

Be You In Focus Transcript: Walking together towards reconciliation; how can schools support this journey?

Presented by Denise Wilson, Tasha Roe and Stuart Taylor (of headspace) and Zoe Cassim (of Narragunnawali, Reconciliation Australia)

[Denise Wilson] Hi, I'd like to welcome you to today's webinar walking together towards reconciliation: How can schools and learning communities support this journey. It's wonderful to have you join us today and based on the high numbers of attendees from across Australia, this clearly is an important and relevant topic for schools and learning communities. The recording of this webinar along with the transcript and any supplementary materials will be located on the Be You website early to mid-August under the resources / events tab. You will also receive a participation certificate via email after this email concludes. My name is Denise Wilson, the headspace Be You National Education Advisor. I've been an educator in both primary and secondary school settings, I've been a clinician working with 3 to 18 year olds and have travelled extensively throughout WA as a headspace support State Co-ordinator, and supporting remote and very remote schools develop a whole school mental health approach to well-being and supporting critical incidents.

Today' is about supporting your reconciliation Journey, which for some of you who are joining us, it may be your first step and for others of you, you may be further along. Today's about sharing stories, resources, information and ideas and it's an environment that is supportive and respectful. For those of you who don't know much about Be You, Be You is a national mental health initiative led by Beyond Blue in partnership with Early Childhood Australia and headspace. It is fully funded by the Australian Government. Be You provides Educators with knowledge resources and strategies for helping children and young people achieve their best possible mental health. Schools and learning communities have access to over 70 Consultants across Australia to support implementation of Be You - with the vision of together we're working to grow a mentally healthy community.

For those unfamiliar with GoToWebinar, this is what your screen will typically look like with a webinar viewer on the left and the control panel on the right. You can ask questions about using GoToWebinar through the questions box in the control panel that's highlighted in red. You can also use the control panel to manage your computer or phone audio today. You're in listen-only mode and your microphones have been muted, as we have a large number of attendees. If you're experiencing difficulties at any time, please request support in the question box or note the customer care details on the screen and contact them directly.

Before we begin, the Be You team acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the Lands and waters throughout Australia on which we are sitting and we pay our respects to Elder's past, present and emerging. We recognize the importance of continued connection to cultures, Country and community, to the health and social and emotional well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and their families. Members of our panel are joining you from various Nations across Australia. I'm on the Kulin Nation, and I would particularly like to pay my respects to Elder's past, present and emerging on this Land. Please feel free now to share in the question box what Land you're joining us from today.

We really encourage you to get involved today as much as you feel comfortable. It's important that everyone feels like this is a safe space to learn and that everyone's contributions matter. We encourage you to use the question box to ask questions, share ideas and experiences. We will have some time towards the end of the webinar for the panel to answer some of these questions. Those that we don't get too, we will follow up post-webinar. Throughout the webinar we will pose some reflective questions that we invite you to consider and contextualize within your school or learning community. We also encourage you to have a go at the polls that will be launching throughout the session. With this being said, it would be great to get a sense of where you're at with your reconciliation journey in your school or learning community. So we will launch our first poll your answers are anonymous.

So I encourage you to participate...

I'd like to share some of the results that you can see that we have 44% of you who are taking some first steps. So that's really exciting to see, 27% of you are making some good progress, 15% you're already implementing your reconciliation action plan and 14% haven't really discussed it yet. So we've got a wonderful mix of people just starting on their journey to those that are well and truly implementing. So that means that this should provide some really rich experiences that we can draw on in our chat and discussions today. So thank you for participating in that.

So today's in-focus event aims to build the confidence of school staff and learning communities to start or continue on the journey of reconciliation. We will explore the connections between inclusion and its impacts on mental health and well-being of children and young people and we will share resources, experiences, and inclusive practices, and then reflect how your school might move forward on your reconciliation journey. We want to acknowledge and respect the different states that each of you are on regarding reconciliation and just know that each step actually makes quite a big difference. We're fortunate enough to have guest panellists with us today who can share their experiences and knowledge. They'll have some time later to tell you more about themselves, but I'd like to quickly introduce them to you now. From Narragunnawali, Reconciliation Australia we have Zoe Cassim.

We also have from Be You, Northern Territory Education and Cultural Practice Consultant Tasha Roe. And we also have our Be You Education Consultant Stuart Hunter. Thank you.

