved in the development of strategic early childhood policy development, new funding initiatives and in the implementation of legislation and regulation. In South Australia, while contracted to the Department of Education and Children’s Services, Rebecca also had a key role in the development and delivery of a 5 year leadership program for emerging 0 to 8 early years’ leaders within early childhood service settings. In her current role, Rebecca is particularly passionate about continuity of learning for children as they transition from kindergarten to school and is influencing policy makers, educators, and school and community leaders to develop models of best practice.

Eve Harris
Eve Harris has over 17 years’ experience in the field of integrated services, adult and early education both in Australia and the UK. She was previously a Manager of a Children’s Centre (integrated service hub) in an area of high needs in England previously, Senior Coordinator of Home-Start (offering family support in the home with a team of volunteers), Adult Education tutor for early years professionals and started life in the Early Years Education sector in pre-school and home-based early education. Her current role is Team Leader for the Benevolent Society across 3 Early Years Centre (EYC) Sites in South East Queensland and has been in this position for over for over 4 years. Since arriving in Australia, Eve has been very interested in Aboriginal and Torres Strait customs, traditions and culture. She strives to make a difference in families’ lives.

Fiona Hiatt
Fiona Hiatt is a Child and Family Health Nurse with Queensland Health and is based at the Cairns Early Years Centre in partnership with The Benevolent Society. Fiona has been part of the Early Years team since establishment of the centre in 2011. Fiona has a strong interest in child development, nutrition, and supporting children and families with disabilities.

Catherine Hudson
Cath has worked as an EAL/D language teacher in mainstream school contexts for many years in Queensland. Her research concerns second language assessment and particularly the development of tools for the identification of Indigenous learners as EAL/D learners. She was a member of the teams that developed the original version of the EAL/D Bandscales, a tool for measuring the English language proficiency levels of students that are learning English as an additional language or dialect, and its later adaptations to include Indigenous EAL/D learners. She has also been involved in developing and providing teacher inservices for the use of the Bandscales across many organisations. She is currently a visiting fellow at ANU and is a member of the Language Perspectives team working on EAL/D language assessment.
Amanda Ireland
Amanda was born in Lismore, northern NSW, before relocating to Cairns in 1995 where she completed her schooling and tertiary studies. Amanda has a background in Social Work with a specific focus on child protection, risk assessment and case management. Amanda has spent the previous 9 years working for Department of Communities – Child Safety Services and has experience working across all stages of the practice continuum as both a Child Safety Officer and Senior Team Leader. Amanda’s current role is Senior Team Leader at FNQ Regional Intake Service which holds responsibility for undertaking comprehensive assessments of reports of harm or risk of harm to children. In fulfilling this role, Amanda has developed and sustained strong relationships with key partner agencies and continues to promote robust cross-sectoral participation in responding to families in need.

Jessie Jovanovic
Dr Jovanovic is a Lecturer in Early Childhood and Professional Experience Coordinator at Flinders University. Since joining the Early Childhood team in 2009, Jessie has assisted in the development, design and execution of syllabi for three new degrees in Early Childhood Education. With over 10 years’ experience working with infants and toddlers, Jessie’s research centres primarily on the work of educators in long-day childcare. This research has focussed particularly on the workplace culture and retention of Early Childhood educators, and on pedagogy which supports young children’s early communication and attachment.

Cassie Kemp
Cassie Kemp is a Child and Family Practitioner and Provisional Psychologist at the Cairns Early Years Centre. Cassie has been working at the Early Years Centre for the past 2 years and has particular interests in attachment and children’s social and emotional development. Cassie is passionate about working with children and enjoys co-facilitating targeted groups and parenting programs at the centre.

Siek Toon Khoo
Siek Toon Khoo, BSc Canterbury, DipEd Singapore, MEdSt Monash, PhD UCLA
Dr Siek Toon Khoo is the Director of the Psychometrics and Methodology Research Program at the Australian Council for Educational Research. Dr Khoo earned her PhD in psychometrics and quantitative research methodology at the Graduate School of Education, UCLA. She specialises in psychometrics, measurement issues of educational and psychological constructs, quantitative methodology, longitudinal modelling, structural equation modelling and multilevel modelling. Her specific research interests are in the psychometrics of measuring change, longitudinal program evaluation, the application of statistical modelling to monitoring of educational progress, and assessment in the early years of schooling.
Damien Knight
Damien Knight has been involved in the implementation of child protection and early childhood reforms in the United Kingdom and Australia over the last 15 years. His main interests include integrated service delivery, implementation science and community development. Damien’s passion is to include community and parents in decision making on initiatives that most affect them. Damien is currently the founder and principal consultant for Integrated Community Services Australia whose aim is to bridge the gap between intent and outcomes. Previous to this role Damien was responsible for managing the Cairns Early Years Centre, The North Gold Coast Early Years Centre and implementation of the Labrador Child and Family Centre where he focused on developing an interdisciplinary approach to service delivery. Damien graduated as a social worker in 1997 and completed a post graduate diploma in Integrated Centre Leadership and is a graduate of the inaugural Queensland Social Leadership Program 2010.

