



Marninwarntikura Fitzroy Womens Resource Centre
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15th March 2012

ATT: Lucy Roberts
Level 1 / 11 Harvest Terrace
West Perth, Parliament House
Perth WA 6000

Dear Lucy,

RE: Inquiry to Educational Outcomes in the Fitzroy Valley

Please find attached our written response to the inquiry with the Western Australian Parliamentary Education and Health Standing Committee in regards to the educational outcomes of the Fitzroy Valley.

We appreciate and give thanks for your invitation for us to have our input into this study, and hope our information is helpful towards your inquiry.

Yours Sincerely,

Emily Carter
Deputy CEO
Marninwarntikura Fitzroy Womens Resource Centre



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Western Australian Parliamentary Education and Health Standing Committee

"An Inquiry into improving educational outcomes for Western Australians of all ages".

This submission sets out the organisations response to each of the stated terms of reference as provided by the committee.

Inquiry Terms of Reference:

- 1. Current and future resourcing of new methods and activities to improve educational outcomes such as e-learning and school partnerships.*
- 2. Factors influencing positive or negative childhood development from birth to year 12.*
- 3. Facilitating greater opportunities to engage all students in year 11 and 12.*
- 4. Improving access and opportunities for adult learning in regional and remote WA.;*
- 5. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: prevalence, prevention, identification, funding and treatment to improve education, social and economic outcomes.*

Introduction:

The current population of the Fitzroy Valley is estimated to be around 3,500. A high percentage of the individual residents in the region are of Aboriginal heritage. Marninwarntikura has serviced the community for many years.

Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre (MWRC) is the lead agency in the Valley for women's interests and concerns. It has four core focus areas that direct the activities of the centre. They are: Safety; Well Being; Leadership; Economic Independence. In order to realise these outcomes it provides a range of services. It runs the Women's Shelter and the Family Violence Prevention and Legal Unit, Indigenous Parent Support Service, Tenancy Support Services, Mobile Play Group, Community Garden Project, and the Community Workshops program for women and children.

Marninwarntikura, with support from Marra Worra Worra and Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services and Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC), is perhaps better known for its lead role in the story of gaining effective alcohol restrictions in Fitzroy Crossing. This was achieved by women and men working together in order to bring peace and harmony to our community so that we, as a community, can plan our social recovery and build a sustainable society in which our cultural richness is paramount.

What we have achieved so far could never have been done by government acting alone. The leadership had to come from the community. We had to own our problems and create the pathway for recovery.

The achievements of the last four years have demonstrated the truth of this. They have also shown the strength of our community in the Fitzroy Valley, and our capacity for wise decisions and tough action. These are the qualities that must be cultivated and enhanced, not stifled, if we are to build a sustainable future.

The key issue for us now is how to build a sustainable future from the fragile social order that we have achieved over the past four years.

Current situation in the Fitzroy Valley:

The current level of chaos that Aboriginal people in the Valley have to deal with in their relationship with governments is disastrous: and it is a state of dysfunction that Indigenous people struggle with throughout Australia at one level or another.

In simple terms there are two broad forces at work in the valley.

On the Aboriginal side there are four language groups – Bunuba who are the traditional owners of country around Fitzroy Crossing, the Gooniyandi whose country lies to the east and have a close traditional relationship with Bunuba, and then there are two desert peoples, the Walmajarri and Wangkatjungka who have moved to the Valley over the past few decades.

Together we number approximately 3, 500 and every day we deal with issues and rules that define our co-existence. We deal with customary law, the complex relationships of family and community and our religion and beliefs. Within this complex social and cultural reality we deal with the extraordinary array of our community organisations that receive public funding and deliver services. We also deal with our land holdings – a number of Aboriginal owned pastoral stations, outstations and communities as well as

native title claims and determinations within the context of a land management regime that has been imposed on us.

Against this reality is the work of government which has legal obligations to provide services on the basis that the people of the Valley are Western Australian and Australian citizens. There is a hospital, public housing, schools, essential services and local government services.

Government responsibility - to provide good government in the form of skill development, employment, health services, education and child protection - does not at present interface or connect in a formal sense with the cultural and social reality of the Valley.

In essence government approach to service delivery is fundamentally assimilationist and a recipe for continued disaster.

"There's a real sense of frustration and despair – once the women despair, what chance has the community got? It will really fall apart then."

New Locally Driven Terms of Engagement Required:

What is required is a new relationship that structurally connects the Aboriginal cultural, economic and social domains with government's responsibility to provide good government. In Fitzroy Crossing there is already the beginnings of an Indigenous governance structure called the **Fitzroy Futures Forum**, made up of the four language groups together with the three layers of government and other community-chosen representatives.

Instead of the many individual State and Commonwealth agencies providing services and making decisions without real accountability or benefit to the community, here is potential for a regional body – a partnership of community and government – to collaborate on locally determined sustainable development.

A sustainable development approach needs to contain the following elements:

1. Empower individuals & families to respond to the challenges that are being thrown up to them.

For example community needs to understand the disastrous impacts of alcohol such as Foetal alcohol Spectrum Disorder and work together to develop ways of managing this serious problem in our community. We need to invest urgently in a process of dialogue and negotiation to build a bold and determined partnership so that fundamental issues of community and family functioning can be confronted. We need to build on our capacity for personal engagement and conflict resolution.

We need to understand the critical importance of economic development and livelihoods and work together and with government to ensure our education and training system is capable of educating and training our young people.

2. Clarify the institutional structures to be built upon the cultural, economic and social value-systems of the local regional Aboriginal Peoples.

In this we need to develop new systems of funding and accountability so that decision making is effective and resources properly invested for sustainable development. We need to ensure that there are direct links between training and employment; that there are innovative social enterprises and other services which include people who may have alcohol-related disabilities and/or be at risk of incarceration; that the many Kimberley strategic plans become actualities in creating sustainable communities in which our families can live and thrive.

3. Adapt existing deliverable programmes to the emerging paradigm in order that the public sector manner of doing business is effective.

For instance why should it be necessary for an independent Aboriginal cultural health organisation to operate independently of the State Government Hospital and community health system? They should be enmeshed as one seamless health service that is fully accountable to the Fitzroy Valley community. The present system allows for repeated 'buck passing' and needs fundamental structural changes.

In Fitzroy we have an opportunity to do something innovative and to build on the foundations for sustainable development that we, the community, have already created. We have already started the journey of partnership with police, liquor licensing and the Drug and Alcohol Office. Let's now build from that and bring government together to support us.

4. Allow Indigenous models and paradigms to develop the necessary pathways through a process of dialogue & negotiation.

This is the critical element that will enable us to move to the paradigm change that supports sustainable development. We must agree on a process that builds a partnership between government and Aboriginal people of the Fitzroy Valley.

It will be difficult for both Aboriginal people and government because genuine partnership that is based on cultural recognition, real Aboriginal decision making and mutual accountability has never been tried before within Australia. It will challenge existing ways of 'doing business' to the core.

And because it is new and overwhelmingly challenging to the existing order of government, we will need to look to international experience to crack through the paternalistic, assimilation approach to complex cross cultural issues that are destroying Aboriginal Peoples. We will need to see the methodologies of the Paris Declaration on International Development (2005) – to which Australia is a signatory – applied nationally.

For too long Australian Indigenous development has invested in pedestrian and ill-equipped practices of development. The problems facing places like the Fitzroy Valley are too severe and deep rooted for us to be considering mediocre process of mediation and development: We have to demand that we employ world best practice.

This, we argue, is where urgent public investment should be considered.

