Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Promising Practice Profiles

Reflections on methodology

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Background

**Funded by** the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) to produce a national collection of Promising Practice Profiles

**AIMS**

- to highlight approaches used by organisations to better understand *what works* to help families and communities to *protect* their *children*
- to *identify* how responses to *child and family safety* can be delivered through *communities* in a *respectful* and *effective* way
Background (continued)

Focus organisations
- specialist Aboriginal community organisations
- non-Aboriginal agencies that deliver culturally appropriate programs

For use by
- carer support organisations
- relevant state and territory organisations
- Commonwealth government agencies
- PLUS researchers
Why “promising practice profiles”?

Criticisms
- too subjective (or not empirically based)?

Strengths
- can reveal who, what, how, where, when, why?
- generates ideas/innovation

Previous work
- other promising practice databases
- literature
Collaboration

Collaborators
- Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC)
  - developing a submission questionnaire
  - assessing submissions
- Closing the Gap Working Group

Issue
- engaging organisations to submit their programs/practices

Response
- "tick box" surveys versus "narrative" approaches
Submission questionnaire

Language
- use of “plain language”
- opportunities to "tell the story"
  - open-ended approach

Principles (domains relevant for Aboriginal Services)
- community / family consultation and involvement
  - identifying needs
  - decision-making
  - program design, development, implementation and refinement
- cultural relevance (use of materials and practices in service delivery)
- community and service delivery context
Assessment

Inclusion criteria

- evaluation status
- effectiveness
  - program objectives met?
- anecdotal evidence (“practice”)
- “empirical” approaches
  - of 38 submissions, only [?] would satisfy inclusion criteria

An “inclusive” approach to assessment

- “arbitrary” inclusion criteria v capturing innovative and/or promising practice
- useful for researchers! for other service agencies?
Translating the data for use

Making sense of the information
- providing a context
  - from an A-Z listing to a THEMATIC display
  - searchable themes
- Improving service uptake
- Protecting Children
- Early literacy/ school readiness
- School retention
- Preventing criminal justice system involvement/recidivism
- Cultural education/support
- Engaging hard-to-reach groups
- Parenting support
- Social inclusion
- Workforce development/capacity building
- Service coordination
- Health promotion
- Suicide / mental health / substance misuse
- Adolescent support / crime diversion
- Intergenerational trauma and healing
Translating the data for use (cont’d)

Making sense of the information

- linking **practice** to available **evidence**
Collaboration is key!
- for research approach
- and for services – reflected in the data

Language needs consideration
- to engage services
- “evaluation” v program “feedback”

Best ways to collect information
- face-to-face; visit services
- PROCESS = OUTCOME
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For further information about the
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Promising Practice Profiles
visit the website at:

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