

ADULT LEARNERS WEEK 2009 Final Report

Program Objectives

<p>Has this program improved adult education for participants? If yes, please detail. If not, why not?</p> <p>Report against original program objectives outlined in grant application.</p>	<p>Many Cultures, Same Dream was a cross-cultural awareness program in the form of a week-long accredited group training session. It focused on working effectively with indigenous and non-indigenous persons and was co-facilitated by CAAPS staff and community members from Ngukurr, Maningrida, Gove, Ramingining, Palumpa and Darwin. Throughout the week, the ideas of a traditional classroom and traditional learning resources were challenged; students from communities across the NT joined together to teach each other skills on verandas, sitting on the grass, in bushlands, amongst mangroves and in the back of two wheel drive cars.</p> <p>“All week I felt like I was the only student and everyone else here was my teacher” – Henry White, CAAPS Community Services Facilitator and 65 year old Indigenous man from the Torres Strait Islands.</p> <p>Students and facilitators used oral presentations, posters, paintings, yarning circles, cooking, weaving, drawing on canvas, movies and photographs to share their skills with others. Throughout each day, as they shared their skills, facilitators asked them to reflect on the benefits of adult learning. One quote particularly stood out:</p> <p>“Learning doesn’t stop when you finish high school. There are things I can change, make better, share with my community and my people”</p> <p>Students discussed what they learnt at the culmination of each day and shared their thoughts on a large shared art canvas. Employed in different industries, the participants discussed how to better communicate with non-Indigenous people, how to ‘walk in two worlds’ and created strategies for different situations through role play.</p> <p>“Celebration of what you do, what we do as part of our jobs. It’s all about making young people strong, educated. Young men, young women learning from us all day”</p> <p>It was inspiring for the participants, as they are all current students in Community Services certificates, to share their success stories with each other through the week. On the Open Day, it was also great to see them sharing these stories with adults and young people alike who had not considered training before and wanted to know what kind of new skills students had acquired in the course. Many of our students actually had the opportunity to become role models in terms of their education and training, and proved that involvement in the VET sector can assist in overcoming those foundation gaps in education that are so often present in people from remote communities.</p> <p>“CAAPS facilitator: What skills will you take back to your</p>
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	<p>communities? Student: New skills...basket weaving, making baskets, all the different dances we learnt from the Island ladies, new knowledge to pass on”</p> <p>Through empowering the participants, listening to them sharing their stories and understanding about their histories, we took the first steps towards achieving the goal we always strive for; dealing with the issues which may have happened in the past.</p> <p>“The body language of the Indigenous students, they were so proud, the non-Indigenous people were listening and they were interested. No one was excluded. They respected Aboriginal people, they looked at them in a new way at the end of the day”</p>
<p>How did the program meet the individual needs of Adult Learners?</p>	<p>Indigenous people from remote and urban communities in the Northern Territory are not always an easy group to engage. Through short courses such as this one, individuals are able to build their self-esteem and grow confidence in learning. Real pathways leading to further training, employment and community participation are then created. Students that were engaged in a community services already were one step closer to graduation through this course and students that were not in training were a step closer to being involved.</p> <p>Unfortunately, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia often find it difficult to progress beyond low-paid and low-skilled employment because of their lack of foundation literacy and numeracy skills. While we are constantly trying to keep our skills updated to keep up with the changing needs of the workforce, this disadvantaged group of Australians often do not even possess the skills that would make them job-ready.</p> <p>The Many Cultures, Same Dream week of events achieved the following goals in terms of the Ministerial on Adult Community Education (the framework upon which we based our event):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced foundation gaps by providing training to adult learners from remote and urban communities in the NT with low literacy and numeracy levels.• Provided relevant, accredited training which gives adult learners the skills needed to communicate across cultures effectively.• Provided a unit of training which fits into a community services qualification and can help the student gain entry into the community services industry (an industry which is included on the NT’s Priority Occupations List).• Provided cross-cultural understanding, which helps adult learners to enter the workplace in any sector and is a skill which is necessary for every organisation. <p>The event was an opportunity for adult learners accessing CAAPS courses to share their experiences and encourage others to join</p>

	them in the pursuit of life-long learning.
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Employment Outcomes

<p>Has the program delivered realistic and sustainable employment or employment related outcomes for the participants? If yes, please provide details. If no, why not?</p>	<p>Many Cultures, Same Dream equipped participants with a range of communication and behavioural skills which would smooth their transition into the workplace and give them strategies to help them cope with situations which may arise at work. Through networking with different organisations and meeting with service providers, participants also had the chance to meet many potential employers throughout the week.</p> <p>By providing accredited training, participants are also another step closer to achieving a certification which brings them closer to being job-ready. Essentially, this event helped participants to understand the links between education, training and employment, and that lifelong learning is essential if they want to be effective contributors to the economy.</p>
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Partnerships