Closing the Gap:

We fear that the COAG Closing the Gap Indigenous Remote Service Delivery strategy is a complex set of National Partnership Agreements that seems overwhelmingly confusing even to politicians and public servants. For Aboriginal people who are now hearing a whole new language of bureaucratic jargon and programme acronyms it all seems like Groundhog Day.

We have seen it all before and heard the same old nonsensical government policy speak; community engagement, community participation, cultural appropriateness, consultation, government coordination – the list goes on. But in reality what it has always meant is that policies and programs are decided by governments and imposed on us without our consent.

This time we can't afford to fail. Beyond the policy jargon of mutual responsibility, welfare reform, and economic empowerment there lies an uncomplicated ingredient for success which governments have never been able to manage – it's about genuine partnership.

The national profile we have gained from our campaign is no doubt a factor in the government selecting the Fitzroy Valley as a priority location under the COAG Closing the Gap Indigenous Remote Service Delivery strategy. We see this as an opportunity to advance our vision of reconstruction and community development. But we are also nervous, because we know from experience that government in its eagerness to impose its own solutions can undermine community authority and derail our attempts to achieve our vision.

What we have now is chaos and dysfunction at every level – within government and within the community. Schools, training centres, the health system, child protection, the range of community services and the courts are basically operating as silos with different policies and funding systems. The left hand has no idea what the right hand is doing and government attempts to coordinate this madness in various guises over the past few years have failed miserably.

What we want is for our children to go to school and learn the fundamental skills of life of which literacy and numeracy are core elements; is a sustainable economy so people can have meaningful employment; is for our families' capacity to care and nurture each other and deal with the problems of social disintegration - the legacy of the past. We want to be able to wake up in the morning feeling good about the community we live in, and not wake up in a community which is judged by the dominant society as being fraught with social problems that need to be managed by constant government interventions.

We know it can be achieved because we know our community. We know its capacity and it's potential. We know its depth of leadership and social capital. And we know what our people are capable of achieving when they are entrusted with responsibility and given the support through resources and authority to act.

"We need to bring back the pride we had for what a beautiful community we used to have – before the alcohol started to tear us apart."

Inquiry Terms of Reference: 1. Current and future resourcing of new methods and activities to improve educational outcomes such as e-learning and school partnerships;

We have endeavoured to list in various categories a number of issues and questions which could be considered by the committee:

1. Other Educational Programmes the committee could investigate and consider as they have proven to assist and bring change to outcomes in education delivery from both within Australia and from across the world.
2. The importance of considered 'Transition Programmes'
3. Teacher preparation in cultural protocols specific for the community they are entering.
4. Second Language Learning and respect for 'Mother tongue'
5. Staff Training and community input and participation in selection of staff for our schools in remote communities in Western Australia
6. Assessment Procedures and Processes- Are they about Assessment of Learning, for Learning and about Learning?
7. Principles of Assessment
8. Characteristics of Authentic Assessment
9. As people living and working in a remote community in the Kimberley,(Fitzroy Crossing) we feel deeply concerned about the fact that for the last thirty years we have had only one or two students complete Year 12. One has to question; if money and resources are being poured into schools such as ours (Fitzroy Valley District High School) why is it that we still can't engage the students or assist them to want to come to and stay at school?
10. Why have we not looked at programmes in other states of Australia or programmes that have been successful in other Indigenous Communities around the world where success and change has occurred?
11. Why is it that Western models and frameworks are the dominant methodology used for teaching in our remote Aboriginal schools? Why is it that the frameworks developed and currently in use in our schools in this part of the state are written predominately by educators, curriculum writers and policy writers who may not have lived or worked in remote Australia, who may not be aware of the communities we come from, nor be familiar with the issues our children and families face on a daily basis?

12. Here in our community in Fitzroy Crossing we are most aware that our children have a heightened sense of observation and bring to the learning environment skills and knowledge that don't necessarily fit into the Western Frameworks. Maybe it is time to further investigate "Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Doing" and allowing some of these methods to be part of what it is we are teaching as part of our everyday response to learning.

Other Educational Programmes the committee could investigate and consider as they have proven to assist and bring change to outcomes in education delivery from both within Australia and from across the world.

13. If the programmes that are in place now are not appropriate why do governments persist? Is it not time to consider looking at programmes where there has been success and implementing them, we acknowledge the recent introduction of **Dr Chris Sarra's – Stronger Smarter Schools (Australia)**.

14. However there are also international examples which can be drawn from particularly when in search of new and innovative approaches i.e. **The Harlem Project – New York (United States)- "Whatever it Takes" – Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America (2009)**

"The Harlem Project" focused on disadvantage and poverty situations and social injustice in Central Harlem. An innovative and controversial approach to "education" whereby all service agencies became involved i.e. paramedics, maternal health, early childhood, primary, secondary educators and parents along with local businesses that shared the belief that all the children could achieve. They provided constant role models, monitoring and they were bold and brave enough to use proven teaching methods from other parts of the world. These stakeholders were all part of the holistic approach to learning.

15. The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) was established in 1968 and is a non-profit, international educational foundation registered in Switzerland. **The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme** (Geneva, Switzerland-1997) was developed by expert primary educators from across the world where best practices are incorporated into the programme. The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right. The continuum of international education The International Baccalaureate (IB) offers three programmes of international education:

- The Primary Years Programme (PYP)—introduced in 1997
- The Middle Years Programme (MYP)—introduced in 1994
- The Diploma Programme (DP)—introduced in 1969.

The three programmes have a common educational framework: a consistent philosophy about teaching and learning that focuses on the development of the whole child, and an overarching concept of how to develop international-mindedness. Each programme promotes the education of the whole person, emphasizing intellectual, emotional, social and physical growth, involving the traditions of learning in languages, humanities, sciences, mathematics and the arts.

Each programme is self-contained, since there is no requirement for schools to offer more than one programme, but these programmes also provide the opportunity for schools to offer a continuous international educational experience from early childhood through to school graduation. The IB's mission statement and the IB learner profile connect the three programmes, articulating the learning outcomes for IB students of all ages. The commonalities and differences between the programmes are identified in the IB document *Programme standards and practices*.

These standards and practices are a set of criteria against which both the IB World School and the IB can measure success in the implementation of the three programmes. It again is a holistic programme with 'inquiry based' learning and rigorous 'assessment practices at the heart of the programme. It requires commitment from all stakeholders in the community in order to be successfully implemented.

16. **The Scandinavian approaches** where children are in play based settings until they are seven and then the formality of schooling is introduced. If you take the time to look at the world rankings of high achievement and success in Education, Finland is always at the top, we need to investigate this further.
17. One should never discount the importance of play based learning in the Early Years of schooling. New Zealand also has some positive programmes in place .Is the work of Marie Clay and the "Reading Recovery" Programme in place in all our schools?
18. If the current programmes are not appropriate why are we not brave enough to seek out **different models and trial them**? For example I once visited a school in Cambridge near Harvard University in the USA where the predominant group of children were from families of Hispanic background and there were two highly trained teachers in every classroom, one spoke Spanish the other English. For the first year of school 90% of the curriculum delivery was delivered in Spanish and 10% in English, then in the second year 80%of the learning programme was delivered in Spanish and 20% in English and each year after the percentage of dominant language changed by 10%, this led to highly successful outcomes for the children and the families. There was an educator dedicated to fully engaging families into the school and she spent most of her time out of the school building relationships with the families and personally inviting them to join the learning programmes. All school newsletters were written in both languages.
19. *We are aware that the "New Australian Curriculum" has focused on the National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, prepared under the auspices of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs. Six major areas for changes have been nominated, that over the twenty years since Ministers' first collaborative Statement on goals for schooling in their 1989 Hobart Declaration, have altered the way in which:*

