

# LISMORE CHILD AWARE LOCAL INITIATIVE

## CALI LISMORE 2015 - BACKGROUND

In 2015, the YWCA NSW Northern Rivers delivered the Child Aware Local Initiative *Everyday Wisdom*, an intergenerational forum that brought children aged 10-12 together with local community leaders to share experiences and learn from one another concerning issues identified by and of importance to the children.

The forum aimed to:

- facilitate cross-generational discussions relating to the issues of healthy relationships, strong communities, and leadership;
- initiate meaningful conversations and deeper reflection regarding the challenges of being a young person today; and
- enable a two-way transfer of information concerning the ways in which adolescence can be a time to grow, become more independent, and establish patterns that support an individual to have a healthy sense of self as they transition into adulthood.

Coordination and delivery of the initiative was led by YWCA NSW in close collaboration and partnership with:

- *Young People's Coordinating Committee* (YPCC): facilitated by the YWCA Communities for Children In School Support program, the YPCC membership is comprised of children (years 5/6) from two key partner schools. The YPCC fulfilled the lead role in the development and delivery of the *Everyday Wisdom* Forum;
  - *Community Leaders Coordinating Committee* (CLCC): chaired by the YWCA Communities for Children and comprised of select leaders drawn from across the local community, the CLCC collaborated with young members of the YPCC to build a practical framework to assist in the implementation of the initiative.
- The CLCC included representatives from the government, non-government and community service sectors; Aboriginal community sector; business and private sector; Local Area Command; City Council; Justice system, and 'everyday' community leaders.

## CALI LISMORE 2015 - EVALUATION & OUTCOMES

The *Everyday Wisdom* Forum was attended by 160 children from 15 local schools, along with 35 community leaders. Evaluation of the forum and surveys of participants found that:

- 80% of participants were highly satisfied with the event and believed the initiative fulfilled its aims;
- 81% of child participants reported increased confidence to express themselves to a person in a position of authority;
- 86% of children reported feeling a sense of importance and satisfaction from being listened to by an adult;
- 78% of adult participants gained a greater appreciation of the importance of seeking young people's views in regard to the issues they confront;
- 82% of adult participants gained a greater understanding of the challenges young people face today;
- 92% of the Young People's Coordinating Committee members developed a new skill from participating in the delivery of the initiative.

As part of the initiative a professional video of the *Everyday Wisdom* forum was produced, including interviews with children and community leaders, and vox-pops and recordings of general proceedings. The video resource has subsequently been distributed among local schools and the wider community as a means of promoting the importance of Child Aware principles and raising-awareness concerning the significance of listening to children and involving them in making the decisions that affect their lives.

## CALI LISMORE 2016 – Overview

In June 2016, the YWCA Northern Rivers partnered with Realising Every Dream (RED) Inc to coordinate and deliver a Child Aware 2016 initiative. The initiative sought to build on the structure and extend the outcomes of the CALI Everyday Wisdom 2015 project and was designed in line with the growing body of literature concerning child wellbeing in schools. Specifically, the 2016 initiative was designed around the findings of an extensive four-part study on *Wellbeing in Schools* which demonstrated the impact ‘wellbeing’ has on children’s academic outcomes and social development. Most notably, the initiative focused on the evidence concerning the ways in which enabling children ‘to have their say’ – to be listened to and heard – can have tremendous, positive effects on their wellbeing and thus academic outcomes.

The CALI 2016 initiative drew together 150 primary school-aged children, their teachers, and select community leaders at a ‘This is Us’ forum. Like the 2015 initiative, the 2016 forum sought to facilitate cross-generational discussions. The 2016 forum, however, focused specifically on providing a space for children to voice their opinions and ideas on a range of issues relating to ‘child participation’ as a core principle of the Convention on the Rights of Children.

Coordination and delivery of the initiative was led by a:

- *Young People’s Coordinating Committee (YPCC)*: facilitated by the RED Inc In School Support team, the YPCC membership was comprised of children (years 5/6) from two key partner schools. The YPCC fulfilled the lead role in the development and delivery of the *This is Us* forum;
- *Community Leaders Coordinating Committee (CLCC)* - Chaired by the YWCA Communities for Children Programme and comprised of select leaders drawn from across the local community, the CLCC collaborated with the YPCC to build a practical framework to assist in the implementation of the initiative.

The CLCC included representatives from the government, non-government and community service sectors; Aboriginal community sector; business and private sector; Local Area Command; City Council; Justice system, and ‘everyday’ community leaders.

As a result of the child-driven discussions at the forum, the RED Inc ISS team, together with production company One Vision, worked with children from the local community to develop a Hip-hop video. The production sought to empower young people and provide a further platform from which they could voice their opinions and ideas regarding issues of importance to them. As part of the five-week design and production program for the video, participating children were given an introduction to hip-hop culture, devised the core theme for the song, wrote the lyrics, recorded their MC-ing, and planned and shot the video. The video was launch amongst much fanfare in February 2017 at a community event for children and their families. In light of the success of the initiative, throughout 2017 the YWCA Communities for Children Programme and the ISS team will be working with other groups of children and their families from the Lismore and Goonellabah communities to create further music productions and community arts instillations.

**To watch hip hop production:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ow84pIHfTgq>

## CALI LISMORE 2015 - EVALUATION & OUTCOMES

Evaluation of the 2016 initiative found that of the 150 children who attended the *This Is Us* forum:

- 87% were highly satisfied with the event and believed the initiative fulfilled its aims.
- 81% gained an increased understanding of their rights as children.
- 73% have increased confidence to express themselves to a person in a position of authority.
- 92% felt a sense of importance and satisfaction from being listened to by an adult.
- 100% of the Young People's Coordinating Committee members developed a new skill from participating in the delivery of the initiative.

Of the teachers and community leaders who attended the event:

- 78% gained a greater appreciation of the importance of seeking young people's views in regard to the issues they confront;
- 82% gained a greater understanding of the challenges young people face today.

Feedback from the Video Clip resource "No Shame, Be Game"

The principal of Goonellabah Primary School has stated that the film clip and song writing workshops;

- Increased school attendance
- Gained confidence within the classroom
- Developed new skills
- Connected with Culture
- Increased resilience
- Provided an opportunity for students to learn about each other and their rights as Children.

A family and friends public viewing of the video was held at the Goonellabah school, 15 families attended. The video is publicly available on youtube and has 3,000 views to date.

## CALI PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

### Primary Schools:

- Lismore South
- Goonellabah
- Lismore
- St Joseph's Alstonville
- St Mary's Casino
- Kadina
- Albert Park
- Trinity

### Government

- DET
- FaCS

- DPMC
- Lismore City Council
- Federal Member of Parliament
- Child and Family Health
- Lismore Local Area Command
- Families Australia
- Centre for Child Protection

### Business Sector

- Lismore Business Panel
- Business Zone Representatives
- Women in Business Network

### Community Sector

- RED Inc
- Solid Mob Aboriginal Health
- Rekindling the Spirit
- Social Futures
- Jarjums Family Centre
- Northern Rivers Childcare
- Northern United Rugby

**CALI LISMORE 2016 BUDGET ACQUITTAL**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Forum Implementation</b>	
Venue Hire	\$1,500
Catering	\$500
Forum Materials / Miscellaneous	\$3,000
	<b>\$5,000</b>
<b>Resource / Materials Development</b>	
Resource Development & Production	\$5,000
	<b>\$5,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>



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