

2012

Evaluation of the Dampier Peninsula Indigenous Parenting Support Program: Progress Report 1

Andrew Guilfoyle

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Abstract

This is the first progress report of the local evaluation of the Dampier Peninsula Indigenous Parent Support Program (IPS). The evaluative report extends the Participatory Action Research (PAR) based evaluation plan (Guilfoyle, Baker, & Bray, 2011). It includes a theoretical discussion on resilience building, community development, and the role of parenting support for early child development, through links to literature and direct evidence captured through community based observations, notes, and recorded interviews with IPS workers, community members, and key stakeholders on the communities and in Broome, and case studies. The evaluation assessed IPS activities in light of its policy framework and a conceptual framework. The focus is intended to provide evidence useful in the planning, acting, and reflecting of the Dampier Peninsula IPS staff, and for broader efforts to support parents in remote Aboriginal communities.

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Executive Summary

Introduction

This is the first progress report of the local evaluation of the Dampier Peninsula Indigenous Parent Support Program (IPS). The evaluative report extends the Participatory Action Research (PAR) based evaluation plan (Guilfoyle, Baker, & Bray, 2011). It includes direct evidence captured through community based guided observations, notes, and recorded interviews with IPS workers, community members, and key stakeholders on the communities and in Broome. The evaluation assessed IPS activities in light of its policy framework and a conceptual framework. The focus is intended to provide evidence useful in the planning, acting, and reflecting of the Dampier Peninsula IPS staff. It includes some theoretical discourse, links to literature, verbatim quotes, and case studies. This work will also appear in collaboratively published papers, which will further connect the work of the IPS to international best practice efforts on establishing communities of resilient parents.

Methodology

I evaluated the validity of IPS activities in light of how well they successfully illustrate achieving project deliverables through community and stakeholder definitions. The purpose of this phase of the evaluation was to record progress towards program deliverables. It worked through the observation of IPS activities where possible. Purposively sampled interviews with Save the Children (SCA) staff, community members, community partner staff, and external stakeholders; who were nominated as engaged with the IPS, or were working alongside IPS plans. To date, the evaluation has involved long face to face interviews with the IPS co-ordinator and IPS workers, a professional development day with staff, 32 stakeholder interviews, and one large stakeholder workshop (n=18). With repeat interviews across time (and all forms of interview), 51 different recorded stakeholder discussions in total can be included as data points. Ten interviews with community members (non IPS staff/non stakeholder) were also recorded, along with one workshop including 4 community members, as well as several interviews recorded with SCA staff. Note that where stakeholders are community members/partners, they are classified as such, and not as community members. The interviews and discussions were held with SCA staff, community members, community partner staff on site at each community, where appropriate, or in Broome (particularly those who are external stakeholders), along with follow up phone and email communication where needed or appropriate.

Main findings

The report to date has found evidence that the IPS can offer a unique approach to parent support, because it is built on principles of establishing a community of supported parents who have ownership and are empowered to act on their own needs. The first year has seen the effective establishment of the IPS worker roles with a recognised presence in the community, through the building of requisite trust in the community for their roles, alongside substantive actions which profile positive parent support within each community. The IPS workers are acting 'participant conceptualisers'; collecting parent support needs expressed by communities and connecting with service providers who are able to facilitate actions for these

supports. These actions can be directly linked to best practice social support models on two fronts.

First, the IPS has worked through the establishment of women's groups, young mums' groups, and men's groups in the communities. This path to parent support is essential to avoid any stigmatising and implication of parents as being in deficit. Reports gathered show these groups are the mechanism for creating a bonding social capital; through a discourse around parenting, sharing, normalising, and realising of common parenting concerns, thus creating a trust and bonding of parents; a site for distributing targeted, relevant, parent requested information. On this bedrock; inviting targeted service providers who can help support parents. Critically, service providers can then participate by contributing to the direct needs of the parents. It is essential to note here, that the unique component of the IPS is its ability to create bridging social capital (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock, 2000; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000) by reflexively facilitating connections between services and the community, based on the voice of the community; but it does not offer those services per se. Thus, the IPS is closing gaps between service providers by bridging, where it is needed, and lessening the perceived social distance (both from the community and service providers, which can occur when service provisions impose, or do not match community needs).

Second, on an everyday basis (and this is the most unique aspect of the IPS) workers have proactively offered (a non-deficit based) personal support structure to parents. This has occurred by promoting their role, creating a community presence and trust, parents visiting the IPS office, door to door visits, and parents being able talk with IPS workers about their own acute/chronic parenting concerns. Here, the workers are collecting valuable reports and information on the essential concerns of parents in the community, which can be the target for broader activities, and then creating actions and events which tie to the communities' expressed needs. The IPS worker role is facilitating, thus any solutions to concerns must be directed by the community; creating a sense of empowerment amongst parents to build solutions.

In this light, the report assesses process, impacts, and outcomes of major activities that have been developed to connect parents with support services and increase the community focus on 'parenting'; along several dimensions of activity. Support groups are vital to IPS work (women's group, young mums' group, men's group) and are being attended by a small core group of participants. A range of specialised events such the Father's Day "Catch and Cook" event held in two communities were organised by IPS workers. This was described as an unprecedented success, with evidence of enormous pride amongst men: A chance for men to own an activity, connect with men who are isolated in their community, and critically, outcomes for men having dedicated special time with their sons, sons having special dedicated time with their fathers, and the mutual realisations of others' strengths. Women's Health Clinic and Men's Health Clinic and information session have been held. An important ground base role of IPS workers is included, such as home visits and an office presence. The role workers can, and are, having in facilitating and co-ordinating services to communities is recorded. Finally, IPS involvement in whole of community events is also noted.

Key points in 2011

- There is an extremely vital ongoing and evolving definition of parenting support and how to support parents, occurring in context of the IPS objectives, with activities evolving being matched to these. While it seems like slow progress, this unique definition of parenting support is worth following.
- Rather than a large encompassing range of service providers, the IPS has worked with a meaningful core group. These key agencies reported being happy with the increased amount of and quality of communication happening between workers and their agency staff. These key agencies appreciate and desire the role workers can, and are, having in facilitating and co-ordinating their service to communities, to reach mutual deliverables and role definitions around this. Ongoing work will be operating with these and further targeting key service supports for the communities.
- The evaluation frames the workers as ‘health enhancing resources’ and the need to support IPS workers was raised by many stakeholders.
- Support groups need to be maintained and expanded and I have suggested, given the problem of including marginalised at risk community members, possibly through more community events or micro groups which can include marginalised members of communities. There was one suggestion that more work should be done with men and women in groups, before broad family days per se. Also, of the need of self care approaches in these groups. The groups have a role for both bonding and bridging (community to services) social capital formation; but bonding must come first.
- Community wide events are great for community resilience building; however there are mixed reports about the nature of whole community events to date. The Ardyaloon Easter Egg hunt is the best model.
- With more specialised community events such as the Catch and Cook, information sessions, or workshops which aim at to consult the community on what they need; more could be done to capture the process, impacts, and outcomes of these.
- The highly situated role of workers in each community is excellent; I would link this to best practice. My observations are mostly though community members in Djarindjin who reported they really appreciated and respected the interpersonal contact being made by SCA.
- Women’s groups are working well, and the impact from young mums is discussed and aims to increase numbers. Data shows a real need to focus on key issues affecting very young at risk or marginalised parents, and supports which can act as preventative actions.
- There is very positive interest across the board towards inclusion of men in parenting support through men’s groups, and events such as the Catch and Cook. Men’s outreach and many stakeholders are keen to support this. There is caution about

ensuring progress and walking carefully to get things right, rather than send the movement backwards through a lack of consultation with men. Also, of martialling a team approach amongst men's service providers.

- Stakeholder suggestions of the IPS successfully attending and being actively involved in the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) based service briefings being run in communities. This is a great opportunity for the IPS to better achieve its deliverables of integrated service delivery. Also strong links with the Department of Child Protection (DCP), Edge of Nowhere Foundation (EON), Headspace, Maternal Health, and the men's' sector are reported.
- Focus on how the IPS can work with and through playgroups, to meet parent to child deliverables and the role of schools as a key site in which to connect parents and schools and meet parent-child deliverables.
- Possibly, the need for discussions around preventative parent support activities, for example through employment and vocational training.
- A need to reflect on key observables for deliverables and SCA aims, to sharpen observations, and how the support for parents transfers to early childhood outcomes in particular. A number of suggestions for enhancing the evaluation in 2012 are made, including the use of reflective journals, case studies, more data from community members, outcomes indicators, stakeholder workshops, and presentation of evaluation reports to SCA and workers.
- A need for more reflections on the IPS stages and the amount of IPS activity and expectations of staff and SCA in 2012.

Introduction

The Dampier Peninsula IPS project commenced in July 2010 with an aim to provide quality and culturally respectful parenting support to Dampier Peninsula families (parents and children) in Beagle Bay, Ardyaloon, Djarindjin, Lombadina, and surrounding outstations serviced by these communities. This initiative is funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). In April 2011, SCA contracted Edith Cowan University in developing a Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating the IPS (Guilfoyle, Baker, & Bray, 2011) in three communities. The implementation of the evaluation, based on this framework, commenced in August 2011.

This first progress report is based on site visits (including the initial visits):

- April 2011: Initial consultations for setting up evaluation framework, early activities.
- August 2011: Stakeholders workshops.
- October 2011: IPS worker professional development sessions.
- November 2011: Formal evaluative data collection in communities / Broome.

These visits included data collection through observation and interviews, small group meetings, and data collection workshops with SCA staff, community partner staff, and external stakeholders and community members who had been involved with IPS activities.

This first report provides an embedding of the IPS deliverables in a policy context; a summary of the evidence for activities which can validly claim to deliver by way or process, impact and outcomes against these. Alongside this review of data, recommendations for future IPS activities are made drawing on this evidence. A final set of statements of achievement against each of the deliverables is provided, along with general recommendations for the next phase of IPS work.

The policy framing this evaluation

It is important to evaluate the IPS against its deliverables by first identifying how the evaluation defines these deliverables in the context of national policy. An ongoing review of key government policy and SCA documents has occurred since the development of Evaluation Framework (in April 2011). The review of these and other documents listed in this section shows the deliverables are set within three core policy framings; a nexus between parents and children, Remote Service Delivery, and the need for integrated services. Key documents are not limited to the following:

- SCA Situational Analysis and Recommendations;
- SCA program design, and activity plans, current data collection systems, tools, and processes;
- SCA program frameworks for Early Childhood Education and Child Protection Review;
- FaHCSIA reporting requirements;
- Family Support Program Performance Framework;
- Related Council of Australian Governments (COAG) policy;

- Closing the Gap Local Implementation Plan – Bardi Jawi; and
- Community partner documentary and promotional material.

Reflections on the policy nexus of parents and children

The review shows national policy discourses on the wellbeing of children is explicit about supporting parents as the pathway to supporting children. There are clear policy agendas within governments which aim to advance the wellbeing of children through parent-based supports. In each of the following policies therefore, supporting families and parents in particular is instituted as viable way of supporting children.

- Closing the Gap – National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous early childhood development;
- Protecting Children is Everyone’s Business: The National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009-2020;
- Time for Action: The National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, 2009-2021;
- The National Early Childhood Development Strategy – Investing in the Early Years;
- The Indigenous Family Safety Agenda;
- National Strategy for Young Australians; and
- The National Carer Strategy.

To take one local translation of these, for example the Dampier Peninsula, based on the LIP, suggests early childhood and parenting support are not easily separable (Early Childhood: The Best Start to Life):

For an equal start in life, Indigenous children need early learning, development and socialisation opportunities. Access to quality early childhood education and care services, including pre-school, playgroups, child care and family support services such as parenting programs and supports, is critical. Opportunities for parental engagement, a sustainable early childhood education and health workforce as well as facilities and physical infrastructure are required. Action in the areas of maternal, antenatal and early childhood health is relevant to addressing the child mortality gap and to early childhood development.

Here, are many other evaluation and research based activities which have argued to connect supporting parents to the wellbeing of children:

- Evaluation of the Supporting Children after Separation Program and Post Separation Cooperative Parenting Programs, (2011);
- Positive Family Functioning (2011);
- Families’ experiences of services (FaHCSIA Occasional Paper 30) (2010);
- Evaluation of the 2006 Family Law Reforms (2010);
- Engaging hard-to-reach families and children (FaHCSIA Occasional Paper No 26) (2008-2009);
- Stronger Families in Australia Study: The Impact of Communities for Children (FaHCSIA Occasional Paper No 25) (2008-2009);

- National evaluation (2004-2008) of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy (FaHCSIA Occasional Paper No 24) (2008-2009);
- Indigenous Families and Children: Coordination and Provision of Services (FaHCSIA Occasional Paper No 23) (2008-2009);
- Engaging Fathers in Child and Family Services: Participation, Perceptions and Good Practice (FaHCSIA Occasional Paper No 22) (2008-2009);
- Lessons learnt about strengthening Indigenous families and communities (FaHCSIA Occasional Paper No 19) (2008-2009);
- Promising Practice Profile final report (2008);
- RMIT University's full set of reports and papers from the first Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2000-2004 evaluation (2008);
- Good Practices and Pitfalls in Community-Based Capacity Building and Early Intervention Projects: A Toolkit (2005);
- Child Care Links Evaluation Report (2005);
- National Evaluation Framework of the SFCS 2004-2008 (2005); and
- National SFCS Evaluation Program Logic (2004).

See also the following clearing house publications:

- Australian Family Relationships Clearinghouse website; and
- Communities and Families Clearinghouse Australia website.

This overall aim of literature is echoed in the recent establishment of the Family Support Program (FaHCSIA, 2011), with one of its aims to focus on family wellbeing. The Family Support Program (FSP) aims to further support preventative, early intervention on one level; by setting up family support services, focusing on family relationships and parenting for families with children up to the age of 12, who are disadvantaged or at risk of disadvantage (FaHCSIA, 2011, p. 4). Thus, the FSP is based on families and it shifts more collectively to include parents and children in one statement. The aim explicitly becomes to help families who are vulnerable to poor outcomes to build their resources and capabilities to enable more positive family functioning (FaHCSIA, 2011, p. 4). This happens through fostering, in families, 'knowledge and skills for life and learning'. The FSP connects with theoretical work on 'family resilience' (for a review, see Guilfoyle, Baker, & Bray, 2011). Essentially, the FSP takes an 'ecological' position by ensuring the whole family, not simply child nor parent, and is embedded in more nurturing and safe environments (ecology).

Thus, my reviews of the IPS design, planning documents, and statements of aim show it is built on the FSP through its identified need to build family resilience and strengthen family capacity to support the Dampier Peninsula communities, and children's optimal growth and development. The IPS aims to develop parent support activities which are applicable for parents, particularly young parents and those with children aged 0-12. Thus, sharing the COAG aims to improve child development, child safety, and family functioning via the provision of intensive, targeted, and coordinated support for parents and children who are vulnerable or at risk.

There is a nexus between parents and children expressed in four of the IPS parent support deliverables, which are focused solely on parents, on both parents and children simultaneously, or simply children.

- Provide as relevant, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander parents with culturally appropriate social, emotional, developmental, and educational experiences.
- Provide parents/care-givers with support and skills training on early childhood development and parenting.
- Assist parents/care-givers and children to connect with other services as appropriate and facilitate referrals as required.
- Provide as relevant, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children with age-appropriate and culturally appropriate social, emotional, developmental, and educational experiences.

I argue while clear in policy, the nexus of supporting parents in order to support children needs to be better directly evidenced, published in academic literature, or researched (see Guilfoyle, Baker, & Bray, 2011). The IPS has the potential to add to this paucity of knowledge. From an evaluative position, it means that while parental child based deliverables are often conjoined, we need to be careful about assessing how building parental capacity for parents from IPS activities has flow on effects which support children.

Remote Service Delivery

SCA is working within the Dampier Peninsula as parents in this location are by any standard, like many Indigenous parents in Australia, some of the most vulnerable and marginalised members of the population. Indigenous parents on the Dampier Peninsula are a specific target group because they are identified by the Australian Government's commitment to closing the gap in Indigenous disadvantage. The IPS is set in the Dampier Peninsula as one of 29 locations where government invests in Remote Service Delivery; to bring the standard of services and infrastructure up to a level that is broadly the same as those found in non-Indigenous communities of a similar size, location, and need. The Australian Government is, as expressed in a range of policy documents, committed to social inclusion and equity for all Australians and these highlight the need for Remote Service Delivery. Here, service providers are therefore obliged to include Indigenous Australians as a priority when designing and delivering their services (FaHCSIA, 2011, p. 6). So the aim of the IPS is to facilitate the development of links with services which can better focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged families and children. To borrow the FSP orientation to families, it means once again an ecological position, wherein a better environment for vulnerable or disadvantaged families will be one that aims for social inclusion and reduced disadvantage through better access to services. Thus the deliverable the IPS must meet is:

- Develop effective and sustainable links and/or partnerships with community, welfare and government agencies, to assist with providing support to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander families.

International literature suggests that the key barriers to service use amongst many Indigenous populations worldwide are simply that services are not visiting enough for community trust to be built, they are unreliable, unresponsive, under-resourced, there are low attendances, and the

community, parents, and mothers do not know about the services. For example, child welfare resources in the voluntary, public, and corporate sectors are significantly less available to First Nation families (Nadjiwan & Blackstock, 2003). Funding for secondary and tertiary prevention services has been identified as an issue (Blackstock & Trocme, 2005; McDonald & Ladd, 2000); with the authors arguing that this is an issue facing many First Nation cultures through the substantial concern that external services are not having a positive impact on the community, and so, not actually helping to protect children at risk. While affecting many Indigenous communities worldwide, the Dampier Peninsula is special due to its remote character within the Australian landscape.

This policy deliverable essentially suggests an agenda to build substantive equality. That is, providing a level of service access that is equal to comparable communities. From a substantive equality position however, this does not mean simply supplying equal services. It means the important focus of the IPS is to develop opportunities to help services deliver their support in ways that are being defined by the needs of local parents. Ultimately that is, deliver these in ways which are flexible and innovative to suit the local parenting situations. When adapted service delivery happens, community, welfare, and government agencies can better assist with providing support to the communities. Thus, the IPS deliverable of links to service providers is an essential reference point for this evaluation. One way to achieve services which are suitable to local parents on the Dampier Peninsula is to ensure that the services being provided are well integrated.

Integrating services

The way that the IPS approaches its parenting support is to deliver positive and sustainable outcomes for parents (therefore, their families and children) in the disadvantaged sites of the three Dampier Peninsula communities, by ensuring services that can support parents are hitting their mark. One barrier to hitting this mark is the disorganised service provision.

To have better integrated services is therefore the mantra and a well-documented concern of COAG and Remote Service Delivery. The link between more integrated services and supports for parents improving child wellbeing is clear. For FaHCSIA, the aim is for “integrated services for families, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged families, to improve child wellbeing and development, safety and family functioning” (FaHCSIA, 2011, p. 7). Especially in the context of small and isolated communities with vulnerable populations, the integration of services, such that they do not overlap, or miss their target groups, becomes critical. Service delivery needs better orchestration and for each service to work in collaboration with other services and the community, or there is a risk of bombarding the community with services, which the communities cannot really decipher as useful or not. In the Dampier Peninsula, the LIP has transferred this aim into the local context and is explicit about this:

- Improve access to a full range of suitable and culturally inclusive services;
- Raise the standards and range of services to be broadly consistent with similar sized and located communities;
- Provide simpler access to better coordinated government services; and
- Increase economic and social participation wherever possible and promote personal responsibility.

Taking policy into account, there is a mediating space and this is filled by the IPS. If the FSP aim is to support parents in order to support children, then the specific strategy is ensuring services supporting parents are more integrated than in the past.

The final deliverable is that which is defined more generally:

- Provide Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander families with opportunities to connect and interact socially.

This deliverable is one of overall importance and really works to sum up the others. If a community is not only isolated from mainstream communities but also from each other, and are fragmented, it is hard to service the parents within the community. This sort of deliverable is built on theory and research from community psychology, which shows the flow-on effects for individuals/families that can occur through networks being set up to build community resilience through offering social support. In the case of the IPS, the social supports also create a base for service delivery. The conceptual framework below examines this deliverable more fully.

The Evaluation Conceptual Framework

The ultimate question of the IPS from a conceptual position is: Can the community of parents be considered more resilient as a result of the IPS program? To inform this question we need to review what a community of resilient parents might look like.

The role of IPS model and workers

First, the conceptual framework for the evaluation takes the view that the IPS workers are vital to building resilience (Costello, Johns, Scott, & Guilfoyle, 2006; Guilfoyle, 2009; Guilfoyle, Banham, Cavazzi, & Napolitano-Lincoln, 2011). Guilfoyle, Baker, and Bray (2011) suggested that IPS staff should act as, or increasingly develop their capacity to act, in what Elias (1994, p.5) defined as: “A participant conceptualizer, and praxis explicator role”. One “who has the role not only of working within settings to understand and help conceptualize change processes but also of reflecting on action processes that are a part of the setting, of reflecting on theory, and of generating products that share relevant learning’s. The praxis explicator in particular works to identify the elusive, dynamic processes of multifaceted, multisystemic interrelationships that are the essence of change.”

A major factor in community resilience is one of accessing what can be called ‘health-enhancing’ resources and the supports available in the community (Hall-Lande, Esenberg, Christenson, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2007; Wyn, Stokes, & Stafford, 1998; Tusaie-Mumford, 2002). Remote communities can have less access to ‘health enhancing’ resources due to issues of social isolation, lack of community resources, distance or lack of access to transport (Hall-Lande et al., 2007; Tusaie-Mumford, 2002; Wyn et al., 1998). These are some of the factors which alone create risk for wellbeing.

One question in the background of this evaluation is whether the IPS workers can act as a ‘health-enhancing’ resource and support for parents. Thus, a large part of the evaluation

analysis is focused on validating reports from workers about what parent support enhancing work they have been achieving. The validation comes through reports from community and stakeholders who are observing or participating in the IPS work.

Parents supporting children

Within the psychological literature, constructs such as social, emotional, developmental, and educational are complexly defined. Generally, measures of these are hard to establish, especially in cultural settings and it is often better to focus on reported experiences. The IPS deliverables focus on community members' experiences of these; therefore the evaluation collected primary and secondary evidence of reported experiences which are social, emotional, developmental, and educational in nature. What we are aiming for is data which shows the flow-on effects of parents'/caregivers' capacity for children's wellbeing and safety along these dimensions (see SCA program Child Protection Review). The IPS aims to enhance parents' capacities to care for their children (before and after birth), and creating an environment (or set of ecological fields) for their children which have stability, are safe and secure, stimulate them, and provide well directed guidance through positive punishments and rewards. International research shows the most positive influence on a child, one that can facilitate all of the above, is secure attachments (see Guilfoyle & Sims, 2011; Guilfoyle, Sims, & Parry, 2008; Sims, Guilfoyle, & Parry, 2005; Sims, Guilfoyle, Parry, 2006a; Sims, Guilfoyle, & Parry, 2006b; Sims, Guilfoyle, Targowska, Kulisa, & Teather, 2008).

Health is a central focus; through their parents' direction children must have every chance to be physically healthy and strong through nutrition and exercise, and have social and emotional wellbeing and be 'spiritually' healthy. Parents need to give children opportunities to engage in healthy activity, provide knowledge about what is healthy and what is not, identify risks, such as social and behavioural problems, physical and cognitive development concerns, and how to act on these to prevent unhealthy development. An important part of this agenda is early education. Thus, for the IPS this translates into how to support parents to engage their children in positive early education experiences through informal and formal play, through groups, childcare, before school, and children's positive interactions with and within schools. Intervention cannot happen any other way than this; if we aim to help children we must help parents. Thus, we must work with parents to help them work with their children. How the parent engages with their children and then supports their children becomes paramount.

Communities of resilient parents

The question is how to build a community of resilient parents who can provide this support for their children. Best practice suggests we must aim at building a resilient community; therefore move onto the broader environment. A resilient community provides its parents with all of the health and education-enhancing resources, builds their capacity, and provides these resources to their children. Here, we move to community resilience. That is, communities of parents who understand what their children's wellbeing needs are, and what capacities they need to provide these needs.

