

Reconciliation Seminar 2: Introducing SNAICC

Transcript from the Reconciliation Series 1 2022

• 1:22 - 1:56

Okay, we might start. So, good evening, everyone. Welcome to the Reconciliation series, number two, a workshop that we've got. Before I do start, I just want to acknowledge the traditional owners in the land that we're currently meeting on. I'm here on the land of the Wurundjeri people in Melbourne Kew, I pay respect to the elders past, present, and emerging. And I extend that to the lands that you are currently on as well and pay respect to elders past and present. I also like to acknowledge any other Aboriginal and Torres Islander person who's joined us tonight.

• 1:56 - 2:13

And I'd also like to extend, it even further to the lands where you may have grown up on, which might be completely different to where you are now. And I would like to pay respect to their elders past and present cause they actually helped shape who you are and who you became.

• 2:15 - 2:45

Hi, my name's AJ Williams. My background's Wiradjuri and Wotjobulak. My family come from Dimboola, Horsham, Dubbo, and the Wellington area of New South Wales. I've been involved with AGECS for the last, three years and I am one of their reconciliation ambassadors. And I am, overseeing the reconciliation series of workshops that we're actually doing. Tonight, we've actually got, two wonderful, ladies, Maxine Walk and Adele Cox from SNAICC.

• 2:46 - 2:52

And, I'll get them to introduce themselves cause I think they'll do a better job than me. So I'm going to throw over to Adele.

• 2:54 - 3:26

Thanks, AJ. Evening all. I'm actually still in the SNAICC office. You'll see people wandering behind. I would firstly like to, acknowledge, and pay my respects to Wurundjeri people on whose land I am on. So, I'm here in SNAICC'S head office in Collingwood, just off Smith Street, and where all of the excitement is in, Narm at least. But my mob is actually from the central Kimberley region of Western Australia.

• 3:26 – 3:45

So, my mother is Bunuba and my father is Kija, but I was born on beautiful Yawuru country, which is otherwise known as Broome. So, I've been here at SNAICC now, since May last year. And I'm currently SNAICC's National Sector Development Manager over to my sister Max.

• 3:47 – 3:48

And we'll go straight over to Max.

• 3:49 – 4:22

Great, thank you. Thanks AJ. Thanks Adel. So, my name's Maxine Walker. I'm a Gumbainggir woman with connections, strong connections in terms of my grandfather's country to the Dingggatti, which is just for the south to Gumbainggir country. I actually sit in my country here. I was born and raised on the river banks here and very much, you know, lived a cultural life. I guess for me. It's a part of who I am. It's a part of my connection, it's a part of my identity. I feel quite strongly about and respectful of my learnings from my elders.

• 4:23 – 4:59

And just growing up on country, I fortunately, had the opportunity to come home just recently to country. I've lived in quite a number of places, and I've had a quite diverse background in terms of my career, but essentially this is my home. So having the opportunity to do this with you on my country is really important to me. And I hope to share tonight, I guess some of my experiences as an Aboriginal woman. But my role within SNAICC is the National Program Manager for the recent intermediary project, which we have, across the state, across the nation, I should say.

• 4:59 – 5:16

And we'll share more with you as to what that project actually entails. And I guess how we actually engage with Victoria, in particular for Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, whereby Victoria is one of the identified pilot states as a part of the national program.

• 5:18 – 5:51

Cool. Thanks Max. So, the rules for tonight are, is that, you can ask questions as we're going along if you like. So you can take your speaker off and Hey and actually interrupt a little bit and go, Hey, I've got a question. We can throw them in there. Otherwise feel free to put 'em into the chat. We will stop, and ask, if, both, both the speakers as they're talking, we'll We will stop and ask you for any comments, if you don't put any in, don't verbally say them as I'll go from the chat and raise the question for you.

• 5:52 – 6:23

So, with note, we've had a couple of technical difficulties this afternoon, so hopefully we've actually finished fixing it up. So, let's see if we can get the presentation up and working. So, let's see whether we can do this. Oops. And of course, we couldn't, so let me just try that one more time and hopefully this will work. Yes. Can you guys see that? Yep.

• 6:23 – 6:33

So, I'm going to throw over to, Maxine and Adele, and they'll tell you about supporting Aboriginal Torres Islander children and families. So over to SNAICC.

6:34 to 8:04 we experienced technical difficulties with slides and have removed the brief conversation from the transcript for clarity and conciseness.

• 8:06 – 8:43

Just while, AJ is setting that up. I just want to also encourage you to yeah, intercept, pull us up if there's anything that you want to explore further from the presentation that we are giving you. I guess from an Aboriginal perspective, we get more out of just yarning and working through and talking through what the understandings of what we are delivering would work for you. And I just want to also say thank you for your time tonight. I think I'm appreciative of the invitation from AJ that your attendance and your commitment to the reconciliation action plan is very much grateful and acknowledged.

• 9:03 – 9:26

Oh, thank goodness. All right. So, these, shout out to, Jabra. These headsets are brilliant. Cuz every time I think everyone can hear what's going on in the background, they can't. All right, let's kick into it. First slide. And apologies everyone, but you know, it's, when you can get technology to work straight away. It's a brilliant day.

• 9:38 – 9:38

Not gonna work.

• 9:43 – 9:47

The slideshow at the bottom there. Yeah.