1. The citizens of the world interact with each other.
2. Increasing global integration and interdependence, as well as increased mobility and migrations are driving the need for greater religious tolerance, an appreciation of cultural diversity and a sense of global citizenship and commitment to peaceful conflict resolution among all Australians. Successful and Equitable societies – at local, national and global levels - have the skills and desire to benefit from and build on cultural, religious, intellectual and social diversities.
3. India, China and other Asia-Pacific nations are growing and strengthening their impact on the world, representing a huge shift in geopolitical power and sparking the need for all Australians to become 'Asia literate'.
4. Globalisation and technological change also place an ever increasing premium on successful education and skill development, so that opportunities for fulfilling and rewarding lives for young people who do not complete secondary education, and also proceed into further training or education, are becoming few and far between.
5. Increasingly complex environmental pressures that extend beyond national borders – such as climate change – pose unprecedented challenges, requiring countries with different priorities to work together in ways never before achieved. They also demand all Australians engage with science and approach problem solving in new and creative ways.
6. Rapid and continuing advances in information and communication technologies (ICT) are changing the way we share, use, develop and process information and technology, and there has been a massive shift in power – to consumers in general, and to learners specifically. In this digital age, young people generally need to be highly literate in ICT and increasingly expect to be able to use such technologies in their learning. While there is some knowledge about how to effectively embed these technologies in learning in schools, we need to make a quantum leap in this effectiveness over the next decade.
(Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, *National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians – Draft*, 8 September 2008, p.3.)

The new Australian National Curriculum - 2012

In the new Australian national Curriculum as well as the defined subject disciplines there are three Cross-curriculum priorities (ACRA 2012)

The development of the Australian Curriculum is guided by the “Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians and was adopted by the council of state and territory education ministers in **December 2008**. The Melbourne Declaration emphasises the importance of knowledge, understanding and skills of learning areas, general capabilities and ‘**cross cultural**’ curriculum priorities as the basis for a curriculum designed to support 21st century learning.
(The Australian Curriculum Overview p1, 2011)

☐ Indigenous history and culture

☐ Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia

☐ Sustainability

20. How have we prepared our teachers to deliver these cross curriculum priorities?
21. Have we engaged experts in these areas to write and deliver training to all teachers in these particular areas?
22. If all of the above are seen as priorities right now how are our curriculum writers weaving these issues into our curriculum offering? Are our units of work up to date in all our schools? Here in our community in Fitzroy Crossing we are most aware that our children have a heightened sense of observation and bring to the learning environment skills and knowledge that don't necessarily fit into the Western Frameworks. Maybe it is time to further investigate "Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Doing" and allowing some of these methods to be part of what it is we are teaching as part of our everyday response to learning.
23. If we are to embrace these new cross curriculum priorities educators will need to have the knowledge so that these priorities can be met through all stages of the educational continuum and all teachers' will need to undertake professional development training in these area by specialist trainers who understand this knowledge.
24. Right here in Fitzroy Crossing we have people who together have created a training programme for teachers and these people are willing and able to deliver this training to assist others. It has been written by a Bunuba woman and a non Indigenous senior educator and together they are both highly motivated and skilled in programme delivery to adult learners. Could this be trialed in some schools as a model of what might be possible?
25. For example "Indigenous History and Culture" we believe can be best done in a partnership model whereby all schools in Australia form a partnership with local Indigenous people and continually work with them to build a relationship so that the expert knowledge can be sourced and utilized all the time. Non Indigenous people cannot have this knowledge as it must come from the Indigenous people who hold the stories and the history as it has been passed down from ancient times through the "oral tradition". A model that has been developed and sustained for over seven years now is one where an expert Indigenous person works with an expert non-Indigenous educator to create units of work around Indigenous history and culture that are taught in a very different mode: It is available and has been successfully implemented both at a school and corporate level but it needs to be done right across the state and the country. We here at Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre developed this model and are happy to share it with others on a fee for service basis.

26. Education and capacity development need to be re-oriented to meet Aboriginal priorities with an emphasis on our culture and language but also with an eye on what lies ahead in a rapidly changing world and the challenges of global factors. We are survivors and entrepreneurs, artists and custodians, not just a pool of labour for other industries to draw on.
27. We are thinking here about the carbon economy where traditional knowledge about land management will be an important economic asset. We are also thinking about creative industries in which Aboriginal people's artistic talents and acumen for multi-media are qualities that the wider world appreciates and admires.

The importance of considered 'Transition Programmes

28. Transition Programmes are of high importance from every stage and age within education, how much are these programmes valued and used appropriately in our schools? Who writes these programmes for our schools and Early Learning Centres? Who sets them in place? Who assists and trains educators to actually implement them?
29. Where are educators trained to assess and look at school readiness? How is this implemented in our state?
30. How are all children and families interviewed prior to school entry?
31. When are all children and families visited in their home prior to school entry?
32. Are all children visited in their early learning environments and are conversations had with the early learning staff about each child?
33. Is information and confidential files about the child passed onto the next teacher? Who designs the templates for these files so that information is consistent?

Teacher preparation in cultural protocols specific for the community they are entering.

34. Who prepares educators and school administrators in cultural protocols for the community they are actually going to work in whether that is in the city, a regional setting, a rural setting or a remote setting? Is it on-going or just a one off session? It really should be on – going.
35. What signs and symbols are evident in schools across our state that welcomes families to the school in their mother tongue language? Who does this? Is it something that should be evident in all our schools? What flags are flown? What artefacts are around? What maps are around? Is there lots of evidence of children's work especially in the school foyer? Are there lots of positive statements about children around the school in appropriate languages for the families to see and read? Is there lots of photographic evidence of what type of learning is happening? Are the statements positive?

36. Is there a local Indigenous person in every classroom supporting the learning? Are they supported and given on-going training?

Second Language Learning and respect for ‘Mother tongue’

37. Second language learning is seen as important but is it the correct language for that particular community and what is the time allocation given to second language learning? A minimum time allocation should be at least three hours per week by highly trained educators who are not only mother tongue speakers but understand developmental and learning needs of the children. I can highly recommend conference papers and Journal articles written by Professor Joe Lo Bianco from the University of Melbourne in Victoria.
38. What languages are used in our community to reach our families? How do we use Kriol to assist us communicate with our children and families?
39. Is there evidence of all the languages used in the community around the school?
40. Are all school newsletters translated into the four languages and sent home each week?
41. Are cultural languages, songs and dance very much part of the weekly Assembly programme?

Staff Training and selection of staff for our schools in remote communities in Western Australia.

42. How does “the Education Department” select and prepare and train staff to work in schools such as ours? (Predominately children from four different language groups and often from “community living” backgrounds where there is evidence of trauma and poverty). We seem to get many, young, inexperienced teachers who come for a short while and then disappear back to the city.
43. Is a staffing plan designed around the needs of our children whereby there is a carefully thought out plan of what it is we exactly need in terms of experience, skill and strength and those educators are sort after or is it that vacancies are just filled? I personally never forget talking to the previous Principal in July 2010 who told me he couldn’t wait to leave as he had “done his time” and was going back south to a better school! We at the time at Marninwarntikura Women’s Resource were developing an “Indigenous Parenting Programme” and had gone to the school to see if we could become involved. The Head of Primary at the time was most receptive but the Principal was not at all interested in the community involvement or partnership which was so disappointing.
44. How many of the staff that is employed in schools such as ours here in Fitzroy Crossing have had training in ESL, Special Education, FASD Training, Second Language Learning, Differentiation and Inquiry Based Learning?
45. How are we as educators incorporating “Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Doing” into the core curriculum? Do we really know what they are and how specific they are to each community?