Some of the material that we will discuss today may impact you. So we just ask that you really take care of yourself throughout this webinar. And that is if you need to take some time out that you do so. The Be You online professional learning is made up of currently five domains. Today's webinar is drawing from the mentally healthy communities domain and its associated three key modules: **understand** mental health and well-being and learning communities, **connect** through strong relationships and **include** by embracing diversity within a community.

We are also drawing on the Family Partnerships domain and the key learning areas **partnering** with families through purposeful and positive relationships and **assisting** families to support and promote mental health and well-being.

To the left of the screen is a screen shot of the always Be You resources available specifically to educators working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as we will be exploring inclusion and its impacts positively and negatively on mental health and well-being. It's important to consider what do we mean by this term. Mental health and well-being relates to the enjoyment of life, ability to cope with stresses and sadness, the fulfilment of goals and potential, and a sense of connection to others. The World Health Organization says health and well-being is a state of complete physical mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity and that mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her

own potential can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Well-being relates to all aspects of a person's

health physical mental and emotional and is fluid depending on what's happening in an individual or communities life. The term 'social emotional well-being' is preferred by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the term 'mental health and well-being'. Social and emotional well-being reflects a more holistic view of mental health like the World Health Organization's definition. This view incorporates a whole of life approach to the physical, social, emotional and cultural well-being of the community. Looking at the centre of the wheel you'll see the word 'self' and its connection to mental wellbeing, physical well-being, culture, family, spirituality, land and community. If one or more of these areas for an individual or community becomes disconnected, it can impact on mental health social and emotional well-being.

I'd encourage you to write one word comment in the question box now. Consider your school community and share a connector that seems strong or one that you would like to see strengthened. Our aim as educators is to provide children and young people with a sense of belonging and connection in a safe environment, emotional social and physical. This in turn can motivate them to participate actively in their learning and the broader life of their Community. I'd like to hand over to Zoe from the Narragunnawali program at Reconciliation Australia, but before we do we would like to show a short video from reconciliation Australia titled *Reconciliation in Education: Learning, Unlearning, Relearning*.

(VIDEO) *The moment that I understood that reconciliation could change everything was when I saw the possibilities of what I could do as a non-Indigenous teacher to support the children and the families in the communities I taught. I grew up in a town where Indigenous people weren't respected and it wasn't always nice when I grew up. I didn't know anything except negative things about First Peoples cultures. I grew up not understanding the Aboriginal cultures and sort of being part of that biased stigma. I had to learn educate myself on a lot of things that I'd been brought up with and I had to really educate myself about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. It's all about changing the mindset and rewriting the hundred years of education and miss-education. The kids should have a right to want to learn the oldest living culture that's still surviving today. Reconciliation for me personally is very much about connecting with a history that I really felt I was denied when I was at school. I feel I've been really quite cheated by that and I have made a real commitment now as a teacher to make that change. We were taught that there were no Aborigines left in Tasmania, but there certainly is I didn't know the Original Custodians of our Land. Reconciliation helps non-Indigenous people because it helps them understand what they're missing out on, what they don't know about. It's been such an amazing experience for the whole family to be more gelled with the community, Cas has introduced us to a whole lot of new words for animals, and we now incorporate that into our language at home.. There's been a real move the kids at assembly Acknowledge Country and that makes me feel really culturally safe. I Love working here because of that. We've had indigenous students here as well and them and their families would feel that cultural safety. The umbrella for Aboriginal education has broadened to include not just our Aboriginal kids and families, but everyone in our community. As parents, it's really important to let your children have their own views on certain things and being open. A big challenge in their Community is people influencing what the next generation are thinking. There's intergenerational learning happening and we even see that with the grandparents, their knowledge of First People was probably more in that negative space and they're coming to understand that their grandchildren are teaching them that there's another way to know. We can teach the children not to be biased and have social justice for all people that live here. Difference is okay and we can celebrate that difference.*

As an Australian it makes me proud to think that schools are teaching the complete history of Australia and not just bits of it. I'm proud to think that there will be a generation of kids and hopefully many generations of non-Indigenous kids going out into the community with that greater understanding of what has gone before, to make sure that it is better in the future.