• 9:49 – 10:35

Oh, brilliant. All right. So SNAICC, for a lot of you, as some of you had mentioned in the beginning actually, are aware of the organisation. A little bit about a brief history, I guess,

and background for a lot of you who aren't. As per this slide, as you can see, SNAICC recently turned 40 years old. And, one of the, beautiful things I guess about the story and the history of SNAICC is the fact that, sorry, there's someone trying to be admitted in, the fact that, you know, for this long, we've been able to not only survive but thrive as an organisation.

• 10:35 - 11:03

And that's the saying that we hear fairly often, when it comes to the early years and the work that we do on supporting young people, supporting our kids and supporting our families. What we can do, in terms of, you know, understanding what the needs are, but also acknowledging that, as some of you have started to put in the chat, there's, you know, there's some of you who are going to be very familiar with, the context of, you know, the space that SNAICC works in.

• 11:03 - 11:38

Particularly some of you are going to have, your own years of experience and actually working with Aboriginal families and children. And a lot of you may not have had that privilege yet. So, this really is an opportunity for us to share with you and take you kind of on the journey of the work that we do here at SNAICC, what we stand for, and also some really exciting opportunities that, have come about, including the work that Maxine is leading with the National Intermediary Project. So, SNAICC is 40 years old, established back in 1981.

• 11:38 - 11:40

Next slide, please, brother.

• 11:44 - 12:18

And as part of that SNAICC, as part of the First SNAICC conference back in 1981, there was a statement of purpose was formulated. And from those discussions and you know, from the outset, the need, the identified need for a peak organization nationally to support the work that was being done in various states and territories at local levels by a lot of organisations who weren't yet kind of fully fledged Aboriginal childcare agencies or organizations, but were on the verge of.

• 12:19 - 12:49

And it's one of those nice things that, you know, we're familiar with the story of the creation of the Aboriginal Medical Services and that history. And I think one of the less known kind of stories and accomplishments is you know, organisations such as SNAICC who've been around now as a national peak for a very long time. In fact, you know, you do the math, I

was only four years old when SNAICC was established, <laugh>. So that's how, that's how long the organisation's been around.

• 12:49 - 13:05

So, it was developed as an innovative and useful resource, as a way to provide useful resources for its members, and to the sector more broadly, who are supporting Aboriginal and Torres Island children and families.

• 13:08 - 13:46

So, a lot of the work that Snake does, is built around collaboration and built around partnership. And of the key kind of ethos and, focuses of SNAICC as a national peak is our ability to connect where we ourselves acknowledge that we don't have all of the know-how. We don't have all of the skill, we don't have all of the, person power. And so, because of that, we're always needing to look kind of beyond the scope and capacity of our organisation and actually connect with organisations who can, and are there and willing to assist.

• 13:46 - 14:35

So, Snake actually has some fairly large partnerships in place. One of them, recent ones I think that was announced at the end of last year was a national partnership between SNAICC and Life Without Barriers. Now, life Without Barriers as a you know one of the massive non-indigenous NGOs in this country had made a commitment that over a 10 year period, they were actually going to, hand over and support Aboriginal community control organisations in the various jurisdictions where they have a footprint to actually take on the, leadership, and do a lot of the you know, take on a lot of the ownership over the programs that they currently have.

• 14:35 - 15:06

So, Life Without Barriers has made that commitment and that's a new partnership that we're very excited by. And we're kind of working through the details of what that will entail. And there's, you know, other ongoing partnerships that we have as well. One of them, I guess over the years has been because of that core role of advocacy and, and leadership in this space. And so, a lot of the conversations that we have is in fact with state and territory governments as well as the federal government.

• 15:09 - 15:55

So, one of the things that I think surprise a lot of people is the fact that, SNAICC is a very small organization. We have and our numbers are growing now, thankfully, but right now we're, I think, a core staff of about 18 maybe extending that now. And that's not including

the new staff and the new team members that have come on as part of this intermediate process. So, we are a very small team. And one of the things that people are surprised by because SNAICC the organisation, is able to churn out and create so many fantastic resources and documents and kind of policy pieces and have a presence out there you know in terms of this space and the work that we do with Aboriginal families.

• 15:55 - 16:13

So, there's an assumption that SNAICC is this very large mega outfit and in fact we're not, you know, we're a couple of handfuls of people who are dedicated and, we're very blessed that we have a unique kind of skill set of staff and people in the organisation.

• 16:14 - 16:58

A lot of the work that we do is actually project based funding. So, SNAICC, even though it's a national peak, we actually don't get any recurrent ongoing funding from any government. So, what does that mean? It means that in terms of our operating cost, we have to earn, and we have to, you know, almost as a consultant, like a consultancy firm, we're always having to look for those opportunities so that we can actually bring in the monies that we need to sustain as an organisation. One of the things that we've said that we need to do is move beyond that. But also have a look at how we can kind of create better models that from a business sense, to ensure that the work that we do is sustained for another 40, 40 years or more.

• 16:59 - 17:16

So, there's massive potential to grow. There are opportunities like the one that we've received with the intermediary that we're able to use and to grab hold of and really kind of do some really meaningful work with which Max is going to talk about very shortly.

• 17:19 - 17:49

So, we, we very much see ourselves as, as leaders. We very much see ourselves in the role as being, people who you know, are the vehicle by which we can get some key messaging across. Part of that vehicle is also ensuring that we have the ability to make sure that we're having ongoing conversations with those people who are creating and developing policies, who are determining what the resource allocation is for new programs, new funding, new initiatives.

• 17:50 - 18:11

And part of that is making sure that we, you know, just always have a presence and, and we make ourselves known. So as part of that leadership, you know, we've been very instrumental in a number of very key and high level policy reforms, changing the way that

government thinks about the work that it does in the way that it works with Aboriginal communities.