46. Who could assist each school? We are not talking about a one off orientation here but a proper partnership with a developed programme which is delivered in an adult learning environment and is on-going for all staff.

- Are our teachers continually given updated training to be able to deliver these units with the most up to date methodology and expertise?
- How are we as schools incorporating experts from the community to share the knowledge and allow the educators to guide and facilitate the sessions?
- How many partnerships do we have with the various businesses and agencies in Fitzroy Crossing?

Assessment Procedures and Processes- Are they about Assessment of Learning, for Learning and about Learning?

- Our question to the committee; “why is it that most assessment tools and learning frameworks are set down and developed through the lens of “Western Frameworks” for learning? Where does Delores Principles (1996) of:

‘Learning to Know
Learning to Do
Learning to Be
Learning to Live With’ placed within all that we are trying to do?

47. Are we teaching for understanding? How are our assessment tools and policies developed?

48. Do we set our children up for success by allowing them input into the building of the criteria for assessment?

49. The following statements about ‘ASSESSMENT’ come from the Primary Years Programme of the International Baccalaureate, known as one of the most rigorous, outstanding educational programmes the world has to offer our children today where “best practice” in education is continually sought from all parts of the world. Why can’t our children have access to programmes like this?

50. Are we in our schools using the 7 P’s of Assessment

Philosophy

Purpose

Practices

Perspectives

Principles

Policy & Professional Development

51. When considering assessment are we able to give

Purpose of Assessment

1. Provide information about student performance
2. Promote student learning
3. Evaluate programmes

In providing information about student performance, effective assessment should:

- Be ongoing
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Be multi-faceted
- Cater for different learning styles
- Be meaningful to the student
- Be linked to curriculum
- Be ongoing throughout the course of units/year
- Identify supports required for student achievement
- Attempt to identify levels of understanding
- Be open-ended
- Deliver clear and concise information about skills, knowledge, attitudes and concepts.

In the promotion of student learning, effective assessment should:

- Provide feedback for the student
- Cover formative and summative strategies
- Be linked to personal and collaborative goals and objectives
- Be diagnostic
- Allow for self and peer reflection
- Establish and articulate clear criteria for the students
- Identify weaknesses of the individual and the whole group
- Enable students to set academic and personal goals
- Identify the point and type of intervention required

In the evaluation of school programmes, effective assessment should:

- Guide future planning
- Identify areas that require redress or further coverage
- Identify trends within the school
- Help direct future planning of the school
- Consider external initiatives and programs
- Compliment state-wide and national benchmarks
- Reflect the school's philosophy
- Be trans disciplinary

52. Are all schools using multiple forms of assessment to assess the children?

We can highly recommend the work done by Wiggins and McTighe (USA), they present an interesting perspective and ask that we use a “backwards by design approach” whereby we as

educators set out what it is we want the students to achieve and then build or construct the learning engagements around this notion. Constructivism is an essential part of helping our children learn so that they understand rather than become “parrots”

53. Authentic Assessment Is...

54. Many terms and phrases are used to describe the alternatives to conventional testing.

55. “Regardless of the different terminology people use, most people consider authentic assessment approaches as alternatives to traditional multiple choice, standardised achievement tests and use the term to describe measures that refer to direct examination of student performance on significant tasks that are relevant to life outside of the school...” (Worthen 1993)

56. “Meaningful tasks at which students should learn to excel.” (Wiggins)

57. “Disciplined inquiry that integrates and produces knowledge, rather than reproduces fragments of information others have discovered.” (Newman)

58. “Authentic assessment methods emphasise learning and thinking, especially higher order thinking skills such as problem solving and decision making.” (Collins)

59. “Authentic assessment is a valid assessment system that provides information about the particular tasks on which students succeed or fail, but more importantly, it also presents tasks that are worthwhile, significant and meaningful...” (Archibald and Newmann, 1988)

60. “Authentic assessments engage students in real world tasks rather than multiple choice tests and use evaluation criteria that are important for actual performance in that field.” (NYS Education Dept 1994)

61. “Authentic assessment is characterised by tasks that ask students to demonstrate what they know and can do.” (LaGuelle-Peterson & Rivera 1999)

Compiled by J. Wooster

Principles of Assessment

Effective assessment should:

- Have criteria that are known and understood
- Cater for individual learning styles
- Be open-ended
- Allow for various levels of achievement
- Expect children to apply their learning
- Be in context
- Be authentic
- Challenge children to apply thinking to real life situations

- Challenge and extend and thinking
- Promote worthwhile information
- Help develop a picture of the learner
- Include peer and self-assessment
- Promote information for children, parents, teachers and administrators
- Be consistent with the philosophies of the school
- Be a tool for learning
- Be consistent throughout the year level
- Be ongoing
- Be both formative and summative

Effective assessment should allow teachers to:

- Develop a picture of the individual child
- Gather information about individual strengths and weaknesses
- Adjust learning experiences to cater for individual differences
- Reflect on their programmes and teaching style
- Gauge the learning that has taken place
- Assess concepts, skills, attitudes, knowledge and action
- Communicate with other involved teachers and implement strategies to improve performance.

Effective assessment should allow children to:

- Participate actively in the planning and creation of assessments
- Be aware of the criteria for assessment and know what is expected
- Understand the purpose of an activity
- Apply their new skills and understanding in a variety of ways
- Demonstrate what they know, understand, can do and feel
- Help them identify their own strengths and weaknesses
- Promote reflection
- Provide them with information about their performance that will enable them to establish goals for improvement
- Experience success
- Develop higher order thinking skills

Effective assessment should allow parents to:

- Develop a holistic picture of their child
- Become informed about the strengths and weaknesses of their child
- Feel comfortable with the accountability of the school
- Develop an insight into the learning experiences of their child
- Develop a dialogue about learning and thinking with their child and the teacher
- Implement strategies that will help improve performance of their child

Characteristics of Authentic Assessments

- Does the task require students to construct meaning?
- Does the task require students to explore essential questions or “big ideas”?
- Does the task encourage demonstration of important “habits of mind”?
- Does the task encourage or require student self-evaluation?
- Is the task free from arbitrary constraints (time, access to resources)?
- Does the task measure progress over time?
- Does the task require collaboration with others?
- Is the task a representative challenge, emphasising depth rather than breadth of response?
- Does the task explore and identify hidden strengths?
- Does the task genuinely assess learning and effort, not native talent?
- Do the standards for the task cover a wide range of knowledge, skills and habits of mind considered important to the subject area or, if interdisciplinary, those that transcend a single discipline?
- Are the standards for the task in harmony with shared (school, district, state, national) goals?
- Does the task match the scoring framework?
- Is the task multidimensional, allowing for a single performance to be strong in some areas and weak in others?
- Is the assessment structured to provide prompt and useful feedback to the teacher and students?
- Does the task provide built-in opportunities for students to practise, rehearse, and retake it?
- Are the standards for good performance clear to students before they engage in the task?
- Are the standards for the task appropriately weighted?

In giving consideration to all we have presented and expressed, we would also be more than happy to elaborate on any of these issues and provide further information or training in any of the above mentioned areas.

