


OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES


## Building stronger NT Indigenous communities through reforming the child and family service system



Kate Race, Assistant Director, Integrated Family Services, Office of Children and Families,  
NT Department of Education and Children's Services  
Children Communities Connections 2012 Conference 15-16 November 2012 Adelaide

Today's presentation

1. The NT context
2. Background to the initiative
3. How we are working to integrate services
4. Four levels of service system reform
5. Outcomes to date




Office of Children and Families

A young, diverse and dispersed population

The Northern Territory is Australia's most culturally diverse and geographically dispersed jurisdiction.

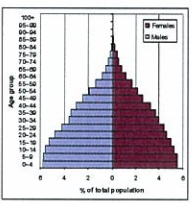
- Indigenous people form over one third of the Northern Territory's population. Over two thirds of this population live in remote/very remote communities.
- 0 to 4 year olds form approx. 11.5% of the total Indigenous population compared to 7% of the non-Indigenous population



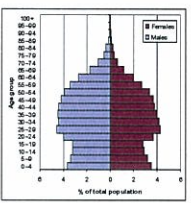
Office of Children and Families

Population pyramids Northern Territory 2010

Indigenous population



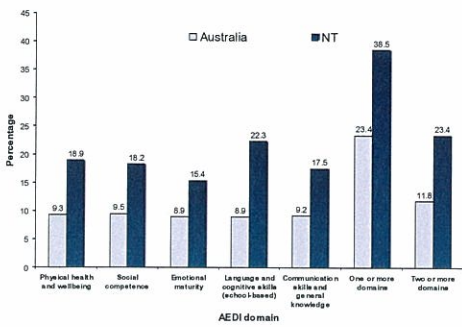
Non-Indigenous population



Source: NT Treasury, 2009. Cited in Silburn SR, Robinson G., Arney F, Johnstone K, McGuinness K, Early Childhood Development in the NT: Issues to be addressed. NT Government 2011

Office of Children and Families

Australian Early Development Index 2009



AEDI domain	Australia (%)	NT (%)
Physical health and wellbeing	9.3	18.9
Social competence	9.5	18.2
Emotional maturity	8.9	15.4
Language and cognitive skills (school-based)	8.9	22.3
Communication skills and general knowledge	9.2	17.5
One or more domains	23.4	38.5
Two or more domains	11.8	23.4

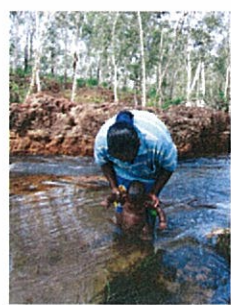
Office of Children and Families

The importance of early childhood

The early years of life have a profound impact on each child's future.

Combined with economic analysis of the benefits of early childhood education, the case for greater investment in early learning and care becomes overwhelming.


Indigenous families are more likely to miss out on early childhood services even though they stand to benefit most.



Office of Children and Families

## Services are struggling to cope

The system of services for children and families is struggling to cope with families' increasingly complex needs... Services are fragmented, and the system is difficult for families to understand and access. The service system needs to be reconfigured to better meet families' needs.



Moore T, and Skinner A. (2010). Background Paper, An integrated approach to early childhood development, Centre for Community Child Health, Melbourne.

Office of Children and Families

## OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

National Indigenous Reform Agreement  
NATIONAL INDIGENOUS REFORM AGREEMENT  
CLOSING THE GAP)  
Council of  
Australian  
Governments

Agreement between  
the Commonwealth of Australia and  
the States and Territories, being:  
the State of New South Wales;  
the State of Victoria;  
the State of Queensland;  
the State of Western Australia;  
the State of South Australia;  
the State of Tasmania;  
the Australian Capital Territory; and  
the Northern Territory of Australia  
This Agreement