• 18:11 - 18:43

But a lot of the work we do actually, which is not surprising to some of you, but maybe to others, is the work that we do to support non-Aboriginal people who are working in this space, who are, you know, who have become champions for our cause as well. And we acknowledge that there's not enough of us, and so collectively, you know, how do we, how do we ensure that we've got enough people who are willing to work in this space? And part of that willingness is, you know, having that shared understanding and kind of, common goals going forward.

• 18:48 - 19:23

So, our work continues. A lot of the work that we do in particularly our CEO Catherine Little, is to be at the table with a lot of key kind of conversations that happen. A lot of you, I'm assuming a lot of you are familiar with Close the Gap, and what that work is in terms of the federal government's response to trying to close the gap on life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Islander people, and wider, you know, the wider mainstream Australians. Part of that work is, there are a couple of specific targets, and Max is going to talk about these, in more detail.

• 19:24 - 19:44

But SNAICC is an active member of the Coalition of Peaks. And as part of that work and conversation that, you know, the coalition is doing in partnership with the federal government, the Coalition of Peaks is there and members of this joint council, on closing the Gap, and there's mechanisms that have been put in place.

• 19:44 - 20:30

There was a new kind of, revised national agreement looking at the targets under close the gap, and there was some really great parameters that were set in terms of how we work better to make sure that everyone across government, across sectors and, across jurisdiction, that those conversations remain. Danny's asking, is the gap closing? Unfortunately, it's not. So, we've got a long way to go. Now, I wasn't meant to read the live questions as they were coming, but, one point to me, there's a number of other key initiatives that we've got as well, and I said to Max, in the interest of time, without kind of going through each of them, we would encourage you to visit the SNAICC website.

• 20:30 - 20:51

Have a look around and see what you can, you know, dig up from there out of interest. And I think, you know, we'd certainly be keen through AJ and perhaps Alex to, also, provide our contact details so that you can send an email to, SNAICC if you have any further kind of queries and follow up.

- 20:55 – 21:31

And this one is, you know, just kind of a, nice closer to remind us that, you know, as, SNAICC, those little ones on screen are the reason and the purpose we kind of do what we do as the National Peak. And so I'm going to hand over now to Maxine who's actually going to give us an update and inform you all of this brand new initiative that the federal government has invested funds into. As well as, we've got some supports from, some philanthropic groups as well, because one of our states has actually been established since last year.

- 21:32 – 21:34

But, over to Sister Max.

- 21:34 – 22:22

Thank you J Thank you. Just going on that slide, so I've introduced myself, I'm the national program manager for the Intermediate, which is a national nationally funded project, with a quite a large investment from the Commonwealth government. And I say that up front because what it's about, I guess from a Commonwealth's point of view is the pilot, the pilot will run with is three and a half years. And so we have the opportunity, as a country to change the dialogue and I think the importance of the picture that you can see now of our children with our colors, you know, our respected flag, and I'm going to even go to the detail of what our flag means to us in terms of, obviously the black is a representation of us as, as a people.

- 22:22 – 22:25

We have the sun and then we have the land.

- 22:25 – 23:00

So those combinations for us as Aboriginal people refer to our identity and how much the country, the lands, the resources, and where we come from is an essential part of our identity, which obviously would include our children. So, for us, within any environment, whether it be at home, whether it be within our local Aboriginal communities and or the broader community, whereby we connect with other family members that live on other countries, essentially what keeps us going in our hearts and within our souls and our, just our essence of who we are as a people is our connection to culture.

• 23:00 – 23:41

So, you could understand the importance of that photo to Aboriginal people like Adele and I and others that are in the room and or within the country that you live on and or the country itself. So I just want to point that out, to start with, because essentially how do we grow Aboriginal children from the day that their inception of being, you know, recognised within Mum's belly and then come out into this world to maintain that connection to their mother, their fathers, their families, their country, their culture, their resources, and everything that it takes to be an Aboriginal person to feel strong, healthy, and live a respect for life within line to our culture.

• 23:46 – 24:17

So, as I said, I'm leading the National Intermediary Project, which is essentially identified to take three state pilot states with us. I mentioned at the beginning, Victoria is one of them. The other two states as Adele referred to, is Thrive New South Wales or as the, as the body is known. So, the New South Wales participate in services, which I'll go into more details soon and Western Australia. But I think it's also firstly important to extend from that first slide with our children.

• 24:18 – 24:51

So, I want you to place yourselves in the position of these children as they're born and the ongoing impacts that have either been intergenerationally handed down and or influenced to their families, their communities, and us as the people across the country and or our immediate country that we have tried to survive on. I would like to also acknowledge, my previous leaders and ancestors and all that have gone before us to even bring us to this space today for the Commonwealth government to recognise that there needs to be a change in dialogue.

• 24:51 – 25:22

And I say that with the challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and the question that was asked, are we closing the gap, or have we had any impact to close the gap? So, when you place yourself in the position of a child having the colonisation and its effects, which continue on today, and I'm trying to say this in a positive way, because we do need our partners, we need non-Aboriginal people to walk with us to change this dialogue. And that includes you here today as well as state governments and commonwealth governments.

• 25:22 – 26:12

So as an aboriginal child being born in today's society, they are currently faced still to this day with discrimination, racism, poverty, systematic child removal, whether it's forced,

agreed upon, and or it's the own solution for the safety of a child. Intergenerational trauma that's been handed down throughout the generations. Dislocation from their traditional lands and culture community disempowerment a lack of cultural safety within services and systems, whether that be within the different services and systems from education, health, juvenile justice, crime, and all the other different portfolios that we all live under.

