Connect with Children

Listening to children locally and nationally

Good Beginnings Australia
Geraldine Toby, Katherine
Dan Leach-McGill, Melbourne
Why we do it—background

We want to ensure that children’s voices are systematically heard in the design, delivery and evaluation of Good Beginnings programs and services.
Connect with Children

The project objectives:
• To involve children in the evaluation and consultation of Good Beginnings services;
• To increase staff and organisational capacity to consult and involve children; and
• To pilot a national approach to involving children in service design and evaluation, documenting:
  – What children said when we listened?
  – What we did and how it went?

Two broad questions guided the consultation:
• What is important to children and young people? (to consult directly with children)
• What do children and young people think about the service they receive? (to involve children in the evaluation of services)
Collection Methods

Mobile Playgroups - Town Camps

- Binjari Community
- Rockhole Community
- Kalano Community
Collection Methods

Centre Based Programs

• Biginini Play2Learn
• Baby Play2Learn
• GBA Play2Learn
• Family Support Clients (including Walpiri)
Collection Methods

Outreach Programs

• Kybrook Community Play2Learn
• Mataranka Play2Learn
• Jilkminggan, Beswick, Borroloola - Mentoring Programs and Family Support
• Yarralin Dads & Kids
Findings

Relationships and interactions are most important to children in helping them to feel loved and safe. So… support children to develop relationships

Food and shelter in a family environment are most important for children in supporting access to material basics (other possessions contributed to their security but were secondary to food and shelter). So… meet basic material needs in the context of family

Children want to be active—supporting children to access a wide range of physical activity is most important for children when it comes to being healthy. So… get active with children

Children are participating in learning through activity or play based learning. It was also evident in children’s responses that engagement in traditional ‘literacy’ activities was low. So… wrap opportunities for learning skill development around children’s play

Children were participating in spaces in their community and highlighted activities that they were involved in - there are fewer examples of participation in decision making. So… get children involved in making decisions
Connect with Children: Consultation report
Reporting back to children

This is a story about children from all around Australia...

These children were not the same they had different ideas and different faces.

Speaking many different languages they came from lots of different places.

Some were born in Australia, some were born overseas.

They lived in many different houses with different kinds of families.

Then loved their friends and families and the things they did and play.

Like hugging Dad or singing with mums and all the games they play.

They didn’t like to say goodbye and not see their friends or families.

It made them sad if people would be mean to them or tease.

These people were special and helped children feel loved and to feel safe and that was important to them!
Taking action

• Embedding consultation in every day practice
  – Developing systems
• Local Change
• National Advocacy
• Embedding in planning and strategy
• Challenge ourselves to act differently because of what we hear
Thank you!

Download the report at: tiny.cc/connectchildren

Contact:
Dan Leach-McGill
Daniel.LeachMcGill@goodbeginnings.org.au
Geraldine Toby
Geraldine.Toby@goodbeginnings.org.au