Closing the Gap

PROTECTING CHILDREN BY  
CHANGING BEHAVIOURS

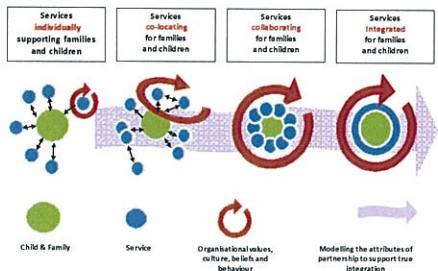
BEHOLDING, BEING & BECOMING

Working together to  
prevent child abuse and  
neglect - a common approach  
for identifying and responding  
early to indicators of harm

STRONG START  
BRIGHT FUTURE

## Journey towards integrated services

Centre for Community Child Health 2010



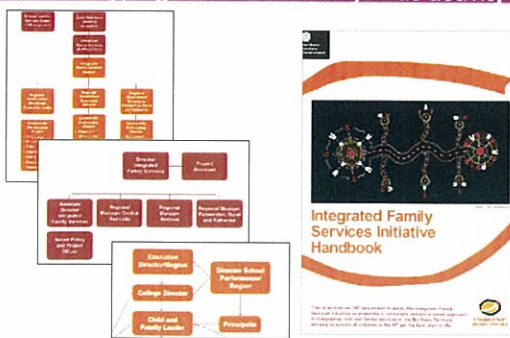
Office of Children and Families

## Outcomes framework for the integration of child and family services

Vision	Providing a system that prioritises improved quality and better access for all children and families, and supports the achievement of improved outcomes for each child in the Northern Territory			
Long Term Outcomes	Children are born healthy, remain healthy and are active, confident learners	Families are resourceful, supported and nurture the development and wellbeing of their children	Communities are safe places in which children thrive and grow to their full potential	Child and family services and agencies respond early to the specific needs of children and families in the community and deliver services that are culturally appropriate and integrated.

Office of Children and Families

## Community, regional and territory-wide activity



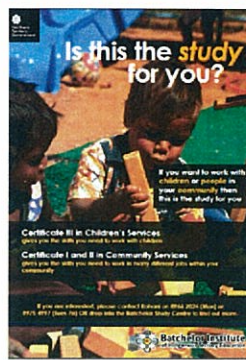
Office of Children and Families

## Workforce development pilot project

Building the Remote Early Childhood Workforce (BRECW) project objective:

To establish a sustainable model of workforce training in four remote communities supporting a local integrated, cross-sector and qualified staff for early childhood services including:

- Child and Family Centres
- Families as First Teachers program
- Universal Access to preschool (Assistant Teachers)
- Early intervention services (Safe House workers)
- Maternal and child health services (community workers)
- Interested parents



Office of Children and Families



### BRECW: Key features

- o A model of delivery shared between two agencies – the RTO and the trainer
- o A trainer/educator living in and delivering in the community and the school
- o Engaging the community in the project
- o Customised curriculum and learning resources
- o Focus on the common skills required to deliver services to young children and their families in remote locations
- o Increased understanding of an integrated workforce and working in an integrated way

Office of Children and Families

### BRECW: flexible, interdisciplinary competencies

Induction	Certificate I in Work Preparation
Working with young kids	
Safety	
Hygiene	Certificate II in Community Services
Health	
Nutrition & food preparation	
Supervision	Certificate III in Children's Services
Play	
Project 1: Make some books	
Project 2: Have an excursion	
Project 3: Book trolley	
Project 4: Keeping the centre strong	
Project 5: Keeping the kids and ourselves strong	
Project 6: First Aid Certificate	

Office of Children and Families

### Community level activity – Galiwin'ku

Office of Children and Families

### Community level activity - Palmerston

Office of Children and Families

### Regional level activity – Central Australia

Early Years Education and Care Reference Group – Alice Springs

Vision Statement: All children and their families in Central Australia have access to an integrated journey of supports and services to get the best start in life.

Office of Children and Families

### Territory level activity

Office of Children and Families