Lynden Lauer
Ms Lynden Lauer is Queensland’s Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) coordinator with responsibility for supporting the use of the AEDC by schools, early childhood services and communities to improve early childhood outcomes. Lynden is a Principal Policy Officer in the Early Childhood Education and Care Division, Department of Education and Training.

William Liley
Dr William Liley works in Far North Queensland as a rural generalist general practitioner. He is a Fellow of the RACGP and ACRRM. He has a background in physical therapy and education behaviours interventions. He has a strong interest in violence prevention and with communities on Cape York to enact with their members, social and cultural change.

Brett Lush
Brett began his career in the Gold Coast Real Estate Industry 27 years ago with a clear goal of making lots of money. On his deluded path toward fame and fortune, Brett fell in love and married someone with far more grounded ambitions. Together they parent 3 children aged 11, 13 and 15 who provide them a daily opportunity to debunk their misguided theories in child psychology. Now more passionate about people than money, Brett works for the Benevolent Society as a Community Development Officer trying to build a healthy, connected and caring village that raises healthy and happy children.

Alisha Lyngcoln
Alisha Lyngcoln is the Children’s Contact Service Supervisor at Relationships Australia (QLD) FNQ venue. She has a Bachelor degree in Social Work. Alisha has worked in the child protection sector and post separation services. In Alisha’s various roles she has worked with both professionals and parents focusing on early years, child development, attachment, and trauma. Alisha has a passion for community education, early intervention, and enhancing positive parent-child relationships.
Donna Mahoney
Donna Mahoney is currently a Team Leader with the Family Support Program for Unitingcare Community and operates a private practice—Innate Personal Development & Counselling. She is known for her passion and the work she does with children, adolescents and families. Within her counselling of children she uses many therapeutic approaches and continues to fine tune her skills. Donna is particularly interested in trauma based interventions when working with children. She has trained in Sandplay and Symbol work, Expressive Therapies, Art Therapy and more recently training in Clay Field Therapy. “I cannot change what has happened in a child’s life, however I can change how it impacts the rest of their life”.

Kathryn Mannion
Kathryn’s teaching experience spans 32 years and has been spent mostly in the Top End of Australia in remote Aboriginal communities. These communities have extended from the Pilbara and Kimberley in Western Australia to Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory and now at Kuranda in far north Queensland. She has also worked extensively in ESL contexts, both in Australia and internationally. Kathryn completed a Doctoral degree with a thesis titled A Study of home literacy practices in two Indigenous families and a comparison with school based literacy practices. Kathryn co-designed Families as First Teachers with Rosetta Brim and Roz Owen in 2005.

Kym Macfarlane
Kym Macfarlane has worked in the early childhood sector for many years. She has experience as an early childhood teacher and in higher education in the field of Child and Family Studies in Human Services. She has extensive experience in working and researching practice issues with children 0-18 years and their families. Kym demonstrates a strong understanding of practice related issues in these disciplines and has a particular interest in soft entry early intervention and prevention, universal service delivery and strengths-based practice. She is currently undertaking research in this area.

Cassy Nancarrow
Cassy is an educator and linguist focussing on the Australian languages of North Queensland. Recent projects include a dictionary of Gangalidda (Doomadgee) and multilingual storybooks (Mornington Island). Cassy is an adjunct lecturer with the Language and Culture Research Centre (LCRC) of The Cairns Institute and is currently undertaking a review for the Language Perspectives team of LOTE programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in Queensland.

Jaye Odgers
Jaye is a Registered Music Therapist, who completed her tertiary studies specialising in Music Therapy at the University of Queensland. She has been the session leader for the Sing&Grow program in Far North Queensland for 10 years having facilitated programs from Tully to Kowanyama. Jaye has worked across various early intervention and education settings and has a special interest in child development and the role of music with children with special needs.
Anthony Paulson

Anthony is a proud Worimi man, his grand-mother was a Worimi elder from Forster, Mid North Coast of New South Wales. Anthony completed a trade and in 2002 he joined the New South Wales Police. Anthony was stationed in remote parts of New South Wales. In 2010, Anthony resigned from the New South Wales Police as a Senior Constable to take on the Executive Officers role at an NGO which was an early intervention centre for Aboriginal boys aged 12–15. Whilst undertaking this position Anthony completed a Bachelor of Health Science Mental Health with Charles Sturt University. In late 2012, Anthony returned home to Taree, New South Wales to start his family and entered into the realm of health. Anthony currently co-ordinates the Social Emotional Well-Being Team which is a team of ten Aboriginal Health workers at Biripi Aboriginal Corporation Medical Centre.