<p>Does this program have links to broader community development opportunities? If yes, please provide details. If no, what is the reason?</p>	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Northern Territory are arguably one of the most disadvantaged population groups in the world. Significant gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the areas of post secondary education levels, disability/chronic disease, household and individual income, substantiated child abuse and neglect, family and community violence and imprisonment and juvenile detention have always existed and in many cases are widening (Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Report 2009). This means that community service organisations face significant challenges in multiple areas, across remote and urban communities.</p> <p>“To share our knowledge and our culture was an amazing experience. Good to see families I haven’t seen for a while and I met new families”</p> <p>Many Cultures, Same Dream provided opportunities for broader community development in two ways; firstly that it promoted the value of education and training and secondly it provided a medium for community service organisations to network and communicate.</p> <p>“We enjoyed ourselves and want to come do more courses” – CrazyBoyz band from Maningrida, NT</p>
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During the week, learners of all ages shared their experiences in a variety of ways, through presentations, handiwork and stories. They promoted the value of skills development first hand and the future pathways which it can open up. The students were living proof that education and training contributes to Indigenous adults being able to participate meaningfully in the workplace, provide for their families and contribute to their communities. Further to this, the event had even wider flow-on effects in that all the participants who attended took this new knowledge back with them, sharing it with their workplaces and fellow staff members, clan and family groups, as well as their communities.

“Different dances, really good sharing dances and different culture, very interesting stalls. Camera people captured all of it and on canvas. Aboriginal people looked so proud all day”

Many Cultures, Same Dream was also a unique and valuable medium for networking and communication between students, organisations and communities. By holding information stalls, each attendee was able to understand quickly what all the organisations do and which areas they operate in. Students and participants could see where organisations fitted into their communities and, in turn, organisations could meet people from communities and ask them firsthand about what they needed.

“I wanted to pass on my thanks for allowing me to attend Adult Education Week at CAAPS, the experience was fantastic and I gained some really valuable information in working with Indigenous co-workers and clients. Working with the weaving ladies listening to their stories over the week discussing Night Patrol, Youth Suicide, Alcohol abuse just to name a few of the topics discussed was very informative. The brief given at the end of each day as a summary tool I observed gave the students confidence as the week progressed. The week was exhausting both mentally and physically but in saying that I found myself arriving earlier each morning so I could catch up with the ladies from Maningrida to extract more information. I saw the ladies off at the airport on the Saturday which gave closure to my Adult Education Week with CAAPS, with the promise to visit Maningrida before the end of November” – Joy Newman, Substance Abuse Counsellor, Australian Defence Force

Besides promotion of education and networking, the event also provided pathways to employment opportunities, through the improved confidence of students which will make it easier for them to engage in further training. Positive role models showcasing their experiences during the Open Day also provided will provide inspiration and motivation to all attending,

	and also perhaps foster mentoring opportunities.
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Educational Support (if applicable)

<p>What literacy and numeracy supports were made available to participants?</p> <p>If none, what is the reason?</p>	<p>Trainers assessed the needs of the learners at the beginning of the week and any challenges that could be faced during training. Assessments were not able to be undertaken by the WELL (Workplace English Language and Literacy Program) trainer as the position was not funded as early as expected but the staff of the Training Department worked hard to ensure that attention was given to each participant. As many of the learners had low literacy and numeracy levels and English was not usually their first language, training methods were adapted.</p> <p>We also utilised our extensive resource base, including text-based and visual-based learning tools.</p> <p>I've never seen anything like you did yesterday. Everybody had a chance to share. Really big thrill to catch up with everyone, seeing things happen, meeting up with people I hadn't seen for a long time. All those organisations trying hard to work together.</p>
<p>Who delivered the literacy and numeracy support?</p>	<p>Many Cultures, Same Dream was facilitated by the staff in the Training Department and the rest of the CAAPS team.</p>
<p>How was the literacy and numeracy support delivered to participants?</p>	<p>Support was delivered to students in a variety of methods, outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through culturally-specific and relevant resources provided to students throughout the week. • Through group training and individual learning, delivered face-to-face and with the help of the new computers available in the Training Room. • Through innovative activities and practical workplace tasks. • Through helping with the co-ordination of the Open Day on Thursday, sharing their experiences with the attendees and also learning from the attendees and other guest speakers' experiences. • Guest speakers throughout the week, from communities and from the Darwin area. • Sharing experiences and participating in storytelling and yarning circles throughout the week.

<p>Was the support delivered in a culturally appropriate manner?</p>	<p>As the student group was made up of people of various ages and various educational backgrounds, elements of workplace English literacy were included in training. From prior experience training with students from communities, CAAPS had already anticipated that many of the concepts that students would need to understand to be able to fully participate in drafting guidelines, procedures and policies would be foreign. Unpacking these “Western concepts” and adapting them to the local environment required particular attention be paid to the English language used in the workplace environment as failure to do so would result in workers feeling inadequate and “shame”, which would lead them to disengage from the training altogether. Trainers are also aware that in order to fully engage with Indigenous people, a strong mutually respectful relationship needed to be first established. It was an advantage that a number of the students had previously attended training with us or knew someone from their community who had, so this made it easier to build those relationships.</p>
<p>Was it effective, adequate or inadequate for client needs? If inadequate, why? How could it be more effectively delivered?</p>	<p>Through verbal feedback sessions conducted on the last s\day of the event, we found that the support provided by CAAPS staff throughout the week was effective in meeting client’s needs.</p>

What are the most significant program outcomes?