[Zoe Cassim] Hello. Hope you can hear me Okay as I am using my iPhone microphone. I would like to also echo Denise's Acknowledgement and Acknowledge that I'm actually joining in from Gadigal Country in Sydney and I'm a visitor here. So I'm a Bundjalung woman from Northern New South Wales. So I am a salt water and freshwater woman and I'm very privileged to call my home Country and heart home where the mountains meet the rivers and the rivers meet the sea. I'd like to Acknowledge the Gadigal Country though and Elders past and present and acknowledge their Land and waterways and skies that are part of our cultural histories and storytelling and a part of everything that we do. Thank you for joining in today's very important discussion. I am part of the Narragunnawali team, and Narragunnawali for those that aren't sure what it means is actually a Ngunnawal word.

The Ngunnawal people are Traditional Custodians down in Canberra, and we actually built a relationship with them after three years-worth of conversations and giving them what we do at Reconciliation Australia and what we intend to do with schools around the country. Narragunnawali, the word itself actually means alive, wellbeing, coming together and peace. 'Alive' is about the everyday practice.

It's about moving things beyond the pretty document that sits on a desk and only gets looked at once. It's got to be done in every conversation in and everything that we do in order to have some kind of meaning. 'Wellbeing' it's about that holistic wellbeing. So it's not just the mental aspect, it's about the physical and the cultural and all of the things about wellbeing in order to keep our children safe. 'Coming together' it's about all of us working together and being united. Unfortunately we [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples] are three going on four percent of the population in this country. So we can't do this on our own and we need every single one of you to walk with us and it's very important that we do so. And 'Peace' because our histories as we know, aren't exactly a positive one since colonisation so we need to come together towards a peaceful future and make sure that history doesn't repeat itself. On the next slide you'll see the Five Dimensions of Reconciliation Australia's *State of Reconciliation in Australia Report (2016)*. These Five Dimensions are key pieces. As an organization we try not to define reconciliation itself. It's too complex and too multifaceted and it's more meaningful if you come up with that definition yourself. What we have come up with through research with national and international First Nations peoples are these Five Dimensions. I like to call them puzzle pieces. All of these are interrelated, none of which is more important than the other. In fact, they're only as strong as the weakest piece. The top one is Race Relations, and it goes through the idea or concept of acknowledging the significant place of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander peoples as First Nations peoples in this country, but also working together towards a society that is free of racism. I'm sure that each of you will have either experienced or witnessed racism. So we know that we have a long way to go. 'Equality and Equity' It's really important to distinguish the difference yet they're interrelatedness.

You can't have equality without equity. It's acknowledging that we each have our own lived experiences and starting points and that we need to work towards allowing fairness so that all people have access to equal opportunities. Because without those provisions or extra support

people often get left behind. 'Unity'. Once again, it's about all of us coming together. We can't do this on our own but by working together as both educational institutions and individuals and communities we can actually build towards a reconciled nation that is free of racism and sees people rather than colour.

'Institutional Integrity' is really important in this space, especially our education systems. And if you know of the Stolen Generations then you know this already, but the education systems have been a large part of the problem. So we need to actually start changing the dialogue around education and reconciliation so we can build that positive future and allow for our young ones as well as their families to build up towards a future where they can actually feel safe and comfortable in who they are and how they identify.

'Historical Acceptance' is about that truth-telling, but not just the dulled down versions. We need to have those hard hitting and very uncomfortable conversations and get more comfortable in those uncomfortable spaces, because our history is a shared history, and while we've got the negative parts since colonization, it's really important to acknowledge that in recent findings we have over one hundred and twenty thousand years of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander existence in this country and that should be celebrated. So while we shouldn't shy away from the negatives and all the things that happened, because they did happen. It's important to acknowledge the strengths and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that continue today.

On the next slide, for those that haven't actually been on our platform, this is actually our homepage. For those that have been on our platform you'll be quite familiar with this. So our platform is a free online resource. We have over 250 resources that are designed by educators. I'm one of six women in the team in Narragunnawali and we're all from early learning, primary and secondary backgrounds. Myself I'm an English and history high school teacher. So with these resources we've actually built them around the frameworks, quality standards and all the professional standards that you guys as educators already have to meet. And the reason why we built the resources the way that we have is that we can support you to achieve what you already have to do, but also to make it a little less scary. What I'll do now is I'll take you through the website and we'll go through some of the resources.

So, on the next slide you'll actually see our framework. So our framework is designed specifically with relationships respect and opportunities. This framework is actually designed from Reconciliation Australia's flagship Workplaces program. What we have done as a team in Narragunnawali is adapted it to the unique setting that is a school or early learning service. So we've made a relationship with respect and opportunities – 'in the classroom', 'around the school', and 'with the community'. So you can see that framework around those circles on the screen in front of you. It's really important to acknowledge that you cannot achieve reconciliation by just achieving one piece. So for example, if you are doing an action like relationships in the classroom, that's wonderful. But you need to think about the broader picture. How do you actually broaden it so you're doing that holistic approach to emotional social and cultural well-being of not only your young ones but your staff and your community members, and this is where the framework comes in.