• 26:12 - 26:51

Our children are also faced with the impacts of high unemployment, which puts them in a place of social and economic disadvantaged from the moment they are born, a low household income where our families still struggle to rake the money up to send their children to school, our families still struggle to pay the rent, our families still struggle to pay the electricity. Our families still struggle to understand how the system will work for them. And when you are faced with all of this as an Aboriginal child being born into a family of Aboriginal people within a community, this is where our children are starting.

• 26:57 - 27:28

So, to start with, in terms of the National intermediary project, we have, yes, we're a nested unit within SNAICC. I believe quite strongly and I respect SNAICC for its previous 40 years. I believe that the Commonwealth has so much acknowledgement, respect, and trust that they have invested a large amount for this project to be nested in SNAICC. So, when I look down that list, we have head office people who are also working collaboratively with the national intermediary team.

• 27:28 - 27:57

Obviously we have Catherine Little, and our board of management from SNAICC Catherine Little has, you know, she honestly, I've never heard a speaker, say it like it is, but within a caring and respectful way because we do need you as partners. We have John Burton, he's the policy and research manager in SNAICC. John's been around for quite some time, quite extensive in his knowledge research and his commitment to the Aboriginal cause in this country.

• 27:58 - 28:33

The sector development officer Adele, who you've met. Thank you, Adele. We've got Fran Witty, who's our operations manager. We have SNAICC Communication Manager, which is currently vacant. And then it goes into my team at the national level that is nested within SNAICC as I suggested. My name's Maxine Walker, I'm a Guango woman as I mentioned at the beginning. We have Miranda Edwards, who we've recently appointed from the National Workforce Advisory role, which is another key element and I'll continue to keep going, but there's further information in terms of that workforce role for Miranda.

• 28:33 – 28:57

I hope that one day you can meet her, as Adele said, we're quite happy to leave our contact details and you can contact us at any time and have direct conversations. And that includes members of my team as well as other members at head office in SNAICC. We have a, a national policy and research advisor for the intermediary. We're currently in the recruitment phase. Sorry, was that a question?

• 29:00 – 29:31

Oh, okay. And we also we're just defining a few other pilot positions. You know, in terms of communication strategies, management of the project itself from a financial budgeting point of view and administration will be the other key element for the pilot project team.

Next slide, brother AJ.

• 29:32 – 30:08

So as Adelle referred to one of the key priorities for the pilot, and I'll just refer to it as pilot rather than keep going through the long version or intermediary.

So, the outcomes and priorities are very much aligned with these reforms. The initiative obviously is about emerging young aboriginal people and having a peak body that supports participating in the services across each state. Those three states that I referred to earlier, an essential part of the priorities of the pilot will be the establishment of an emerging peak within WA located in Perth. As Adele referred to, we have the Thrive New South Wales set up already in Wollongong with the director, Joe Balding, who heads up the team there, sorry.

• 30:09 – 30:42

And we are just about to commence planning to co-design as we are doing currently within WA for a model to establish an emerging peak as well. And the key things that will come out of the emerging peaks is the support base that whereby we can support those participating services from Aboriginal community-controlled organisations so that we have children who are born healthy and strong. How do we do that? How do we collaborate with health to enable a child to be healthy as well physically, mentally, spiritually, and culturally?

• 30:43 – 31:05

Children are engaged in high quality and culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years. How do we do that? How do we ensure that when a child is being serviced by a health nurse or going to school, they have the best advantage to start

in kindergarten, ready to go where their cultural identity is acknowledged and respected and supported?

• 31:05 – 31:41

How do we provide that high quality as well as support them within their cultural identity? So, children thrive in their early years as we know. If we can take on the approach of starting to support and enable our children to have a good start and thrive in life, it starts from the day they're born into here. And then obviously that transition from the early years sector over into the big school. So, what developmentally we have, basically its evidence based whereby our children are starting developmentally sort of basically behind other children in the country.

• 31:41 – 32:03

So what we're trying to achieve within the pilot is whereby our children have the same opportunities, the same service delivery, the same connections to their culture, their country, as they would at home and leading into their future. The participating services, when I refer to them, as I said, it's an aboriginal it's the focus will be on aboriginal community-controlled organisation, which is a target under the close the gap.

• 32:04 – 32:47

So, at the moment within New South Wales, we have 17 participating services within Victoria we have nine, within Western Australia we have eight. And I say those numbers as I do because when we be mindful of the close the gap target, and I identify priority within these same reforms. It's also about there are a number of transitional organisations that are transferring over to the Aboriginal community control or to go back to the aboriginal community control. So, the priority at the moment is the participating services and they are made up of child and family centres, the multifunctional centres, Aboriginal children's services, and long day care centres.

• 32:48 – 32:55

So that's pretty much capturing the key priorities under close the gap.

Next slide. Brother. Am I going too fast?

• 32:58 – 33:55

Okay. So yeah, just going through the pilot in detail a little bit more, just to give you a concept of how it will operate at the national level and how we're actually working with the three identified states within the timeframe that we have for the pilot. A part of that is obviously to support the consistent quality across participating services and the development obviously for each state will change within the co-design modelling that we

are doing with the participating services so that we understand what their priorities are, what their service delivery access, and those initial responses are as they stand now, where are the strength and welcome a strength based approach whereby an emerging people be established in each state, just as we've done in New South Wales to support those participating services to develop and be stronger than where they are today.