(NB: Report against the original project evaluation plan outlined in the application form.)

Outcome 1: Increased awareness of the importance of adult community education.

Through sharing, learning, inspiring and motivating, students that were already enrolled realised even more that their achievements were of great importance in terms of being role models to others. For students that were not already enrolled in certificate courses, listening to these certificate students who were living proof that the goal of education is not only achievable, but it is necessary to empower communities again. Being part of a short training course made participants realise that language, literacy and numeracy barriers can be overcome, and learnt about the flow-on effects of education.

“I was interested in looking at all the services. Sometimes when we have problem in community it gave me more ideas on how to help my people in my community. Sometime we go to lots of people and no help but now we know there is lots of resource out there” – Grace Daniels, Ngukurr Community

Outcome 2: Successful delivery and certification of all students in the accredited training unit.

Aside from those students who were enrolled in the course but did not attend due to various community reasons, the 24 students that attended were all assessed as competent. This is a substantial achievement, when it is taken into account that it is not always simple to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Outcome 3: Increased cross-cultural awareness across all attendees.

A picture tells a thousand words and the pictures attached to this report showcase just how many

students from different locations and cultural heritages were working together throughout the week on common goals. Whether the goals were to collect pandanus for weaving baskets, portray ideas on canvas, explain what concepts meant, answer questions or find bush tucker, there was an overriding theme of collaboration. It was amazing to be part of a celebration that had both Indigenous and non-Indigenous guest speakers, facilitators and presenters working together.

“One of the highlights for me was when I started my talk I spoke in language and some of the Aboriginal students in the crowd answered me. Later I went and talked to them about their communities, their families, their skin names and they were so proud” – Roger Sigston, CAAPS founder

Outcome 4: Provision of networking opportunities across the education and community services sectors.

With approximately 36 community service, education/training and health industry stalls present, there was not only information and resources but also staff representing organisations across the whole of the Top End. The networking conducted will serve to increase the capacity of all the organisations involved and also to provide new opportunities through partnership.

There was also another aspect of networking that was not identified on the original application; the Australian National Council on Drugs (ANCD) approached CAAPS not long after the application was lodged and wanted to hold a consultation forum for their National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee (NIDAC) in Darwin; we included this into Many Cultures, Same Dream. As the Open Day was scheduled for Thursday, we pushed back the opening time for guests to 10am and then ran the ANCD/NIDAC forum from 8-10am on the Culture Block. This had huge benefits because the delegates were able to meet everyone that attended our event, and all our attendees were able to network with the delegates. Professor Edward Wilkes from Curtin University also offered to speak at in the Opening Ceremony, and made a speech that touched many people in the audience deeply.

“There was a strong sense of community on the day and it was terrific to see evidence of the relationships CAAPS has forged through the participation of other agencies” – Malarndirri McCarthy MLA, Minister for Children and Families

Outcome 5: Increased awareness of the existence of CAAPS as an organisation and of the services that we provide.

Holding the whole event on CAAPS premises in Berrimah meant that all attendees were able to see first-hand not only the work that we do, but also the premises which we do it on and the facilities and resources that we have available. Attendees were able to browse through the Training Department, the Healthy Families Program Room, the Dolly Garinyi Hostel and the Culture Block, as well as obtain information packs on who we are and what CAAPS is all about. We portrayed the CAAPS story from the beginning of its 25 years on a history walk which was enjoyed by many. Everyone that attended, even if they already thought they knew about CAAPS, learnt something new about the organisation from either seeing the facilities or meeting all of the staff who were conducting tours.

“My first visit to CAAPS yesterday, during the Many Cultures, Same Dream Open Day was inspiring. The dedication and care by all involved, in achieving positive outcomes to individuals from Aboriginal communities, near and far, is clearly evident” – His Honour Tom Pauling AO QC, Administrator of the Northern Territory

Outcome 6: Increased awareness of the existence of other education and community services organisations and the services that they provide.

Through inviting organisations throughout the Northern Territory to be part of the event, it not only

enriched the event that we were holding, but also provided an opportunity to increase awareness of all the other organisations we work with and the services they provide. As stated before, we had an overwhelming response to our call to hold expo-style stalls and all of them were staffed, as well as adequately prepared with resources and information. This outcome was also achieved by the number of attendees we had; while this was difficult to measure accurately, there were approximately 1000 attendees from different organisations and communities across the NT.

These outcomes were measured through the following feedback methods:

- Verbal feedback through the week, in the feedback sessions at the beginning and the start of each day and on the Open Day (in addition to comments requested on film).
- Statistics of student attendance, competence and achievement.
- Visual observations throughout the week.
- Surveys sent to all stakeholders, attendees and students after the event, collated and results included in reports.
- Photo/video reports will be compiled and sent to all stakeholders, attendees and students after the event.
- Group discussions and brainstorming sessions with staff, stakeholders and students