One of the tools that we've established is our Reconciliation Action Plan program [RAPs]. So on the next slide what you see is on our platform. This is your RAPS page. On the bottom of the screen you can see four coloured tiles. You've got the RAP working group, reflection survey, vision and actions. These are the four steps that you need to take to build a Reconciliation Action Plan. What a Reconciliation Action Plan is, is a framework. You guys have to do the legwork. You guys have to make sure that this is meaningful for you and your service. Unfortunately as a national organization,

someone that looks after the entire country, we can't offer you the specifics and we won't be the authority in this space. That's where the respectful relationships with your local community really comes into play. But with these steps in front of you we're trying to allow you to gain access to the knowledge and the beauty that is those respectful relationships with your local community.

So in addition to these four steps with resources surrounding all of them, you also have your RAP Working Document which allows you to work offline if you'd like too, but you've also got multiple different downloads that you can use.

This on the screen is an example of one of our actions. Build Relationships with Community. You can see there you've got the blurb or the description. This is actually your commitment. When you go to build a Reconciliation Action Plan and adding an action. This is what you are trying to achieve by adding it to your RAP. You can also see there is the 'overview', the 'need to know', and the 'ideas for action', 'professional learning' and 'curriculum resources'. Overview and need to know are really, really important. Especially if you're doing these potentially for the first time. It's really important that you feel safe and comfortable when it comes to, for example building a relationship or having a conversation with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person for the first time. In addition to those need to knows and overviews we have 14 minimally required actions. These are the basics. These are the foundations and all of those actions have a film so you can see that just there above the professional learning and curriculum resources.

To extend the framework, so the relationships respect and opportunities in the classroom around the school with the community, what we've done is every single one of our actions - and we have 39 soon-to-be 40 total which are resources in and of themselves - each of them have professional learning and curriculum resources that link directly to the quality standards and the areas in which you need to teach. What I'll do now is play a video in a second. This video is actually conducted through interviews with schools and early learning services that we've had a connection with and that are talking through what this action has meant for them and how they've gone about it. Just to give you an idea of what it could look like, remembering that it's up to you to make this journey meaningful and unique to your own. So that film will play in a sec. I'll drop off the screen and then I'll pop back on once it's finished.

(VIDEO) Build Relationships with Community:

[Jack] There are a lot of Aboriginal people in your local community. What a lot of schools do is they'll make contact with one and then the following year it's somebody else coming in so then it's not a familiar face. Nobody can actually build a bigger and better relationship.

It's the constant contact year after year that people get more comfortable with.

We've cut this off nearly two years ago and see the tree hasn't died still alive. It doesn't harm the tree at all.

[Briony] Would this stop a spear you think?

Kaurna shield scar tree is not far from us in the Parklands. Jack Buckskin very kindly came and cut it for the school to see and use so it is to be in classrooms handled by the children and visiting the scar tree as a great point of discussion.

[Jack] The scar is one of the most significant things. For us the shield was it was an object made to be broken, so never lasts a long time. The scar is one thing that lasts forever as long as the trees there the scar stays there. So I thought I'll try and find a tree close by in case the teachers wanted to incorporate it into their studies.

[Jess] Having community members come in and assist the schools that might be parents that might be Elders of the community might be someone like myself. To have them come in those kids are then going to be able to understand that Aboriginal people are people and that we live a lot like others today instead of having us as this of the past.

[Uncle Ken] So we went out into the wild and we collected eight different reeds and rushes of boandik Country. It's our role to make sure that we can teach the Next Generation. Tap into some of your local Elders and encourage them to come along. I often bump into some of the students down the street or in town or out on Country. So we've now got a connection they've got a lot of respect for some of the stories that I've been telling them. Just lovely to be able to think that we've got people coming on learning about our culture.

[Jess] The thing that's important for services to consider and to understand when they're connecting with our community is that the first thing that educators will ask when they meet an Aboriginal person from their communities. "We need this", "Can you do that?" Instead of it just being a relationship. Just being. It's about having a cup of tea without the expectation that you are needing or wanting something in return.