Tempest Richards-Timoti

Tempest is an early years teacher who currently works for the Language Perspectives team, training other teachers in best-practice methods for supporting the language learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are learning English as an additional language or dialect.

Jennifer Sewter

Mrs Jennifer Sewter is an Aboriginal woman who is employed in the Family Health team at Apunipima Cape York Council. In 2008, she successfully completed a Graduate Diploma in Indigenous Health Promotions at University of Sydney. Jennifer has worked as a Community Development and Health Promotion Officer in the Gulf community of Mornington Island, with Oxfam Australia in the Gulf Regional Health Service, North and West Queensland Primary Health Care as a Community Wellbeing Officer in the Wellbeing Centre and currently Baby One Program/Cairns Home Visiting Team Leader with Apunipima Cape York Health Council.

Linda Shannon

Linda Shannon is in the role of Guidance Officer Mental Health with Education Queensland. In this role she works with school teams to support them to deliver whole school responses to student mental health and wellbeing. Linda has a keen interest in frameworks like the Learning & Wellbeing Framework and KidsMatter and uses these frameworks to inform much of the work she does with schools. In previous incarnations, Linda has worked as a Guidance Officer in schools near and far in the far north region. She enjoys working with families and school communities to support the learning needs of children.

Anne Stephens

Dr Anne Stephens is a researcher at The Cairns Institute, James Cook University. She enjoys local and international collaborations, always with a focus on education, community development and evaluation research. Anne’s interest is in social inclusion, particularly as this pertains to women and girls.
Marie Stuart

Working in the area of early Intervention and child protection since 1983, Marie Stuart has managed, researched, published and worked in the early childhood and child protection sector. Marie has passionately provided technical consultancy to early childhood programs, taught in early childhood, early intervention and adult education around Australia and the Pacific region. Marie currently works for the QLD Department of Education and Training ECEC as a transition and partnership officer in the metropolitan region.

Susan Todhunter

Susan is the Director, Early Childhood Education and Care for the Brisbane Metropolitan Region in Queensland’s Department of Education and Training. Susan has extensive teaching experience and expertise across a wide range of educational institutions and domains but specialises in the early years. She speaks about early childhood education and care with the passion and knowledge that comes from a lifetime in the field and from educating and caring for several generations of children.

Susan is a strong advocate for early childhood and for the voice of the child and family.

Ben Walker

After fifteen-years’ experience working in early childhood education, Ben has accumulated vast knowledge working in multiple, dynamic roles; from educator, director, government regulator and assessor, consultant and now Families as First Teachers Project Coordinator. He has worked in various environments with diverse groups of people across Long Day Care, Outside School Aged Care, Family Day Care, Preschool and School sector in various locations across the country. Ben’s current interests include teacher education and ECEC staff development, leadership, pedagogical documentation, critical thinking, physical environments, and relationships with families and community.

Danielle Waugh

Danielle Waugh is a Case Co-ordinator for Parenting Orders Program at Relationships Australia (QLD) FNQ Venue. She has a Bachelor of Education and a Masters of Guidance and Counselling, a background in Primary Teaching and in more recent years in counselling and post separation services. In her various roles, Danielle has supported parents in community education about issues impacting their children and how to provide appropriate support. She has a keen interest in child behaviour and what brings about positive change.

Emily Welham

Emily Welham has been working as a Child and Family Practitioner for over four years. Prior to working at the Early Years Centre, Emily was a Children’s and Youth librarian for a public library service in Victoria. Emily has a background in Early Childhood Education and has a Masters in Children’s Literature and Linguistic Words. Emily is a colleague trainer in Marte Meo and is dedicated to working with parents to support their children’s holistic development.
Claudine Wiesner
Claudine moved to Cairns in 2009 to work on several education projects in Aurukun, Coen, Mossman Gorge and Hope Vale. Claudine worked with Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy and the Family Responsibilities Commission across Cape York and lived in Aurukun. She worked in policy development for the Cape York Institute in the area of youth disengagement. Claudine holds postgraduate qualifications in Arts and Management and is currently studying towards a post graduate qualification in psychological studies. Claudine was Project Manager for the PaCE program at Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy and later on with the Benevolent Society. She is currently the Acting Manager at Cairns Early Years Centre.

Geoff Woolcock
Geoff Woolcock is Manager, Research & Strategy at Wesley Mission Brisbane and Adjunct Associate Professor at Griffith University and QUT. He works with a diverse range of public and private sector organisations helping develop whole of community outcome measures for a variety of social interventions, particularly in socio-economically disadvantaged communities. Geoff is especially interested in building more effective evidence of what place-based approaches work to improve children’s wellbeing. He’s a partner investigator in two large national research projects, the Kids in Community Study (KiCS), and CREATE, testing the conditions for collective impact in child wellbeing in a range of Communities for Children sites.
The Conference Organising Committee would like to thank Brandtree (http://www.brandtree.com.au/) for their invaluable support and for volunteering their time and expertise in designing our logos and hosting the conference website.