Terms of Reference: 2 Factors influencing positive or negative childhood development from birth to year 12;

In response to Terms of reference 2 we would like the committee to give consideration to the following areas:

1. National Guidelines in Early Childhood in Australia – 2012. A positive factor.
2. Early Childhood Programmes from other parts of the World
3. Primary Education – *An example of what is possible*
4. *(Inquiry Based Learning)*
“From The Ground Up – Creating a Culture of Inquiry”
5. The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme.
6. What to look for in a PYP classroom?
7. Relevant information at your fingertips about the IB PYP Programme:

Response

1. The National Guidelines in Early Childhood in Australia – 2012. (A positive factor)

- Please ensure that all schools are implementing the new National Guidelines in Early Childhood Education and that Early Childhood teachers are given the appropriate training and support to implement these guidelines. The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia Produced by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments. © Commonwealth of Australia 2009.

This is Australia’s first national Early Years Learning Framework for early childhood educators. The aim of this document is to extend and enrich children’s learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school.

The Council of Australian Governments has developed this Framework to assist educators to provide young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning. In this way, the Early Years Learning Framework (the Framework) will contribute to realising the Council of Australian Governments’ vision that: *“All children have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves and for the nation.”* 1 The Framework draws on conclusive international evidence that early childhood is a vital period in children’s learning and development.

It has been developed with considerable input from the early childhood sector, early childhood academics and the Australian and State and Territory Governments. The Framework forms the foundation for ensuring that children in all early childhood education and care settings experience quality teaching and learning. It has a specific emphasis on play-based learning and

recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. The Framework has been designed for use by early childhood educators working in partnership with families, children's first and most influential educators.

- Setting up an expert panel of senior educators to mentor and guide educators in the most appropriate educational practices for the Fitzroy Valley community, for the Early Learning Centre, Mobile Playgroup programme and the Children and Family Centre.
- Visiting the innovative programme set up in Northcote in Melbourne, Victoria (2011) called 'Bush Kinder' by Doug Fargher. Westgarth Kindergarten. www.wgkg.vic.edu.au/bush-kinder
- E-mail address is bushkinder@wgkg.vic.edu.au

2. Early Childhood Programmes from other parts of the World.

- It would seem that once a woman is pregnant, the focus on the child and meeting those developmental needs would be considered, if we are to approach this in a considered manner, one needs to see that depending on the environment and whether people are in cities, regional rural or remote communities there will need to be attention given to the cultural make-up of that particular community in order to address the specific needs. May we again suggest you look at the "Harlem Project" from New York where focus is given to Pre Natal, Post Natal Maternal Health, Baby College, and Early Childhood Education.
- Another model, true play based learning in the Early Childhood sector using the influence of the "Reggio Emilio" philosophy, (from Italy) also using the natural environment as the most important learning space and building "inquiry based learning" into all programmes.

4. Primary Education Programmes.

We as educators must continually look for best practice principles in Primary education for our Australian children and gain insight and understanding in these programmes so they are relevant to our own community. The following ideas have been used by our staff when working in schools across the world and we believe that some of these ideas are relevant to our community here in Fitzroy Crossing.

5. **Inquiry based Learning Programmes** where children are given the opportunity to construct the learning based around a set of question which is constructed by the children, facilitated by the teacher. The notion of 'transdisciplinary learning' is of high importance with a balance given to all subject disciplines.

An example of what is possible (Inquiry Based Learning)

From The Ground Up – Creating a Culture of Inquiry: Heidi Mills & Amy Donnelly

* The Curriculum for the Centre (South Carolina, Columbia) would reflect all of the characteristics of an inquiry-based philosophy.

* Their belief-

Inquiry is a philosophical stance as opposed to a set of strategies, activities etc

* The guiding philosophy of the curriculum.

- Collaborative in nature
- integrate curricular areas
- connect academic subjects to meaningful real-life situations
- be learner-centred
- function as a true learning community where all participants exist simultaneously as teachers and learners.

* In starting the school – aims to outline the advantages of an inquiry-based school included

- all involved in child's education = teachers, parents, administrators, students
- teachers would be steeped in content areas, knowledgeable in educational research, capable of translating content mastery & knowledge of research into coherent curriculum and instruction
- needs, interests and abilities of students would be accommodated in developmentally appropriate and responsive ways so that students would begin to take responsibility for and ownership of their learning
- parents would be encouraged to become partners in the education of their children
 - state and national initiative and standards would be incorporated

MISSION STATEMENT: FIRST DRAFT

The Centre for Inquiry is about making classrooms exciting places for teachers and children to be. It is about sustaining children's successful learning strategies that they bring with them. It is about helping all children become thoughtful, intelligent people who care about others and who delight in learning. It is about helping pre-service and in-service teachers recognize what is possible in elementary education. It is about genuine collaboration with families, the university, and the community. Put simply, it's about good teaching. It is also about developing habits of the mind and heart through living and learning at the Centre for Inquiry. Habits that all participants, tall and small, elementary students, graduate students, parents, teachers, and administrators employ such as inquiry, imagination, perseverance, appreciation, confidence, reflection, joy, responsibility, respect, collaboration and humility for the purposes of creating a more caring, more equitable, and more knowledgeable and democratic world.

SPEAKING IS....

Easy when...

- * you have a lot to talk about
- * the listener does not interrupt
- * the listener looks at you
- * you care about what you are saying
- * you have time to get your thoughts together before you speak
- * you don't have to speak for a long time
- * you are comfortable with the topic
- * you are comfortable with the audience
- * you get to choose the topic

Difficult when....

- * you have a set amount of time to fill
- * you get too excited
- * the listener doesn't seem to be listening
- * you're tired
- * you're shy
- * you're in a new setting with new people
- * you have lots to say but not enough time to say it
- * topics are new to you
- * you don't have much think time first
- * you're not sure if the listener really understands you

LISTENING IS....

Easy when...

- * you don't feel like talking
- * the speaker is interesting
- * the topic appeals to you
- * the speaker is expressive
- * the speaker involves you
- * the speaker uses good gestures

Difficult when....

- * you want to ask the speaker questions but can't
- * the speaker does not appear comfortable
- * what the speaker says makes you mad
- * the speaker mumbles
- * the topic is new to you
- * the speaker talks very softly

- * you care about the speaker
- * you agree with the speaker
- * you know something about the speaker's topic
- * you know your turn to speak is coming soon
- * you are comfortable and can sit still
- * the speaker is very funny
- * the speaker seems to rush
- * there is a lot of noise
- * you're tired
- * you're hot

Created by Year Four students...at an Australian school.

WHAT IS INQUIRY?

- It's about teaching readers, writers, mathematicians, scientists, historians, artists and musicians.
- It's about fostering the sense of wonder and delight in learning that children bring to school.
- It's about preparing children academically and socially to take personal responsibility for their own learning while making valuable contributions to the learning community.
- It's about truly respecting and celebrating diversity.
- It's about teaching responsively so that all children's needs and interests will be recognized and valued.

We implement our inquiry-based curriculum by helping children:

- learn the value of close, focused observation
- examine the world from different perspectives
- learn through active engagement in the process
- use skills, strategies, content and concepts for authentic purposes
- understand the skilfulness of inquiry (how to learn)
- use reflection / self-evaluation to grow and change
- appreciate the integrated nature of life

The teacher's role in an inquiry based classroom

- rejoicing in discoveries
- prompting and supplying opportunities for genuine conversations
- bringing areas of authentic inquiry to the forefront
- sharing wonderful literature
- encouraging questions & helping children seek answers to these
- ensuring a balance between what should be discovered/uncovered with what must be taught(national standards)
- teachers power is often from what we don't do –by not always stepping in and deciding what's appropriate to talk about, by not taking all the instructional time, by not talking too much
- speak less, listen more

Classroom practices reflect teachers' beliefs. As beliefs change, practices parallel these changes. Classrooms look different but classroom sounds – active children, singing, debates, discussion, laughs, sighs, questions, squeals of delight – the sounds of intrigue, surprise and wonder should remain essentially the same. No two school years are ever alike but the sounds of inquiry should remain constant.