[Viv] Bring in Community, bring in Elders. Make it more a close thing, like someone that knows somebody that might be able to bring somebody in and talk to them. And listen.

[Jack] What I try to leave with people is that this culture of ours, of Aboriginal people is the culture of Australia. And now that you are a part of it you have obligations as we do to sustain and maintain this culture and this Country. So I try to make people feel more inclusive and that they have an obligation now to look after this Country alongside us not against us. [End video.]

[Zoe Cassim] And I am back, just a heads up we are getting quite a few questions and interactions from the audience. We are able to see them. The chat or Q&A's aren't like the typical webinars that you can see what everyone else is posting, but I can assure you that we do have a number of interactions and your questions are being answered, and also feel free to send through your questions so that the panellists, myself included, can answer them and support you. On my screen here you can actually see a professional learning. So as I mentioned the actions, each of them have linked professional learning resources, because it's really important that we allow you to go on your own learning journey before you take it to the children and in your classrooms, so you can make sure that it's relevant and meaningful.

But when you've got an education system where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content, people's cultures and histories were typically left out, it's very understandable and we acknowledge, that we've got multiple generations of educators who just weren't aware of all of this content. So be gentle with yourself and make sure that you do the learnings and you discover where you need to go next with all of these resources. That's what it's there for. For you to create your own meaningful learning journey. These professional learning resources, the Evaluating Resources one in particular is very important. It tackles the idea of tokenism. But also you can see all of the 15 subject areas that have been curriculum mapped by us with different resources. So if you're a science teacher and your wanting to have specific science resources with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content, then please have a look at the evaluating resources guide, we have all of them there. On the next slide

what you see is the curriculum resources. What's really cool about our program and the way that we've structured it is where every single action you have the linked professional learning resources.

So you have at least three professional learning resources per action, but then you also have at least one early learning, primary and secondary curriculum resource. These resources are all about supporting the professional learning. So you can see the obvious link between your own learnings as staff members, as working groups, as committee members, as families, and how that can actually be taught or extended to these young ones. And don't forget these young ones get it, they understand the difference between sameness and fairness and they understand the difference between right and wrong. So it's really a matter of having a little bit of a go and stepping a little bit outside of your comfort zone. On the next slide in 2017 we ran our first-ever awards program. So this year it's our second time running and we're really, really excited because the calibre of schools and learning services across the country in their nominations have been amazing.

What I encourage you to do is we've actually got a suite of YouTube clips that share these stories. Have a look, see if you can get some inspiration and also feel free to contact these services and schools because they each want to share their story and we definitely encourage you to create your own support network by doing it. But this is a chance for us to celebrate all of those wonderful successes and things that you guys are already doing. Don't forget we aren't assuming that people are not doing reconciliation or including a Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content. We really want to share what's being done around the schools and early learning services to make sure it's celebrated.

Grounded in Truth: Walk Together with Courage. This is this year's National Reconciliation Week theme. And while it's for National Reconciliation Week, it's important that we extend these conversations beyond a calendar week. 'Historical Acceptance' what I mentioned earlier, is all about that truth-telling, that conversation, those challenges, that we often come across when it comes to uncovering really, really devastating histories. And unfortunately when it comes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's histories since colonisation, a lot of it is devastating. We need to have that safe space for that truth-telling not only for you guys, your staff, but for your young ones and for their families, so by showing you these we really encourage you to extend your conversations and your truth-telling. We have a suite of resources around National Reconciliation Week.

We do it every year so please also jump online to find it. That's it from me! On the next slide I've got the contact-us details. You can see in the bottom left hand corner. If you do have any questions or any thoughts or feelings, feel free to actually contact us directly. I assure you it's actually going to be either myself or one of my five other colleagues who will be on the other end of that email, but Yoway everyone. I'll be hanging about, eager to answer your questions on here.

[Denise Wilson] Thank you so much Zoe you've provided some really useful and fantastic information and resources. We did have a lot of comments that did come through about ways that people are able to connect to the broader community. So I think that the video can really help speak to that. So thank you for that. If you'd like to direct a question to Zoe then I encourage you to put that into the question box now and as I'm handing over to Tasha Roe, this is probably a good time to also pause and allow yourself some time to reflect briefly on anything that might be resonating with you following Zoe's presentation and encourage you to also put that in the in the question box now. I'd like to welcome Tasha Roe to share her story and experiences.