On one level, we have to engage with the community at a level of what issues parents face that prevent them from providing this care, such as violence in the home, drug use, poor

education, poor education literacy, poor attitudes to education, poor housing, employment opportunities, and a lack of other community facilities and resources being provided. Along with these are the macro issues of history, inequality, and disadvantage that parents know all too well already. Thus, the IPS aims are directed to intervene, especially for those most vulnerable, marginalised, and at risk across all of these issues, and to mitigate these factors contributing to crisis for parents, families, and children. Community resilience can be seen as contingent on both individuals and families improving daily functioning and quality of life, even in the face of significant stress.

To do this, the IPS needs direction from the community in what the best ways to target interventions as early as possible are. The IPS can then work to integrate these services around ends desired by parents; ultimately making the services well directed and useable/meeting local needs. Thus, the IPS works through parents, finding their problems and ideal solutions, and works with these in supporting parents; and this is the correct protocol.

An important concept in the literature is that we cannot further stigmatise parents who are in crisis, or are marginalised through self imposed or social exclusion. The best practice aim is to build up community capacity as whole, rather than stigmatise parents. Best practice shows us that community capacity around parenting occurs when parents are provided with opportunities for connecting with each other.

Conceptual literature framing the analysis

The evaluative analysis is focused on identifying processes, impacts, and outcomes related to building community resilience or capacity for parents, which extends to their children and their families. This research will allow us to understand more carefully how community resilience can be built.

From an FSP perspective, the focus is on the family. There is an assumed directional flow between ‘individual’ resilience skills and community resilience through the family unit. A strong family can dramatically increase potential adaptive outcomes after adversity. However, ecological models always acknowledge the alternative directional flow wherein a strong community is shaping strong families. It is critical therefore, for programs such as the IPS to exist. The IPS will help us examine what factors within the community contribute to resilience within that particular context. Essentially, building community resilience is premised on the development of key individual, family, and community activities within supportive environments; such that the community becomes an ecological site which can in an ongoing movement; begin to build its own social capital, and foster parents own preventative, collective action for their resilience (Chaskin, 2008). Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) approach of nested systems (micro, meso, and macro) theory has particular descriptive power in guiding the analysis. The approach helps us to capture the influence of all social contexts, and develop new contexts, which are each essential to resilient development for parents within the communities. To evaluate the IPS means to show broadly how the IPS is creating a new set of social environments which have an important impact on parents’ (thus children and community) wellbeing (Poortinga, 2006).

The IPS is about creating a social change agenda; a new discourse around the topic of parenting at all levels. The analysis links to Orford (1992), who reviewed the person in

context from the perspectives of setting, physical environment, and perceived climate. Creating a new climate works at all levels: Intra-personally (in the hearts and minds of parents), interpersonally (in everyday interactions), inter-group (within small groups such as families, parents of children with a class at school), and societal levels (at the whole of community level). Thus, shifting a culture of what is normal or best for parents in each community. If the IPS works, ultimately its outcome will be to create a new climate for parenting in each community. New ways for the parent to engage with their children and then support children flows from shifting the climate of parenting.

It means we need to investigate each local parenting context and design strategies that suit it. As Ungar and colleagues (2006; 2008) suggest, we need to be looking at context and environment and determining what strategies are introduced within that context to promote wellness. We need to accurately define resilience relative to the local environment and context in order to develop the specific risk indicators for parents, and protective factors and strategies for parenting that prevent these risks. When we look for risks and ways to protect parents and build up their capacity for parenting, their resilience in Aboriginal communities as a local context, we need to focus on an often neglected realm of defining a community and its relational aspects.

Relational aspects of Aboriginal community resilience

Aboriginal communities have a largely undocumented (Guilfoyle, Coffin, & Maginn, 2008), particularly interesting, and important way of building resilience. Community in Aboriginal contexts is powerful along the relational aspect. From a community psychology perspective, Dalton, Elias, and Wandersman (2001, p. 190) suggest that Sarason's (1974) definition of community gives us a starting point "a readily available, mutually supportive network of relationships on which one can depend". For remote Aboriginal communities a readily available, mutually supportive network of relationships on which one can depend is multilayered. Thus, the definition of 'the community' of supportive relationships, can cover microsystems such as a family, and circle of close friends, as well as macrosystems like the whole community, or through kin and skin, the region in which the community exists, and which members have varying degrees of traditional, formal, informal, close and distant links. Simple entities such as local networks, or 'neighbourhoods', which seem important for atomistic individualised society, do not technically exist. Although, to add to the complexly defined community, there are spaces within each community which will come somewhere in between all of the above definitions; people who say hello often at the general store or 'back streets' for example can be a micro community. In each community there are mediating structures, such as clubs, which enable a member to participate in the wider community, and a range of local groups that exist within a community.

Aboriginal community is therefore multifaceted and difficult to define. Within Aboriginal communities, family systems exist between smaller networks of individuals, and larger communities, where those communities are defined either by locality or by relational group (for example, the Dampier Peninsula or Bardi Jawi). However, most government policy has tended to consider community as having geographical or territorial aspects. Policy is less focused on the unique relational aspects of each community. This is not just governments, for many outside of Aboriginal communities the relational community is hard to define and there is stereotyping at play, suggesting that any one community is like another.

Given the complexity suggested above, a wide range of processes are at play that enables each community to function as a unique relational entity. So to establish if an Aboriginal community has become more resilient, or for example the communities of parents on the Dampier Peninsula are more resilient following an intervention like the IPS is not easy. The best way is to focus on assessing how the work has processes, impacts, and outcomes that are in tune with, or develop, the relational aspects of community. However, it is often the primary process that IPS workers are involved with that builds community resilience in each community. Process is important, in comparison with or before the outcome, and this is something I focus on in the present evaluation of the IPS and its strategies for social change in respect of parent support within the context of each IPS relational community.

Leading writers on how a relational sense of community forms do call upon a process based analysis which is applicable to the IPS. For example, the concept of sense of community (McMillan & Chavis, 1986) has heavily influenced this area, and has provided definitional clarity to a host of subsequent studies. According to McMillan and Chavis (1986), there are four aspects of sense of community: (1) membership or feeling of belonging, (2) influence, or feeling of making a difference, (3) integration and fulfilment of needs, and (4) shared emotional connection. Shared emotional connection is a particularly interesting construct. It is mediated by contact and the opportunity for what they term high-quality interaction, which is the product of the number of successful events that have occurred, the salience and 'sharedness' of the event, together with the honour given to members. Thus, from an evaluative point of view we need to know what the processes are, by which a sense of community can form around parenting in the Dampier Peninsula communities.

Social support as a process in Aboriginal community resilience

Social support is another vital concept for the IPS. Social support can be defined as an active way to protect people from stress and help them cope. For example, it can be defined as "the mechanism by which interpersonal relationships presumably protect people from the deleterious effects of stress" (Kessler, Price, & Wortman, 1985). Dalton et al. (2001) acknowledged complexity when they defined social support as "a collection of social, emotional, cognitive and behavioural processes occurring in personal relationships that provide aid that promotes adaptive coping" (p. 234). Research has shown that, compared to those with a limited social network, those with wider social networks are more likely to cope with the effects of stress (Cohen, Gottlieb, & Underwood, 2000; Sarason, Sarason, & Pierce, 1990). Helgeson (2003) reviewed two major types of social support, and concluded on quantity being second to quality.

This evaluation is interested in observing evidence of social support, as an impact and outcome, but more critically as a determining variable for parents feeling supported. In particular, how the IPS is creating social support which can act as a buffer variable, enabling individuals to more efficiently cope with parental stress. It is focused on the qualities of this social support experienced by parents, not the sheer quantity of the social support being offered. Thus again, a process view is important. As suggested by the above definitions, we are interested in the 'mechanisms' by which processes are occurring; what processes contribute to the IPS offering quality social support. So a process view of social support is also needed. Social support should not be measured by its outcomes; social support is a

process, similar to a 'sense of community' above. Taylor, Sylvestre, and Botschner (1998) argued that social support is something you do, not something you provide. Felton and Shinn (1992) also suggest the need for support to be studied as a process.

Social support as bonding and bridging social capital

We can argue for observing the process of social support at two levels. Specific social support can happen within the immediate social network. Specific social support is most easily related to work of the IPS, such as enhancing a person's feelings of confidence in dealing with a challenge and provides advice and emotional guidance. Importantly, at the more general level, there must be a sense of community at work, such that offering social support enables social bonding and a feeling of belongingness. For the IPS to work, parents must feel more confident as parents, and also feel they belong to a community of like minded parents. These work together in good program design; by normalising good parenting, parents can bond with each other over issues and realise they are not alone, thus gain more confidence to act on strategies (not beat up on themselves) about being a good parent.

Working within each relational community, the IPS is putting in process groups for developing social support groups which are "built on commonality and homogeneity" such as, for example, bonding between family members, friends, or community networks of women, mothers, and fathers (Putnam, 2000, p.22). One aim of the IPS is to build community resilience through work that can create trust between parents by forming social support groups.

Metropolitan based society babysitting clubs, 'car-pooling', and charity events are examples of social capital in action (Newton, 1997). Putnam focused on voluntary organisations as advancing social capital; whereas other authors have argued that social capital can be created in other areas e.g. family, school, or work (Winter, 2000). In the IPS, it is through social support groups, playgroups, young mums' groups, and associated community events. In small bounded communities often the same people attend multiples events, thus social capital flows holistically. Building social support is not limited to support groups in relational communities such as Aboriginal communities, as opportunities for social interaction occur across many relational networks. Anything that can create bonding works (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock, 2000; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Elliman and Hall (2003) suggest it is "the social cohesion of a community and the sense of belonging" (p. 4) felt by individuals.

Creating communities of trust

The IPS aims to facilitate the development of bonding dimensions of social capital among its parents and their families. For some, social capital is defined as comprised of a range of values and attitudes of individuals that influences how they relate to each other (Newton, 1997). Putnam emphasises that the extent of social capital is influenced by the trust an individual has that their altruistic deeds will be rewarded in the future (Winter, 2000). Prosocial behaviour creates trust; that is, doing something for another at personal cost with an expectation that acts of kindness will be reciprocated in the future if needed (Onyx & Bullen, 2000). I argue that trust is the central indicator of social capital, and the most important. As Lomas (1998) stated, the degree of trust between individuals and the level of caring in the community is likely the most important determinant of health.

Trust in a social context means there is sense that others will be supportive or “do no harm” (Onyx & Bullen, 2000). Social capital is best understood as the development of networks which are characterised by trust and reciprocity (Stone & Hughes, 2000). Again as Cox (1995) defines, process is important: ‘social capital refers to the processes between people which establish networks, norms, social trust and facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit.’ They argue when trust is present “people feel that they can request assistance from their neighbours, allow their children to play outside in safety and participate in community activities” (p.4). Thus, the IPS is developing a range of locally crafted general community based work and activities which can create a ‘reach out’ to parents and create a trust and base for social capital to form.

Social trust is a component of social capital. In most mainstream metropolitan settings, trust in acquaintances and strangers are to be dependable, honest, and keep promises (Hughes et al., 2000). Social trust is influenced by personality, past experiences, and values which in turn are influenced by education (Hughes et al., 2000). People with altruistic values had higher levels of social trust, though the association is correlational (Hughes et al., 2000). Also, education increases social trust; learning about others and making the unknown familiar. The IPS however, will show how the concept of trust is vital and related to smaller networks and observable of specific social support. In Aboriginal communities, trust is fostered through face to face interactions and expressed in the way that community members work together. People in Aboriginal communities come together to face threats such isolation and lack of resources (Hughes et al., 2000). To gain support from government is more likely in well functioning Aboriginal communities, where the key benefits of being able to trust others can be actualised (Cox & Caldwell, 2000). When there is trust:

- Negotiations about who does what are easier;
- There is a general lack of suspicion;
- One can ‘leave things up to others’; and
- There is a general feeling of security, which can lead to taking good, valuable risks.

In this evaluation, I hope to observe social capital development by examining the local IPS processes that predispose individuals to bond; to cooperate, trust, understand and empathise with each other. Trust and reciprocity are considered important components of social capital, as social capital requires active and willing engagement of citizens working together and refers to people as active agents of their social world (Onyx & Bullen, 2000). Behaviour is shaped by norms, relies on trustworthiness of others, and utilises networks. Use of social capital replenishes it whilst non-use depletes it (Lyons, 2000).

Bridging social capital: Linking community to information and support services

In particular, the IPS model is one of creating bridges between members of the community and between community and core services. Linking community to supports is a form of bridging social capital. Social capital can therefore be associated directly with social support and sense of community through participation in a network not just to bond, but also to gain resources (based on Bourdieu’s definition, Winter, 2000). A key stratagem of the IPS aims to work through building up social supports (formal or informal) for parents, which can act as a catalyst for service provision. Social capital can form when these support groups can act as

catalyst, and facilitate the creation of links to resources or opportunities through social synergy. The potential for social capital to address economic disadvantage for socially and geographically isolated communities is when it can facilitate access to services (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002). There is a clear role of service institutions in government, non-government organisations (NGOs), schools, businesses, and voluntary organisations in the creation of IPS social capital. Thus, the IPS aims to create two sets of networks: (1) those of parents supporting each other and (2) service providers supporting parents, thus trust between parents and trust between parents and services.

The role of parent social supports groups and events in the IPS

Here I connect to what Winter (2000) calls the social location of support groups. The support groups and events can represent the place-based end of the social capital spectrum, while for services the groups/events represent the function-based end. A happy medium can be found; however it seems a core group of service providers are invited to support groups (this is valid) and also that women expressed (and men also via reports from stakeholders) that the groups need to function for support first, rather than for service providers engagement. Typically in the literature some institutions (such as social support groups here) are public regarding, some are private regarding. The IPS model can have impact here, as often government policy does not work fully within the relational aspects of communities and rather imposes its agenda by seeing community events from a purely functional point of view (for their service delivery). If, within the IPS, a relational connection can occur whereby policy fits and respects the primary relational agendas of the community, and aims to first build their own sense of community, within its own relational networks, better service delivery will occur.

Social capital, community, and health

Araya et al. (2006) suggested that the social environment and mental health are interdependent. For example, a poorly maintained environment could impact negatively on social cohesion and in turn on mental health and, conversely, poor social cohesion may lead to little interest in the built environment. Lomas (1998) stated that the physical structure, social structure (e.g., meeting places), and social cohesion in a community are relevant to health. It is the interaction of physical and social which helps build social capital. Lomas (1998) has therefore argued that changes in the physical and social structure of communities will help create social capital. For example, by simply creating more public spaces, then giving financial support for clubs and associations and increasing leisure time to facilitate social interactions, will combine to improve environmental opportunities for community cohesion. For example, Poortinga (2006) states that the while we know the social environment is important for health, we know little about the exact the relationship between the two.

It is for reasons such as reviewed above that community participation and empowerment have become important aspects of health promotion (Baum et al., 2000). The IPS is well premised on a community participation and empowerment aim; this is its main strength and will be its greatest source of impact on parenting support deliverables.

Be careful not to undo social capital

There is some debate in the literature as to whether social capital is an individual or group attribute (Kawachi & Kim, 2004). We argue again for a process orientation to identifying social capital, rather than personal and outcomes based approaches. Social capital resides with the group/society and is not 'owned' by the individual (Cox & Caldwell, 2000). Social capital is produced through group interactions. Cox's definition of social capital allows for collective action for the common good (Winter, 2000). Bonding and bridging go together. Bridging can occur after bonds of trust and reciprocity can bridge cleavages in society or bring similar individuals together. In many ways bonding must occur before bridging; trust is the key to bridging social capital.

An important thing to note, and one I focused on in this evaluation, is that networks and groups/clubs may not necessarily add to social capital if those clubs, for example, engage in processes which benefit some members of society, creating good bonding within these and then bridging to resources, but to the detriment of others (Cox & Caldwell, 2000). Membership to a group is not sufficient for access to social capital (Hogan & Owen, 2000).

Social capital theorists (see for example, Winter, 2000) talk about immediacy of trust: Trust may stem from immediate face to face connections such as within a support group, or generalised anonymous bonds such as standing at the back of a community event. There are great case study examples of men and women who would not normally attend a support group or event, attending and becoming drawn into a network of immediate trust. We have to be careful however, about strandedness/intensity (see for example Winter, 2000). At one end are the durable, intense, multistranded networks; at the other end are weaker, fleeting bonds such as may be made by a day of volunteering. If marginalised parents are, at best, only attending whole of community events, then only fleeting bonds (or no bonds depending on how involved they can get) will occur.

If there are marginalised members within the community that, through their own shyness or withdrawals, or through how the networks are being formed, feel they cannot participate in these, the effect is that it can drive them into a more marginalised state; unable to capitalise on the resources that can be established around them. With Bourdieu's definition, social capital is invested in the individual, whereas Coleman defines social capital as an attribute of the social structure (Hogan & Owen, 2000). Social capital is not generated by individuals operating alone but is based on interlocking networks that are sociable and equal (Onyx & Bullen, 2000). The IPS needs to ensure it sets up support structures which can include all for an ultimate effect on social capital. Thus, there must be ways to ensure that the building of any internal cohesion within support groups is not affected by the exclusion of others.

The key role of the IPS is to try to build trust with marginalised, at risk parents. We know socially isolated parents are at greater health risk. However, socially isolated parents in communities with high social capital are often at reduced risk because they are more likely to be 'looked after' by other community members, especially in times of crisis (Kawachi & Kim, 2004). Conversely, in some cases parents with low attachment to community may suffer (be ostracised) in high social capital communities. For example, Poortinga's study found that individuals with high trust reported good health in countries with high levels of trust but were less likely to do so in countries with low levels of trust. We can replace the word 'country' for

‘community’ here. Poortinga also found that the social capital indicators of social trust and civic participation were associated with self-rated health measures. Poortinga surmised that the health benefits of social capital applied, in the main, to individuals with high trust who were socially active. Thus for the IPS, the direct aim is to gain and build trust with marginalised parents.

Evaluating social capital

Lomas (1998) argued that while there are a number of tools to measure the impact of interventions on the individual, there are few validated ways to measure impact at a community level. ‘Measurement’ of social capital at the community level needs to include a range of data from diverse sources (Cox & Caldwell, 2000) and Guilfoyle, Baker, and Bray (2011) draw on this; arguing that qualitative indicators are best. These, along with identifying ‘trust’, need to be established around material wellbeing, inequality and barriers to participation, personal experiences, expectations, and feelings of connection and isolation are needed. Thus capturing social capital through qualitative data, which capture components such as social capital and its function, for example like those suggested by Onyx and Bullen (2000), can be transferred. These are all highly essential and highly observable processes of social capital formation:

- Trust +
 - Participation in local community.
 - Proactivity in a social context.
 - Feelings of trust and safety.
 - Community relational connections.
 - Family and friends connections.
 - Respect each other’s values, and differences, support for or tolerance of diversity, others in the community.
 - Values of community life.
 - Working together collaboratively.
 - Recognising common cause to resolve disputes civilly by recognising the validity of different positions and the need to operate within a framework that takes account of the common good rather than just competing sectional interests.
 - Recognising that building trust requires a perception of fairness and equity to all involved and therefore that prejudice or exploitation must be opposed.
 - Ensuring that the building of any internal cohesion is not affected by the exclusion of ‘others’.

The Situational Analysis

The Situational Analysis performed by SCA (2010) provides the groundwork for the existing program and its evaluation and is an essential source. By working with key community stakeholders, community members, and service providers who have a direct responsibility to provide services and support to families living on the Dampier Peninsula communities, there is bedrock of data to work from. The analysis aimed to develop a solid evidenced based and culturally respectful platform for the project, and the findings of this report and its

recommendations for elements of a program to strengthen family, parenting, and early childhood support services, form an essential backdrop to assessing the processes, impacts, and outcomes of the IPS work.

In particular, the direct engagement with the communities and families of the Dampier Peninsula of the West Kimberley identified ways to understand (1) community perceptions of harms impacting on optimal family functioning and early childhood education and development and (2) community ideas about program elements that could strengthen family and community support and reduce the problems associated with harmful family and parenting behaviour with a particular focus on children under the age of two. These communities expressed perceptions on the barriers to access, as well as the limitations prohibiting use or access, which are vital to understanding the performance of the IPS. In short, any community barriers identified within the situational analysis will not disappear easily. The evaluation focuses on the IPS's efforts to work around these initial perceptions and barriers for parenting support.

Likewise, the basic service mapping existing programs and services, scoping existing programs and services, and exploring limitations and difficulties experienced by service providers also formed an important backdrop. It functioned to assist the early sampling of stakeholders. Finally, data and literature, including literature on factors affecting optimal Aboriginal family functioning analysis through Western Australia and regional survey data, and other data analysis including, possibly, uptake of parenting and early learning programs, provides an important backdrop.

Evaluation Research Methodology

The purpose of this phase of the evaluation was to record through a PAR process (Guilfoyle, 2008; Guilfoyle, Coffin, & Maginn, 2008; Guilfoyle, Guilfoyle, Reynolds, 2010), progress towards program deliverables through purposively sampled interviews with SCA staff, community members, community partner staff, and external stakeholders, who were nominated by others as engaged with the IPS, or within IPS plans, and through observation of the IPS activities where possible. To date, the evaluation has involved long face to face interviews with the IPS co-ordinator and IPS workers and a professional development day with staff. This first progress report is based on site visits (including the initial visits):

- April 2011: Initial consultations for setting up evaluation framework, early activities.
- August 2011: Stakeholders workshops.
- October 2011: IPS worker professional development sessions.
- November 2011: Formal evaluative data collection in communities / Broome.

Thirty-two stakeholder interviews and one large stakeholder workshop (n=18) were conducted. With repeat interviews across time, and all forms of interview, 51 different recorded stakeholder discussions in total can be included as data points. Ten interviews with community members (non IPS staff/non stakeholder) were also recorded, one workshop included 4 community members was held, and ongoing interviews were recorded with SCA staff on site and by phone or email.

Note, some stakeholders are community members/partners, and are classified as such, not as community members. Interviews and discussions were held with SCA staff, community members, and community partner staff on site at each community, where appropriate, or in Broome (particularly those who are external stakeholders), along with follow up phone and email communication where needed or appropriate.

Sampling

Community based data was collected, through a maximum variation and critical case technique, where possible, on the community based individual and/or families selected by the IPS as engaged in IPS activities, with the aim of assessing the benefits of engagement against deliverables. Ideally, the approach includes an opportunity to talk with those not being engaged with the IPS to elicit reasons for this non-engagement; therefore potentially the barriers to engagement, prohibiting the achievement of deliverables for these members. It was also important to include reports from individuals and/or family based members who are key informants, respected in their communities or otherwise able to critically observe and comment on the role of the IPS in the community, whether currently involved in activities or not.

Stakeholders were sampled on a critical case, and using the snowball method. The evaluator asked for nominations from SCA staff and other stakeholders about who were relevant in terms of engagement with various IPS activities.

Data collection procedures

Interviews ranged from formal, in-depth explorations which lasted more than an hour, to very informal conversations of no more than five or ten minutes (Guilfoyle, 1998; Guilfoyle, & Hill, 2003). It was difficult to time visits to the activities (in order to attempt to directly observe each activity in operation) as only two evaluation visits occur each year and the activities are fluid, ongoing, and in development. It should be possible to attend the activities that are now established such as women's group, young mums' group, and the men's group in 2012, and potential spin-off activities that are associated with these.

Being on site, face to face with community and stakeholders within their own space, is critical to gaining full observation of the dynamic processes in which the IPS operates. One stakeholder suggested when asked: 'How will we know that parents are getting supported?' - 'I suppose if you see their faces in the places'. In future, I would like to be on site more often and for longer periods as the range of IPS activities extends, to gain deeper insight into the needs for parent support in each community.

Observations of community based activities included: Ardyaloon Playgroup, IPS worker home visits, Dampier Peninsula Early Years Network meeting, women's group meeting in Beagle Bay, Djarindjin playgroup, KRCE session Beagle Bay, as well as general observations of community life, council/offices, general store, school grounds, and the youth internet access centre (Beagle Bay).