Brandtree is a local design and creative studio, providing clients just like you innovative solutions across all channels of marketing, for all industries. We have over 10 years of experience in the local region, and passionately create unique brands for start-up businesses, property developers, builders, tourism, hospitality, retail, corporate players, and all other industries in between.

Nick, Daniel, and the Team from Brandtree are proud to be locals and proud to support local events and community programs.
AUTHOR INDEX

Ahmat, Lorraine ........................................ 26, 33
Angelo, Denise ......................................... 16, 27, 33
Backhouse, Sharman .................................. 22
Banks, Kerrie ........................................... 26
Berry, Lorna .............................................. 23
Borg, Joanne ............................................ 28
Borg, Joanne ............................................ 33
Boyle, Tess ............................................... 14, 34
Breben, C. ............................................... 15
Brim, Rosetta .......................................... 16, 34
Brown, Sarah ........................................... 4, 26, 34
Bumbarger, Brian ...................................... 10, 12, 31
Burridge, Graham ..................................... 13, 34
Callaghan, Rose ........................................ 30
Campbell, Claire ....................................... 18, 35
Chaves, Jenny .......................................... 26, 35
Clancy, Nicole .......................................... 26, 35
Cordukes, Lorraine .................................... 18
Corrigan, Lucy .......................................... 22
Croker, Amanda ......................................... 31, 35
Croker, Amanda J. .................................... 19
Dalley-Trim, Leanne ................................... 18
Dickson, Paula .......................................... 17
Farley, Courtney ....................................... 21, 36
Flint, Phil ................................................ 4
Fox, S. .................................................... 19
Fraser, A. ................................................ 24
Fraser, Henry ........................................... 25, 36
Glass-Pattison, C. ...................................... 19
Glass-Pattison, Caroline .............................. 36
Hand, Rebecca .......................................... 22, 37
Harman-Smith, Yasmin ............................... 9, 11
Hapley, Jane ............................................ 17
Harris, Eve ............................................... 19, 37
Harris, Geraldine ....................................... 21
Hiatt, Fiona .............................................. 17, 37
Hudson, Cath ........................................... 16
Hudson, Catherine ..................................... 37
Ireland, Amanda ........................................ 28, 38
Jackson, Siobhan ...................................... 32
Jovanovic, Jessie ....................................... 15, 38
Kemp, Cassie .......................................... 17, 38
Kemp, Gwen ............................................ 4
Khoo, S.T. ................................................ 24
Khoo, Siek Toon ........................................ 38
Khoo, S-T. ............................................... 23
Kidd, Melissa .......................................... 22
Knight, Damien ......................................... 4, 20, 39
Lauer, Lynden .......................................... 13, 39
Lawless, A. ............................................ 15
Leafo, Helen ............................................ 4
Liley, William .......................................... 24, 39
Lush, Brett ............................................. 39
Lush, Brett R. .......................................... 14
Lyngcoln, Alisha ....................................... 15, 39
Macfarlane, Kym ...................................... 21, 40
Mahoney, Donna ..................................... 25, 40
Mannion, Kathyrn ..................................... 16, 40
McHugh, Jennifer ..................................... 4
Meiers, M. ............................................ 23, 24
Meldrum, Kathyrn ................................... 20
Miscamble, Debbie ................................... 21
Moriarty, Ros .......................................... 29
Morton, Kia ............................................ 29
Nancarrow, Cassy ..................................... 40
Nay, Cherie ........................................... 19
Odgers, Jaye ........................................... 23, 40
Ozolins, C. ............................................ 23
Paulson, Anthony ..................................... 41
Reid, Kate ............................................. 23
Rendell, Kathryn ..................................... 17
Richards-Timoti, Tempeste .......................... 27, 30, 41
Schipke, April ......................................... 4, 32
Sewter, Jennifer ...................................... 26, 32, 41
Shannon, Linda ....................................... 18, 41
Shirtcliff, Rowena ................................... 22
Smith, G. ................................................ 27
Stephens, Anne ...................................... 24, 41
Stuart, Marie ......................................... 28, 42
Tayler, Collette ....................................... 9, 11
Todhunter, S. ......................................... 28
Todhunter, Susan .................................... 42
Walker, Ben .......................................... 16, 42
Wallace, Shane ....................................... 22
Waugh, Danielle ...................................... 15, 42
Welham, Emily ....................................... 17, 42
Wenitong, Mark ..................................... 9, 11
Wiesner, Claudine ................................... 4, 22, 43
Woolcock, Geoff ..................................... 27, 32, 43
Yeatman, Gwenneth ................................ 13
Young, J. ............................................... 15