[Tasha Roe] Thanks Denise, and thank you Zoe for such a great presentation. I know from personal experience the Narragunnawali resources really are fantastic and so easy and practical for staff to use within schools and early learning centres, so it's been really great to have you along with us today. Thank you. I would also like to do an acknowledgement of country. I am joining today from Larrakia Country here in Darwin and I would like to extend my respects to Elder's past present and emerging and I also like to extend my respects to anybody who's joining us online who may be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person and thank you for the work that you do and continue to do within this education space.

Little bit about me I am an Aboriginal woman with family connections to Yawuru, Bardi and Nyikina people in the Kimberley's but I grew up on Larrakia and Tiwi country here in Darwin and the Top End. I grew up in a family with an Aboriginal father and non-aboriginal mother and a very large extended family. My Aboriginality is a very important part of my identity, but it is not something that is always easy to talk about. I know from past experience and from the experience of others that people don't always filter their reactions when they do find out that I am Aboriginal and those reactions are not always positive.

So as you can imagine sometimes it's something that you just rather not deal with, and as a fair skinned person I do have the luxury not to disclose my aboriginality if I choose not to. But by the same token I also do feel the responsibility to not shy away from having these important discussions particularly when it comes to education and reconciliation. I'm a trained teacher myself and I have been working in Aboriginal education in both Darwin and Perth for the past 12 years and just a bit of context around why I think it's really important that we have these conversations. I think we need to ask ourselves why it is that we need to improve the inclusion practices on the whole for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We do know that there is a gap in education between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and non-aboriginal people. We also know that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are underrepresented in the education system. I know for myself as an Aboriginal person going through school, I never once had an Aboriginal teacher through my whole 12 years of schooling and that's saying a lot particularly in Darwin where our population percentage particularly in schools is a lot higher than the rest of the country, we're closer to around 40 percent rather than that three or four percent.

In fact, the only member of staff throughout my whole schooling journey who were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander were the Aboriginal education officers through both my primary and secondary school and the role that these people play it in getting me both to finish school in the first place, but also know that I could go on to do whatever I chose as a career really was immense. They also a vital link between my family, particularly my dad who left school after year nine and his willingness to engage in the school community and I was lucky enough that both my parents were very engaged throughout my school community, but I know that wouldn't have been the case without the inclusive practices that happened within my schools. And just on a bit of a side note for teachers that are trying to engage with Aboriginal students who may not speak English as their first language...

I just want you to imagine as though you're trying to teach English in Germany to German students. And one of the first things that you might do would be likely to familiarise yourself with some local language and some culture. Likewise, if you're a tourist traveling around the world, you'd familiarise yourself with some of the local language just to have a base level of communication with the people you might buy translation dictionary relevant to whichever country it is that you're visiting. This

sounds really simple and very much a common sense thing to do, but all too often I've seen Non-Aboriginal people not think to extend that same courtesy when engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and their families, and why they might not be a dictionary readily available from the local tourist shop there are walking and talking vessels of knowledge present in each and every school community just waiting to be tapped into. As an education system I think we need to get much better at valuing the local knowledge and expertise and look at how we can better engage in that space.

When it comes to engaging our local to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities and looking at inclusive practices the whole school approach is always going to be the greatest way to start, and some of the things that you might want to look at within your school is how you can go about providing information to families during facility tours, enrolment and induction sessions about what your approach is to inclusion and what the diversity of your communities population might look like. Your school might wish to host welcoming events for new children and their families, and make efforts to show that everyone is welcome. And that might look different depending on the local community that you're in.

Developing strategies to connect with and hear from family members who don't typically participate in your learning community is another consideration, and that might be translating information if you're working within a community that English is not the preferred language. It might be making phone calls to family rather than relying on text messages or the automated app push notifications as well. And as we heard through Zoe's presentation including families in conversations and consulting with your families and local communities with them about the service or schools approach to inclusion and belonging remembering again to use a wide range of communication methods in just in case technology is a barrier to participation.

I think you just missed the slide there. So some key points that I've put up here just to have a think about and I'll give you some examples of how I've seen some inclusion steps done within a few different schools. But some just really basic things to think about is; Does the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag fly at your school or early learning service? And if it does, does that happen on an everyday basis as happened just drew special occasions such as NAIDOC week or Reconciliation Week or does your school not even have a flag. And if that's the case, just do you know where you might go to try and get one?