A series of home visits in Djarindjin were highly successful and I hope to continue these and make contacts from previous site visits in order to track the engagement of community

members in the IPS as suggested by Guilfoyle, Baker, and Bray (2011). A number of nominated home visits were initiated in Djarindjin through IPS staff setting up an interview, and guiding the evaluator to relevant members who were able to provide an account of the IPS in their community, either through direct engagement or observation of its work. This approach worked in Djarindjin; however in Beagle Bay there was concern that the activities for women/mums were just getting underway and visiting those who were attending, or especially those not attending might be threatening, or women might not be comfortable reporting on reasons why they would not attend. It was felt that would be off-putting for young mums and would not be appropriate. It was a similar situation in Ardyaloon; however here there was also discussion from stakeholders and community partners about the local politics of the IPS worker being compromised if approaching some members/young mums who are outside of her family.

Stakeholders' workshop

In this first phase of the IPS, it is particularly important to gain perspectives from those who are involved in planning as a baseline for expectations. Fitting the PAR approach, the evaluator has taken an active role in developing baseline information from the IPS coordinator/staff, and a range of stakeholders who were or likely would be variously involved in the IPS, through a series of interviews in April with staff and stakeholders. Further, to develop this baseline, a stakeholders' workshop (with small group discussions) was held in Broome and in Beagle Bay. The Beagle Bay event was not well attended due to some confusion outside of the evaluator's control (about how it was advertised/timing/who was invited). At both events, basic evaluative questions were posited and discussions recorded. This baseline report was distributed to those who attended and other stakeholders.

Reflective journals

The evaluation had planned a professional development session for IPS workers on collecting activity based data and reflective journals as outlined fully in the evaluation framework (Guilfoyle, Baker, & Bray, 2011). Such that, the IPS staff could begin to observe, reflect, and record their own activities, on a regular basis through a reflective journal format; and refer these observations to the evaluator through regular quarterly meetings with IPS staff. There was possibly some confusion over the role of these and the regular SCA monitoring, and the plan was modified to basic qualitative data collection techniques and data management which could be used for the journals. One worker journal was received and is, in part, included in this report; therefore more development of the role of these journals for recording essential data needs to occur.

Case studies

Guilfoyle, Baker, and Bray (2011) suggested a process whereby, nominated by SCA staff, both regular and irregular participants could be identified as case studies, and could be involved in more in-depth interviews and narratives over the project. The model includes IPS workers recording interviews with case study participants; however this has not yet occurred. This will create long term capturing of process, impact, and outcomes of the IPS, of what is working well and for whom, accounts of preferences for service delivery, and role of the IPS in facilitating support for parents.

Through discussions with workers, a number of potential case studies might be useful, and some have been identified by the evaluator through home visits. These do not include marginalised community members who are not yet involved in the IPS however. Also, the evaluator has not yet had opportunity to do long-term in-depth interviews with these individuals. There is also the need to use case study as snapshot of the process, impact, and outcome of the IPS at a point in time. The first progress report provides several of these. There are also stakeholder case studies which have been formed through ongoing interviewing of core stakeholders. In the next report, I will aim include service provider case studies.

Data analysis

The data analysis was tightly bound to the data collection and sampling methods noted above. It is founded on principles of triangulation: Collecting data from multiple sources all bearing on the same questions. The data was triangulated to best capture the essence of the experiences of all participants. There was a constant checking process where different sets (or sources) of data were compared against each other. That is, what workers say about what happened at an activity can be validated by what agencies staff say, and what participants say can be validated evaluator observations and attendance lists, for example. Or case study interviews/observations made by workers can be validated by the evaluator's observations/interviews, or agency staff observations etc. This ensured the meanings derived from all data sources are authentic, credible, dependable, confirmable, and transferable (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Nagy & Viney, 1994). Data on each community were considered separately in the analysis as a case. Within each case, there was a triangulation of each data source against the other data sources. All data was transcribed and entered into NVivo9. Here, a detailed coding process and an analysis spiral were used to help identify significant statements from participants presented in this report.

IPS Activities

Parent Support Groups

Djarindjin Mum's Club

Formed largely from an established women's group meeting in Djarindjin, the club aims first to provide mothers with opportunities to connect and interact socially. From this connection and interaction the dual aims are:

- Provide as relevant, mothers with culturally appropriate social, emotional, developmental and educational experiences and support and skills training on early childhood development and parenting.

This happens through providing the group with ongoing information and developing a relationship within the group, but also so participants can call on workers or other members outside of the group for information, and social support.

In this latter work, the workers are trying to make sure the group can work as a way for workers to:

- Connect mothers' services as appropriate and facilitate referrals as required, and thus as a site on which to develop effective and sustainable links and/or partnerships with community, welfare and government agencies.

The aim is for group empowerment, thus the group sets the agenda for special activities such as flower arranging and inviting services in.

Dates:

The meeting is scheduled for every Wednesday (unless community issues prevent this or a worker not available). Wednesday is seen as the ideal day for attending group meetings in Djarindjin. There are special focuses at some meetings, such as flower arranging, aiming to create bonding between women.

Attendance:

There is a slow evolution of group membership, and this is a necessary part of process, not to push too hard in the early stages. I don't have documentary material detailing the weekly attendance, attendance at focused meetings/events when service providers are present, thus details of the nature of meetings per se (e.g. flower arranging event). Discussions with workers and mums in the community suggested a core group of 3-4 attendees, or sometimes just one or two mums. For example, there was report that at one meeting, "*only a mum and service provider but they still engaged and yarned*". At the flower arrangements session: 23 participants attended, including mums and service providers.

Service providers who have attended to date are EON Foundation, local clinic, DCP and Parent Support, Kimberley Regional Operations Centre (ROC), Headspace, Local Police, Kullarri Regional Community Development Employment Projects Inc (KRCE/CDEP).

Process:

Workers stressed that the important process was 'no agenda'.

Impact:

Families and their parenting in the community.

Normalising concerns and needs for support

The classical role of the mums' group is one of normalising concerns and needs for support on various topics. The workers aim to create a safe space for mums to discuss shared concerns about their needs as mums and what can best support these. For example, this was expressed by one mum who was a highly experienced parent and grandparent. She had 8 children, aged 3-24 years, her oldest two are away, one going to La Salle college in Perth, and one doing woodwork. She also has 3 grandchildren, all of whom are girls the same age as her own

youngest daughter. Though highly experienced, this mum testified to how the group supports families in their parenting by talking about how it helps to normalise the worries she had about being a parent, realising they were the same things that other mums experience:

it is just not sort of you, it's not just you

Workers can interpret the support needs of mums

The setting up of the mums' group is a great catalyst to help families in their parenting, as it allows workers to be guided by the mums in terms of beginning to develop sustainable links and/or partnerships with specific community based welfare and government service agencies that the mums define as needed. To help mums in their parenting, there needs to be a matching of the available services to community needs quite specifically in ways that are defined as relevant and appropriate by the mums. Through the mums' group the workers can delineate which services are most needed, then, how these can be best invited to meet with the mums at the group in the optimal experiential way, in order to provide potential parenting information and skills the services can support.

Thus, the most direct outcomes workers/community/stakeholders point to about how the mums' group supports families in their parenting in the community, in this development phase, is the establishment of dedicated sessions such as the Well Women's Health Day Clinic, which are attributable or flow on from discussions between workers and mothers at the group.

Empowering mums around issues of parenting and supporting parents

The impact of the group was helping to empower women. Interesting discussions were had around how the group is governed. A delicate balance between workers instituting things and the group setting agenda has been achieved. The group was helping women feel they are in charge, actively planning parent support events, and seeing them resourced and come to fruition. This sense of ownership and empowerment was evidenced, where the group seems quite selective about how and when and which services can be invited. The reported empowerment process was mothers telling the IPS worker what they want, thus any activity within the group (involving service providers or not) is designed by mums. The group has an empowerment aim, such that mums control the agenda:

When we do start yarning and that I might start the conversation but then I just let the ladies take over because it is all about them

If a service provider wants to come to mums' club, the IPS worker checks with the club first. This orchestration, which can occur through the mums detailing their needs to the workers at the group meetings, is important to create ownership and empowerment, and to avoid mums feeling they are being bombarded with services, which do not connect with them or their needs, thus do not engage with the mums.

Specific activities

A focus on parents 'cognitive development' was linked by workers to activities such as plastering casts:

For cognitive development – instead of ways of making cards etc, or new ways like can plaster cast a child's foot at certain ages and compare the different sizes, plaster cast of when pregnant and decorate that and have as memento etc.

Relational support versus instrumental support

In this context, interestingly, women reported the need to be able to come together and yarn without any service provider being there. This came from the suggestion that what had evolved is too many service providers being present at one time, thus that women wanted the time more for themselves (and there was a suggestion that 5 was an absolute maximum). Thus, there is a need to consider the concern from women that when too many service providers attend, this tends to overwhelm the mums. However, there is also a tension between the roles of the group as a space for both service provision versus self-care, which needs to be considered in light of supports for families and their parenting in the community. The overall role of the group is empowering women in respect of supports for families in their parenting in the community, and to some extent this means allowing the women to look after themselves and engage with services that are most needed, and avoiding anything top down which makes them less likely to engage with services. There are essentially two functionalities; basic self-care relational support, connecting women with other women, versus instrumental support.

Thus, the functionality of the group as a point of distributing information or connecting with services, and possibly holding a dedicated service provider information sessions for this, which are a spin-off from the weekly meetings to keep the group functioning without conflict in the dual role of connecting mothers and providing education. The information sessions are open to the mums' group and all other women in the community. Mothers can be encouraged to talk about the sessions as a follow up at their weekly meetings, but the two workings of the group could be separated. Communities coming together only for events or receipt of information is not sustainable; communities need come together from a genuine desire to form a community.

Women reported the need to be able to come together and yarn without any service provider or any males being there. Food being provided is a draw card for best attendance. It is interesting that women want the group meetings more for the self than to always to have service providers present. There is very much a self-care emphasis in the mums' group activities. Thus, there is a need to keep generating energy around activities and planned events such as arts and craft, sewing, outings, and movie nights, along with forming links with service providers.

Critical action group on families in their parenting in the community

Women in the group are engaged in discussions of problems for parents and the community in general. In this sense, they act as a critical action group on these issues. The definition of the

group and its aims could be expanded to a general space for meeting or as an action based group on community concerns around families in their parenting in the community.

Workers can integrate parent support service delivery

The mums group is also a catalyst for workers to consider the integration of services and feedback to services, how they can best co-ordinate and integrate their service delivery to support mums and their families in their parenting. The relationship with EON, Headspace, DCP, and the local clinic are probably the most significant.

Referrals or take up of services

Outcomes in terms of referrals or take up of services that can help build safe environments (free of physical and sexual abuse) have been hard to establish at this early stage.

Children's wellbeing and development

The young mums' group is the central pathway for workers to discuss with young mothers the services that are available and try to link mothers to services which can help in social, emotional, developmental, and educational experiences and demonstrate their support and skills training on early childhood development and parenting directly, by inviting them to attend to the group meetings.

The more specific aim is to impact on young mums' understanding of their child, developmental stages, and needs at each stage.

We also have stuff from NGALA DVDs of different development of kids, some brochures that we will give out to parents and put up, because at a meeting like the young mums club you don't overwhelm them with information, you only give them a little bit of information, you say ok well let's talk about this, and at another meeting, the next time they get together they might talk about another different age group.

Ideas about when go to town who can access for support, for medical appointment, or pregnancy, Burdekin Youth, and young mums group will get them to appointments, give them transport. They were not aware of this before. But through service providers attending so community now know what are available for Broome that service them.

There was discussion of the impact in terms of young women meeting as a group, along key deliverables of social, emotional, developmental, and educational experiences and support and skills training on early childhood development and parenting. Here for example, the focus was on women as parents and the important role of the group in normalising experiences of parenting.

Another thing that came out of the young mums club was we learnt about how dads have got a different style to parenting than mums and we learnt about that,

and tips and resources about it through Parent Support (name of agency member) and that was very interesting, because we all had similar stories, with about our children and how they behaved differently towards their dads and towards the mums, and we shared all those stories, and the good thing about it was in a comfortable and relaxed and shared environment...I mean they might talk in their little groups and one on one or whatever but when (name of agency member) explained it that way we could see...it was part of problem solving as well, not complaining about blokes about knowing that is why blokes do it that way...and knowing that as female you approach it in a different way...and some if think that is just our partner or our kids dad; but from this conversation it is all dads are similar in the way they do things...so really I guess you can say getting that parenting information and for different age groups, that teenagers will behave different and at different ages when they go through another spurt, that will behave another way...

Reciprocal learning through parents and children sharing activities

The young mums group afforded opportunities for mums to be with their children in a relaxed environment and for children to engage in safe free play which were beneficial to both mother and child. For example, the plaster casting activity allowed mums to interact with their child and bond.

Parental stress impacting on child development

Early years research (Mustard, 2008; Mustard & Young, 2007) has suggested the key role of parental stress impacting on child development (in utero onwards). Here, a woman talked about how she defines parent support for young mums; all of these parental supports should be seen as work that can support parents in ways that will have flow-on benefits for child development, through lessening parental stress (Guilfoyle, Saggars, Sims, & Hutchins, 2010).

What things do young mums need for support? Well sometimes its single mums, young girls trying it themselves sort of thing but um, its maybe the um, oh, I don't know, they probably got their mums and that there but sometimes its um, they could have um the nurse come along to give a bit of advice to them and stuff, and ah um, I think they are sort of trying to get young mums into Broome and telling them what support there is there when they are waiting for baby and when they are going into medical appointments, and sometimes big shopping trips and shops or something like that with baby with them, which is a good thing, because you don't have much time to do stuff when you go in there for a big run.

With no birth centre on the Dampier Peninsula, there is a strong need to support young women in town when they are coming into town for pregnancy (poor accommodation; left in town for weeks). This can obviously be traumatic for young women. Stress during pregnancy can link with postnatal depression and affect child-parent attachment, thus support for young women in town is crucial.

For many marginalised young women, the real focus needs to be on increased antenatal and early childhood development sessions that can engage mums, such as baby massage

(however, the nature of session should be defined by the young mums). Further arts and craft activities, possibly linked in the KRCE and school, and vocational and employment based training might be considered.

The IPS should work towards supporting the setup of a playgroup, which arrives via the expressed needs of the young women; thus to train young women on how to create such a group. Here, the IPS role is to identify and formalise young mums in the community who want to run the playgroup, under a tree if need be, potentially voluntarily, and the IPS can help secure funds and get in touch with Early Years Network, and other relevant funding through FaCHSIA.

Continued work to connect mothers with services as appropriate and facilitate referrals is required, thus as a site on which to develop effective and sustainable links and/or partnerships with community, welfare, and government agencies, particularly around issues of maternal health. There is a need to be careful not to overwhelm young parents with information. As one worker reported, the process is also one of not overwhelming young mums.

because at a meeting like the young mums club you don't overwhelm them with information, you only give them a little bit of information, you say ok well let's talk about this, and at another meeting, the next time they get together they might talk about another different age group.

Informational pamphlets

A direct way for supporting children's wellbeing and development is through workers providing and distributing educational informational pamphlets at the mums' group meetings.

When I go the mums' club meeting I give them little print outs like this, I just put them on the table and they just help themselves, or I go and put them up on the notice boards, because I find people love to read, and will attend there and read it.

This information connects women with these same messages in workers' offices. Thus, when mothers from the group come to visit the workers' offices, the messages can be reinforced (see role of an office, and documentary examples of these).

Educating parents about the needs of kids

There is a need to investigate longer term impacts on parenting being established around childhood education, school readiness, and relationships with children. Ideally some recording of feedback needs to occur to better establish impact and outcomes related to the specific focus of the meetings, e.g. around school readiness, or women's health.

The IPS could connect better with KRCE activities, thus keep tapping into existing structures of expertise resources that are already available, within the uniqueness of each community and what is already in place or on offer.

I need more information on the impacts related to what was provided by services providers e.g. healthy eating in children or cleaning (EON).

Helping community members be included in and socially connected to the community

For those mums who attend, there are clear benefits in feeling included in and socially connected to the community. By sharing with others in the group, the women are creating a safe space for mums to discuss shared concerns about their needs as mums and what can best support these, thus forming a micro community of support. With a core group of mothers attending regularly, the workers report that this group is quite switched onto parenting issues, and they are taking on the new information well. The risk here however, is if the group does not include more women and the more marginalised mums, which are hard to attract for a number of reasons, then the pervasiveness of the effect of the mums' group in helping community members be included in and socially connected to the community is lessened.

Thus, there might be a need to get a support group going for isolated and disadvantaged mums to fulfil the deliverable of social connectedness and non-isolation of parents. In the extreme, not feeling comfortable to join the core group might make them feel even more isolated or disconnected and out of picture. There is a need to examine processes by which hard to reach families and vulnerable marginalised mums can be included. Maybe these mums would not join the core group. Perhaps, this means setting up alternative mini-groups, smaller networks of already connected vulnerable mums, who exist outside of the core group of mums already attending. The idea of an action group could be applied here too.

Ironically, sometimes helping community members be included in and socially connected to the community can mean separating groups within the community, such that different members can identify with their position and role in parenting. The establishment of the young mums' group is the case study of this. As suggested by one IPS staff member:

They can yarn on their own without any older women around, free to create ideas for their selves, and then at times can be encouraged to start yarning about some sort of health issue, or kids stuff.

However, there are reports that the split off from young mums to form their own group was a longstanding issue. This shows the slow but impactful work of the IPS has to help create; small but large given the previous static changes within the community and facilitate, in an amicable way the wishes of all. While the split of young mums from the women's group could be seen as a process, it was something that was described in terms of a very strong impact of the IPS.

Definitely seen some action [from IPS] happening, some stuff happening, you know with the young mums playgroup in DJ, I mean that was a great, I think it was a great way that we all really came together to talk about that with the mums, before it was, it wasn't put onto to people, it was do you want, that opportunity for everyone to sit down and talk about, [and have a look at it] this is what we can offer, what do you guys want, what do you think would be good for you, here's some examples of what it could be like, um you know I liked that,

[reflective] I thought was really great, and I think that took a lot of pre-planning and a lot of work for [IPS worker] to get that happening too,

The impact of the IPS to mobilise community desire is demonstrated below, in that the IPS is creating a movement of otherwise slow change events.

um I know my we are supporting the development of children, and people say oh we want this or we want a playgroup or we want something happening in the community and I suppose since last year, or since the expo nothing has come from that um the only thing really has been the DJ playgroup which started off as something else and the morphed into this young mum's thing, and it wasn't the expo that raised that and it didn't come from that, so I wonder how many people it is that we are thinking we need to be servicing and how many they actually are, um I feel like we are doing great things but I don't know if it is targeted where it needs to go. And I did think with the playgroup, you know we had a good outcome of mums which is really positive, and they were, four of them were first time mums, um which was good and I mean that, I mean that's taken, that's been a couple of years to develop, that or to try and make that playgroup happen, and I think because someone is on the ground as well, is what encourages that to occur, and it can get little bits of funding, and you have got that person on the ground which is definitely a need

It was a bold assertion supported by the IPS, of young women wanting to mobilise some outcome for themselves, independently from 'the oldies', and find their own strengths (this was supported by 'the oldies'). One stakeholder reported that they were still finding their way and that there were young women that would attend who were working at the schools, and they needed to find their voice.

But some of the young girls they work as ATA at the school centre so there is no opportunity to go to the 11am session. I say to them well all you need to do is go an talk to Lyn say because we work at the school we can't go to the mums program and I said you renegotiate the time slot to between 3and 6, even if you juts catch up for an hour, because a lot goes on in the school setting and you are kind of interacting with these young women and you read their body language and they are not that happy and then they have to go home and they try and perk up and before you know it they will be slapping their own kid around you know because of the frustrations through work because they don't have any place to externalise what goes on in the school setting so that is what I am saying to them, I [service provider] would be happy to come in the afternoon, I service four communities but I would happy to come in and it is more about juts creating this opportunity for them to externalise what is going on and then how we might link in with what's happening for the kids, what ages, so I could just call in there.

A very strong thing that young women want is to come together themselves first, without coming into the women's space "with the old girls there you know growling and carrying on, it's like [explicit word] you are not even my granny who are you to tell me you know". There was a discussion of the impact, in terms of young women realising the value of meeting as a group, which they can own.

They pick up a lot of information that they didn't know that they are now becoming aware of. They are getting passed prefixed ideas about what a group like this could be about, and a feeling that it is not relevant to them; by coming along they are thinking this is an ok group, useful to attend, and it's not about preaching or this or that, because that is what some of the young mum's spoken to can tend to think".

Constraints

Workers report difficulty in obtaining information from service providers regarding impacts and outcomes, and sharing of information. More case study based information on impacts for specific mums and their needs and how the group has facilitated these is required.

Young Mum's Club

Aim:

As noted above, this group came out of Health Clinic Women's Health Day, when young women expressed their desire to set up their own club, to break away from any (no negative connotations here) domineering of older mums. Interviews with older mums validated it was something they fully supported. Thus, young mums have branched out on their own and can freely go back to the older mums anytime, but have lots of new ideas and will decide themselves relevant service providers to come in.

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander mothers with opportunities to connect and interact socially.

From this connection and interaction the dual aims are:

- Provide as relevant, young mothers with culturally appropriate social, emotional, developmental and educational experiences and the special focus is on support and skills training on early childhood development and parenting.

This happens through providing the group with ongoing information, developing a relationship within the group, but also so participants can call on workers or other young mums outside of the group for information and support. In this latter work, the workers are trying to make sure the group can work as a way for workers to:

- Connect mothers to services as appropriate and facilitate referrals as required, and thus as a site on which to develop effective and sustainable links and/or partnerships with community, welfare and government agencies.

The aim is for group empowerment, thus the group sets the agenda for special activities such as flower arranging and inviting services in.

Dates:

The meeting is scheduled for every Wednesday (unless community issues prevent, or worker not available). Wednesday is seen as the ideal day for attending group meetings in Djarindjin.

Special focuses have at some meetings such as Plaster Casting where mums were able to make cast of child's foot, to have as a symbol and comparison of the later development.

Attendance:

5 young mums attended first session plus two service providers. A core group ranging from 1-4 have attended on an ongoing basis. Service providers who have attended include: Burdekin Youth, an Anglicare counsellor, and Kinway.

I always ask in reference to attendance (do not always receive a response though): Why do you think they wouldn't turn up? Typically the answer is one of practicality. This should be considered, as there is often an assumption that people in communities are idle; however they are busy and have schedules like anyone else.

Ohhh, probably because, I don't know, because what's happening at home, or because probably might be the wrong day, but there was a lot of stuff um happening last week with a lot of mums out of town, gone into town for basketball and all the rest of the stuff so, maybe that was the reason.

Process:

The idea of a young mums' group was talked about over 5 or so weeks, and the IPS was involved with this, and then acted as catalyst and fixed a firm date for it to start.

Outcomes:

Need to further assess the outcomes of delivering information on child development stages, but first to assess full impacts of this and how it builds to outcomes. An important outcome from community action around a parent support position is that some young women have the idea now of how to set up a playgroup. One outcome was a discussion of a possible playgroup for every Tuesday. Possible mums' and bubs' health day can also be considered.

Potential case study:

A potential case study of one young mum is being developed. Her family is engaged with a lot of service providers. The IPS worker approached her for some time, then she came to young mums' group and really engaged, her and her daughter, and her daughter was the one used for the plaster casting. She was able to come when her partner is away for half an hour or so, not always on regular basis. But the IPS worker will always go and check and offer her the invitation.

Constraints:

One stakeholder suggested that 11:00am was difficult for young mums/young women working at the school to attend and that support groups could build more community on a 3:00pm-6:00pm time slot:

I think the only thing I am mindful of because I know a couple of young women that are in schools that are mums, just the morning sessions are a bit hard for them to engage in. One of the things I have been saying to people in the community is let's look at 3-6 as your time, community time; you know the schools are doing everything, so also now having to build community's responsibility. So maybe build on a 3-6pm time slot as the key times of social support groups, and build the community's responsibility to own that time, which is outside of the school time, because 8-2 is school time. Build up a sense of your time, community time; you know the schools are doing everything

Recommendations

Many of the same recommendations as mums' group apply here.

Men's Groups

Aim:

There is a lot of service that go out there and for women and we are trying to push for more services for men.

