



Newsletter Kimberley Children's Services Plan

Issue 1

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YOUR UPDATE ON THE KIMBERLEY CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLAN

IN THIS ISSUE

Kimberley Children's Services Plan

by Candace Maunder

The Regional Community Child Care Development Project was established by the Western Australian Government through the Royalties for Regions Program.

The Regional Community Child Care Development Project is an acknowledgement by the State Government of the challenges faced by organisations that provide Children's Services for children.

The purpose of the Regional Community Child Care Development Project is to develop strategic, long term approach to supporting sustainable models of community managed Children's Services in regional Western Australia.

Children's Services include Education and Care services (previously known as child care services) as well as Playgroups, parenting programs and Aboriginal early childhood services.

In support of this, Wunan Foundation has been engaged, through the appointment of a Regional Development Officer, to develop the Kimberley Children's Services Plan.

Wunan is a recognised and trusted not-for-profit Indigenous development organisation in the East Kimberley. Established in 1997, Wunan has a clear purpose and strategy to drive long-term socio-economic change for Indigenous people by providing real opportunities, investing in people's abilities, and by encouraging and rewarding aspiration and self-responsibility. The Organisation has a solid history of developing strategies to address social and economic issues in the region. Wunan has been engaging in the Children's Services and the Education and Care sector for sometime and as a result have become increasingly aware of the challenges impacting the sector. Wunan is particularly aware that Education and Care services are vital to support the economic growth of the region and that the delivery of services continue to meet the needs of the regional community.

Further Information

If you would like any further details on the plan please contact Candace Maunder, Regional Development Officer on 0458 650 002



Identifying Innovative Ideas

Have you got an innovative idea that addresses sector challenges? What Kununurra services are up to...

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Identifying Innovative Ideas

Kununurra Children's Services address challenges in the attraction and retention of qualified staff.

Establishment of the Education & Care Youth Program (ECYP) in March 2014 was to develop partnership opportunities that support young Indigenous women with an interest in accessing training and career development opportunities in the education and care sector.

The program is designed to be flexible and to meet the educational level of students as they progress through a Certificate II in Community Services and to address a range of local issues associated with school to work transition, youth unemployment and shortage of qualified staff within the Education and Care industry.

This supports building capacity of communities to work together to drive change and take responsibility for the learning and development of their young people.

Since March 2014 the following outcomes have been achieved by the Program:



Participants of the Kununurra Education & Care Youth Program

- Three participants have been supported to follow alternate career paths
- Attainment of Certificate II Community Services by three participants
- One participant seeking to further studies by undertaking a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care
- One participant being sought for employment in a Kununurra Education and Care service

An opportunity exists to learn from the Kununurra Education & Care Youth Program and develop similar programs in other towns of the Kimberley region.

NOMINATE NOW!

The Regional Governance Group aims to drive strategies that address issues specifically impacting on the Early Education and Care Sector across the Kimberley.

CONTACT

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Learning the alphabet at the PaCE program in Kununurra. By breaking down the ABCs of the challenges faced by Children's Services of the Kimberley Region, we can support the development of the Plan's Strategic Goals

Consultation Simplifies Trends

Challenges Identified by Kimberley Children's Services

The consultation phase included a variety of stakeholders such as Education and Care service managers, parents, family support staff and local government representatives. The process included forty-six (46) face-to-face meetings, five community forums and thirteen telephone surveys.

The key objective of this work was to better understand and explore the issues and challenges faced by the sector as well as identifying the opportunities and the best practice occurring in the Kimberley.

The approach taken has identified regional and local trends and subsequently highlighted priority areas including;

- Lack of Education and Care places to meet demand due to staffing and infrastructure
- High costs associated in delivery of Education and Care
- Lack of available funding and limited alternate income for Children's Services
- Challenges in the attraction and retention of qualified staff
- Lack of Indigenous engagement in Children's Services
- Access to and affordability of training and Professional Development
- Limited collaboration, networking and governance across Children's Services

These local and regional trends will shape the strategic goals for the Kimberley Children's Services Plan.

ACTIVITY UPDATE



Re-establishing the East Kimberley Early Years Network

East Kimberley Early Years Network has commenced. Find out more and how to get involved on page 4



Learning letters at PaCE, planning for the future



DropIN for Online Collaboration

Recommended by WACOSS as the online tool supporting collaboration and connectivity amongst networks DropIN has been developed for the East Kimberley Early Years Network with the Broome Children's Services Network in consultation for the building of their site. Read more on page 4.

KIMBERLEY FACTS

22%

Of the total population living in the Kimberley 22% are aged 0-12 years

3.8%

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) the total estimated residential population of the Kimberley is 35,000 with an expected growth rate of 3.8% per year.

15%

The costs of goods and services, as a whole, are almost 15% higher in the Kimberley than in Perth.