• 33:56 – 34:33

The unfortunate thing that I guess me coming on board last November, the clearest message that I received is that a lot of the Aboriginal community-controlled organisations have been, have reduced funding and or they haven't got upgraded funding to address the needs of the children within those centres. So, if anything, they have done a lot of work that they have done very much underfunded, under supported and or have the ability to access services to support their children to become stronger and develop the service to enable them to work with the children within their services, but also with each other as a network.

• 34:34 – 35:00

It'll be a tailored, it is a tailored support to strengthen the compliance, the National Quality Framework. So, at the moment we're engagements with ACECQA at the national level. How can we provide a support base, I guess to the participating services that are under the National Quality Framework and or are in transition and or under other forms of management where they will transition to the National Quality Framework.

• 35:00 – 35:43

How do we actually provide resources and workshops and policy and procedures and mentoring capacity building to those participating services as well as with each other, i.e., Community of practice? Sorry. So the tailored workforce development and training supports will be to address, sorry, redress the identified areas for, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and strengthening them as individuals, but collectively as well as how do we connect those children to maintain their connections and bring the Aboriginal community into those centres to support the boards and the teachers and collaboration once again with all the other services that we're trying to achieve.

• 35:43 – 36:19

It's about a support-based development peak, so that we can monitor, so monitor, evaluate the learnings and the strategies so that we can hopefully change the dialogue with the Commonwealth, but also with the states as to what works best for Aboriginal people. And one of these key priorities for me in the pilot is to give Aboriginal people, at

the front end of the seat so that we have the opportunity to engage, influence and inform, but also guide our own futures as well as today's.

Next slide brother.

• 36:22 – 37:11

So, a part of the setup at the national level and I'll then go take, break it down to the states in terms of the governance requirements. So, obviously we have SNAICC at the top who I report to on the national pilot itself, which is the board of management of Snake. Um, I report to the CEO as the national program manager for the pilot. Sorry, my voice is going a bit croaky here. And then we have our internal systems and then there will also be the establishment of a national for the first time National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early years steering committee, which will also report on the pilot and make some decisions, but also advocate and lead in the early childhood sector on behalf of the participating services across the country.

• 37:11 – 37:47

The other element of the national governance is a national expert advisory group whereby yes, we'll have the Commonwealth government sitting there with us, but we'll also have the state governments sitting with us as well from the three pilot states, but also who will have their people like, you know, Dr. June Oscar, who's a social justice commissioner, hopefully, fingers crossed. I'm still going through the appointment process as well as other aboriginal leaders who work within the early sectors, early childhood sector, sorry,.

• 37:49 – 38:31

Also, other aboriginal leaders who generally work within the early years sector. And what this is about is, yes, it's about accountability to close the gap, but how do we work in partnerships even sitting within such an expert advisory group, how do we lead and change the dialogue so that the reforms can actively happen within the states? So strategically, I guess the way the Commonwealth are starting to think, which we think we're having an influence on is well. How do we actually talk to each other to become accountable, but also we go back to our own arenas or our own portfolios and continue to advocate and consider what's actually happening within the pilot for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

• 38:32 – 38:41

You'll note there below the SNAICC box, there's the list again in terms of employment and staff that at head office.

• 38:41 – 39:12

So, the next tier level to the actual pilot governance is within each of the three states. So, you'll notice I keep sort of referring to thrive. Thrive is very much the branded or the endorsed brand for the states as well as the national pilot itself. So New South Wales then, their brand name of their organization is Thrive New South Wales or Body I should say. And as you can see, there's one, there will be one established in WA.

• 39:12 - 39:56

We're currently going through the co-design and identifying what the priorities are for the state. One of the challenges in WA is that how do we get from a child protection space over to the prevention space. So what I'm trying to, I guess outline here is you will find the differences that I will refer to from New South Wales, Victoria and WA. The co-design process is very similar, but the aspirations, the priorities are very different and the governance of even just those state governance and or access, you know, remoteness, whether it be rural, you know, far reaching, you know, out the back or sort of, so not that the back, I shouldn't say that, that's what New South Wales terminology.

• 39:57 - 40:29

So up in the Kimberley region it's quite large, quite sparse, and there are a number of Aboriginal communities within that space alone. So how do we get equity in full coverage with an emerging peak located in Perth? How we do that is through governance. So, the other part of the governance for the states is with Victoria whereby there will be the establishment for their whole three states, where there'll be a set of a, once again an Aboriginal community control early years sector advisory committee.

• 40:30 - 41:09

They will basically work with every participating state, sorry, participate in service that will come together as representatives from their participating centres onto that state advisory committee. And then to establish a collective voice for each of those states from New South Wales, Western Australia, and Victoria so that the collective voices from those states are represented at the national level. We then step back up into, as I referred to earlier, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander steering committee, who will then respond to the SNAICC board with recommendations, advice, as well as myself who has that coordination role as the pilot.

• 41:11 - 41:15

Any questions? And did you understand what I said? Marie?

• 41:18 - 42:04

I can't hear you. Stop picking on Marie, Max. No, actually's. The only way I can see in my little box here, so I'm waiting for a thumbs up. Yeah, no thumbs up. Maxine. It's, going to your website is, very revealing and, just, well, the SNAICC website, I must admit, I didn't know a lot about Maxine, what your intermediary, project, but this is great to hear about it. I have just writing that I worked in a MAX centre and how I was surrounded by such strong Aboriginal women and learned so much. No one else has had that privilege that I know of, but we need to be more champions.

