

It Takes a Town: Igniting a culture of generosity to build a thriving environment for all children in 2484



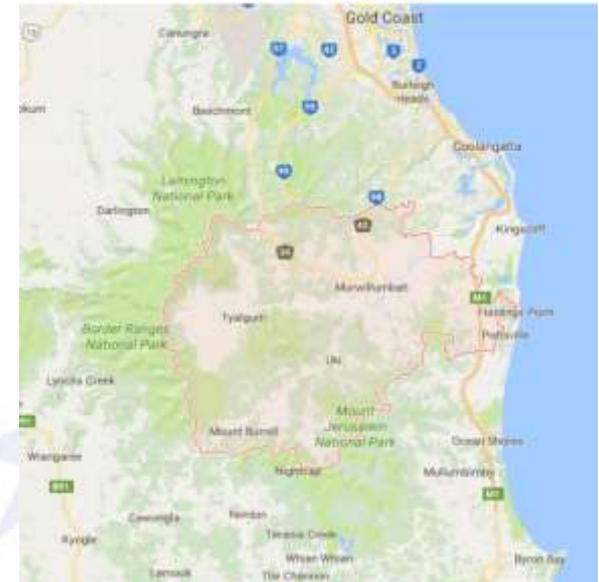
Dr Liz Reimer (SCU)

Ms Carmen Stewart (ITAT)



Introduction - 2484 POA

- higher than NSW average rates of unemployment, child poverty, people experiencing homelessness and housing stress
- lower than NSW average income
- a very generous community - 1 in 4 locals volunteer



ITAT aims to activate:

- access to the opportunities and environment to thrive
- culture of generosity and responsiveness



The It Takes a Town project

- 7 beliefs
- 2 results
- 3 key underpinning theories
 - Ecological theory
 - Social capital (specifically theories on social cohesion)
 - Asset-based community development



A few assumptions

- Government and the sector can't adequately respond to the complexity or scale of the problems
- People largely expect government and the sector to fix the problems
- Communities are the petrie dishes that determine how behaviours / genes are expressed or silenced
- People want to contribute, but they're not sure how and they balk at commitment



We need collective seeing

"When we lose sight of our role as neighbours, the health of the neighbourhood suffers. And when the health of the neighbourhood suffers, we all suffer."

- (Hugh McKay, *The State of the Nation Starts in Your Street*, 2017.)



How do we intend on achieving this?

4 obsessions

1. Connections between diverse sectors create and activate a 'common agenda'.
2. Connections lead to new initiatives and approaches to creating opportunities for children to thrive.
3. Families are supported to identify and move towards their aspirations for better futures.
4. People are contributing according to their abilities interests and resources. (Response-Able)



Three broad strategies for a thriving community

- Harnessing generosity
- Building circles of support
- Creating impact



The story so far



Harnessing generosity

- Create a focus on what we want more of
- Tell the stories of vulnerability through a new lens
- Tell the stories of generosity
- Build a self-functioning community exchange platform



Circles of Support

- Match families seeking change with individuals who can support the achievement of their aspirations.
- Support individuals to contribute according to their abilities, resources & interests – Response-able.



Creating Impact

- Get everyone focused on the common agenda – talk it up.
- Enable and support strong connections across sectors to activate the common agenda – link & leverage.
- Prototype initiatives that hold the seeds of change.



Observations so far

- Facebook works – 4 weeks post launching our site, we have a weekly reach of 15,000.
- People need to be asked to contribute, and they need to know what contribution looks like.
- Inviting people to contribute according to their skills, passions and resources, with a minimum of paperwork involved, works a treat.
- Asking on behalf of someone else works



Obstacles

- Human services and health workers say - “it’s too risky”
- Government policy and risk averse attitudes are crushing community creativity to find real solutions
- It’s a fine line between activating change and becoming an irritant

It takes a
town

imagine...

working together to strengthen the culture
of generosity in our community, to create
opportunities for everyone to thrive.





Thank you

QUESTIONS?

Dr Liz Reimer (liz.reimer@scu.edu.au)

Ms Carmen Stewart

(Project Activator, 'It Takes a Town')

Carmen@thrive2484.com or 0438 140 589