The aim is to create activity for men:

And even about what happens in the community, I took someone from Perth up to the community the other week and they said oh so what happens in this community, what's, um what they do, and I am like ahhhhhm, [long pause] nothing, they said no but what do they do what's their industry, what do they do do they just exist and I am like, ah yeah well pretty much it's a just exist there is not a main industry or you know thing to get up for in the morning or anything else drugs alcohol many women...what happens in Djarindjin, or Beagle Bay, or Ardyaloon, well Ardyaloon has its agriculture but I have never really seen it happening, they have got some tubs but what actually happens there, well nothing

Dates:

Set for every Wednesday, same time as mums' club.

Attendance:

First formal get together had 23 men, an overwhelming attendance; ongoing, 2-3 men. Often those who are linked (partners, their mums, aunties, nanna) to women in the mums' club. Men from Ardyaloon have come down to attend the Djarindjin group.

Process:

Men's shed established. First meeting attendance happened through:

- 1) word of mouth;
- 2) IPS workers reminding men in the community, in her travels, of the event coming up, pitching it to men this way: *'it is just a men's session, just yarning about men's issues, good or bad (relaxed atmosphere), up at the shed, can just sit around, have snack, talk about men's issues'*;
- 3) Critically, through putting up notices, the more the better, so the message gets through;
- 4) Take flyer to school and attach to the newsletter so information gets through to parents;
- 5) Mums' club encouraging their partners, nephews, to attend; and
- 6) Men's group meets same time as mums' group, top avoid any conflict over partners being idle while other is busy.

In first men's group meeting (date unknown) men ran the meeting themselves, discussed a range of ideas, what they would like to do at the next get together and what they would like to do within the community. Stages of group formation seem to be underway, through ongoing meeting, forming relationships, and trust develops as an ongoing activity. There were reports that men now independently meet up at the shed and yarn about their general issues.

There was an important process considered, to have something to offer men at the same time as the women's group meet. Below, this woman expressed some uneasiness about attending when her husband was looking for her.

Um well ah there wasn't really a lot of mums here, a lot worked [long pause], and, like and um sometimes I don't even go up to the women's centre um , yeah sometimes you don't know when things are happening, and who is going to be there, so I don't really go up there, I don't mix with other people much, it was a good thing that I went the other day, get me out of the house, they were spraying my house out, for cockroaches that day anyway, Then there was my husband ring up, 'where you was I was ringing up for hours' I said I was at the meeting, they were spraying the house out for cockroach so I had to sit down somewhere, Q: and he was fine with it/}, yeah but I haven't told him about going very Tuesday or whatever...not the full hours.

Some stakeholders will actively support the process of setting up activities for a men's group to be take part in.

I have got a conversation going with Men's outreach about BMX bikes because I heard they got a BMX track out in DJ, so I am saying, hey please save all the BMX bikes, so it is about keeping your ears to the ground, oh these resources can come in, oh got a BMX bike what does it take BMX bikes, running a bike program fixing bikes, men on prisoner release, for a wet season holiday program.

Impact:

The overall impact needed was to make men feel special about their place and connect on this point. This impact applies to all the support groups of the IPS, but there seems to be a real need to have the IPS impact for relationship building support for men in each community:

In those situations when people are just sitting around yarning people don't realise that they are absorbing stuff and I think that's the most effective way and once those relationships are established that is the most important effective way.

Many reports from the community and stakeholders is that it is good that men are meeting there independently, without women or IPS female staff, suggesting the need to focus in on men and that the IPS is impacting on this.

Dads are always put on the back burners, it's always Mums upfront

Many discussions were about the wider impact of the bonding that was occurring within the whole of community that occurs when men can get together.

it builds trust and relationships, because some men that go up to that shed they have never sat down with the next man and had a conversation (without a beer or something), you know they have walked passed and said hello but they have never had a conversation

There are many substantial reports on impact on the whole community from men taking time with kids. IPS workers identified a strong need expressed by the men to do something, outside of normal hunting and fishing; men were asking to do something else, just for them in the context of having seen female activities running.

Ideas about what could be provided for youth were high on the agenda: For young boys, ideally these could be linked with men's activities.

I have got my old people saying oh those young ones they need to be doing this they got no respect they need to be doing this and that, and I think well where are you as a community creating those opportunities, those young people want to do something after school, you see them, they are just aimless, whereas if the men's shed was open and a couple of old blokes were sitting up there carving or making spears or whatever, those young blokes would be there,

Support for men's group and men's activities came from women:

I: What do you think about IPS getting some men's stuff happening?

Well we even brought it up in our playgroup because there was [laughs] a big emphasis on oh my man does nothing, and you know we had to, mm, you know I think it is good to promote fathers and the benefits of having fathers and what they do and why they do it and why they do it the way they do it and what makes that good and you know what makes the women's way the right way all the time

it's not always true you know you need the balance I think it is about and I think men are under serviced [issues, DVs huge]

A 'stronger' man was also connected to men changing women's beliefs:

and I think to change some of the women's beliefs and thought process in regards to their men you know, yeah

Outcomes:

Reports that men from Ardyaloon are getting the feel of how it all works, and about service providers and how they can link men with services. Helps run mums' clubs, as it can cater for menfolk at same time as mums' club (Wednesday) with both partners engaged in their thing, avoiding conflict, with each knowing where the other is. There are flow-on effects, as both parents are attending activities; there is harmony, and children are happier. There have been discussions in the Djarindjin shed about setting same thing up at Ardyaloon.

Critically, one outcome from this group; the Father's Day cook up emerged. This is an important outcome that should not be overlooked. It shows the holistic way in which the IPS is working. The men's group supports and can act as catalyst for men's events, and men's events that include men that would normally not attend a men's group, to come and join in the men's group more regularly.

It is important to note that from a range of discussions with Men's Outreach, KAMSC, Kinway, and stakeholders throughout the project, such as Headspace; they happy to help support men through information and instrumental and other support.

Constraints:

Ardyaloon and Beagle Bay are talking about setting up men's group; however these groups are yet to be established. In Beagle Bay there was talk about setting up a group, but there have been problems in getting to the next stage in the Beagle Bay context.

Many suggested the way the broader men's program which is established in Broome needs some orientation to connect with the IPS; there is possibly a whole lot of interconnected training in little programs which could be tied together into a coherent training program. A strong men's group could act as catalyst to this. However, a series of men's training events could work just as well:

I: What is the best way to help supports fathers, or men?

There is a lot of service that go out there and for women and we are trying to push for more services for men. They need to be involved as well; I guess we need to get them motivated. Usually they are working or away or are not motivated on various issues, and in truth there was nothing there for men, so slowly pushing men to get together, to men's groups, talking about men's groups, it's a struggle, but we are slowly getting there, trying to push a couple of programs up there last few years, man are happy to share their stories, it sis struggle because we only

work with a few of them not the majority of them, and there is some strong men out here leaders of the community, but we are trying to get some younger kids as well, maybe lack of service that do go out there, maybe lack of support from each other I am not really surer most of the issues but conflicts between families, jealousy and such,

Yeah a men's shed, yeah, they need something like that, because there the women's group and women's do some painting and things like that, arts and crafts and stuff but realistically there is nothing for men, they do you know go to the garage some days and fix parts for their vehicles,

They always come together if there is something they are interested in, and then you can push some other issues through, getting them to come and getting them involved first, and they mostly you know they like to talk about their [self] and their opinions from their side as well, because they have all day they listen tother issues or listen to their women, and they have issue to discuss as well and they usually don't express it sometimes, but you know it is slowly, slowly increasing and getting better

A few years ago we tried to get a men's group happening, we got few numbers and then it slowly faded away, but they just wanted more activities, more stuff around, but they feel like doing it, if they feel conformable doing it, and getting something going like you need shed sort of thing, to build stuff, do some creative stuff, there is no organised recreation if they run things like dance kids would be there but nobody puts their hands up to do that, maybe regulations and volunteers,

Great for men to have place to go and talk about stuff just hang out but a 'men's group would need something to keep it motivated and going

Recommendations:

There is tremendous willpower for a men's movement to occur through setting up solid men's groups, expressed by men and women in the community, and stakeholders at all levels. It is worth noting that the IPS doing all it can to facilitate men's events and capture this desire.

There was talk of the IPS employing an appropriate male worker, to facilitate the men's movement, although this worker would need to be from a community, with the respect of the men whom he would be working with.

Men's Outreach recently trained (November 2011) more men in facilitating their Hey Dad program and if this can be rolled out on the Dampier Peninsula.

In general, the key service provider, or the success of a men's program, is highly contingent on forming solid relationships with Broome Men's Outreach.

Beagle Bay Playgroup and the Women's Centre

Aims:

The child development deliverables apply here.

- Provide as relevant, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children with age-appropriate and culturally appropriate social, emotional, developmental and educational experiences.

In addition, playgroups are known to be an excellent site in which to:

- Provide as relevant, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander parents with culturally appropriate social, emotional, developmental and educational experiences.
- Provide parents/care-givers with support and skills training on early childhood development and parenting.
- Assist parents/care-givers and children to connect with other services as appropriate and facilitate referrals as required.

Process:

Unsure of playgroup precises, thus how the aims of the IPS are being met through the playgroup. Observed processes below of women engaged in art/beauty activity.

Impact:

The discussion over the potential impact for the women's centre/playgroup at Beagle Bay was of employment opportunities for young women. The IPS worker and I discussed potential questions about attendance and needs/desires for certain activities. For example, the IPS worker asked mums whether they thought computer classes at a mums' and bubs' club would work. One mum said:

Yeah, for a few, yeah for sure, I am not saying all of them, because I know who comes in here, with their just babies you know, sewing what do you think about sewing) sewing yeah, if you can buy materials they can make their own stuff, you know what I was thinking you know them high school girls over there, and these ones now who I am talking to (daughter is next to her) who think they are kiss know it all, they say they doing nothing there, I mean look at where she is sitting today, she is supposed to be in class, they say they do noting [daughter responds, no you supposed to bring me to shopping?], every time I bring you to school you aw we are doing nothing, we are doing the same old same old, so you know who they used to do classes[child care or something like that] and you know high school girls are away boarding away, and they have periods like when they change classes, and those girls come over here to like sewing and one period of time you know and then they swap back and doing something else, or screen printing, or tie dyeing, or something else [or child development where they can be

going in and sitting with teacher discussion of how it is done in Perth, and they might be in future dreamtime models, or they might not wanna be doctors and always they might wanna be hairdresser things like that you know...

At this point, I spoke with the KRCE representative who was setting up with a non-accredited CDEP program for the ladies in Beagle Bay and he had brought hairdressers doing certificate 2 in Ardyaloon to show the girls at Beagle Bay or to do girls hair. He suggested:

Young mum and older mums are interested in CDP programs having CDP girls work with them can't afford to get nails done or hair done, waxing, in town, great introduction to industry and they can then go on to hair drawing nail technicians and other skills to get trained in...Job service provider work plans are what they are interested in; computer training, etc...The ladies do nail art, they learn hairdressing very quickly, I observed the mother with her daughter (who was supposed to be at school) the daughter was doing some incredible nail art.

We all talked about the need for “real dollars not Centrelink” and the talk was about how there is such a need to be creating real jobs, servicing community and stakeholder clients in the community. However, the Indigenous job centres, ICC traineeships, job networks, and workshops could provide support for a business, but this never quite happens, and cannot get support for the women’s centre as it does not come under any umbrella.

Also that the IPS “has to be careful it doesn’t get stuck at top with workers being paid, and not get funding down to the ground level” and the need to “use women’s groups to employ more people in real jobs and up skill them, get people trained in the community, workers mentor roles, hand over to others...”. A stakeholder commented about the Beagle Bay women’s centre.

Women centre has lots of good ideas but until they start to make money who supports them, because it takes time, and it is not going to happen instantly for them to pay themselves and make it viable..and they continue to do it voluntarily, and off CDEP, so there needs to be a, and even this women’s centre everyone has been trying to do voluntarily but it actually a hard job to it with the administration and bookings and catering and all that kind of stuff they don’t get paid for it, and then people burn out that is what happens they commit so much time to it they burn out, and then they quit and they have to start the whole process starts all over again, and then those people burn out, government, community politics, family and land all the stuff you have to deal with up here.

Constraints:

In Beagle Bay I asked one stakeholder: What would stop mums coming to a young mums group?

Well I can think of one young mums, at her house they have got mums and babies there anyway, they have got a lot of playgroups happening why would they want to come out and play here? And I think it is a little bit of trial and error, you know

find out what people do like, and the going with that and then finding what people that aren't coming to that like.

COAG roundtables have suggested playgroups at the beach where people like going, but stakeholders reported difficulties with this in terms of transport, car seats, normally also people want to go fishing, or there are staff concerns of overly protecting self, due to laws/rules such as seatbelts etc. Stakeholders insisted we need to be targeting little bubs; mums with bubs under walking age. At the stakeholders' workshop in August and by phone/email communication with me, key players in vocational education are keen to see what synergies can form with the IPS. The IPS is keen to work with VET etc. Though VET youth based participants are not directly related to parent support, as they are likely not parents, it is an opportunity for work with these youth as future parents.

This is one area I feel that is under evaluated by the present report. I need to examine more carefully the role of vocational education as a resource for parenting support.

Recommendations:

I will endeavour to collect more intensive data on the workings of the playgroup and how it connects to the IPS aims and facilitates the LIP.

Ardyaloon Playgroup

Aim:

The child development deliverables apply here.

- Provide as relevant, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children with age-appropriate and culturally appropriate social, emotional, developmental and educational experiences.

In addition playgroups are known to be an excellent site in which to:

- Provide as relevant, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander parents with culturally appropriate social, emotional, developmental and educational experiences.
- Provide parents/care-givers with support and skills training on early childhood development and parenting.
- Assist parents/care-givers and children to connect with other services as appropriate and facilitate referrals as required.

The LIP is connected to IPS outcomes through the playgroup. SCA have responsibilities under the LIP to deliver on certain things, update their progress on these.

Process:

I am a little unsure of the playgroup process, thus how the aims of the IPS are being met through the playgroup. There have been women's group meetings in Ardyaloon.

Impact:

I made observations twice. In April 2011, I observed 4 women happily talking while their children were in the outdoor area of the playgroup. They and their children were very relaxed. I observed that the IPS worker had a great rapport with these women. In November 2011, I did not observe any women and children at the playgroup.

Outcomes:

Child based outcomes of the IPS can be achieved through women attending the playgroup with their peers. Stakeholders talked about the importance of the playgroup in Ardyaloon.

[need to develop that facility] get better programs, I am not saying we need a new building for this and that, but something like that is really really important, because it is the main focus for everyone you know, to make sure our kids get a really good start, and we know that is important we have to really support that now, making a place ere mothers van bring their children in a nice safe, it is inviting, and it is not going to be too much in the public eye type of thing as well

Constraints:

On stakeholder suggested there are family relational problems, in that the playgroup is seen to be the domain of one family/set of; thus other younger mums would not readily attend this service. Another suggested the location of the playgroup next to the council office, shop, school, and in the centre of community, meant that young women were quite self-conscious in attending (especially the marginalised women), thus a less prominent location would allow them to more easily utilise this service.

I: Are there some parents that won't attend IPS?

There are parents out there that probably won't come up and say it, but funny in coming there and there are cultural reasons, you know, some people can't talk to others as way of showing respect so there are other things like that.

There have been discussions about the playgroup facility in Ardyaloon not being attractive to parents or appropriate for kids; too many corridors and rooms, location of toilets, cultural inside, but not colourful and cultural on the outside.

Recommendations:

I will endeavour to collect more intensive data on the workings of the playgroup and how it connects to the IPS aims and facilitates the LIP.

Parent Support Events

Well Women's Health Check

Aim:

Women wanted a specific health day open to all women. This idea arrived through IPS workers interactions with the maternal child health nurse and the local clinic nurse.

Dates:

Unknown.

Attendance:

Reports from a number of sources show that 20-30 women were present; however I have no documentary material supporting this.

Process:

This provided a healthy check-up, along with healthy yarning and pampering, and then a healthy meal. The clinic was closed to men for this time; if a man needed help, the nurse was to meet him at the front and explain to them the clinic was only for emergencies and it was suggested that the men were fine with that.

Impact:

I am aware of 'feedback forms' being completed by the women on the day; however I have yet to receive this documentary evidence. Once again, a fundamental impact was the opportunity for women to get together and normalise and share their experiences.

Like the well women's clinic, the issues we talked about when we all gathered together some of us knew and some of us didn't know see, and we all talked about it together, we all then had a different understanding of it you know.

Outcomes:

Ten health clinic checks and one antenatal check were performed. The antenatal check was seen as positive, as normally women do not go to antenatal checks.

Constraints:

It is unsure to what extent these events (though 100% needed and supportive) can fully target or attract very young women/mums at risk. One stakeholder was clear about the need to deliver health messages related to maternal health as a preventative action for unwanted pregnancies. This is a difficult message, and especially not one that can be supported through the Catholic schools, but it can possibly be done through dedicated after school sessions. It depends also on how parent support is defined, as there are at least two issues touched on

here: Preventing young women becoming young parents accidentally and reinvoking their sense of being a parent, rather than having grandparents care for their children. The IPS responds to the expressed needs of young mums, but if so desired, it would be incredibly hard to collect these two issues as needs, thus act on these.

We need to look at how we do better maternal health care for our young women, not just young women but it's predominantly teenage mums here we are talking about, they're getting younger all the time as well, I think that is the other level, when you talk to clinic staff they're talking about sex education, the other side, of that is you need to look at 3-6 (out of school / school hours information distribution) because a lot of our young women are catholic and there is tuff around birth control and there is young women that might be on a pathway and all of sudden there might be one little slip up, they don't really fully inform that look, you know it is an alternative, it is not a good one, that you want to advise the young women but if you know they are on the way and they are claiming, in terms of terminations too, because what is happening we have got this whole generation of unwanted pregnancies, and that what is their grandmothers are saying they're looking after these kids because girls are still out having a good time

Recommendations:

The self-care model of 'healthy check up', along with 'healthy yarning' and 'pampering' and then a 'healthy meal' has a great deal of power. This was a good example of how to connect mothers' services as appropriate and facilitate referrals as required, thus as a site on which to develop effective and sustainable links and/or partnerships with community, welfare, and government agencies. We need to work to elicit more feedback from the women about the utility of this day on the sort of educational experiences, as well as community bonding opportunities this provided.

Breast Cancer Week (forthcoming in Nov 2011)

Aim:

There is a community member with breast cancer (breast removal) in Djarindin. The activity aims to raise awareness around breast (and prostate cancer). Young mums and children do not understand this illness, so there is a need to focus on this and inform the community about what is going on.

Father's Day Cook Up (with Mark Olive)

Aim:

The suggestions were that this was a first in Australia; a strictly male event to celebrate the importance of dads in children's lives through a unique catch and cook structure. It was summed up as "my time with my boy" away from other children or other things happening. Focused on male empowerment, and an opportunity to act on men's clear endeavour and initiative, an opportunity to invest in and own something, and to have the opportunity to show responsibility to provide for the event and contribute, in presence of son.

Dates:

October 2011

Attendance:

Attended by fathers and sons; reports that 30 attended across both Bardi Jawi communities. Reports in Djarindjin of a little boy running around; in Ardyaloon, two dads with babies in their arms. Scully, Men's Outreach, police officer and son, David Pigram, and Lloyd attending. Beagle Bay did not eventuate due to several complications.

Process:

IPS staff planned and went around talking with male community members about the idea. IPS staff went into schools to set up dialogue with the principal to see if the process could happen, then set things up, took photos etc; thus it was up to fathers going in to school to collect sons and attending by themselves. Dads needed to catch something and some men got together and went out beforehand to catch some fish. Dads went into school to pick up their sons, and take them to the cook up. Incentive based, in that sons had to come to school regularly and do good in class. David Pigram was invited and able to display some stuff. The IPS will support David continuing this sort of activity.

IPS process case study: Man with bandage

This shows the value if IPS workers.

The first bloke on my list (when planning) he agreed and toward the lead up to the day, he had an injury or something to his eye, with a big 'embarrassing' bandage to his eye and he tried to back out, but I wouldn't let him, and he came along and he thoroughly enjoyed himself, very proud stood up for photos being taken.

Impact:

The work of the IPS workers; the process of direct on the ground contact with community members is the key to achieving IPS impact, as below:

she got my husband, you know to come to the men's [cook up] yeah, and he didn't want to say no to her, then he got up that morning and said naah, I got sucked right in, but the he ended up going up there and he had a good time, and that was a good thing and it was a good thing for him to get out of the house too, because he struggles with depression, and on medication so it sort of gave him a break, so that was good thing, and get him out because, he doesn't really mix with other men so, that was a good thing, I am happy that he did that, yeah, because he has depression it was good for him to get out of the house, because he doesn't mix with men much, my hubby doesn't even sit next to his brother next door, or his brothers,

The event brought men together:

first time me and him have had conversation, not just hello when they are walking past, but first time had a conversation and that is what a few of the men did, first time they had a conversation

I was able to triangulate reports from a range of sources, all of which converged on the huge success of this event in both communities.

Focused on empowerment, and own responsibility to provide for the event and contribute. Dads needed to catch something with no expectations that things would be provided. This brought out pride in going out to catch something for Black Olive to cook up, showing off their own ability to catch something in the presence of their son/s and other men. The challenge and hard work of getting something they like in particular; they did not catch normal stuff, but instead got clams, oysters, scallop, homemade chilli, and shared this with everyone else. The event included prize giving ceremonies, practical cooking implements, books, etc.

Mark Olive reported great fun, and a perfect opportunity for blokes to be blokes; men really opened up talked a lot more once women (IPS workers) left. Initially hesitant and stand offish, but within 10 minutes all men gathered around, asked lots of questions, and prepared food together (dad and son).

There was a great discourse of pride around this event, men being happy, a sense of fun, and ownership; all helped together with preparations, got special wood, built the fire, handled cooking in fire, packed away, “ *they contributed a lot of stuff*” .

They were proud, it was in Djarindjin, it was Djarindjin mob, Djarindjin shed and finally something come into the community especially for the men, and they was, they was proud

There is huge reported impact for kids in simply being with their dad in different environment:

not just normally being with dad when dad is sort of in a bad mood or preoccupied, but when there is nothing else going on.

Thus the event offered the children a dedicated special time and place to relax and celebrate with their dad.

with their dad, they were there to do some cooking with dad, sort of like a one on one with dad and their sons which doesn't often happen in the communities

There were reports of children being very proud when their parents are around (especially in front of their friends).

There is a need to include review of evaluation forms.

Stakeholders talked about men's sense of own responsibility, around not everything being laid on. One man commented he did not do it for himself but only for his son. This man is very hard to get to this sort of get together. He now comes on a regular basis. Some applied new cooking skills at home, whilst some blokes stood back but are more likely to come along to the next one having attended. Fathers were really proud and saw their sons/their role with their sons in a different light and felt their sons saw them in a different light. Reports from the women were of their partner enjoying the event. Reports from men who attended that they saw men who they had not seen for a long time, or never really talked one to one in-depth with.

Outcomes:

Men increasingly see that parents is not just mums looking after kids, they see what it can do, and that it is a safe environment for acting, being involved with service providers, enhancing their own skills; and it might emerge that a man may see his role as an IPS worker.

There was a large outcome in having dads going into school, thus having a presence at school. One outcome was related to the IPS workers' presence and being in dialogue with school on behalf of their community (men in community). The outcome reported by the school, of wanting to be highly supportive of idea of dads coming into school, was great. The school is supporting by action and instrumentally in lots of ways, seeing that that IPS is doing good, supplied tables and chairs for the event. Subsequently, a fairground circus was held at school, meetings held in hall, along with the young mums' playgroup.

An important aim would be to have a family day cook up which extends the idea to whole of family, as well as holding a Mark Olive event each year.

Constraints:

Resources to run this event or something like it more regularly.

Recommendations:

Workers need to have the trust of the community to get something like this up and running. For example, a worker was able to challenge a male to attend, and was able to suggest he should go, despite being injured or not wanting to go, takes mutual trust. As each event happens, the workers are getting more trust from a broader spectre of community members. The key is therefore to have more events like this: Seize upon the success of this to enter into dialogue with schools about ways to connect fathers and sons with support from school.

Men's Information Session

Aim:

Informal get together to talk about any men's issues and information day about what a health assessment would look like.