• 42:04 - 42:08

We need to be more allies with you and just tell us what to do. <laugh>.

• 42:09 - 42:13

No worries. Any other questions from the Crowd? Thank you, Marie. You're a champion.

• 42:13 - 42:27

Max, a couple of questions that came up. One was, for non-indigenous, non-Aboriginal people, what can they do to help this project? What can they do? Where can they start?

• 42:28 - 43:00

Okay, how connected are you to your local Aboriginal community in terms of aboriginal community control centres that I referred to? In terms of engagement? I, I would be engaging with those services to support them on their journey. Are you, you know, in terms of your own cultural capacity, are you clear on that or are there things that you need to work on within yourself and or your family? I say no to racism if you want to just keep it, call it what it is.

• 43:01 - 43:13

Unfortunately, systematic racism still occurs. Direct racism and all the different levels of racism. Pull it up. Be the, be the, what's the, what's the terminology? Be our ally.

• 43:16 - 43:50

Yeah, be our ally and walk with us. I guess it, within your own capacity of your own employment, I really acknowledge the fact that you do have a reconciliation action plan for this group, but is there a necessity to take on the same approach within your other areas of life, whether that be within your full-time employment, whether that be within your children's school, whether that be within, you know, within the health systems, whereby how do you support us? And that is enough to start you off, I think, because at the end of the day, it's also about your journey.

• 43:51 - 44:22

We'll tell our story as it is and sometimes it's a bit too harsh for people to accept, but you are a part of our journey. And I guess for, you know, when you refer back to what AJ was talking about earlier, as well as Adele, it's about partnerships, it's about co learning and it's about you telling your story and if that means being honest as to where you're at and your lack of understanding or your understanding, as Marie said, she's been fortunate to work within this space. How do you actually come up to speed and walk with us?

• 44:22 - 44:39

And unfortunately, I can't answer that individually for you. That's something that is within your own journey. But also Adele, did you want to add anything in terms of, I guess from a professional perspective, I've very much gone along the individual family and community approach.

• 44:39 - 45:24

Yeah, I was, I was cheek while you were talking, thought I was deadly because I was able to, maximise the chat box on one of my monitors. So, I was reading through and kind of starting to respond. Look, there's, I mean, you know, just following up from what Max has said around kind of the individual, you know, part and role that you can play, I put a comment there to Tracy, and just said that, you know, there's more and more of a presence now in Australian society where, you know, they, they're finally kind of embracing, the fact that, you know, we, we live in a country that has the longest, you know, ongoing practicing, culture in the world.

• 45:25 - 45:30

And part of that is something to be, you know, to acknowledge and to be proud of as well as non-aboriginal people.

• 45:30 - 46:07

And little things like, you know, a lot of the mainstream TV stations as an example, so channel 10 now, you know, they'll report, you know, which country or which traditional ends that they're kind of reporting from, the ABC's doing it. Channel 10. There's a couple of other stations that have jumped on board. There was a, a real kind of increase in surge, recently where people were putting up on socials that every time they were boarding a plane now where there was Qantas or Virgin it had the location or the destination that they were flying to was written in the traditional owner group, you know, kind of lands and country.

• 46:08 - 46:25

So, there's things like that we see, you know, massive kind of presence of just allies and people who are, you know, supporters of who are, you know, on their email tag or email

signature, you know, have a nice little acknowledgement saying that they work on whichever lands that they work on.

• 46:25 - 47:01

You know, with Aboriginal Torres flag, lots of examples like that and of little things that you can do. And it's amazing how we've come, we've come so far as a society where, 20 years ago doing something like that might have just seemed, you know, like a tokenistic gesture, but because everybody's doing it now, it actually is the normal thing to do and if you are doing it, you can't left behind. So, it's nice that we've progressed as well, and that, you know, I think our, Australian, societal kind of psyche has changed along the way as well.

• 47:02 - 47:16

Where there, you know, there is acceptance, hey, there's still a lot that we, we have to do and, and get done. There was a comment there, you know, there was that question by Danny around, you know, is the gap closing?

• 47:16 - 47:48

Unfortunately, it's not. and one of the things that you know, we need to do is we need to change the way that we kind of operate and the way that we view things. And until we as a society kind of start to reflect and, make some of those changes in terms of our own behaviours, our own attitudes, I think Max, what Max was trying to say is, you know, we still have this, this issue where, you know, there, are the bystander someone who knows that something is not being done properly or that something, you know, somebody should say something.

• 47:49 - 48:13

You know what, I think as a, you know, I think globally, we're at a point where yeah, you know, if someone's struggling, you need to look out for them. You know? Yeah. There are things and capacity that you have as an individual that someone else may not have. And as good human beings, I think you knows you know, more generally, yeah, there's, there's lots that we can do.

• 48:14 - 48:47

Yeah. And, just to even in that, if there's no questions on this section anyways, I think, you know, like as humans, we all know with realistically whether it's, you know, whether it is really hit in the spot, you know, in terms of, I guess one of the things that really challenges me, is when I guess I get very challenged when issues come up for vulnerable people and we all just keep walking or we all just deny that it even exists.

• 48:48 - 49:08

I'm very much into calling it, acknowledging it and then what do we need to do about it. And that's why I guess I started with the point of starting with yourself as if you are not aboriginal, of origin. Because at the end of the day, as Adele said, I think we've got a great opportunity in this country to really turn the dialogue around.