Have a 'Wonder Why Wall'....Try to turn observations into how and why questions, sentence strips for wonderings. Learners become more comfortable with ambiguity when answers can't be located.

The Power of Inquiry...

Short, Haste and Burke (1996) refer to education as learning, outgrowing ourselves through inquiry. Actively involve children through the curriculum... an inquiry-based curriculum encourages children to ask questions...by inviting children to ask questions you involve them in the learning process....as a result they develop ownership of the process and benefit from the outcome... children who have these opportunities become seekers of knowledge & develop a love of learning. When we allow children to direct learning they become genuinely interested and their inquiry reaches beyond confines of a classroom.

*Again we would like the committee to look seriously at the **International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme** which is available in Australia in both the Government and Independent sectors of education. There are some excellent examples of this in operation in Victoria, Queensland and South Australia as well as over 2000 other schools across the world. We can provide detailed examples of all aspects of this programme as one of our staff has worked across the Asia/Pacific Region in training over 2000 teachers in this particular programme as well as lecturing(writing, developing and implementing the Post Graduate Course in International Baccalaureate Education at the University of Melbourne (2005-1010)*

An example of what to look for;

7. What to Look for in a PYP Classroom.

You may use this tool to assess your classrooms individually and/or with trusted colleagues.

Low 1	2	3	4 High
Physical Classroom Environment			
Classroom space is unexciting and sterile	→	←	Classroom space is inviting, stimulating <i>and well organised</i>
Displays of student work are minimal or old	→	←	Displays of student work demonstrate individual achievement, ongoing learning and inquiry
Use of room demands that students always remain at the same table	→	←	Use of room enables students to switch flexibly between spaces appropriate to different activities
Resources are provided solely by the teacher for specific pre – planned lessons	→	←	Resources (e.g. books, maths manipulative, science tools, computer etc.) <i>are labelled</i> , easily accessible to and respected by students
Use of Programme of Inquiry			
The teacher is not using the relevant planner	→	←	The teacher and students are clear about the central idea and questions driving the inquiry. <i>(These should be clearly displayed and referred to.)</i>
Students have little			Ongoing student

involvement in the ongoing direction of study			questions are valued and explored. (<i>Show evidence of this.</i>)
Multi-cultural international environment			
The classroom environment utilises only a mono-culture and mono-lingual approach to learning	→	←	The classroom environment openly celebrates the diversity of its students <i>and their mother tongue languages.</i>
The class is divided into factions disrespectful of one another	→	←	Teachers and students show respect, tolerance and empathy towards other of different gender, nationality and levels of academic or language development etc.

What to Look for in a PYP Classroom

<i>Low</i> 1	2	3	4 <i>High</i>
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Student Learning			
Students are bored and disinterested	→	←	Students are inquirers, whose natural curiosity has been nurtured and who are empowered to feel responsible, show initiative and take action
Students are required to do work inappropriate to their level or language skill	→	←	Students are involved in meaningful and engrossing activities appropriate to their knowledge, experience and

			language skills
Students are passive recipients of knowledge	→	←	Students are involved in planning and assessing their own learning
Teaching Strategies			
The teacher directs all activities and establishes all tasks	→	←	The teacher facilitates open-ended inquiry and real life investigations encouraging student initiative in choice of resources and appropriate means of expression
The teacher employs only whole class teaching strategies	→	←	The teacher uses a range and an appropriate balance of teaching and grouping strategies, switching flexibly between individual group and whole class work
The teacher requires students to conform to the same level of expectations	→	←	The teacher demonstrates high expectations of students, <i>and appreciates different ways of knowing and doing.</i>
The teacher is considered the authority on knowledge	→	←	The teacher facilitates a balanced emphasis between the pursuit of understanding and the acquisition of knowledge and essential skills.
The teacher reports <i>to students and parents</i> by written report <i>only</i>	→	←	The teacher uses a range of assessments and self-assessments strategies with

			students.
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Typed by Jax Webb from a rubric received at "PYP Training for Trainers" July 2001. (Possibly a knowledge product from course as no credited source or copyright identified. Comments in italics added by Zug administration for use in school.)

Relevant information at your fingertips about the IB PYP Programme:

Please check <http://www.ibo.org/ibap/pyp/> for the following information:

1. Preliminary and Consultation Visits
2. In-school workshops
3. Fee Structure in Asia Pacific
4. IB Copyright and Branding
5. New and interested schools essential information

Please check <http://www.ibo.org/ibap/workshops/> for the following information:

1. Workshop Descriptors
2. IB Asia-Pacific Events Calendar
3. To register online for regional workshops, download info packs and workshop agendas

Please check <http://www.ibo.org/general/storefaq.cfm> to purchase IB publications, materials and services

1. Purchase starter pack, Other relevant PYP Documentation
2. To advertise a job vacancy

Please check <http://www.ibo.org/pyp/curriculum/> for the following documents:

- [Schools' Guide to the Primary Years Programme](#)
- [A Continuum of International Education](#)
- [Programme standards and practices](#)

For IB promotional publications please check:

<http://www.ibo.org/communications/publications/index.cfm>

It is hoped that we have been able to provide the committee with some ideas to consider and further investigate their relevance as we see them as critical to enhancing the chances and opportunities for our children.

Terms of Reference 3: Facilitating greater opportunities to engage all students in year 11 and 12;

Here is our response to Terms of reference 3. We believe there must be wide and varied options available for this age group in all places-not just in the cities and the regional centres but also in rural and remote communities.

Alternative Pathways

- Not all students wish to follow an academic pathway. For those that do want this option we present them with the challenge of academic rigour with compulsory components of community service, thinking skills and problem solving ,creativity and wellbeing as critical elements of their programme
- Offer industry based learning in all settings
- Use experts (engineers, nurses, geologists, architects, lawyers, philosophers etc) in the community more often to provide the content and allow the teacher to facilitate the learning
- Allow students to begin traineeships whilst still in the school setting.
- Set up 'internship programmes' with all the agencies in each community. These programmes would be developed with each particular community

Terms of Reference 4: Improving access and opportunities for adult learning in regional and remote WA;

We would like the committee to consider the following ideas.

1. Mentoring Programmes
2. Successful Programmes implemented in the Fitzroy Valley
 - FASD Prevalent Study
 - FASD Visiting expert/educator in residence for a three month period
 - Indigenous Parenting Support Services
 - Programme Mentoring
 - A senior Bunuba leader and a very experienced non Indigenous teacher trainer in partnership developed a two tier programme on Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Learning to be delivered as a Professional Development 2 Day Workshop for organizations and government agencies and schools to assist non Indigenous people to gain insights and understanding about why things are the way they are and how we can all work together towards a better outcomes in Reconciliation for all Australians.
 - An example of an outline of a programme for Adult learners.

Mentoring Programmes

- We have successfully used mentoring in our organization to assist our adult learners but our mentors are very highly skilled and carefully selected. We as an organization look at our priorities and specific needs in the skill base of our staff and then seek the expert in that particular area to come and work with our staff. These mentors must be mentored themselves as they must know how to behave and adhere to all cultural protocols as well as work happily in the two worlds combining 'Indigenous ways of Knowing' and 'Western Frameworks' for learning using a constructivist approach.