Dates:

Late, possibly 21st October 2011.

Attendance:

17-19 men, included old men, and doctor.

Process:

Bit of a feed and discussions.

Impact:

Planning to send a contact list to the IPS worker.

Outcomes:

Men's health checks idea; 4 - 5 men from this session turned up at the Health Check (the others did not want to for whatever reasons).

Men's Health Check**Aim:**

Clinic opened only for men, closed to women unless it was an emergency and attended by a range of men's based support workers/organisations from Broome. Not an IPS event per se, but an opportunity to collaborate and distribute IPS information to men in Djarindjin. But supporting an event like this by encouraging men in Djarindjin to attend is certainly a core IPS role in supporting men who are parents.

Dates:

16th November 2011

Attendance:

BRAMS, KAMSC, KPHU, Milliya Rumurra, Alive & Kicking through men's outreach, Scully, Trainee Doctors (x2), Aboriginal Doctor.

Process:

2-6pm. 10 men attended in Djarindjin (3 Lombadina). David Pigram emailed material out through the networks including SCA along with ROC, Police, Michael Currie at DCP (helped out with food as well). Touched base with IPS worker and unsuccessfully tried to distribute SCA based information. Clinic opened only for men, closed to women unless an emergency.

Impact:

Comments were made that its impact was the opportunity to discuss other matters, rather than just one specific thing that was wrong with them. The health check made men feel special. Men reported enjoying some of the activities happening while they were waiting; men enjoyed the more informal get together to talk about any men's issues.

Outcomes:

I think it was pretty good for a first run and we are planning to do a review like a follow up and check in with the guys and ask what they thought about it, some of the issues about why it is important to get checked, general issues not personal stuff and see if they want any more activities, or to highlight some of those issues, and see do you want more information on these, and try and get back to them before Christmas, so don't leave it too late.

Constraints:

Being at the clinic was a bit of an issue and I think there were a lot of problems with things happening because there was an AGM, some meeting in Broome and some people had gone to town for personal reasons, shopping and cars, just that all sort of a timing thing you know

Can the IPS help you in any way in activities like this one?

I think the issue was obviously with the women, you need a man there to help out, she definitely can help with the promotion, but engaging, juts getting information to the men, but even then, sometimes not appropriate, I just had that feeling, with [IPS worker] doing that, I don't know if some men might find it ok, but I don't think it it works,

Discussion of need for localised men in DJ, not in whole DP, and not focus just on social emotional well being, but have a parents focus.

Big camp out in July was set up with elders but fell though, (KLC and heavy issues). Thus plan switched back to what David could focus on, engaged wit health screening, could make that happen quicker with existing resources, even though camping was what they wanted. Build on strengths from Father's Day event, Men's; info session events so two events within the year, and then try and get the men who are willing to be supported, or want to do something for themselves and do get a regular activity happening and then through that obviously we can promote Hey Dad, and slowly you know other activities that might be appropriate, or like maybe the Drumbeat, um which is maybe a possibility too for the younger blokes or even the older men, to focus on their feelings, and I think we need to do that first, before worrying about improving, make them feel better about themselves, and being able to move on and be better fathers, and uncles and so yeah I think so a bit of a building phase, and building rapport and respect within the group, and letting that evolve, um hopefully, with

some of those events we can just link together, together as combined, group to help support each other, and through monetary and physical resources to make those things happen I think is probably the best way forward.

I think [IPS worker] wanted me to do a family thing next year but I think we really need to keep linking in with the men's group and the women's group, actually make sure we get the direction coming from both, not just making it your own, leading it yourself, you know, and think it is a good idea, I mean it is a good idea but, we need to make sure that the community actually owns it, and wants to be part of that process, even organizing it and saying, having a say over where it should be, and what it looks like and who they want and you may think it is ok to do this or that, but do they want that, yeah, I think that is imperative to which way we are heading, otherwise it is just going to go backwards, and that is going to take time, and I have been able to break some of those barriers, being known I suppose need someone with family and being respected in the community, help to flag some of those barriers down, but it still can't be my own thing, it has to be taking up by the guys, because we did a consultation prior to the health check session,

Everyday Parent Support

DJ Home visits

Aim:

The IPS worker in Djarindjin has been active in making home visits to local families. This work establishes the presence of the IPS and the worker's role, and serves as an outreach to help facilitate parent support for particular families.

Dates:

Ongoing, weekly visits September through to December.

Attendance:

I visited 8 families whom the IPS worker had made regular home visits to.

Process:

The IPS worker paid visits to a range of families, taking information recent to the IPS, asking about parenting support needs, and reminding and advertising of IPS related events.

Impact:

One of the first priorities is to ensure that communities are aware of the mainstream services which can provide services to their communities. In the first, the community needs to be aware of what concerns they should attend to or are legitimate, and then how these can be met by the relevant services.

The data I have on this activity shows enormous direct impact on promoting IPS work, which is to facilitate the opportunities for families to avoid isolation and have opportunities to connect and interact socially and identify the local needs of families for types of parent support, thus develop activities to suit these.

I observed the IPS worker distributing information including the home based survey.

While I visited homes guided by the worker to conduct community interviews, I observed how well the IPS role is complemented by a form of outreach. It seemed to create a great familiarity of staff and community (although in Djarindjin, clearly the visits were based on long term relationship having already been formed). I observed the IPS worker servicing community members through home visits, organising and reinforcing that they can call on her, how great it was for their husband to attend Catch and Cook, volunteering reports that other men like seeing him, organising for boarding school, uniforms, any questions, slide show about the school, traineeships, apprenticeships, explanation about the role of school and training for apprenticeships, and having some to fall back on outside of football.

Thus, I witnessed a lot of support being given to families regarding boarding school (as this was topical with applications for boarding school due). Also, there was often discussion of job opportunities for youth. In addition, there were specific discussions about health issues, the needs of family members, and checks on how members of the family were progressing, or where they were located at present. In addition, there was a great deal of discussion between the worker and families as a follow up to their attendance at IPS events, such as men attending the Catch and Cook.

Outcomes:

From the IPS workers' perspective, the aim of IPS activities is empowering by building the capacity of people on the ground to make their own decisions, giving them choices; through their engagement with the IPS. The sorts of impactful conversations suggested above are the glue to building the sort of connected social support vital to community resilience building.

I had opportunity to speak with community members in Djarindjin. Overwhelmingly, those I spoke with really appreciated the hands on, approachability, indeed going door to door approach of the IPS worker.

A range of outcomes were noted in terms of community members (both women and men) attending IPS activities, such as women and men's groups; special events which seemed to be a direct result of this direct IPS contact.

One outcome of this approach is that it allows the workers to invite the evaluator to talk with particular families, thus collect invaluable data about the effects of the IPS.

Constraints:

There is always a potential problem in any bonded community of IPS workers having close connections with some members of their community, and likewise distant relations/barriers to

engaging with others. This compromises the ability to interact too personally in the role. There is a need to avoid any situation of the community sensing role confusion in the IPS workers' role, and putting demands on the worker, or feeling conflict with worker.

Recommendations:

This is a good example of how to ensure Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander families have opportunities to connect and interact socially as well as connecting families with services as appropriate and facilitate referrals as required.

The IPS role does not preclude a general outreach that other service providers cannot provide, it is a value add situation wherein the IPS can help in any way and create services that are generally more in touch with the community.

This is a potentially direct way to get support to isolated and disadvantaged young mums to fulfil the deliverable of social connectedness and non-isolation of parents. All IPS workers should adopt this model of ground based consultation with families. Workers should keep records of home visits the IPS staff make and for what reason, what occurred, then track any outcomes associated with these visits in terms of whether there was attendance at an activity, or event, or use of a service. This will facilitate case study information also.

Community Presence and Open Door

Aim:

The IPS worker in Djarindjin has been active in making the IPS office a tangible site to visit for parents wanting more information about parenting support. This establishes the presence of the IPS and the worker's role, and serves as a concrete point of contact to help facilitate parent support through information for particular families.

Dates:

Ongoing; office open through August through to December,

Attendance:

Worker reports that mums typically drop into the office if they need specific information. Mums report that they will actively attend the IPS office if they need specific information.

Process:

Good location of Djarindjin IPS office in a central site with council building, approachable worker who is well known in the community and facilitates relationships through home visits and attendance at events. Essential to have a welcoming and informative space created; range of educational posters on the walls which the worker can point to or be observed by visiting parents, along with well stocked information sheets and pamphlets. The office space gives the worker an opportunity to reinforce messages and conduct follow ups on information for interested parents through mums' group, young women's group, and home visits.

Impact:

I observed, through the reflective journal, ongoing interaction with stakeholders and the community that was occurring through the worker's role. I feel there is great impact to be had through the IPS using its community space effectively: One stakeholder linked this impact to youth.

I mean it is the thing about them too. The one thing about them is that they have space, that is a critical thing around young people is to have space to be able to run things through,

Having a presence is essential to the IPS worker: Here it builds a sense of community wherein others in the community respect her intentions and share the concern of getting mums to the support groups.

And if I ever had any problems like even if it is [for a lift] or she knows that I've been having problems at school with the kids, she said you know I am here if you need anything, she, and she has been helping me with my son, getting him sorted out for boarding next year, and even if it is just a yarn on the way up to the shop or something so that's been good, she gets on with people so, and she doesn't ah, they'll say yeah, yeah, yeah and she will remind them again, and I am just sorry that a lot of um other mum's didn't turn up last week so.

The worker reports how she uses a brochure stand, and keeps it well stocked all the time and how this works to distribute information to homes. This is an essential IPS activity with an impact of the community taking information home.

We collect information from service providers so when they leave, we still have it. Put the stuff we think people will read. Information that Catholic schools won't present for example. Do prints outs and leave on table for young mums, and tips for dads when men programs started and they pick it up and they read them. We use resources and information from other service providers, that are useful for reading for parents and making those describe and so they can pick it up and read in their own time. They won't read it at the clinic, but will do at home.

Without this useable office space site, the community will find it hard to take the role of the IPS worker seriously, or feel that the support is always present. Research shows it is the presence of support, rather than whether or not it is used which has the effect on feeling supported (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

Outcomes:

Workers should keep records of who visits the IPS office and for what reason, then track any outcomes associated with these visits in terms of whether there was attendance at an activity, or event, use of a service.

The support group for women was seen as an important site for distribution of information and we should not underestimate the role of information distribution as a way of creating social change in communities.

I: What sort of support do parents need?

Well yeah what [IPS worker] is doing now with that mums club that is a good one, that is a a good support, [IPS worker] is pretty good with all that she gives out a lot of info...

Constraints:

One suggestion made by several stakeholders was that IPS workers could use local media more. The IPS do use local media, however local media is limited in scope with an hour on air each day, thus there is limited airtime/space and the IPS is hoping that within this space, more promotion occurs.

Recommendations:

This is a good example of connecting families with services as appropriate and facilitating referrals as required. All IPS workers should adopt this model of office based consultation with families. Perhaps even inviting families to make an appointment with the worker to discuss their parent support needs, thus formalise this office space and the IPS presence.

It is a potentially direct way to get support to isolated and disadvantaged young mums to fulfil the deliverable of social connectedness and non-isolation of parents. Workers should keep full daily records of who visits the IPS office and for what reason, then track any outcomes associated with these visits in terms of whether there was attendance at an activity, or event, use of a service. Record this in the journal as an essential IPS activity. This will facilitate collecting case study information also.

Service Integration and Facilitation

Aim:

The integration of the service deliverable was being met on one level, as it was evident that a key group of service providers are engaged in IPS activities and IPS workers are facilitating links with key agents in support of their community parents.

Attendance:

DCP, EON, Headspace, KAMSC, Men's Outreach, ROC (not service per se), ALO's, Schools.

Although the reflective journal shows a great deal of ongoing planning, and contacts with a range of stakeholders, work has focused on a core group of service providers as these are those who, to date, can directly meet the needs of the community, as they have been expressed to the workers.

Process:

Clearly there are service providers who have not ‘cottoned onto’ the IPS model and the valid way to ensure community contact and engagement is working with the IPS to set up their events and activities.

I have been in the situation where you have sent out flyers, you have contacted people and tried to get people there, you get up there to do something and no one turns up and then you hear a week later that everyone is confused and that no one goes up there and then you think wait a minute, we have put as much effort in as we can and if no one is going to turn up to get the information well then what do you do, and you know and that’s where I am a really strong, I try to say to people well you know you’ve got to take the responsibility if you want to the information you have got to turn up and get the information you just can’t sit back and expect it to come to you all the time and that’s why I say when people comment taking into context of where they are coming from because I really think it’s time that people started taking responsibility that if they need it, if you and I need information we would have to go looking for it, or we have to make sure we’re available to receive it

However, for a core group, the very opposite experience is reported; they talk of growing observations of the good work of the IPS and of their ability to collaborate with the IPS in their service delivery. They talked constructively about process such as below.

Space issues

The idea that the IPS quite simply had a presence or space in each community was talked about by many stakeholders wanting to connect parents with their services. It is key process to have an active presence through providing an approachable space within the community, such that if any service provider wants to link with parents they know the IPS is there, they have an identifiable, reliable, responsive, space to get something happening. Whether that be IPS workers simply checking with parents if it is what they want, and give feedback, or collaborate all the way through to set up an event.

The workers on the ground, that is the only way you can do business, because at the end of the day we’re the external services, we’ve got all the programs under our services we’re resourced to deliver the services, look these three SCA have space so it is an opportunity for us to come and deliver health education to the girls in an environment that is theirs, that they’re comfortable with you know and then they are going to be more set up in terms of talking circles because they kind of have ownership of that space

This presence is invaluable, and hopefully as more and more services direct their community contact through the IPS, this space will psychologically enlarge. It could be that to facilitate this, designed meeting spaces can be negotiated which the IPS can also ‘own’, such that the IPS office presence is enlarged and there is designated physical space for IPS activities to occur in. Thus, any attempts at enlarging the presence of the IPS for both community and

services, adds to the conception of services that the IPS is the link for integrated services providing for parents

Obviously space is not easy to gain; there was talk that past council in Djarindjin was not allowing the council building to be used. Schools provide most of the infrastructure, though there are limits on this space, both physical and at times for the community, psychological.

The Djarindjin school maybe have allowed them to use the hall but I don't know if that is over the wet season, because it has to be locked up but that would be a great venue.

Using the school grounds connects parents to school, but there are also relational/associational barriers which exist between parents and school.

IPS role definition within integrated services

An important dynamic to realise, and indeed is an indicator of IPS success to some extent, is that the more established agencies, whether connected with school, or health based programs, or FaHCSIA based; might feel that the IPS can share in the work they are doing by actively taking on these 'service provisions' in a sense. The more the IPS is able to successfully engage the communities; other service providers might feel there is an opportunity for the IPS to deliver services they would ordinarily provide. Here, the role of IPS is to provide linking social capital (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock, 2000; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000), which can occur across power hierarchies.

Some stakeholders suggested great opportunity for the IPS to map onto and work alongside, or facilitate the work of their agency. There is an interesting nexus between the LIP, Aboriginal Liaison Officers (ALO's), DCP, and the IPS in some ways.

And yeah I think that is the thing we struggle with is that communities get put on the back burner, with us because we're only a referral service, and so we wait for the referrals to come in but we there is enough is enough need in Broome community without us going out there so that's what gets put off last, whereas with SCA kind of being out there and them doing the extension the other way, I think is a bit more supportive than how we do community work

This is a real aim of the IPS; however is for workers to facilitate and they, through excellent co-ordination, are very wary that they do not do the work of services, or work they are not mandated for, or qualified to provide. It is a difficult balance between representing the community and being a buffer to appropriate services, and letting services act independently, as they should, to deliver their services to the community. Services need to appreciate this balance, and the data shows DCP, EON, Headspace, Men's Outreach, ROC (not service per se), and ALO's, do.

Broad 'impact' of the IPS model

Core service providers articulated their appreciation of the IPS model; in this way the IPS and the workers are having a great impact.

Otherwise it is still an external face service, if it goes through the workers, then they are the glue, and I am trying to get more service to use that glue, you know instead of running around, because well normally if you are clinical you will just go deal with the clinic, if you are education you will go and deal with the school, if you want to muck around with government then you will go and muck around with [MM], you know there is these key people sitting up at this level and then it is up to you – but I am a bit more creative in terms of how I use people on the ground so it is about just looking at how we link in better, it is not rocket science, this is their community let's give them the tools to run their community.

I like the person located there I think it's more um respectful of the community, rather than people coming in and out in and out, oh you know your worker will be here on Wednesday, you know rather than your worker is there you can go and see them whenever you want, ah, yeah, I like that their workers are aboriginal people to so there is not that um, so it's not oh here comes another new person another 'govvy' worker or another person who thinks they know about us but they don't. So I think they are definitely um, and it is identifying the strengths within the community, to support the community, so it sort of feels like it is coming from the inside out rather than the outside in um and I think that's a much better way for communities to address whatever their needs are [definitely I agree], because one program doesn't fit all

Key stakeholders reflected on the fact that now the IPS is set up, they can see the broad impact of its model. They see the IPS as having an impact as it is working directly to mediate risk factors within each community.

You know yourself Andrew, each community's dynamics, very, very different, and we got to build our social capital in communities, because all this isolation, all this intergenerational stuff, young people are inheriting it they don't know why, or how, but it does impact on them and these are the young families.

Often, the IPS was attributed to the key deliverable of helping build service integration. The key group of service providers engaged with the IPS articulated their appreciation of the impact the IPS model had on their service provision.

Those workers being physically on the ground for their communities are critical links for me as service provider and I have utilised them because they are the link between us as service and the communities and when I don't have within my role the infrastructure I rely on existing programs and activities that are happening in the community like I say to the women (IPS workers) what are youse doing, can I mobilise more resources to enhance your program, so you know well x amount of service around in the youth sector, we are all running around in isolation and this [IPS] is another sort of way to part of community development through these sorts of programs

The presence of the IPS workers and the model impacts on service integration best when services who use the IPS recommend it to others in their networks. One suggested that the key

was service providers acting as ambassadors for the IPS and suggesting that there is a substratum of key services that are able to work with the IPS as people on the ground. IPS workers were seen as tools for their community to run their own community. Also, the dedicated role of the IPS, as a space, was critical.

Otherwise it [any service coming in] is still an external face service, if it goes through the workers, then they are the glue, and I am trying to get more service to use that glue, you know instead of running around, because well normally if you are clinical you will just go deal with the clinic, if you are education you will go and deal with the school, if you want to muck around with government then you will go and muck around with [MM], you know there is these key people sitting up at this level and then it is up to you – but I am a bit more creative in terms of how I use people on the ground so it is about just looking at how we link in better, it is not rocket science, this is their community let's give them the tools to run their community.

I think it is working, it is owned by community, I mean these are key women in their community; they have obviously put their hand up

There was tremendous respect from all I spoke with for the IPS workers, and all stakeholders unequivocally want to offer support in any way they can.

and that is why I do I take the lead from those women and they ok we are doing this, and I say ok well do you need any resources, what other information, do you require, I am happy to be that sort of link

Outcomes:

Do you think IPS is achieving to date what it set out to achieve?

I regards to my perception I think they have done really well in that community engagement level so trying to get community involved in different activities, ummm I think they are getting better at their communication especially with services, um so they are letting services know what they're doing, how they're doing it, whether services want to come and be involved in that, umm, you know I think they are getting the word out there more.

Constraints:

Many of the process issues above, if not resolved, can be constraining, but they are easily resolved, except for more physical space. There was discussion of how well the IPS can handle acute problems.

umm you know I wonder how they would go, because they're doing that greater scale or group work, I wonder how they're going to go when they identify, you know people that need support, yeah so what are they going to do there are they going to refer it out to other services are they going to you know employ a worker to manage that because I think when you're doing , the community

engagement on that large scale that they're doing, you know when you are identifying, just say in the playgroup, and then identify a mum that needs some, you know really needs some support what are they, you know what are they going to do then are they going to source that out or are they going to be able to manage it with the one worker that they do have. You know when that worker is trying to do the community engagement thing I think it really takes two different roles to be able to manage that and that is the only thing that I wondered, about how they would do that

IPS workers however, are fully aware of their role not to provide intervention and to make referrals and or links to other specialist support services.

Support for workers

Although not assuming any are necessarily always well informed, key stakeholders often expressed the need for SCA to look after and support IPS workers: There was a lot of talk about supporting the career paths for workers.

Really need to support IPS workers 20 hours a week not enough; they need Aboriginal Health Worker training...so we get health workers and education workers into our family units.

There was ongoing suggestion that the workers need better remuneration and training for the amount of hours they do. Though it is good to have support from other services and workers, it is important to maintain the distinctive IPS role definitions. For example, working with the two new Family Support workers in Djarindjin and Ardyaloon is important; however, clear boundaries of what each role provides can be maintained. Often there was suggestion that the IPS workers can mentor others: This would seem to add to their own work burden however.

Local women who are health workers could be facilitated through the IPS to progress their own training

There is a need to give the IPS workers training, so they can offer their skills to others in the community; they then become the models. While the IPS is social support, not a clinical service, a few stakeholders suggested they wanted to see if the IPS could become trained to help deliver their work. This is contentious (see below). Finally there was talk of remuneration which fits the sort of investment needed:

Because we want to make sure that the community programs with community workers is getting the resources and the support because that's our link as external services, we need those people physically on the ground, if we are going to see any improvement in Aboriginal health, and the investment in terms of remunerating these people as well

Stakeholders also talked of staff needing support through SCA networks:

Opportunities to debrief, can't whinge with family because it might be about them, working with families and children is tough, stressful, people want to be able to talk about stuff and know it goes no further...

Working with the LIP (or AEO + ROC)

Aim:

Facilitate the LIP Early Childhood (where appropriate to parent support - Schooling, Health, Safe Communities, Economic, Participation, Healthy Homes, Land, Language & Culture, Governance & Leadership).

Process:

Evidence of close working relationship with the LIP, however and importantly, are the IPS staff and LAC/AEO's working together? In the roundtables with the co-ordinator and her team, they were obviously very familiar comfortable and working together every day so they had a good relationship.

Impact:

Every core stakeholder I spoke with more or less said something like:

Was good that IPS attended RSD roundtable with [name], IPS must have input into the LIP.

This captures the impact of the interaction between the IPS and the LIP very well:

They participated in the roundtables working on the review of the LIPs, so both coordinator and the worker in each community gave input into those roundtables so that was really useful because of the IPS is a result of the original roundtables, where people said there was need...so it was a good time to review how it was going and they actually had some new ideas to go into the new action plan and it was good for people to realise oh ok so this [IPS workers and their input] came out of the original roundtables so we didn't waste our time

Outcome:

Does the IPS work according to reviews of the LIP?

The IPS was offered up by FaHCSIA it is now happening its now being successful as they are saying it is, it's good it was a good outcome and I didn't think there were any more recommendations for the IPS because they, the community see it as fulfilling one of those needs but juts that bit continue to you know progress, because one of the recommendations ion the Bardi Jawi was to review what is going on in the early child hood area, and to encourage parents

to interact more, it is not a new action, but it is just a continuation of what [co-ordinator] and her crew are doing, keep doing it.

Constraints:

IPS coordinator/staff are wary that they are not there to complete the LIP outcomes, not to do the work of the LIP, but the IPS, and see if collaborations with the LIP can be a facilitated, but not do the LIP work for them.

Recommendations:

IPS attended the RSD roundtable.

Collaborate with the LIP given the close links of both for integration of services (IPS parent support services only) and early childhood focus.

Ongoing reflections over ways to link work with existing service structures and government based local area coordination activities are occurring.

Working with DCP Parent Support

Aim:

The IPS worker is not qualified, nor bound to provide parent support of the crisis intervention type provided by DCP based Parent Support. However, the IPS worker in Djarindjin has successfully facilitated contacts between DCP and families requiring intensive support and has, through the general IPS role, kept in contact and followed up with such families to check on how the IPS can support parents in these families.

Dates:

Ongoing, August through to December.

Attendance/Participation:

The Djarindjin worker reports a case study of helping one family that was receiving Parent Support through DCP. This account validated by DCP.