• 49:09 – 49:48

You know, when you think of the history, and I think that's why I had that slide in there in terms of being born into an aboriginal world with us, from our previous ancestors and people that have gone before us. That's what our children are faced with from the moment they're born, that big list of things. So, can you imagine whether regardless of where your origin as a baby is or your childhood began, can you imagine what the challenge is for that Aboriginal child? And I just asked you to reflect on that, you know, and I think, you know, as I said, you know, you've got this here, but what else can you do?

• 49:50 – 50:23

You know, even just in your learnings, whether you're a teacher within the early childhood sector, you know, is it a case of getting extra trainer training to be trauma informed? Because as sensible, as professional as I can be, I too am trauma informed and had a long history of domestic violence. I was born and raised on Aboriginal reserve where thankfully we could fish, we could swim, we could do all those wonderful things, but when it comes to that list that I showed you earlier, that's where I started too.

• 50:23 – 50:40

So comes trauma with that comes disadvantage, racism, all them different things. So sometimes just keeping it simple is what I'm trying to say. All right. We might go back to the slides, or have I finished?

Any questions whilst AJ's comments?

50:40 to 51:36 we experienced some confusion between slides. We have removed this section from the transcript for clarity and conciseness.

• 51:36 – 52:17

As I keep referring to the Commonwealth and the state government, they are a part of the pilot. We're obviously quite working quite closely with the government in the establishment phase at the national pilot level. One of the commitments from both the Commonwealth and we hope to engage with the state governments of WA, Victoria, new South Wales very soon. I guess in terms of their investment into the pilot, given their responsibilities under close the gap for this, their relevant states and jurisdictions is to map out, well what are

the existing programs which needs to be accessible, for Aboriginal people and in particular those participating in services.

• 52:17 - 52:47

So it's about identifying, well, what do we currently have now, i.e. within the government and state program system and who are the keen contacts so that we too at the national level and or the relevant jurisdiction states can engage with those state government programs to consider what's there now and or how do we work forward for reform and or how do we embed culture within those state and commonwealth government programs to ensure that Aboriginal people are feeling quite couple, a lot more comfortable in terms of access.

• 52:47 - 53:18

The other priority, once again, it's been referred to throughout a deal and my presentation and Adelle's is engagement partnership collaboration. What we find is either a service may not even, you know, participate and or engage with our Aboriginal community-controlled organisations. How do we do that in partnerships so that those people within those services, and I say those people, I mean the Aboriginal community organisation and the relevant partner walks together, how do we collaborate to maximise that service delivery?

• 53:18 - 53:45

How can we do it in a cultural way? How do we actually engage with the Aboriginal children that also brings in their parents, their community and do it as a collaborative but holistic approach that works for Aboriginal people. And that's sort of one of the biggest learnings I think that we all need to understand is how do we actually walk together? And sometimes, or most of the time, it either takes compromise or acknowledging, as I said earlier, where the improvement actually exists.

• 53:46 - 54:20

Obviously the, at the national pilot level and the engagement with the Commonwealth and states, as I said strategically, they will be placed within the governance, the expert advisory group. And that is about, yeah, continuing on with the advocacy, continue on with the support so that we too can support the state governments as to what the reform or the changes of the requirements are for those relevant states. So that we do take it out of the prevention, sorry, the protection space and bring our children into the prevention space so that we have a shared understanding of updates and identify programs to build awareness.

• 54:21 - 54:52

Not just for, I guess, you know, in terms of cultural awareness and safety for, non-Aboriginal children, but most importantly for our children, how do we build the capacity within those centres, i.e. There are a number of non-Aboriginal directors and teachers that in our aboriginal community control organisations, how do we also support them so that they have the capacity and knowledge to engage with Aboriginal children respectfully and appropriately to ensure that those children have the opportunity and the best advantage to thrive.

• 54:53 - 55:24

As I suggested earlier, or as I informed earlier, I should say, we are currently in conversations and engagement with the National Quality Framework, ie. ACECQA, and I think that conversation will continue and that's something that Adele's leading as sector development manager. It once again goes back to how do we build a, you know, how do we actually embed within the systematics, whether that be at the government level, the NGO level, and all those participating services from the states up to the national to give it a voice.

• 55:24 - 55:44

How do, how does it become quite common? And I think we're on our way to a good start, ie, as Adele said, you know, we have our acknowledgement to country and we say that respectfully, but what else can we do to embed culture? And that is working with the local Aboriginal people because I can't speak for any other country, but my, my own here.

• 55:45 - 56:20

So, I can give you advice as to what my cultural protocols, processes, and respectful requirements are as an Aboriginal Guugu person on this country, which is mine, but I have no right to speak next door neighbour to Dunga and all the other surrounding communities, whereby the country changes. It's also about engaging within the governance. So how do we actually give a collective voice to the Aboriginal community-controlled organisations in the early years sector? A voice at the state level that will be heard in the steering committee at the national level.

• 56:33 - 57:21

Okay. So, these are the key things that we see really need to occur in terms of the theory of change. So, when we identify the range of anticipated outcomes that align with flows, close the gap, essentially what we will do in terms of that theory of change is how do we increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early use learning services, which I referred to earlier, how do we even transition? So when you're in WA as I said,

although we have existing Aboriginal community controlled organisations, which are a smaller number that will transition because there is an allocation under the close of gap funding, whereby the priority for some of the centres over there, one in particular, I won't mention the name, but they have, the majority of them are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander centres.