Successful Programmes implemented in the Fitzroy Valley

We have been able to do this successfully with a number of our programmes within our organization and beyond.....

1. FASD Prevalent Study using local people as community navigators working with the multidisciplinary Medical Team
2. FASD Educator from the USA and Queensland being resident in our community for a number of months running community workshops and seminars
3. A senior Bunuba woman and a non Indigenous senior educator working in partnership with younger members of our organization to develop an Indigenous Parenting Support Service Framework and on-going mentoring support in programme delivery for remote communities.
4. The organization sought the skills and specialized knowledge of a Programme Mentor and employed them to continually assist mentor and empower the local people in programme delivery in "Mobile Playgroup, Indigenous Parenting and In –Home Practical Support. This person also worked with the organizational leaders to empower them to use appropriate 'adult learning practices' so they could implement their own workshops.
5. A senior Bunuba leader and a very experienced non Indigenous educator in partnership developed a two tier programme on "Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Learning" to be delivered as a workshop in organizations and government agencies and schools to assist non Indigenous people in gaining insights and understanding about why things are the way they are and how we can all work together towards a better mode of communicating and knowing how to work more effectively with each other through respecting the knowledge each brings to the table, it is not either or but both.

Terms of Reference. 5. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: prevalence, prevention, identification, funding and treatment to improve education, social and economic outcomes.

Much work has been done on FASD in our community and it started with the recognition by the women of the community that the trauma and violence in and around our community was escalating so with determination and a hope to bring respite and change the women set out to bring in alcohol restrictions for the entire town. This was achieved and through this work a number of agencies including Marninwarntikura partnered with the University of Sydney, The George Institute for Global Health and the Westmead Children's Hospital to undertake some studies into FASD and as an Aboriginal community we have been so impressed with the courage of our people to come forward and state there is a problem and are prepared to participate in a study so that data can be collected and analysed and presented to a Parliamentary Inquiry in order to bring this to the attention of all Australians. We still have much work to do but are now able to engage with other service providers both locally and state wide to assist them in understanding the complex needs of children and adults living with FASD. We have decided to present our response under the following:

1. The Lililwan Project
2. Alcohol Restrictions
3. State Liquor Licensing Act
4. Independent evaluations
5. Breathing Space
6. Healing Time
7. Partnerships
8. Trying to educate and bring appropriate and relevant programmes to all within community.
9. Living in two worlds
10. Dispossession and trauma
11. What we all need to do now to assist in educating and caring for these children and adults living with FASD

1. The Lililwan Project

- The project, the 'Lililwan Project' could assist in educating the whole of Australia on the impact of alcohol use in pregnancy. It is a right for babies to be born healthy not just here in Australia but worldwide. This project raises the issue of conflicting rights of the child and the mother stresses the need for careful consideration. This project also identifies the intergenerational stresses that have resulted in high rates of alcohol use in Aboriginal women and must be urgently address Alcohol has affected every single person in the Fitzroy valley at one level or another. We have identified alcohol as the most important health priority that must be confronted. After a spate of tragic suicides in 2006 a highly publicised coronial inquest examined the reasons that so many Kimberley Aboriginal people were taking their own lives.
- This study, called the Lililwan Project (Lililwan being a Kriol word meaning "all the little ones"), is being conducted in two stages. The first stage completed earlier in (2010) involved the interviewing of parents or carers of all children born in 2002 and 2003 residing in the Fitzroy

Valley to gain information about the antenatal exposures, early life trauma, and health and development of each child. There has been a 95% participation rate in Stage 1 reflecting the fact that the community is leading this work. This shows immense trust between all the participants and those inspirational individuals leading the project.

- Stage 2, which occurred in 2011, involved the multi-disciplinary assessment of the health and development of these children with one aspect of this being to establish the prevalence of FASD. The most important aspect of this work however is the development of structured nurturing support for each child to help them become the best they can be.
- Stage 2 of the study is completed and already this group is starting to lobby strongly for the services that will be needed to support the lives of these children and for the prevention programs needed to prevent another generation of damaged children. They are working with the WA Country Health Service to plan the additional health personnel that will be required, and will commence discussions with State and Federal Governments about additional support services that they will need. What is really significant here is this is not a problem isolated to the Fitzroy Valley; but for all communities throughout Australia. Just imagine if the findings of this project could influence all Australians and help educate everyone on the impact that the consumption of alcohol can have on the developing foetus.
- It has taken the strength and courage of June Oscar and Emily Carter from Marninwarntikura – Women’s Resource Centre to stand up against much angst from within their own community in Fitzroy Crossing in 2007 to bring about the alcohol restrictions. It then took the knowledge and foresight of these two women working alongside Maureen Carter from Nindilingarri Health to address the legacy of alcohol use in pregnancy – FASD – and to consider how best to assist affected children and their families to heal and to prevent future generations of damaged children healing.
- When these women partnered with non Aboriginal Australians (James Fitzpatrick, Jane Latimer, Elizabeth Elliott), they recognised that more could be done working together. The Lililwan collaboration has worked to promote and protect the human rights of Aboriginal children and their families – the right to be born healthy, the right to access good health care and specialist services, the right to a good education and educational and community support for those with disability. The work of the Lililwan collaboration is enhancing the rights of Indigenous Australians and is promoting equal opportunity for people with a disability in Australia.
- The project is now well underway and by June 2013 a major report will be written and articles will be published. The team leading this project of collaboration have done this with such care. They have won the trust of the families because they all took the time to build a relationship and partnership with each other and incorporated both ‘ways of knowing and doing’ with respect and sensitivity.

2. Alcohol Restrictions

- Not surprisingly the State Coroner concluded that alcohol abuse was the primary reason for the suicide epidemic of Kimberley Aboriginal people. But women from the Valley were already

campaigning for effective control over the supply of grog and had demanded that the sale of full strength take-away alcohol be banned. The demand was eventually supported by the Western Australian Liquor Licensing Authority and the restrictions have now been in place for more than four years.

3. State Liquor Licensing Act

- It is the first time that the State Liquor Licensing Act has been used to restrict the supply of alcohol in a whole town. The women met fierce resistance in this campaign, especially from members of our own community and the many others who had a vested interest of one type or another.

4. Independent evaluations

- Independent evaluations have recorded a significant improvement in living conditions in the Fitzroy Valley since the restrictions. There is less violence, fewer admissions to hospitals and more kids attending school. Overall there is a greater sense of peace and order in our communities, and most people, men as well as women, now accept that control of the grog is essential if we are to build a better future for our children.

5. Breathing Space

- This is exactly what the women of the valley have sought to achieve; a breathing space from the cycle of grief and chaos so that we could plan for the long term reconstruction of our communities. Rebuild the foundations of responsibility and obligations that our old people used to live by. The grog restrictions were never intended to be a panacea for the enormous social disadvantages we face

6. Healing Time.

- What we have to imagine is a long term and permanent healing of the gaping wounds that arise from alcohol abuse and violence. We must find a way to fundamentally change the historical relationship between the dominant society and ourselves and create a new definition of 'mainstream' for Australia - one that is more inclusive of our aspirations and values.
- This would mean in the context of the Fitzroy Valley that Aboriginal culture, land ownership and management and our purposes for living – our values and our aspirations - become the foundation for our inclusion in the Australian nation.

