Getting to the heart of it:
Cross-cultural and cross-sectorial relationships are core to the Indigenous Program at The Bouverie Centre

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Overview

Acknowledgement
Introductions
The process of cultural safety as a guide for optimal collaborative partnerships
Our journey towards cultural safety and what we have learnt
The beginnings – what we got wrong

• DHS granted the funding to a mainstream organisation

• Lack of meaningful, needs-based consultation

• Our assumptions, arrogance and cultural blindness

• We had an expectation that students would come to mainstream
Developing Pathways

• Advisory Group – developing connections into the communities

• Prepared to give it a go, make some mistakes and learn from them

• Change our approach and respond to feedback

• Theory - Practice -Theory shifts to Practice -Theory-Practice

• Drawing on the process of cultural safety
What we have found works

• Shift from a colonising position

• Vouching – finding a Champion within each Community

• Understanding that building relationships of trust and commitment takes time – short term funding does not work
Ongoing Challenges

• Still in the pioneering stages of nurturing and developing joined-up services

• Patience and perseverance is essential

• If you get it right for Aboriginal people you get it right for everyone – holistic service delivery is best practice
Cultural Safety

The process of developing cultural safety provides a guide for building successful relationships across all sectors

“an environment that is spiritually, socially, emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people...it is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and the experience of learning together.”

(Williams, R. 1999)
Cultural Safety

“Extends beyond cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. It empowers individuals and enables them to contribute to the achievement of positive outcomes. It encompasses a reflection on individual cultural identity and recognition of the impact of personal culture on professional practice”

Cultural Safety - key features

Cultural safety is dependent on a set of principles for how we relate to and work with each other:

- Respect in communication
- Honesty in communication
- Consideration in communication
- Honouring each other’s efforts in communication
- Participation in communication
- Safety in communication
- Confidentiality in behaviors
- Lawfulness in behaviours

(Developed by Professor Judy Atkinson's Masters of Indigenous Studies students 2002 – 2012)
What gets in the way of developing cultural safety?

Lateral Violence is a term used to describe destructive behaviours that get in the way of safe collaborative relationships.

Unfortunately Lateral Violence is a common infection in workplaces and communities, sectors.
Lateral Violence: how it shows up

- Put-downs of other organisations rather than building them up
- Breaches of confidentiality
- Lack of sharing the load evenly...either keeping all or not taking responsibility for anything
- Breaking trust
- Breaking commitments
- Hoarding useful knowledge
- Spreading rumors about other organisations
Lateral Violence: How we can deal with it

Becoming aware and recognising that it’s going on is the first step to move forward

We must also be prepared to challenge the deeply entrenched systemic assumptions that organisations and people will not find common ground...
Moving forward together...

- Commit to the ongoing practice of establishing stronger relationships based on the founding principles of cultural safety: trust, respect and relatedness

- Move on from operating within siloed/separated workplace environments

- Respect each organisation’s unique cultural identity and environment

- Recognise the impact a culturally safe workplace could have on achieving stronger, more sustainable, positive outcomes for clients and families AND for us as workers