Does your school or early learning service have a plaque or a sign or some other form of visual display acknowledging the traditional owners of the land that you're situated on? And I've seen this done in so many different ways in both remote and in urban schools and one of the most beautiful examples that I can think of is when the school was engaged with the community and actually incorporated some art using some local language and the whole walk into the school was covered in language, it was bright and colourful, there was painting on the walls that depicted schoolchildren of variety of different colours, and it's just a really beautiful welcoming way to show that inclusivity.

Acknowledgement of Country as you've seen throughout today's presentation. We will choose to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land that we're meeting on. And again this is a really simple and quite a beautiful way that your school can be inclusive and accepting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Again, I've seen some really beautiful examples of this happening one

in particular small Catholic School in urban metro Perth where the year 6 students actually learned how to perform an acknowledgement of country in the local language and were able to perform that at assembly and also at some key meetings that the staff leadership had as well which was so beautifully received.

And the final point that I have down there is about inviting local Elders to perform either welcome to countries or just to share their stories at your school. And whether this is something that just happens in individual classes with young people is something that happens at whole school assemblies. Again, the most common example that would come to mind would be inviting family members or orders to share stories specifically around NAIDOC Week or Reconciliation Week. But again, as I mentioned we're pushing to have this extended more than just a calendar week. I've seen a really beautiful example of an urban school that actually invited us a local Elders in every Friday at recess and they would set up a bit of a yarning circle and just have a space where they could talk to the students, and students would approach them and just have a general chat. They were also able to organize the set up a bit of a campfire and cook up a bit of a feed and just as another way of just engaging with that school community. So there is lots and lots of examples that your school might choose to look at again I'm happy to answer any questions in the question box at the end when we do our panel discussion, but if they don't get answered today as Denise mentioned earlier, we will make sure to follow that up in the coming weeks.

Thank you.

[Stuart Hunter] Thanks, Tash for such an informative and great presentation. And before I start I'd like to acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians the Bindal and Wulgurukaba people's past and present of the land I speak from today in Townsville. And also knowledge to run out there and who's listening in terms of today's in-focus on reconciliation that everyone is at a different place in space in relation to knowledge and experience and the following conversations is based on my own lived experience. My name is Stuart Hunter and I've recently spent 25 years living in the Northern Territory, 20 of those in school based education as a teacher and in leadership predominantly in remote Aboriginal schools throughout Arnhem Land, and I'd like to start today with two metaphors that I've been fortunate enough to experience.

That for me lay a foundation for how I choose to view and operate from in my personal and professional world. The first slide there is a metaphor for two way learning, and fundamentally this is a meeting and mixing of salt water from the sea and freshwater from the land. Here salt water and fresh water mix together and move onwards and this is a working concept based on culture exchange of knowledge and ideas. Also referred to as both ways approach which came to signify the acceptance of the mixing of both Western and Indigenous knowledge in the second slide.

Which is a metaphor for the traditional canoe, and that should come up in a moment, the captain is always an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. There are a leader who guides and steers the canoe through the waters always picking the right direction to move forward. The canoe has a powerful crew made up of Indigenous people working in harmony with Non-Indigenous people sharing knowledge and stories and ways of doing business. Sometimes the waters will become and we move forward at great speed as you do, sometimes the going will be rough and we may have to slow down or often change course a little, but you know, we'll always keep our eyes on the horizon the move in the right direction. When we reach our destination we will have created something very powerful and important for both indigenous and non-indigenous people's as well.

In the third story slide this is more of my approach to my experience and how this metaphors have been applied. Bilingual education has been a really important part of that experience and it's fantastic when you're working in the school where learning in the language that children think and speak in whilst simultaneously becoming proficient in English, which is delivered at a high quality both ways education process, which are the core values language and culture and is supported by schools literature production centres. Basically, that's where students learning is contextualised into materials that suits the students world view. And that's a really important concept of students world view. The second dot point there where community and students have a voice. That was my experience of running a homelands boarding school that value community and student curriculum inclusion. This is a huge word that both Tasha and Zoe have shared as well and it creates a sense of ownership a sense of self direction and ultimately a sense of responsibility that comes from that ownership and it supports and balances the needle so for that non-indigenous view which is often seen through attendance and learning outcomes.

So in remote schools that often struggle with attendance, finding real solutions to attracting get students back to school often lies in making their learning relevant and contextualised to their worldview and it needs to focus on what community expectations are. Like mainstream schools parents say, why do I send my students to the school is because it offers an education that I value and so it should be the same for indigenous students in schools. The third one there is learning on Country. There's a good example of what I've just saying that the learning on Country programs is an example where this where students literally learn on country and utilizes senior community members, ranges, vocational educators and school teachers. And each external outdoors event is followed up in regular classroom teaching, using aspects of country as resources for students learning and development. Probably one of my greatest pleasures is been working in Homeland schools in different communities. And essentially the experience is about cultural immersion.