7. Partnerships

- We are now laying the foundation for long term sustainable development. We have already built a partnership with police, liquor licensing and the Drug and Alcohol Office. We now plan to develop a genuine partnership with other parts of State and Commonwealth governments so

that their policies and resources can support our vision for community development. Again through strong leadership from June Oscar and Emily Carter from Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre and Maureen Carter from Nindilingarri Health and their continual work in the Fitzroy Valley, Aboriginal parents summoned the courage to look their own children in their eyes, to name the issue of FASD and take responsibility and to work towards a better future. This has taken immense courage and the three women named truly recognise this.

- Following this, a community strategy was developed to address FASD. In 2009 the Fitzroy Valley community entered into a collaborative partnership with the George Institute for Global Health and the University of Sydney's Department of Paediatrics and Child Health to progress the strategy and the Lililwan Project – the first study of FASD prevalence in Australia. This involved commitment and respectful development of a trusted relationship between the four organisations and sensitive leadership from June Oscar, Emily Carter, Maureen Carter, Associate Professor Jane Latimer, Professor Elizabeth Elliott and Dr James Fitzpatrick. The non Aboriginal partners, Associate Professor Jane Latimer, Professor Elizabeth Elliott and Dr James Fitzpatrick, have shown immense respect and dedication towards working with the women and families in the Fitzroy Valley. Working together with guidance from June, Emily and Maureen they have engaged community navigators to work with the medical team and the families. Both 'ways of knowing' have been incorporated into the project and the outcome has been so worthy.

8. Trying to educate and bring appropriate and relevant programmes to all within community

- That will be a challenge because we have to remodel the chaos and dysfunction that exists at every level – within government and within the community. Schools, training centres, the health system, child protection, the range of community services and the courts are basically operating as silos with different policies and funding systems. The left hand has no idea what the right hand is doing and government attempts to coordinate this madness over the past few years has failed miserably.
- We have also begun one of the most comprehensive surveys of children afflicted with Foetal alcohol syndrome and foetal alcohol spectrum disorder ever undertaken in Australia. We know ourselves that the tragedy of FASD and Early Life Trauma is widespread in the Valley but soon we will have the hard evidence on which to plan and implement comprehensive strategies to deal with this lifelong and intergenerational predicament .

9. Living in two worlds

- Like many Aboriginal groups in the Kimberley and across northern Australia, the Aboriginal people prior to 1967 became experts in the cattle industry. Aboriginal labour ran a number of cattle stations and over successive generations families stabilised and rebuilt social structures in a creative coexistence with the pastoral industry. This saw the beginnings of a life being lived in two worlds. They were able to live according to traditional life ways as well as adopt the western ideology to some extent.

10. Dispossession and trauma

- Then in the 1970s an epoch of dispossession and trauma occurred when the mass evictions from the pastoral properties occurred following the pastoral award decision for Aboriginal stock workers. Many people in this area were sent to the United Aborigines Mission in Fitzroy Crossing. There was much chaos and confusion. This was Bunuba country but Bunuba people were soon outnumbered by displaced Gooniyandi, Walmajarri, Nyikina and Wangkatjunka people who flooded in to Fitzroy Crossing from a number of cattle stations in the Fitzroy Valley.
- Amidst this large settlement of displaced people protocols had to be negotiated between people who traditionally had no engagement. Quite an extraordinary community was forged with sound leadership and the Fitzroy Valley became a centre for political advocacy and community development.
- In the late 1970s and 1980s the Fitzroy Valley became a place of cultural and social renaissance through the outstation movement and community development activism. The Kimberley Land Council was born in the Valley through the Noonkanbah conflict and it was here that large bush meetings created organisations such as the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre, the Kimberley Language Resource Centre. The community resilience of the Fitzroy Valley based on commitment to culture, strong leadership and innovative thinking has been frustrated by the incapacity of government to reform its governance structures and deliver services that are relevant to people of the Valley. “A people, trying to live within two worlds”. They continue to have visits from government and external representatives who choose not to recognise the reality, which the people are living and surviving in two worlds. They are continuously adapting to live in the modern reality and uphold their ancient tradition. This is their reality in 2012. The hope for the respect and recognition for who they truly are is just as relevant.
- This lack of respect and acknowledgement continues to perpetuate the trauma and pain. The alcohol and the increasing despair of young people have threatened to erode the social and cultural resilience of the Aboriginal people of the Fitzroy Valley.
On the social agenda front, the urgent and critical imperative has been to confront the crisis of alcohol that has inflicted such devastating and long-term harm on the Fitzroy Valley community.
- In 2007 the women of the Valley through the Marninwarntikura Women’s Resource Centre in Fitzroy Crossing under the leadership of June Oscar and Emily Carter, led a successful campaign against the alcohol industry to restrict the sale of full strength alcohol from Fitzroy’s liquor outlets. It was the first time in Western Australia’s history that community action had led to limits on the alcohol supply for a whole town through the Liquor Licensing Act.
- The key aim of the restrictions was to restore order to the community so that there could be an opportunity to plan an inclusive and comprehensive development.
Without question the alcohol restrictions have achieved exactly what they hoped for. Community respite, healing, family togetherness, security, positive action around responsive community programs, clear thinking and planning for a future based on benefiting from living in two worlds.
- The alcohol crisis in Fitzroy Crossing has also impacted on the unborn child. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders or FASD as it is commonly known occurs when women drink during pregnancy. Alcohol has an extremely toxic effect on the developing foetus and these children

may be born with brain injuries that cause lifelong behavioural and learning difficulties. FASD is a problem for the whole of Australia but it is felt more strongly in communities that have suffered trauma.

11. What we all need to do now to assist in educating and caring for these children

- It will be critical that all educators become aware of FASD as a Disability and we again look to places where there have been successful educational programmes put in place so that these children can learn. For example, Seattle in the USA (Carolyn Hartness FASD Educator), Ruskin Mill Birmingham Project in the UK.
- These children now in our schools (each and every one of them) need an Individual learning plan developed for them to meet their specific needs. They need routines and low stimulus learning environments, they need attention given to their fine and gross motor skill development and all teachers who work in areas where FASD is evident would need to undertake specific training so they not only understand the issue but are able to write individual learning plans and implement them using the correct processes and resources. There will need to be funding made available so that there is more opportunity for educators across the state to be trained appropriately in working with children with FASD and more one- on- one assistance is available to these children.
- Money for teaching assistants will need to be allocated to all children identified with any disability but in areas such as ours where there is a high incidence of FASD there needs to be a trained FASD co-ordinator allocated to each school to assist teachers as well as a community unit where families can access support as is being developed in Fitzroy Crossing at Marninwarntikura Women's resource Centre The Committee will report by 30 November 2012 on this particular development.

This particular issue "FASD" is very much part of what we, as the community of the Fitzroy Valley live with each day as a result of chronic over supply of alcohol into our communities over the past forty years . We are trying to assist our families and our community to understand this issue and find respectful and supportive ways of supporting those of our families living with a unique and complex set of needs. It is our hope that in future, we will have available the means and capacity to respond appropriately to the huge need across our community. For external parties and service providers, we hope to deliver a specific training programme developed so that all people coming to work or visit agencies in the valley will understand FASD and must undertake training so they too can assist in the best way possible instead of trying to make our children fit into programmes which are just not providing them with the much needed skill development and training. We would be happy to present to any Government Agency on our knowledge in this area and hope that this committee looks favourably at all that we are trying to achieve for our community.

In concluding our submission to the Committee, we thank the Committee for visiting the Fitzroy Valley and Marninwarntikura. We hope what we have been able to share new and improved ways of how we envisage delivering services to our community can be adopted by governments in response to these issues and we look forward to the Committee's response to our issues.