The Plan for Action

by Candace Maunder

The Children's Services sector has faced increasing challenges associated with the provision of quality Education and Care. The evidence collected during the preparation of the plan suggests the Education and Care sector specifically is finding it increasingly difficult to operate financially sustainable services.

Education and Care services have encountered some challenges in working towards meeting the requirements of the National Quality Framework (NQF) and it is vital that assistance to services is provided to ensure that all Education and Care services are able to meet all of the requirements of the NQF to the very highest standard.

A range of priority actions, have been drawn from these trends to address issues faced by Children's Services of the Kimberley region. These will be developed into the strategic goals and recommendations.

Kimberley Children's Services Plan Priorities

- Increase access to qualified local Education and Care workforce
- Increase accessibility of Working with Children Checks
- Increase knowledge of Children's Services as a career pathway for young people
- Improve governance and strategic planning skills in Children's Services
- Increase knowledge and access to funding and alternate income streams for Children's Services
- Improve collaboration and networking between Education and Care Services
- Improve the structure and ability of Early Years Networks to better support Children's Services
- Develop a portal to support information sharing across Children's Services

including improving information to families

- Improve and increase participation of parents in Children's Services
- Develop a Regional Management Group to support a regional governance model that seeks to support the sector
- Improve access to regulatory training for Education and Care staff
- Improve affordable access to Professional Development opportunities
- Increase collaboration and resource sharing across Education and Care services

Supporting Children's Services Plan Priorities

Wunan is currently supporting Children's Services with the following activities supporting the region's priorities;

1. Ensuring that the sector is kept abreast of the Regional Plan outcomes.
2. Working with the Children's Services to re-engage Early Years Networks.
3. Identifying innovative ideas that can be shared across the region.
4. Promoting available funding resources to support Children's Services to access Professional Development opportunities.
5. Working with appropriate services to encourage the delivery of regional appropriate training through Online or Webinar formats.



Re-establishing the East Kimberly Early Years Network

In 2014, Early Years Network members and early years professionals from across Western Australia participated in a six month project undertaken by the Western Australian Council of Social Service (WACOSS). The project explored the type of support Early Years Networks need to become or remain sustainable and achieve their full potential.

The project development was informed by discussions within the early years sector that revealed concerns about the widely varying capacity and sustainability of the Early Years Networks.

At the time of consultation, the East Kimberly Early Years Network was one of five inactive, yet registered, networks in WA.

WACOSS revealed that Early Years networks are diverse in their strengths, the challenges that they face and the support that they

need to thrive. As information about the networks and their needs was gathered, it became apparent that the model of support developed must be flexible, responsive and focus on capacity building and long term sustainability.

The data collected by WACOSS suggested that most Early Years Networks would benefit from support in the following areas:

- Developing a clear purpose and a strategic framework
- Identifying key stakeholders and recruiting and retaining members
- Promoting the importance of the early years to organisations in order to facilitate an increase in member's capacity to participate in the group
- Identifying key network roles with an emphasis on shared responsibility and succession planning
- Identifying and accessing funding to support the network's strategic direction
- Networking and sharing information

Similar feedback was attained through the Kimberley Children's Services Plan consultation. The East Kimberley Early Years Network recommenced on 31 October 2014. The network's first meeting was attended by 15 professionals from a variety of organisations from the early years sector and has established a calendar of bi-monthly meetings for 2015.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To join the East Kimberley Early Years Network

FOLLOW THE LINK
<http://bit.do/JoinEYN-EastK>



The full WACOSS report on Supporting Early Years Networks in WA is accessible here:

FOLLOW THE LINK
<http://bit.do/WACOSSreport-EYN>

DropIN for Online Collaboration

DropIN is the new online platform set to change the way the community sector and its corporate and government partners connect and collaborate.

Provided by WACOSS, and supported by a Social Innovation Grant, it's free for all community sector based networks in Western Australia to join. DropIN was developed to enable people to collaborate and help reduce duplication and waste through providing a central meeting platform for networks. It has the advantage of allowing both open and closed membership groups to operate as well as an open forum for people to pitch ideas, seek support and network.

What's different about DropIN?

DropIN is community sector developed and owned. It is designed to help groups across the sector to:

- Provide a quick overview of the group, its members and purpose
- Continue working online outside meetings and create discussion
- Provide a platform where people can work collaboratively online using the best document sharing, mind mapping and development tools available
- Diarise and plan meetings and training
- Be built upon, to suit particular or complex needs of different network groups and save time

Currently the East Kimberley Early Years Network have established their DropIN site with the Broome Children's Services Network meeting in February to discuss site design and development needs of the group.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

To register for DropIN and join one of the Kimberley networks:

FOLLOW THE LINK
<http://bit.do/JoinDropIN>



Want to help develop the Broome Children's Services Network here's how:

GET ME INVOLVED - TAKE ME TO THE SURVEY
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/B8YMJTY>