And as the elders in one of the regions that I worked in have continually stated, they want non Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers to learn with families so that they understand the knowledge that students bring to school. And again, this is this whole concept that utilizing the knowledge that kids bring to school and working from that.

The essence here is that this sharing is critical in strengthening the practice of both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal teachers particularly in road remote indigenous schools. The next slide is here are some of the things to consider so some of the strong starting points for leadership? And again what Zoe and Tasha have said, let people have a voice, get to know and invite people in the community from just a business managers, parents, to staff members and include them in conversations and strategies where they make decisions that help build a community direct it and support the school the community school. An example of this is a basic template that I use for all meetings where decisions need to be made and in this instance let's use our staffing employment as an example. So basically the page that I have an A4 page standard is separated into four horizontal sections where the top section is information that non-Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people bringing to the meeting, the second session section is information that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people bring to the meeting. The third section is where a local decision is made and gets done. And the last section is where that decision becomes community-led and by who. So here we operate from a sense of empowerment a sense of self direction and the sense of self management as well. Another really huge way of respecting communities and people's decision making so it means that we value what their voice brings-truth to the reality that schools are a service provider to whom in this instance to the schools community.

To the parents. So respecting the decisions that communities make is so important. Having empathy is equally as important because that develops when you begin to have understanding of the history of the community and the culture. Try to understand people situations, for example, what would it be like to walk a thousand steps in their feet, you know. Work towards what communities find most important which is cultural identity in survival. And what Tasha said earlier about being a tourist overseas and you know, extending your courtesy there by learning some language or finding out little bit more about the culture and the world they live in. Well, you know in many ways you are when you onto anyone's land a tourist so extend your courtesy and extend that through cultural understanding and that should apply here as well. Working together creating local employment. This is more than just having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on staff. It's about these members of staff being employed in meaningful achievable and support roles that recognize qualifications and make real change to themselves, the school, the community and in and into the communities long term. One of the last ones: is the curriculum relevant, is it inclusive of student and community needs. Is it solely system directed or does it blend and share its ownership across the community. We wouldn't send us we wouldn't send our kids to schools if we didn't think that what they were learning was important and that is in some ways parent lead and directed. From the classroom teacher perspective some of the strong starting points to consider is working with and you know capital W-I-T-H with your classroom assistant teacher simply means your involving an assistant teacher and all things from the planning process to the teaching process. It's about being inclusive, again supportive. It's structuring it, it's making it flexible and knowing what each other's roles and responsibilities are to bring the best of the students. And also really important is developing a strong relationship because you know, when you can develop trust and respect that's integral to the way that you work together. Remember when you leave the community, the assistant teacher stays, it's their home so really value and respect what they bring to the classroom the depth and strength of their cultural knowledge and the relationships they have with every student in the class room let alone everyone in the school more than likely. And as mentioned earlier like help you understand the knowledge that students bring to school and that is where the learning begins. So what can we take away from this? Well, listen to the community members, continue to learn, never stop, value the learning experience and grow from it, respect yourself others decisions and their culture and implements within the learning environment that which supports on the cultural social and emotional life of the students and the wider school community. So thank you very much for listening. I know it's a lot to take in today, but look forward to any questions that may come afterwards. So, thank you.

[Denise Wilson] Alright, thanks so much Stuart for your wonderful metaphors and your insight into the experiences in working in remote communities. We've had some great questions that have come through and some really beautiful reflections and we are going to put together a Q & A post-webinar answer sheet for you to be able to capture all of that and we will send that out to you post webinar. Just before we finish for today some of the questions that have come through around wanting to get assistance with a RAP and where do you go to for help? We've also had a lot of comments about wanting to respond to having strong connections to culture. Thank you so much for those that have joined us today.

If you haven't had a chance to log onto and register your school community to Be You which the next slide will show for you, I encourage you to go on before you log off today and register your school community as a Be You Community. Thank you again for joining us and thank you to Narragunnawali. I really do encourage you to contact them following the post-webinar. They're happy to answer any further queries. Thank you to our Be You consultants Tasha and Stuart. I'd also



like to thank the team that have been supporting this webinar, and I'd like to thank you for joining us today. Thank you.