Outcomes:

The IPS can support parents, but avoid any general stigma about mums being seen as, or being labelled as, bad parents when actions are being directed at them. This is a good mediating outcome, creating distance between parent support through the IPS and DCP based targeting of mums in crisis through parent support, and issues associated with child welfare. The outcome is collaboration between DCP and the IPS to support parents.

DCP Parent Support is highly appreciative of the collaborative role of the IPS worker, and the impact of this in achieving an outcome for the family.

Recommendations:

Working within the boundaries of IPS defined roles, the facilitation of DCP parent support through the presence of the IPS, as another person to talk with, seems like a valid way to conduct IPS activities and of connecting families with services as appropriate and facilitating referrals as required.

It is not appropriate though for IPS workers to refer families to DCP parent support, and doing so would compromise IPS staff on several levels, including their more general role of offering support outside of what DCP provides.

Working with EON Foundation

Aim:

The IPS has developed a good relationship with EON Foundation through the women's groups, and facilitated visits by EON to homes in Djarindjin and Beagle Bay, which was seen as a way to appropriate the building of mums' confidence and offering direct support to parents in their homes along with social, emotional, and developmental outcomes linked to the LIP Healthy Homes.

They want to go to this healthy home project, so it's just like an extension from the gardens, to the healthy eating, to the healthy homes. So the homes aren't as good as they could be.

Attendance/participation:

Eight (needs confirmation) homes visited in Beagle Bay, however number of home visits work in Djarindjin unknown.

Oh I've had about five sessions, probably five, I could tell you exactly if you wanted me to. ... Excellent. They want me to come back more and more. It's brilliant. I've found Erica brilliant to work with, brilliant. Yea, she's a little ripper. Like her very much and she's professional and she emails and she phones.

Process:

How have you linked with the IPS?

Oh yea, that's who I work with, with the women's centre. I was first...[unclear sequence], next Monday. Not this week the week after. [IPS worker at BB], she rang me, I was in Perth recently and she rang me and asked me to come up and work, the next day, so I said no Cecelia, so the fifth of December is the next date when I'm available. I carry an actual calendar, so I can show people exactly how busy I am. So I'm working, so, you know, Howe's first approach was with [IPS coordinator], I think. I was asked to go to the women's centre at Beagle

Bay, at DJ. She had seen me working in the garden with the kids and she asked me to come over and do this healthy eating programme with her, with the ladies, with the young mums. Then there was a girl there, Erica, from Ardyaloon, she came down, then she's asked me to go away to One Arm Point, so I've been working up there and I was up there last week with the women, at One Arm Point

I worked in the women's centre. I had been working with the young mother's, with the play group, but then when I was up there last Thursday, they asked me, or Bono. Was it Bono from the office? I have my notes here. Yeah, she asked me if I'd work in the women's centre there, they're really trying to. Anyway, I've worked in the women's centre, with sort of an older group, yeah.

Impact:

As described by an EON representative:

Well, the healthy home project, is all about actually, literally helping them in their homes to try and get things up to a standard, so what happens is, while I've been doing this, I go into the homes, with that ute over there. I've got full resources in the back and I've actually done two homes so far and one women's centre and I showed them the products they can use to clean their ovens, or their stove tops, or one lady didn't know how to keep the mould away from her shower, so I showed her how to use domestos and how to use a bit of elbow grease. There are other products. We can get these other synthetic things now, much healthier and gets mould off easily, so I literally go into the homes and give them lots of buckets, domestos, oven cleaner, you name it. It is good. The lot's there. That's been rectified. So disgusting and they wonder why the little children get sick and sores.

The healthier home project, that's why it's gone into that, it's really opened a can of worms, because there's people employed to do those roles. Andrew, it's interesting, I spoke to this lady Rosemary. I said, "Rosemary, have you reported it?" She said, "I've been four times." I asked her when she last reported it, she said, "Last week when you were working in that house, I reported it again." I asked who she reported it to. She replied she had reported it to the housing officer. "I have to be really careful when I approach these people, they think, here's another white person coming and telling a black fella what to do. I have to be very careful not to upset people as well, but there's the sort of things that go ... nothings done. When I met this chap he said, "I was supposed to do a housing inspection this week, ahhh but it was a big weekend." Everyone has big weekends, but this problem was eleven months old, she'd been four times to report it because I was quite happy to... If she hadn't have filled the paperwork out. You know the protocol you go through. So what's happened now? No, No, she had filled it in, (the paperwork) so she said. So what happens, I do the healthy home project, do some areas in the house where they want a hand with, then we do a healthy eating project. I could show you photographs. You can have a look at them if you like, so you have a good idea.

So there's the healthy eating programme. They get their relatives in, or a few people from next door, whoever's happy to come along. I get them to cook the food and then we all eat it together and that's really fantastic. I love it. What's happening Andrew is, it's bloody busy, so like next week I drive up to Wangachonga and Nookamba, to do healthy eating in the schools and then the next week I'm back up to Beagle Bay, to do a healthy eating programme, with women in the women's centre and I'm not complaining I absolutely adore it really.

Between that I work in the schools, it's getting bigger and I'm actually taking someone away with me on Monday, a new guy, to see if he's suitable to come on board with the EON Foundation. It's getting too much. I'm actually a horticulturalist. I love work in the gardens and I don't want to give it up. I like doing it all, but it's too much. Yea, it is. The thing about EON, it works, its hands on, you go in there and do it. You don't have to bother with any politics, it's so good, they're not getting anything out of it, except they're doing a good job. They're amazing and they all come up and work, they're really amazing. So that's what the foundation is.

Data is required from those who have experienced the EON work.

Outcomes:

The IPS office in Djarindjin was highly appreciative of the collaborative role of EON, and the impact of this work in achieving outcomes for particular families. More work can occur through the IPS in Ardyaloon:

They want the EON Foundation to help with a garden for the community, because what's happened at One Arm Point. We've been working up there with the school, there's the biggest fence around the garden and locks on the gate, so there's no access, for goodness sake. See Beagle Bay, the fences aren't that high. The teacher, she's been in charge of the garden at Ardyaloon School, she's leaving this year, so it will be deferred next year.... [unclear sequence]..... Just some young mums, want to pick some vegies. Couldn't do it on that day...[unclear sequence]....Totally the opposite to the EON ethos. Ah yes, so here's a garden full of vegies, we're trying to train them, so they're the obstacles you come across.

Constraints:

While the process seemed fine on one level:

That's the other thing I was going to say, the EON Foundation only go when they're invited, they don't just say, come on, here we are. We actually have so many communities asked us to come on board and what's happened now...

I have a report from one stakeholder in Beagle Bay that many were out by this and it seemed to go against the ethos of service integration, in that, those already providing cleaning within the community were completely unaware EON was attending to do so, until they arrived. I am sure that was teething issue, and it seems that in Djarindjin it was successful, and there was no suggestion of EON coming in without a fully integrated approach through the IPS.

Recommendations:

Continue working with EON as a way of building confidence and offering direct support to parents in their homes.

Aiming to extend community gardens connected to schools through the Kimberley, so that's these schools here. So they set up this edible garden and they had one in...[word blurred] and he set up the gardens connected to the schools and then what was happening, the gardens were all happening and the schools were directly involved and they hoped the community would get involved, because in some places they do. Yes, always connected through schools. The reason they set it up was to try and reduce children's diabetes in communities, so what was happening, they started these gardens [unclear] fantastic. Some were more successful than others. What happened was they realised people didn't know what to do with the vegies, they hadn't seen some of them before and didn't know how to cook them, so I was employed to actually work in the gardens with schools, but also do this healthy eating programme, with all the kids through all the schools and they just started this new programme only in the last two months ...They do now.

Working with (youth) maternal health

Aim:

Outsides of the clinic checks, there is no midwifery on the Dampier Peninsula. Thus, parents needs to access midwifery supports in Broome. This means being located in Broome for 4 weeks prior to the birth due date.

Service providers in Broome are interested in how the IPS can work with other services to support young parents in town.

We have got SCA we have got the DCP, KAMSC, Burdekin running young mums in here so for me it's about more kinds of thinking we are gonna have these young mums coming in, we know they're being housed at the hostel or in the caravan park, where's the linkage between all of these programs to ensure the well-being of this young woman, when she is in town and waiting a baby when she is forced to be here and without any supports so the idea is linking. We are all individuals but are all managing programs that ineffectively resourced so we have to be creative in terms of how we work together.

Process:

The role of the IPS is to inform on maternal health issues and advertise the supports available in Broome, through information and inviting maternal health representatives to support groups, as well as facilitate (social support) transition of mothers to Broome and back to the community. Finally, the IPS is linking the mother with a range of supportive services.

Impact:

Often, the maternal health spaces were linked to youth concerns generally, thus to Headspace. However, impacts on preventing poor maternal health, and any trauma related to pregnancy and birth, are known risk factors for antenatal and postnatal depression respectively, and child parent attachments is essential. This was defined generally in terms of support and action, not just location of women in town before birth and this raised the issue of paternal health as well.

There is willingness from stakeholders to support IPS workers achieve this inclusion.

For IPS it is an opportunity to link in with Nancy's programs [Maternal Health] as well because we are talking about these young mums, well there was young man that helped make that baby, you know so it IPS provides another opportunity to link in with him and if we look at parents indigenous parents, look he wants to be a dad just as much as she is the mother, so it about put the investment in both parents, young parents, because then they go on to have some 2,3 4 6 biggest gang, and it's unfair if their relationship, is you know rocky and they keep still producing children, and it means that these children are being born with traumatic traits, and the vibrations of if you dad is an alcoholic and is beating her up all the time especially if she is pregnant or, so we need ways to partner and look at,

For several, it meant that both young women and young men (thus, paternal health) need to be targeted.

At the end of the day when you look at all the stats it is our men that are in dire need of support, and I think if we gave the support to the dad we wouldn't have these little mums [very young mums] being the way they are in terms of not happy because when they are pregnant they run around trying to find the man that has [seeded] them, because there is a lot of relationship times that happens around then for these young people, especially when you look at all the FASD stuff that is coming out, and the reality is young people are sexing up when they are pissed and full of piss, already the foetus is, there is alcohol in the blood stream and then you got these young women that are " oh I was charging up and now I got pregnant and' now they are worried that their kids got arms and legs and you know, while baby is in uterus all the stress going round about whether this kid is going to come out normal or not so there is a lot of angst, if a young women knows she has had sex and fallen pregnant when she has been pissed, and then we are talking about the amounts of alcohol in your body when you have got a planned pregnancy [laughs] who plans them

Constraints:

One issue relating to youth is that it is hard to deliver good maternal health messages to school aged children within a school setting. There is a need for better integration, which the IPS could help facilitate in the youth sector. Given the need to focus on young parents, the IPS could possibly think of ways to support the delivery of service integration on the Dampier Peninsula around the youth sector.

We have about up to 60 people running around with links to youth sector, just to try and pull some sort of co-ordination, is hard, Broome YCM maybe we can do one for the DP, [discussed the problem of everyone not knowing everyone else is doing] even if you are not there physically send a note or at least send your apologies so we know and we can just keep track of who is servicing,

Recommendations:

Work intensively with Headspace and maternal health to develop the essential youth focus on parenting issues affecting very young parents (both men and women). Define this broadly in terms of self-care and the range of issues that can affect them as parents. Possibly, have intensive, targeted events for these younger groups, providing food, outside of school hours.

Interactions with School/Preschool

Aim:

Attendance is the biggest agenda for school. The IPS worker is not qualified, nor bound to provide parent support such as that provided by school based ALO's. However, like for DCP based Parent Support, there is a role for IPS workers to offer general support to families experiencing difficulty with their child school attendance.

Dates:

Ongoing, August through to December.

Attendance/participation:

The Djarindjin worker reports a case study of helping one family that was having chronic difficulty in getting children to school and the School Principal validates this account. The Ardyaloon worker makes regular visits to school and uses the school newsletter to distribute IPS information. Beagle Bay is forming cooperation with the school through supporting the community to develop activities that school can support.

Process:

The role of the IPS is clear to many. When asked about school attendance, this community member was fully aware of the different roles that different services can have. The IPS can help facilitate the links between communities and these services but does not offer the service such as getting kids to school.

Community member in DJ: yeah, most they have got someone that works at the school that goes around and for kids that don't show up, they go around to their houses and see why they're not at school, so which is good makes them get up and go and if they don't go to school they are not allowed to do [unclear] it is a really good [message], yeah they will get the picture in the end.

For some, school based outcomes are a chief outcome for the IPS. However interestingly, as below, while this is the aim the IPS social support model, including the school in this, is the best process.

How do you define parent support?

The support I see would be encouraging the parents to involve the kids in early childhood activities and school yeah working towards more the education side of things, because a lot of parents don't feel confident or comfortable, engaging with those activities or even school, because of their own bad experiences of whatever, so probably engaging parents in those preschool or school activities,

Ok, how do you think the IPS could facilitate that sort of support for parents?

Organising activities where they can interact with, where the parents can interact as a group, where they feel comfortable but also where they can interact with whoever is providing the activities or the teachers from the school so they build up a relationship, because in my experience it's the relationships that are so important to aboriginal people, once they know who you are or who the people are and what they are doing, and what it is all about then they feel comfortable moving to the next step, which is engaging in the activity, so I guess um relationship building and mending any bridges that might have been broken in the past and so on,

Impact:

The was a lot talk about room to move, with IPS workers developing contact between parents and schools, though how they can occur is not yet established. This has been a longstanding issue beyond the IPS.

Things are all on paper of course school and community partnership but what does it look like physically...

Distributing school based information through the school, which has happened a lot in Ardyaloon, means parents reading this see a connection between them and their IPS worker and the community with the school, and this can lessen distance. The higher the profile of the IPS worker through the ongoing role, the more effective this distance lessening technique will be.

Outcomes:

The schools were highly appreciative of any support the IPS could offer or any collaborative role of the IPS worker, and the impact of this in achieving an outcome for the families struggling with school attendance. Thus, schools are supportive, and there are active discussions over aims for community engagement in some school-based initiatives.

For some in the community, the topic of school attendance was certainly one that the community were aware of and were happy to have addressed.

Community member in Djarindjin: Oh yeah...and then there is some girls there working there and as teachers aid, and they come looking for kids,[who don't go to school] they shouldn't be looking for kids, the kids should be all there, from here straight and everyone happy, of that's it, you know important things like we have to help one another in the community, for this kinda purpose you know, it is not for ah we are growing up we are going down, they are going up, it is for them, they are the backbone of the community,

Constraints:

Tide is going the wrong way

One stakeholder suggested the school simply did not meet halfway in developing a curriculum that would connect with the children. This is included as indicative of the issues parent support can have; it is hard to support parents to get their children to school when they know the school does not really attract their kids.

Change takes a long time and takes a long time for people to get the message, and the government idea of something like this (IPS, school, etc) is presuming that families kids aren't getting enough of this kind of stuff at home or whatever, and I think they are and I know the valuable stuff they are doing at in communities is just not what is expected of them when they get to school you know and there is that big gap, and they want to close the gap, and my personal belief is closing the gap needs to come from both sides, and so we can't have aboriginal people changing completely to fit into a a school system, there needs to be a two way thing in there and I do for the position have here understand or even value why they don't come because they've got enough happening in their life without having to come to something like this. [like what I said at the school they have been like that for years so why don't they change] it is not valuing the knowledge that they have [no, no] they don't have the literacy and numeracy but I know you know they know when the tides coming in, and that that moon affects the tides you know what kids in another school, would know that?

As an observer, I wondered about how easily the school could connect with the real science children knew of and that this could be studied at school in a way that makes it interesting for them.

It is evident that the school, while well intentioned, does not really meet the community halfway:

and I don't think it is through lack of trying through us trying or school trying you know I think sometimes it happens in community, it is the wrong time of the year to get parents motivated when they have got so much going on, wrong time of the day, which is quite interesting you know because the school had chosen that day because it fitted into the school curriculum but it doesn't actually fit into the needs of the community, community don't want to do things on a Friday because they want to take off to town or, so Friday it meet the needs of the school but it didn't meet the needs of the community

In Beagle Bay, the school is keen to create more engagement and presence of parents at the school or in school activities. One stakeholder talked about:

Schools say in Beagle Bay are very keen to minimise the difference and how do we get parents past the gate. If you are having a free feed the parents are in the school, you know if you are proving lunch or free activities, the parents tend to come in umm but then that's the problem that they will come in for the lunch and then leave and not get the information or not gain some of the stuff that's happening in the school, they just come for lunch, but I think that's important when you are working with aboriginal people you are including family and you are trying to make it fun and you are including food in that because that's one way of trying to break down those barriers and get the engagement happening. I think with aboriginal people you've got to show that you can, you know you have to give something before they are going to give to you, or before they are going to trust to open up to you, or whatever that might be you have to see that you can do that first.

Another said:

I think having those things at the school is a barrier and that it is joke to come, you know have a feed and not actually engage in what is trying to be provided

In Ardyaloon, there have been concerns over history or friction about school attendance between the school and community members. There is also now low teaching staff, thus this leads to 'boring' parents that cannot really engage children. However, the IPS worker has strong links with the school and uses the school to distribute information, and also has support from the ALO, which has strong links with school. I am unsure if more collaborative events based work can occur through the collaboration with school, or the school interactions are not limited to information distribution.

Recommendations:

One approach to encouraging school attendance is for community agents such as the IPS worker to profile their relationship with the school, and work to connect parents with the school generally. Also, the ability of the IPS to connect mothers and fathers with the school,

demystify any stigma regarding the school environment experienced by parents, and increase the presence of parents on school grounds, or with school based activities.

I am unsure whether the IPS can/should try to work with the school to see how the curriculum can interact with excursions such as a real science session etc., which invites parents and children together to study applied topics around the community.

More analysis is required on how far the schools will bend towards supporting parents and how far the IPS can go to facilitate connection between parents and schools. This is an opportune site for parent support, by connecting parents and children through school, but there are also some issues here.

Early Years Network

Aim:

The development of the Dampier Peninsula Early Years Network (EYN) is a direct result of the discussions and consultations for the development of the IPS program for the Peninsula. Integration of all early childhood services among the four communities on the Peninsula, which, for the first time, commenced the formation of solid collegial support networks, and the sharing of resources and experiences. The EYN presents an ideal opportunity for services and local family workers with details on services and programs they may be able to tap into for the IPS program. Likewise, SCA has an explicit charter within the LIP, and there are potential impacts of activities connected with the LIP through the IPS.

Attendance:

I attended an EYN based meeting in Djarindjin (April 2011).

Outcome:

There are potential outcomes here for focusing on family, parenting, early childhood learning, and development; specific to the issues as experienced by the Dampier Peninsula communities, thus strengthening community and family functioning.

Constraints:

I am not sure to what extent the workers are connecting with the EYN. Some stakeholders expressed they had a sense of confusion over whether this connection was pivotal or an initial or explicit aim of the IPS that was not being met. There seems to be great opportunities for collaboration and joint activity; however, for example, I am not sure to what extent activities at Ardyaloon and around playgroup are connected with the EYN.

There is a sense that the LIP would like the IPS to do more of the LIP role; however the IPS has a facilitating role, not actively chartered to implement the LIP activities.

Recommendation:

Keen interest from some stakeholders to see how the IPS matches with early childhood initiatives, thus would like to see what is happening on this front. Clarifications around the IPS role versus the LIP and IPS facilitation, but the LIP should not rely on IPS to compete its objectives.

This is one area I feel that is under evaluated by the present report. I need to examine more carefully the role of playgroups on the Dampier Peninsula, in Ardyaloon, Beagle Bay, and the connections of the EYN, which could and should act as great resource for parenting support.

Whole of Community Events

Children and Family Expo

Aim:

Showcase what service providers offer and to raise awareness around a range of service provides that are accessible on the Dampier Peninsula. Links to connecting families with services as appropriate, and facilitating referrals as required; thus as a site on which to develop effective and sustainable links and/or partnerships with community, welfare and government agencies. Also provide Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander families with opportunities to connect and interact socially.

Dates:

March 2011

Process:

Coordinated and organised by the IPS Coordinator in partnership with the communities.

Impact:

Stakeholders suggested that the attendance at the expo was very low; opportunities to connect and interact socially outweighed service based information distribution: People came for food, but did not attend to the services for information.

Outcomes:

A stakeholder reported:

The expo was quite a funny thing wasn't it, there was 90 parents someone said to us and I thought well I only met two, so like where were those 90 and they were like at the BBQ, so that was kinda like oh, ok

Or another said:

That is something that I think has come up for me when we are thinking about having another expo on the DP this year, I personally found the expo to be a waste of time for me, um people say it was great everyone loved it, well you know what did they love, what services have gotten you know, extra work out of that

Survey data is needed.

Recommendations:

This could be an annual event organised such that there is tight link between the expo and attendance; that is direct distribution of information. Although with IPS workers now fully in place, a more targeted awareness campaign and distribution of service provider information should be occurring.

Ardyaloon Easter Egg Hunt

Aim:

Provided Ardyaloon families with opportunities to connect and interact socially.

Dates:

April 2011

Process:

Coordinated and organised by the Ardyaloon worker, who promoted the event through schools and around the community. Key successful idea was that children can come only if parents come too, thus children had to make the request formally, and parents needed to attend and not disappoint children.

Impact:

It was the method used by the IPS worker which was the real impact here.

Sometimes the kids come along first in these communities, if you got an activity that is interesting for kids then the kids will rock up anyway and you might find the parents come later, and they will give in to the kids, if nothing else to keep them quiet and if it means they have to move their bodies from the living room or whatever it is they are doing you know it is not so hard, if it is not too painful on them,

Reports of lot of fun by children and parents were present to witness this. Reports that parents who otherwise would not necessarily attend, or attend while others in the community are present; but they did attend despite this for sake of their children. This is quite impactful, as

family tensions have prevented whole of community activities in this community in the past and shows the willingness of parents to put their child first, before any personal feelings.

Outcomes:

Parents reported that they thought the policy of no parent no children was good; so that child and parent must be connected. Thus, establishing this message of connection across the community of those who attended is central. [Note: The IPS has collected survey data which can be added to this outcome].

Recommendations:

Should be an annual event, children will look forward to this and know what to expect, thus will plan ahead about inviting parents to the event.

Non IPS events

The IPS has had a role in attending and promoting events such as the Fairground Circus, and children's Art Workshops. These aim to give children an opportunity to do something in the school break, through motor skills, juggling and hand-eye coordination; and collaborate with schools to facilitate children's self-expression of feelings and identity through self-portrait etc.

Fairground Circus

The IPS had role in promoting this event and attended. It gave children an opportunity to do something in the school break. Motor skills, juggling and hand eye coordination. However seen as less direct in terms of an effect for a parenting program, it involves the whole community, whereas the IPS desires focus on just parents and kids.

Art Workshop

Directed towards children, the IPS collaborated with the school to facilitate; children came from school (Ardyaloon - held at community hall). Children painted a self-portrait to express feelings about how they see self, and this was good for children and parents.

Process, Impact, and Outcome Cases in Focus

Potential For a Resilient Community

The case study shows that often parents are caregivers, they are aware of issues for parents and they respect the work of the IPS worker in trying to build resilience. This discourse from an older couple (man mainly) recorded on their front steps shows the complex and nuanced way that 'parent support' was conceptualised for them within the Djarindjin community. It refers ultimately to a sense of community togetherness and resilience developed through creating forums for an open dialogue within the community; across issues of school attendance, drinking, and parents attending to their children. Critically, the community member talks explicitly about the key role of the IPS worker in facilitating this dialogue

around 'parenting'. The case study shows the context of parenting and parenting support in some sections of the community, and the subtle everyday ways the IPS can work to help create a sense of harmony through its presence.

I talked with an older couple, 4 kids living in Broome "two in town, their living their own life, we don't bother for them" or out of community. The couple look after these grandkids," we look after the grandkids'. The parents come home, when they feel like coming they come home, they normally come back for Christ the King, Christmas, and New Years and all that you know, they want to come home, you know the old saying there is no place like home, they want to come back. While we were talking two little boys appeared and one asked "who come back from Broome, is mum and dad still in town"

IPS worker talking with them about organising boarding school for one grandkid, and for a possible job interview for one of their kids, and discussion about where she is staying in Broome so she can be contacted, and while there handing out the IPS household survey

Discussion about new buildings and planning room, being built by army, they suggested DJ is really 'coming up', roadhouse, seen as positive, discussion of new CEO being proactive, improving drains, "new paint in office, changed things around for the better, no disco in office...no smoking in back veranda, register for the keys"

Do you have much involvement with [IPS worker]?