• 57:22 - 57:24

Sorry, they're not, I'll say that again.

• 57:24 - 57:56

They are centres with the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. How do we transition them over so that they can be Aboriginal community control, we can embed culture, we can support the social and economic disadvantage of those communities and build up the strength of the children through the centres being controlled by their own people. How do we improve the quality of these services as measured under the National Quality Framework? As I said, we are in conversations as it stands now at the national level with a ACECQA.

• 57:56 - 58:13

Adele, I don't know at the end of this part, I don't know, it'd be good for you to maybe just give a bit of advice in terms of a ACECQA and the workings that you are doing and leading over there. obviously as I said, it's about integration, it's about collaboration and is it just about short-term wins?

• 58:13 - 58:47

Cause as we say, you know, within SNAICC it's very project funded. We don't get money for governance; we don't get money for administration. We have to earn and seek that. So that's a very short-term business approach. So how do we get it to the point that it, it becomes quite long term, but it also becomes just normally the way things happen for aboriginal people with aboriginal people in these services increase participation from of Aboriginal and Torres Strait children in early years learning and obviously health and, education as I referred to earlier.

• 58:47 - 59:21

But also, how do we collaborate with the families because we don't see ourselves separate to any other member of the family. We are a part of a cultural connection as an immediate family, but we have a bigger, once again, the next circle is our community and cultural connection. And then we go out to the country, i.e. the remaining for me, in terms of being Gumbainggir people, as much as I live in a very tiny little valley, my country goes all the

way over to the other side of cos harbor up to the tablelands of New South Wales and then meets on the other side of Maxville as it hits and butts up with done Dainggatti country.

• 59:22 - 59:55

So, there are different circles within our circles, but they're all connected to the one circle and the one culture. The other point there is improve collaboration and genuine partnerships as well as, once again, how do we embed cultural safety and security practices and protocols and requirements to make happy and healthy strong aboriginal children who have a strong identity and proud of their identity and have the ability to express their identity and their culture without feeling as if someone's trying to push it down.

• 59:58 - 1:00:32

And this little guy, he's my grandson, he's my second grandson and I had this photo picked cause it shows to me when give a child a cultural identity, love , food, access to health services, access to the many of the things that makes and Aboriginal child healthy. For me, this is an example. And so, I just wanted to share this with you, cause I would expect that in future and in terms of the close the gap agreement we've got time frames but if we can see more happy children like my grandson, I feel we have all done our part to closing the gap really. So yeah, that's the end of my presentation. Thank you for your time. I also want to acknowledge AJ and thank you for your invitation but most of all let's stay in touch. I would prefer to engage with you individually and as a group again. I'm sure Adele would agree with me, so if we can help you with your Reconciliation Action Plan we're here.

Can we just thank Maxine and Adele. If you can put your camera on and give them a clap that would be great.

I do want to say thank you guys for joining tonight. This is series two. I did put up into the chat earlier, we've got seven, seven workshops all booked out, planned out for up until July this year with another four coming in the, so we'll have nine this year and hopefully nine think Yeah, we're looking at different aspects of, the Aboriginal life cycle. We have got Vacca and the Department of Education, we've got a workshop, on close the gap that's just been recorded today and we'll go up as a podcast.

• 1:00:33 - 1:00:49

We have got the Koori maternal health, people coming in and talking about it, which I'm really excited for because my background besides being a social worker, as a maternal health nurse, so I'm really excited on hearing what's been happening in the Koori maternal health space.

• 1:00:49 – 1:01:23

And we're having the Department of Education also talk a bit about working with Aboriginal children as well. So, it is a series that's going to go over the next two years. So, guys, keep, keep watching out. There is a new newsletters coming out very shortly. I think Alex has put into the chat as well. And I'm going to leave you right there. Please have a nice, one thing I wanted to add, and I did put it into the chat as well, that 54% of the Aboriginal population is actually under the age of 25.

• 1:01:23 – 1:01:58

And in that 54%, there's, often first-time parents and the young child. This is the population of aboriginal people that you'll often be working with that makes up 50% of the population. The, close the gap strategies. Now, a bipartisan agreement with both, both the labor and the liberal party and with the peak bodies that said, closing the gap is gonna take the next 30 to 40 years to actually help close some of these gaps.

• 1:01:59 – 1:02:34

So, whatever you do with this Aboriginal family that you've got in your centre, this could and supporting them, nurturing them, nurturing the parents as well. We want to see that 54% under the age of 25 get into the 65 age bracket in the next 40 years. That's what we want to see, because when we're looking at 45 and above, Aboriginal people only make up 17% of the population at 45 to 64, and only about 5% of the population at 65 and above.

• 1:02:35 – 1:02:56

So, close the gap strategies now are also really about making sure that those people under the age of 25 get to the 65 age bracket with, with a lot of those gaps closed. So, whatever you are doing with families now, you are part of trying to help close this gap for us. Maxine,.

• 1:02:58 – 1:03:29

I was just gonna say, just to further support yourselves within our space, if you don't know, you know, the best thing you can do, just ask. It's, it's better for you to, I guess, ask the question. Just like any people, rather than go gung-ho and try and save us and all those different things that can occur, just ask because Believe me, we're open to your engagement.

• 1:03:29 – 1:03:36

We're open to support you and yeah, just ask the question. That's all AJ.

• 1:03:36 – 1:03:49

No, thank you. Once again, thank you to Maxine and Adele guys. We'll see you after, at one of the other workshops that's coming up in the next six months. So, talk to you guys soon. Bye.