She is a good lady, she comes around, she knows most of the people, (unclear = familiar] she can talk with a lot of people, give some information.

They were not 100% aware of the men's group, but very aware of the women's group and suggested at first "didn't really know what her position was you know, have to find out and know them you know, but other than that she is part of this community" and "If we want something done here for this, children and whatever you know, so she is a good person to talk to"

How can [IPS worker] help parents?

Most the parents I see you know need, need some help from someone like her you know, to attend school and you know, especially the young parents, well I don't like to see not one kids ah, going astray and ah, you know, it is just not decent for any kid to be left alone, for, you know, we love kids, I do, and they should look after their kids you know, especially the young parents should be holding their kids, giving the best they can, and whatever you know, well that is part of them as well, keep kids that is the [goal?] for, they need a lot of help anyways, to talk to them instead of drinking their life away, the kids must come first, so...and teach them, to send them to school, you know, that is where the discipline comes from, not school, not anywhere, but from home, I'd like to see that but you know, but we need someone like [IPS worker] and working and this

is the time to work with the kids that and start pushing and everyone be friends you know, family, relations and part of the community, and then that way kids are you know, kids are the backbone of the community, [deep sigh of mmhhh and long pause]

How else can [IPS worker] help the parents?

We just talked about most of the things you know...maybe women's programs, say they pick up a good day once a week, they sit down discuss with the matter with all the ladies, they put everything on the table and they might get somewhere, [IPS worker] can might help the need in the community, some parents come along some don't, that's the way, it's like some go to church, most stay back, you see, so them kind of things have to be talked about, [IPS worker] talking with all the mothers, get together, [everyone/be one] in the community, so everyone is happy, everyone is caring and sharing, the problem with each and every one, and she [IPS worker] is the right person to do it and sit down and discuss the matter, you know it's no shame if there is a problem with the ladies, someone can talk with them, and [IPS worker] might say oh, let's talk about it more often and you never know they might go and get someone then from outside, but we have to it ourselves here first, before you go off [hand meaning outside community], once you get offhand you know I don't like that happen, but if everything can be [settled/set up]?] in the community, we're right.

Are the kids happy?

There happy still there's something that they can be taught you know, when its home time its home time, you got all day to playin' round after school, but soon as the sun sink over the hill there, or over the trees, they should be home, not any later than eight o'clock, half past seven, eight o'clock they should be home that's the, the kind of discipline we have to discipline our kids, home time is home time, don't stick around there and some parents are signing out for their kids, every second and it's not on, so them kind of things are important, kids have to learn when to come back to the parents, and not, not, beyond time you know,

Do most kids go to school or slack off from school or do they show up?

Well some kids, I only know my kids I can't look after other kids, [they go every day, grandkids], my kids stay, up in the morning, give them 'brekky' then before you know it in the shower, I'm off, and the smallest one oh, he is the first one to get in, [they love their school] they love their school, and out the door [we got no problem] we got no problem with our family,

Discussion moved to their children:

"we used to send them into school, our eldest son went to Perth for school" about 10 years, was good football player. "Came back home met up with 'friends' [when met up with friends that's it his gone] came back home, met up

with friends that's it [he played football in Broome, but they won then it was finished, he used to play football all the time]...sometimes has been feeling sick now so, he has been in Perth a couple of times sick so,[bad things come down..], so eh. Good things but sometimes it can be bad, you meet up with a lot of friends, bad things, but now he has been sick for a while, he breakaway from [just breakaway from them] from them, [hang around in the community, much better for him] now all he want go fishing, and this, and I talked to him when you doing these things you doing lifestyle, your own life, that's working here, that's life, go out there look at the ocean, and that's life, but when you are in town there's a lot of bad friends, [it is no good, now that is talking to the younger ones what is bad and what is good], [unclear, you getting beaten?] I want to you to go for schooling in Perth go for what you want to go for,[that little granddaughter you know that one that came here] oh that's bright kid [is going to school for that]

The Isolated Mums' Group

It is often surprising to those who have not worked in remote locations that in a small bounded community, a sense of personal isolation can exist. We imagine someone might feel isolated in New York City, but in a small community we assume everyone is connected, thus never alone. This is because we think of communities in geographical and not relational terms. Often in smaller communities people know less about each other than in larger communities, or networks, and for many reasons do not feel they can connect and share with others around them, especially if they feel different to others. Thus, for example, gay youth are at greater risk of suicide in a small bounded town than in New Your City. Thus, the IPS workers setting up social support groups, which create a sense of community with others, is a perfect strategy linked to best practice community psychology.

In small communities that are geographically isolated there can also be problems of stasis, and a need for programs or events that break the cycle of boredom and reenergise people, and need worker as a catalyst to this.

Thus one mum attending spoke of a break from boredom isolation:

It was alright, just good to get out the house for a little while. She knew the other women there but said "except for the some of the agencies that came, I mean like sort of some of them faces, but um didn't know who they were,

What did you get out of the group, was it useful to you?

Yeah, ah, my daughter got a bit of a play, and to get out the house, so she sort of got a little bit of a play, and it was good to talk with some mums and um, get out the house, don't get out much, so that was a good thing,

How did it come about?

Ah [IPS worker] handed me a pamphlet a few weeks back, and sort of an invite, but umm, I forgot about it, so she asked me the day before and gave me another

one, and I said yeah I'll come down nothing else to do, tomorrow when I have got.

So do you reckon you will keep going down there?

Um yeah I said even if I can't get there some days for the whole session, might maybe just go for a little while, what I can, have time to do,

What do you parents need in the community, and how does the mums' club help?

It helps because you get to talk to other mums, and that that you don't really get to talk to, otherwise, and you sort of you just sort of realise, that they're sort of going through the same sort of stuff that you are going through so it is just not sort of you, it's not just you, and you get some advice and all of that, and um, you sort of learn that there's other, other places, that you could go to if you have to you know, and stuff like that,

So it helps you connect with other mums?

Yeah it does, because I don't really go anywhere, so it does, and there was few um younger mums that was there so that was a good thing, um a niece with a new baby, so that was a good thing,

Even now for myself you know because we go through a lot of stuff, and you don't think that other families go through that so it was good to know you know you're not the only one, we are all not perfect,

A couple talking about the Catch and Cook

This discussion shows the reverberant community wide impacts through the process of local on the ground IPS parent support activity.

W: that's good, and she ah, oh and ah she got that dads club up and running, my husband went to that [calls out to husband you know that thing with that cook and that that was good una], -

H: yeah, oh was good meet up, talk other fellas have a feed you know, Oh was good and even to meet up with a couple of the young boys, [IPS worker] asked to come down and I said yeah thought was good, even had a chef, see everybody else and even a chef, yeah and turtle and fish and even other stuff you know, good you know, and even kids coming along with their dads, and now the blokes get together, just the blokes, some of the blokes hardly [unclear], some of them can't come or go, but most of the blokes go to it,

W: you get people that are stuck in the house and don't go anywhere but yet they can rock up to that thing which is a good thing,

H: you got something that can draw them there you know, and you got to know who is in there it is not what you know it is who know to get you to go along there, you know you got people over here but what about people over there you know,

W: And that is like [IPS worker], she has been really good with the young mums, oh not the young mums the older mums as well, get em all tother and get it happening so they can meet up, she is pretty vocal she tells everybody she is there for them if they need, whether they go it is up to them that is another thing I suppose

Have you noticed a difference now since [IPS worker] has been doing this job?

W: Oh yeah, just all of this stuff she is organising, and letting people know, the men's club the women's things, these are really good things you know, she is pretty busy, specially that she is really vocal you know, that is good to get people interested, but she doesn't [pester?] people, but if she needs to go them she does she just walks around you know,

H: Oh there was quite few hey, oh, mmh, maybe boys and dads, um maybe, who else, um think maybe nearly all of them went up there, all the blokes, and then there was the next one too you know with the Doctors and the check up, that is coming up this week, and you know just have a feed, have a check up you know, with the blokes,

W: but it is good because you know what men are like with Doctors, they never want to go, but it is easy this way because it is good they meet up anyway and can check 'em while they are there, which is good, that's the way to do it, men are hopeless, things like that make a huge difference hey,

H: getting blokes to go to that can be hard though you know?

So would you get blokes come along that would normally not turn up?

W: yeah yeah for sure, that is where [IPS worker] get's things up and running you know especially for them blokes, sticks with them and reminds them to come along,

What do parents think kids need?

Do you think kids are doing ok?

W: Well with a lot there is a lot of smoking and drinking, see that a bit, alcohol and that sort of stuff, like I say a lot of that comes back to the parents but this is where (the IPS worker) steps in and she is pretty good you know,

How young do they start?

H: 16

W: oh younger than that, and cigarettes [discussion and reflection on three very young girls asking me for cigarette after helping me find an office when walking through community]..drugs oh yeah it is, because they don't have much you know going for the kids around here, out of school

What do you think the kids need ideally then?

Like a drop in central a youth centre you know, with games and what not, things that can amuse them keep them interested, they really need that, especially like on the holidays, they just hangin' round you know get bored, even the internet, give them that, kids have to pay for a ticket at the office, but what about kids that don't have money, you know kids that they don't have the money, they should provide that...otherwise you know the y7 get bored they end up go round smashin' up things, they get that bored they end up doing t wrong things in the end like samshin' places, but if you have all these things, have all this stuff out there, maybe they would think of doing that you know, it is just a matter of getting it, and whatever, Lynette is aware of all that,

Do most kids show up for school?

yeah, most they have got someone that works at the school that goes around and for kids that don't show up, they go around to their houses and see why they're not at school, so which is good makes them get up and go and if they don't go to school they are not allowed to do [unclear]it is a really good [message], yeah they will get the picture in the end. Sometimes the police puts on discos for the kids [do the kids come along] oh yeah, it is good because they got police running it so kids don't muck up and rage you know, but is a bit of excitement there,. Neville is good he takes em down in the police van for a swim and stuff and now they know Neville is coming they say wait wait, get a ride back you know.

Mums' and you & young mums' group: They got their own reason

Do you know [IPS Worker} and her role?

W1: She goes round with the young mums, and let people know if there is something happening at the school hall.

Are you guys involved with the women's group?

W2: Yeah I went there, yeah, so we have that meeting [meeting to discuss young women's club?] and she was coming in and we started this young mothers club, and because there was no younger ones there was only older ones, so she said, well we told her like, well it will be best if you can round up,

pass the word around to some of the young mums, like you know, they got little ones, and some just starting school you know, you can get them, or pass the word around, because and you know to have their own little group, because they, they, might not be comfortable with the older ones, you know, you know, and some of them get shy to say things, so it will be good in their own little age group, so that's what they done now, and they told Lynette, we mention it in the meeting, we said you know try and 'halfn'it out because they might not want to come to us oldies, while we there, because they sometimes might not get a chance to talk you know, and so it has been good you know like the young mums, sort of started in the last couple of weeks, because we already started this young mums, but because the oldies were taking it you, and now it's been what 3 nearly about a month now and they sort getting activities on the side well for the little ones, you know like some of the toys and stuff for them to play while they're meeting, so that's good and bit of feed something to eat while keep them, you know so that's good, yeah,

What sort of things do you think the young mums need in the community?

W1: time to have a cuppa tea together and have a yarn and all that, [mmh] talking about their kids what they need to do for them and some of them might show them their own little thing what they know and some might'n [might not] and some might come up with other things,

W2: I think more, I think it would be good if they can have funding or something, for a little building you know, for them, because they sort of going over there to the [hall] hall, to the [school] school hall, it's alright for the women's group you know, but um sometimes we got a whole lot of work to get our stiff produce you know out in the market, and sometime they take up our time, you know, yeah, yeah that's what we were thinking like ask for funding for a little small building, you know for the young mums,

Have you talked to [IPS Worker] about that?

W2: No, no I haven't mentioned it but I was thinking about it, it will be good. And apart from that you know they got that day-care there and it will be good to have a little centre for the young mums because when they go over there they can have a little playground for the kids, to play or like a little indoor thing you know, in another room and they could sort of know here their kids are, you know, yeah, but she been good Lynette yeah.

W1: she been doing good since she started to have her own little office over there and then come around and do all that, and that was really good, [and talking about it] and she was encouraging my daughter and she got a baby to go out and she found it was good, yeah because the baby had little things to play with and special things that she wanted to do, and um, the wo, woman's thing that they had, last, last week, [yeah] ah what that thing called, were all them women's can come [oh you mean well women's day check-up, yeah]

W2: yeah they had a barbecue after that, for yeah encourage because for personal things like women's you know oh they get there pap smear and stuff that all done, health check-up, encourage the younger ones too you know as well as the old ones, yeah

Do you see the young mums getting something out of that, or do they tell you?

W1/W2: [emphatic] W2; yeah, you know, mmh, and it is good to get them outa the house too, you know because

W1: and it was good because my daughter said to me 'oh mum it was good for me to get out and be with the woman's today' and I said oh well that's good go and do it again you know, keep going [and she said] 'oh we are going to have it every Tuesday' she was saying and she was looking forward to it tomorrow again,

W2: Like when Lynette bought for the meeting and the women's group, it was too often like we had too much things on the agenda for us itself, so she said oh that's a good idea we might put it (the health check-up] separately, so it went well [calls out to child to bring a zero coke from house, feeling thirsty]...and the other thing I was thinking like further down the track, like maybe for next year, like funding for a little centre for them, and maybe at the end of the year, they can have a little contest fro , baby contest you know, and do all these things you know, all these things that they can think of, to 'up bring' them you know. Just no facility here for young mothers, [so] funding for a little centre or something.

This community member was really pushing for funding for buildings and was interested if SCA was conducting the IPS in other areas of Kimberley and thinks they really should.

W: But I reckon it will be good if you can go a bit further up north you know, like encourage more younger women's because a lot of them are smoking [gunga] and wasting their life away, and neglecting their children you know, you know they go to counselling maybe and some of them don't you know and maybe it will broaden up their mind or something you know you know start being responsible for their children...and even though, you know it is a good thing you are all coming together and even though you might not know the person next to you, and next minute you sort of talking and sharing and laughing you know, it's a good thing, that is how I see it, it should be addressed more you know,

Are there young mums in the community that wouldn't come along to the group?

W2: oh maybe they they for their own reason, they just won't tell you know, maybe they might come along, but you got some who are very, you got some who, who not interested you know, but maybe they will change their mind, next year, or whatever, but because it is good to talk about more ideas, and more activity or something like you know that that can interest them, maybe they'll them young mums in the centre might pass the word around say look we doing

this you know, it's a good thing, maybe they will think twice and say oh yeah, you know,

The community member was very interested in what the IPS could do and enquired if the number of young mums attending more this year than last, and whether it has increased.

Establishing a men's group

One community member in Beagle Bay talked about the establishing a men's group. He suggested people like [key figure in Men's Outreach] have got 'some traction', and have developed relationships with men. But that the feeling was 'brown's cows'; the idea sort of comes and goes. Unless there was real traction then men would not get involved. Also for him it was about "*having a decent facility that would attract men*", and that this should be funded directly, as a space for men, to go for 'entertainment', to just 'chuck darts and play pool, a pressure release'. He suggested for men there was very constricting environment where '*you meet the whole community every day*', and men needed time out.

He said that "*women are the prime movers of the community*" but if you "*Try to build a core group of men that have the time and respect of the rest of the men around the place you will pull in a lot of people*".

He talked also about many wide ranging activities, more than fishing, such as go kart facilities, a father's workshop to fix bikes for children, and how father and son days could be planned more regularly around these. Fully aware that the facility must be set up by men and then managed by the men, thus take on a responsibility for it. It would be a whole community site. "*A place to talk about Beagle Bay history, a place to store historical information*" with elders in increasingly old and gone, should be a multipurpose place to have which "*both men and women can use at times, all can use at times, not a facility just with a 9-5 purpose...*"

He suggested there was real need to harness the interests in each community; Beagle Bay was seen as creative, musical, '*doing things with our hands*' and that men might respond to activities that are associated with this. That more services are coming in but they need a clear ways of delivering programs [for men].

you know a lot of the men here that want to actually do something but if you don't have the tools and assets to do it interests, well it wanes probably quickly, they are coming in with ideas for a men's group but they don't have the facilities". Also that many 'business plans are put out but doesn't end as an active document' and then we need to get "services here to help set up plans for men,

He was also highly critical of general attempts at service provision around this topic stigmatising men with their own image of what men should do and be like, saying "*For men it is not about them being a fine example of an aboriginal community – that's all brainwash shit that has got nothing to do with making aboriginal people manage their affairs. It is a glossy image. But it is really about them being able to restore pride. The noble savage is gone*". Suggesting men were tired of mixed messages about an 'ideal community' versus what they want to do.

General Reflections on Activity

In this first progress report on activities in 2011, I have highlighted activities that especially related to the establishment of support groups which can facilitate the achievement of IPS deliverables, as well as a number of activities related to more general actions, such as on the ground presence and home visits, by the IPS and other IPS work in collaborations with services. Below, I draw a number of general reflections to help guide discussions as the IPS moves into its next year. Unlike my first data collection in April, where many stakeholders identified risks to the IPS, perhaps because the data I collect is not focused on core stakeholders working with the IPS, no discussion of risk was had: The only one was this.

If they upset a group of people, or someone did something real abysmal, and incident it only takes one thing to happen and people are really quick to disengage, if a kid got hurt during an activity people interpret that as not looking after their kids, even if completely accidental.

Targeted focus on marginalised

An overall risk for IPS support groups is that they work with the converted in a sense and are able to offer support to those who are stable parents. The IPS is not just about supporting marginal members:

I think with the guys it is important to have a conversation with the young man's program because we want as much resourcing into and supporting our young dads, and look we've got some solid solid young men out there, you know that have some from real DV backgrounds and said nah, my children aren't going grow up like I did, but they're still need those supports you know and they're trying you know some of these dads, they have got 6-8 kids, then you have got your own kind of internal stuff that you have inherited, as a male in the community, and I would sort of advocate for these sort of men's programs going on to see if we can get em on the peninsula you know,

Indeed there was, at times, a cynicism about funding programs which are “pouring resources in to the pointy end men with men who are incarcerated assessing for their FAS”, and not enough money therefore into existing men on community who are doing their best to be good parents.

Good models

There is much health promotion research that works off models where members act as idealised role models within their community, and there is a full need to glorify and reward parents who are working in a way that support their children, and to offer as much support to them as we can. In this positive parenting approach the younger the better; as younger community members can be drawn in by older role models. There is a need for:

Documenting stories of really sold young mums don't want end up like their mum, so their baby has good life

As one stakeholder put it:

But you know you have also got young mums that are coming through the traps that are just solid young mums, so for me it is supporting those and also it is the relationship with Kulluari media in terms of documenting all this good stuff that happens in our communities, because these young mums as first time mums they don't want to end up like their mum, you know so, in terms of the life they've lived so they want to change so that their baby has good life, you know at least better than what their mothers have, but it need supporting and resourcing around it, to be able to do that and I think the opportunity to be, to kind of draw in these young mums through a young mums group and it might look, you might even change the name and go young chicks group or something, so it's more inclusive cause you also want to try and get to the mums, the young sister that haven't even started having sex yet.

The support groups can encourage this documenting of positive parenting developing in an ongoing way; however a clear aim for deep parenting support is to reach the marginalised parents of the community who, for with their children, are most in need.

It is hard despite workers and because workers are ingrained community members to always achieve full representation of these young parents to connect with the IPS.

Who and which young mums you can get involved comes down to the person in the position and their own relationship with their community you now we can't, we can't do anything about that

Unwanted pregnancies

There are also contextual factors about the marginalised parents that will make it hard for any worker to engage them. On one level these parents are simply not present in their communities.

Whole lot of unwanted pregnancies and grandmother looking after kids because the girls are still out having a good time

Or from the men's side of things, grandparents are (or wanting to be) looking after their son's children.

Often I know about what is going on for these young fella because it is often single mother externalising their worries and woes for their sons you now, and if the son happens to impregnate someone you know it's like oh and I got a granny over there, somewhere, I want to bring home, they're not looking after him, so you know,

If the IPS is to work successfully with these young women it would need to attract them back to their community and their children, or link with them while they are on community. That is a hard call. The IPS is chartered to work with the expressed needs of the community, and it is unlikely these girls will express a need for parent support, or that their needs could be

collected. Their parents might express it as a proxy for them; however it is a far stretch for a parent support program to go this far and it would not be fully appropriate.

Youngest parents

Nevertheless, I think there could be a more targeted focus on focus in on the youngest parents, men and women, as a site for early intervention, and this links parent support directly to child outcomes. However, the vicious cycle for some parents is the same cycle, which makes it hard for them to engage or be engaged in targeted IPS activities.

The main issue was around getting parents to get their kids engaged in the activities and to engage themselves and to support their kids that was the main thing because there seem to be a bit of a, well the parents that were engaged it is not an issue, but it's the ones who just don't engage at all, and then therefore don't encourage their kids to engage either so that was seen as the gap and I think the [co-ordinator] and her team are working really hard on that, it's difficult, because once people ummm just don't want to know about any of this area of government you know at all, or private schools providing preschool and then schooling once they sort of shut off from that it is relay hard to re-engage them but I think the activities they have organised, I have not been to any but I have heard about them, you know where they have tried to get them out and you know [broad scale whole community activities] and I think umm it is going to start slowly probably, because once again it is about building relationships with people, and the, her workers on the ground do have relationship with people, but not with everybody, I guess,

Hard to access

What about those who are really at risk or marginalised parents who need real support?

Hard to engage, because they don't come out to e.g., and if you go looking for them they don't either, I have been in the situation where you have to go and find parents and people tell you where they are, and you go and knock on the door and you know there is people in there but they don't answer the door. You are imposing in their privacy in a way, and in fact you know if people come knocking on my door I hate it too, I think who are these people what do they want and why are they imposing on my personal space you know, so I think their idea of actually getting whole community activities where people just comes themselves and then juts chat, you know sit and have a chat,

There was a very strong discourse with the community that parents would attend or not attend the IPS for their own reasons: as in “they got their reasons” and “whatever their reasons might be”. This is a cultural factor and it is not really appropriate for members to consider or at least discuss these openly with outsiders.

Shy parents

Reflections on unique broader historical contexts in each community are about reflecting difficulties in engaging all/some parents in parenting support and this is a central context for parent support. In Ardyaloon, a community member talked about issues of parents historically not attending. That is hard for the IPS to turn around in any easy way. This community member linked the ‘shy kids’ from those not very public in the community, to youth who also use drugs and alcohol and those are in a routine which leads to laziness and apathy, and they will miss out on support. But they have always been the shy kids in that community.

We do have a lot of shy parents out there especially the young ones, about being out too open in public you know kids I have seen here growing up here, people are not the same, and that will continue when they are adults I suppose, some are out there and [unclear] and some are more reserved, so things like that you know [What about to the large community events] Yeah people like community events, they are a real alternative

Support little kids

This is generational, as he said that there are young children who are doing well and conversely, others who are not with their reading and talking etc., and that without any interventions that difference will continue. For him, the little kids were the most important site for intervention and this echoes the deliverable of the IPS to work with parents to support little children, and to work with parents and children together in a playgroup form, or young mums’ group.

Micro support groups for marginalised, hard to reach parents

There is a slow process to create attendance within the key support groups; this is a normal part of community life where everything can be going well, then something happens and people cannot attend. As long as the core group is present there is base to work from however. In many ways, we cannot expect too much e.g. community members are not unlike students in lecture rooms; some will attend, take notes regularly, some irregular, some never, some get it the information presented, some do not, some want to be there some because they think they should, peer pressure, some go up and down on this and their attendance. Thus, I think the IPS should not focus solely on support group based activities. It should actively continue outreach through home visit, and create an office-based presence. However workers need to record all of that activity, in order that it can be included in the evaluative data. Attracting those who are most at risk, most vulnerable and most in need of parents support will be an ongoing project for the IPS, or any project like it.

A strong recommendation from community psychology theory is rather than focus on attracting marginalised community members into the sole mums’, young mums’, and men’s group in the community; think about setting up micro-support groups for particular families, interest groups, people with particular concerns such as alcohol use, or school attendance. Ideally, in any given day, the IPS worker might be present at a range of group meetings across the community with several micro-support groups. Thus, micro-support groups could work to include for marginalised members or diverse member groupings of community members; that

way with smaller attendance at a range of groups, more community members are directly engaged with the IPS work and workers.

It seems antithetical to fragment delivery and thus community, but the reality is the community is fragmented and it is better to adapt the delivery to this naturally occurring map, then to set up for some and exclude others, as ultimately that really does fragment the community.

Stability of workers

Stability of workers is a known risk factor to the process, impact, and outcomes of the IPS being reached; thus levels of activity by the IPS. For example staff turnover in Beagle Bay has affected the functioning of the women's group. All the current (and past) IPS workers have existing relationships and solid community ties and a comprehensive understanding of the community dynamics. There has been turnover of staff. This is something simply to bear in mind.

Beagle Bay

On my first visit (April 2011) we were unable to talk with the staff member at Beagle Bay; and the staff member vacated the position not long after. Eventually, the part-time worker at Beagle Bay took on the main worker role (September 2011) and though good contact was established between the worker and evaluator, and important information was obtained about her formative processes in setting up activities and establishing her presence, in the process of establishing her position subsequently also left the role (December 2011). It is at present (in 2012) vacant.

Djarindjin

Has been stable, although the initial part-time worker I met in April 2011 departed soon after and has not been replaced, a stable full-time worker has been in place most of 2011 and continues in 2012. The program co-ordinator is also based in Djarindjin and Djarindjin has been the site of the most intensive IPS work. With existing links to local stakeholders and families, the worker has engaged the community and community representatives using existing mechanisms of community organising, regular and existing venues and reasons utilised by families and community stakeholders to meet. These included and were not limited to Community Councils, Women's groups, early childhood programs / the Dampier Peninsula Early Years Network, Community health services, and Remote Service Delivery site Local Area Coordinators, Community interagency meetings.

The attached report and interaction at the consultation meetings (in Broome, Ardyaloon, Djarindjin, Lombadina, and Beagle Bay) are an indication of the successful collaboration and momentum taking place.

Ardyaloon

Has had stable worker and joined by part-time worker, actively involved in playgroup and school based information distribution and liaison.

Self care for workers

Most (women) stakeholders suggested the need to support workers, in their pivotal roles.

I also wonder how um, I worry about those workers that you have in your model, um because, there's there's only one person in each community, I mean I know they have the support of the other person coming in but it's really about, I I think they would they will reach burnout very quick and they will be and they're quite lonesome in some of that work, um so I think more for the worker themselves about um how are they networking with other services, how are they supported by other services how are they supported within your own framework about how are you managing that because it is about the person and their, their personality and their skills on the ground but also think about what are those supports that you are bringing in for that person, because otherwise that person is going to be fantastic for a year and then die that's what worries me you know,

Problematically, this was seen as needing to employ more worker supports: A regional manager might be able to have impact as a mentor here.

S1: When we talked about the playgroup one of the things we talked about was how to mentor one of those young mums into doing it, so of course [IPS worker] will do it for a certain amount of time and then build someone up to be able to do that and you know because then you are building the community's strengths from within that community you know you are not bringing someone else in to do that so it's about trying to mentor other people in that community which should be doing your role of whatever or to continue [hopes the SCA model take account of this] and one thing that is talked about on community is that no one wants to do anything for nothing, and for SCA [IPS/ worker] to survive, they need some of those extra supports you know whether they can pay a mentor, to mentor them up into a position or, you know the mentoring them into paid work, um to you know add some strength to that community I think, and the people in it.

S2: Yeah because otherwise it's the people who are doing the job, who are getting paid and then they are trying to get someone to do the job to do it for nothing, so you know, why would ya,

S1: And it has that you know sometimes you want people to go out and be supportive and do that that sort of stuff but you also need people to get paid so you need that assort of balance, [talk about getting volunteers who can have some paid role and also do some of the stuff voluntarily at the school) and that is how you are going to build that community, so it is about slowly and encouraging them and slowly building them up into a position where they can think they can be great and it and be comfortable and think oh ok I am doing a good job and I do feel comfortable about what I am doing and then them supporting say maybe someone else to do that as well, and that how it will continue otherwise it will all fall down and it will just be another 'pilot program'

Transience of services

This will always be an issue affecting process, impacts, and outcomes. I had a fantastic discussion with the Clinic about how well they were ingrained with the community, and how community members were approaching them for joint activities, including the nurses and getting community walking happening. Health clinic nurses were highly motivated and excited about their roles. They talked in detail about the sorts of interactions they had with the IPS worker and the IPS worker clearly had a role in fusing their confidence to work with the community and be approachable. However, both workers then left and have been replaced. This is an ongoing risk, well known to IPS workers and the community. The impacts of these events on the IPS are that it creates a lot of time delay in energising more activities through the IPS. Community members get weary of forming new relationships with services, and it takes time to build new levels of trust that will flow into more spontaneous activity. It is not something altogether resolvable, but it means that expectations over what can be achieved by IPS workers have to be set in this transient context.

Services not engaged, but less is more outcomes

I feel the IPS has, in 2011, rather than throw a wide net worked with developing a highly valid (community desired, thus connected) group of service providers to engage with.

There are some agencies that are not regularly out on the Dampier Peninsula, but were very keen to be involved (e.g. Kimberley Money Management, Centrelink). The difficulty is that unless communities have expressed desires for these particular services, or the IPS has not had the need to refer any members to their services; it is not a role of IPS to initiate contact with the community with services that the community has not requested, as this would be an act of imposing these services onto community members; which is antithetical to the IPS ethos. The role of the IPS worker is to ensure the community know of all services that are offer thus the community has informed choice about what services it needs, and the IPS can facilitate these.

There was in some ways I felt a natural, and important, sense of distance between community and general service provision. Not in a harmful sense, but for example the mums' group in Djarindjin did not like when too many service providers attended as this tends to overwhelm the mums, and there is a sense that the community want the time to meet and support each other in the first place, then invite service providers if and when the time is needed or right. This works to screen services carefully. It is interesting, in that, the groups have a primary support function. They function first for the community, not simply as a means to distribute services. From a holistic point of view it is important that the groups can balance their dual position, of women getting together and women receiving service provision in ways and times that suit them. However, it is also important that other ways of distributing information are built upon also, and ways to get information to women not attending groups for support.

As service provision becomes more targeted through the work of IPS workers, the sense of distance between service and community will diminish and this is something I will be asking in interviews this year with key service providers and those community members engaged in IPS activities.

However, it is also a very important deliverable to orchestrate and integrate services into a core group, and this means less is more. Thus an outcome of the IPS to date has been, I feel, ability to screen, select, and work with a few core providers in a way that is meaningful to community participants and which meets their desires and needs. This sort of work builds better trust between community and services and bridging social capital.

Keep on catching spaces

The IPS works well when it catches space between community and services; sort of a mortgage broker's role, not a bank; but can match the client to the best service. IPS workers can use their office space and home visits more formally along with formalised groups. They could invite the community in for office appointments, or vamp up the home visits, and also formalise by collecting data about how often they are engaged in this activity.

While one path is to develop support groups, then link those in the group to services; working directly with people in the community encourages their participation with IPS support groups and events. It is a way to increase the contact with marginalised groups and reduce their sense of stigma or self-imposed exclusion. IPS workers are ingrained in their communities and often in programs like this with such bonded communities; it is the sheer presence of the worker that can cause ripple effects. The IPS has its finger on the pulse of the community and the sort of outcomes that activities have for kids and parents.

2012 Evaluation-Based Reflections

Additional policy framework

I would suggest that the IPS connects its model to the work of the Mental Health Commissioner in Western Australia. Although there is place for IPS staff to provide mental health services e.g. counselling, my discussion with community members in Djarindjin and Beagle Bay suggested, in particular, that mental health is a significant problem which affects parents and forms the basis of their needs for social support (see men's group discussions). The work that the IPS does through support groups and home visits/presence, links directly with best practice contemporary approaches to mental health such as "making it personal and everybody's business" (West Australian Mental Health Commission, 2010) which details the way to provide supports and services potentially available to people experiencing mental health problems and/or mental illness. It suggests:

Individuals who experience poor mental health are placed firmly in the centre circle to signify that relationships, supports and services, ranging from family and carer support to involvement with community activities and services received from mental health services, are responsive to their needs and strengths, interests and preferences. People with mental health problems and/or mental illness are empowered to have a central role in determining their own relationships and directing their own supports and services wherever possible. Its Ecomap of support shows: Family members, carers and friends are placed in the next circle. These people include parents, siblings, spouses, extended family members, carers and close friends and are the significant individuals who often

provide strong and lifelong support to foster a good life. Service providers and community activities may change focus, staff and programs, but meaningful relationships with family and friends can sustain individuals experiencing mental health problems and/or mental illness for the long term.

We know that carers are central in many contexts (Cavazzi, Guilfoyle, & Sims, 2011). My observations of how the IPS model is working in practice, suggested it maps onto this approach, one which includes supports for carers, and the theoretical rigour of IPS work will be enhanced by any links to this policy and its work thus with agreement for SCA, I will evaluate the IPS within this context as well as the policy framework already outlined in the earlier section.

There were discussions about the need to adopt self-care based models or wrap around support services. This could mean a focus on more intensive longer activities such as two-day events, with opportunities for quality time. Maybe there could be Memorandums of Understanding about how to use the arts in these more intensive sessions, with Headspace for example could occur.

I know that we've got well we had and we are getting another one, ah pre-employment for the young disengaged people, pre-employment course which is kind of similar but the next level, and a lot of them and this probably applies to a lot of the parents who may be the same people, need up some support services wrap around support services, for mental health issues drug and alcohol issues all sorts of stuff before they are ready to engage in anything in particular, so you have activities and you have people who can provide those support services, like counsellors and psychs and people like that they also engage in the activity not so that they um are seen to be providing a service but they do it accidentally if you know what I am saying, ah, um yeah, ah, if a situation arise and they are there they can, talk about deal with it, and so quite often it will happen in group, so you know around the campfire at night, over the dinner table or something like that so, things would come up and they would talk about them as a group, a kind of group therapy and they don't realise it, or if they do they don't mind, and also if things happen there could be an incident the person is actually there to help them work it through and it is fairly intensive in that you have got someone on the ground all the time but sometimes that is the best way of doing it, all the time during the event and if people just want to have chat kinda of one on one that can be done as well, you can kind of move off or go and sit down and have a cuppa under a tree or something like that, so it's those sort of wrap around services and how they are provided, because people who disengaged are not going to respond to a knock on the door from a counsellor, the where here to help you type of approach doesn't relay, doesn't really crack it, so that sort of model I don't know if {co-ordinator} and the team are getting some of those allied health people along to some of those sessions, it could be useful, and even um when people are in that situation they probably don't realise it but some of the really good wellbeing people, counsellors, 'psychs' all that sort of stuff, can provide some advice, some discussion and initiate some discussion which is actually quite helpful and people don't realise it is happening or they don't identify it as that, yeah,

Discussions with Men's Outreach and Kinway suggest the way they would like to go through Hey Dad etc., is of this kind of self-care for men's support and that, in the first instance, getting men in touch with their sense of place and worth, and restoring their sense of pride (the Catch and Cook was the excellent example of this) was the way to go. For example, one stakeholder said this was needed (for both men and women) before 'family days' could be useful. All the men outreach and health service areas, as well Headspace could be a good link here, although also DCP offer programs for men.

Holistic approach

To echo the general reflections above, I think as an evaluator and from advice to the IPS in terms of how it defines its work, there is a need to take a holistic approach to towards the word 'activity'. Many of the IPS activities are very well integrated and in this way quite efficient. For example, many things which are, to use a philosophical terms, greater than the sum of parts, are being achieved by community home visits, office door open, support groups, and events. Increased activities around all of these will reach out and contact more people in the community; pulling more people towards IPS workers and activities. I evaluate activities with this sort of holism in mind, looking for effects of the IPS which span across activities and processes which flow in between many activities, thus causing impact at each point.

Recording of data

In this next phase, I think more discussion needs to occur on IPS activities being captured by IPS staff. The recording of attendance and aims of initiative, notes on planning, acting, and reflecting as expressed in the initial evaluation framework are essential primary data for the evaluation of the IPS work. One way is the use of reflective journals, but maybe there has been some confusion over how these data can be collected, separate from the SCA reporting requirements.

The reflective journaling approach set out in the evaluation framework (Guilfoyle, Baker, & Bray, 2011) maybe became a little blended with SCA's development of an ongoing (and state based) program monitoring process, in the eyes of workers. This formal agency monitoring requires staff to record names of all activity participants and report these back to SCA on a fortnightly basis. Maybe there is some confusion here as to date I do not have systematic attendance data per activity. I recommend in 2012 (and will implement in agreement with SCA) the original method as outlined fully in the evaluation framework (Guilfoyle, Baker, & Bray, 2011) with regular quarterly meetings with IPS staff and the evaluator to collect activity based data and reflective journals. I have reports that it is/has been difficult for the SCA and the evaluation based system to work side by side, as IPS workers who can feel burnt out by over reporting. I have had discussions with two workers who both independently approached me on their own volition, concerned that the SCA system was not culturally appropriate for them or otherwise very difficult for them. Thus, if the SCA system is in place it may need to be fine-tuned in this context, in consultation with staff, to provide the key evaluative data relating to type of activity and attendance.

However, returning to the initial evaluations plans of quarterly reports will allow better communication with the evaluator, workers, and SCA. For example, often the evaluator was

unaware that workers had left their positions. I also feel it would be useful to have the opportunity to present the evaluative data verbally to SCA workers in a collaborative workshop format as part of the yearly planning the SCA undertakes with the IPS staff.

I would like the opportunity to speak with more women and men that are part of activities such as women or men's groups, or gain recorded feedback via IPS workers from members who are engaged and attending. My interviews with community members (n=9) have been very successful and I would like to do more of these. I will also talk with SCA about the evaluator hiring a suitable Research Assistant who can also help with data collection.

Expectations of level of activity

Relatively, to all above points, discussion can occur over level of activity and what is expected as the IPS outcomes. From a process point of view, and my experience of assessing similar projects, there appear to be many good processes set up which should ongoing this year and now start to reap benefits. New 'impact' will arrive with the increased activity associated with this groundwork process. I am not sure of the expectations of SCA around the levels of activity the agency desires.

I am not sure if the Project outcomes and milestones have been negotiated between the community/workers and SCA. There maybe is some ambiguity over project expectations. SCA staff has aims set out through program logic; however I am not sure how well this logic maps onto the situational analysis, or importantly how well it is developed based on the reported expectations of workers and community/stakeholders. In a community driven project it is hard to assess outcomes against this document, as the goals might not be agreed to with the community or workers, or are being imposed, and thus not being attended to. An ethos of community drive agendas should flow through the project and be captured in documents about expectations, and maybe it is a point of discussion to revisit or adjust these aims with workers on the ground now that the first year is completed.

When there are multifarious/complex aims, it is sometimes hard for local workers to align with these. Thus, my observation of the workers and activities suggests that the IPS worker is extremely dynamic within this context of multiple aims. However, I think IPS is at risk of having some operational multiplicities in its aims as these are expressed in situational analysis, program logic, and illustration and core IPS components. Its aims could be grounded more simply in what the community desires, and what the community has expressed as realistic and doable. Workers are at the forefront of this. It might be that discussions should be had more explicitly about what the workers are finding the community wants. I hope this report has gone some way to echo the community perspective through the data collected. It was focused on key deliverables. This year I would like to workshop, with the SCA program manager, the key observables in respect of the expressed program aims above for the IPS, thus ensure the analysis is reporting process, impact, and outcomes, directly on these.

More collaborative stakeholder workshops

While I know the ROC has the agenda to integrate services through its service briefings, I would suggest another stakeholders workshop facilitated by the evaluator but involving IPS workers, to touch base with stakeholders involved or willing to be involved, and discuss

progress, the roles of the IPS and service providers and process, impacts, and outcomes around making a difference. The evaluator is happy to set this up and provide catering, room booking etc. It might these sort of events could be best organised in collaboration with ROC.

More service provider evaluative data

IPS workers expressed that it is hard when services attend IPS based activities, to rely on service providers to collect attendance through IPS attendance forms, or provide feedback, and hard for IPS staff to get feedback impact and outcome information reports after activities from some service providers. The evaluator can have an active role here.

In terms of more general outcome data, the Broome stakeholders' workshop in August suggested a range outcome indicator data, and this year the evaluator will look to explore if any of these can be collected from stakeholders, and whether these indicators will match or be of use to evaluating IPS activities. For example, school attendance figures. Although discussions with school principals are often a far more direct way to get attributable effects of the IPS on school attendance and other indicators.

Also, there is a need to record and map the outcomes by which there is modification of these services to suit local agendas.

Outcome indicators

One bottom line outcome is through increased take up of services will be longer term; however to the extent that IPS has a preventative role it might mean that community members have less need for service in the previous model. Stakeholders have this sort of expectation.

I actually though we might get an influx of referrals from them you know with SCA being on the ground and seeing that kind of stuff but we haven't seen any referrals and um you know I don't know why or what that's about, and it is interesting [because we have a waiting list anyway]

Or, if you ask a stakeholder: How will we know that parents are getting supported? They refer to broad outcomes such as:

I suppose if you see their faces in the places, I suppose because if you see them because at the moment, I suppose the measure would have been how people how many people were actually engaging with the services in the beginning, and what the increase was so if the people who are providing the early childhood service, the mobile playgroup, static playgroup, childcare service school offering the pre-primary services records of who was engaged a year ago compared with currently engaged with and see if they are the same people the IPS is working with.

On stakeholder described the outcome flow effects this way: This is important in terms of the risks of not including marginalised parents discussed above.

Um suppose the one thing I still kind of wonder about is, is there any kind of data which shows for quota of families, if we think about the three communities on DP how many are in DJ how many are in parents, how many are we actually targeting, or have we got this big number in our head, which needs this service when actually it might be 10 people, I don't know if we have got any of that, I mean boring old stats, but I don't know if we have got that information to say this, is the main thing, we know the population of the community how many are men how many are women, how many are parents, how many are young parents, how many are doing ok, how many are needing support, and where can we focus our services so we can you know, not just getting the people who are confident enough to come along and be part of that and still those other people, slip through [the gaps] the gap.

Although I am not sure this is, per se, any reliable ultimate indicator, I would like to check by starting with all those who are listed as being engaged with the IPS (N= 73) and talk with workers about these cases and if they are taking up service, bouncing or transferring, spreading into other services case studies. Thus, this year if possible I would suggest (can help with) setting up a targeted strategy for which parents the IPS wants to include, map the community in terms of who needs IPS helps and what sort of help is provided, who has been involved who has not, why and why not, and see if plans can occur from this.

However, the constraint here is the number of young parent's women and men who have been connect or engaged to date, and that it is important for IPS to work with a dedicated number of core service providers at least in the early phases.

Conclusions

The IPS has moved from its infancy and development phase; there are a range of processes which can be detailed in this move and in the development of key IPS activities. In the next phase, the evaluation will be focused on outcomes through community members' increased contact with and direct accessibility to 'mainstream' services.

In general five observations were made in 2011:

1. A lot of groundwork activity was being performed by IPS workers, especially in Djarindjin, in order to sensitively, sensibly, carefully, and safely navigate the presence of the IPS in the communities through the development of trust, thus establishing a base for activity which penetrates more deeply into the support of parents. This work is critical in order that the IPS does not inadvertently disengaged through forcing things onto the community whilst destroying its own validity, or be seen as just another intervention, which was not worth the community investing time and effort in, but one that the community can invest in to further their parental outcomes.
2. Thus I count (discuss) in this progress report, the most impactful work being the everyday activity (see worker reflective journal) associated with creating a community orientation to, and definition of, exactly what parent support means in the community. These definitions are major in such a project.

3. The IPS project has multifarious / complex aims when linked to a range of documents and expressions of what the IPS is ideally aiming to achieve. All of these bear on what the IPS form of parent support is; I focused on key deliverables and the general at this stage of the IPS impact based question: What differences IPS aims to make for these local parents. Against this, are the definitions provided by workers and the community, which are essential. It was important for IPS staff to not impose any agenda of parenting support but to see what sorts of supports parents desired, thus what evolved by community definition, as essential activities that could support parents.
4. The above process will have the most impact and ultimately best outcomes for making differences for parents, and then for us to observe differences for children.
5. In light of the above, a key evaluative question is whether at this point of the IPS progress, was there enough of these activities?

These first two broad points above are related. The second is important in that we can only evaluate activities in terms of how well they are offering parent support; if we know the definition of 'parenting support' which acts as a reference point. The IPS aims for community empowerment. For this to happen, the community must own the definition of what parenting support is or, that is, what supports parents need. Activities should be matched to this definition. However against this, the IPS has a set of deliverables which it must be assessed against, and these, in a sense, provide a formal definition of parenting support. These deliverables are well defined, with key words such as 'relevant', 'opportunities', 'appropriate' and I saw in the IPS work in the Dampier Peninsula a great opportunity for project and community definitions to meet.

The way these two (or sets of) definitions can meet is through the first point above. Careful planning and ground work by IPS staff is needed to match the deliverables to the local context and establish a definition (or set of) parent support that can successfully avoid any community sense that a definition of parenting and parenting support is being imposed, but rather, achieve a definition (set of) that emerges from the community itself. To the extent that the IPS can galvanise parent support in this way, it can then create valid activities. For example, parenting is defined within the deliverables to reflect a broad concept of parenting / caring that includes extended families, kinship ties, and respects cultural and traditional practices.

Finally, we can never forget point 4. To be valid as 'parent support' we need to know that supporting parenting will impact, and as a result of the support given to parents, there is more responsiveness to their children in desired ways. This link is an argument made within a context of children's rights where it is the right of the child to have parental support. However the link between supporting parents and benefits for the child (Banham, Guilfoyle, Cavazzi, & Napolitano-Lincoln, 2011) is hard to assess, and should be a point of discussion for the next year of IPS operation.

The last question then is whether at this point of IPS progress was there enough of these activities?

Was there enough activity?

The question of whether there were enough activities in 2011 is one of expectations, funding, agency, and community. Again expectations are divided between the project deliverable based definitions of what is enough, and community based definitions; IPS workers must walk this ground. Communities are constrained often by a thickness, one which means that while from the outside (say a tourist perspective) the ground looks easy to traverse, it is in reality difficult and boggy with a unique, complex social-historical background; navigable, by those in the know, but not at the rate of progress that only take view from a paper map suggests. As suggested above, the IPS workers were certainly in the know.

Enough has various definitions. Enough can also mean the sheer number of activities and it means the reach of these activities. Enough can mean whether enough parents who are marginalised or most in need are participating in IPS activities.

Whether the IPS is achieving enough is a question that must be addressed through expectations of SCA. In this first progress report, I took a careful look at what constituted the claimed activities themselves. Thus, I provided an outline of what I could see were potential processes, impacts, and outcomes that can evidence valid IPS activities. However, I think discussions over aims and these reported processes, impacts, and outcomes; between SCA, workers, and the evaluator would be good, as the IPS moves into its next phase.

The assessment of enough activity is dependent on expectations as discussed above; it was implicitly discussed throughout the report, as it is something that as an evaluator I would like to be involved with and support.

I would like the opportunity to deliver this report in summary, in person to the IPS coordinators and workers (Western Australia Program and regional manager if available) through a full day workshop format, thus set a common and solid reference point for key observables in the evaluation 2012.

I evaluated the validity of the IPS activities in light of how well they successfully illustrate achieving project deliverables through community and stakeholder definition. The first question then, was their evidence of such activities? I found evidence of valid activities and that these are attached to valid processes, valid impacts, and valid outcomes. Here is an important focus on process, as it is vital that valid process is in place for setting up activities, thus to outline the mapping of each activity set-up. Activities by and large have been necessarily slow to develop, as they are emergent, and rely on trusting relationships between the community and IPS workers; such that IPS workers can confidently build the project and define parent support in ways which adapt with community needs. My discussions with workers showed they are acutely aiming at creating this match of activities and needs of communities with as much precision as possible. Questions over what is expected for the amount of activity should be ongoing this year as well as discussions over the best form of structuring of IPS activities that will support the workers and support the parents.

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