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The Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre (GRCEC) is a non government, not-for-profit, incorporated community organisation. It has operated in the Mid West Gascoyne and Murchison regions of Western Australia, delivering a diverse range of programmes, since 1975.

### Our Vision: What we hope and dream for

Strong communities and families where children and young people are valued and connected and realise a future full of possibility.

### Our Purpose: What we do

GRCEC is committed to providing services to children, youth and families to build individual, family and community capacity. We deliver services in education and care; transition to and through education, training and employment; individual and family support; counselling; partnership development and service co-ordination. We work to build connections between people including other non government agencies, government, business and the wider community.

### Our Values: What we believe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respect and self worth</td>
<td>We are committed to supporting and nurturing the aspirations, self worth, dignity and mutual respect of all people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of belonging</td>
<td>We believe in and encourage inclusiveness, community spirit and a sense of responsibility to each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>We work together to build collaborative partnerships between staff, programs and the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust and responsibility</td>
<td>We apply principles of honesty and integrity and ensure ethical and accountable approaches in all we do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>We want to make a difference by providing access to high quality and innovative services that are responsive to the needs of the children, young people and families in our community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BOARD MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PROFESSION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td>Kim Stokes</td>
<td>Business Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Chair</td>
<td>Kim Weatherston</td>
<td>Psychologist Private Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Chair</td>
<td>Trevor Price*</td>
<td>Midwest Development Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Katherine Allen</td>
<td>Contracts and Reporting Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Peta Davey</td>
<td>Finance Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Kevin Grigsby</td>
<td>Community Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Glenn Wishart*</td>
<td>Youth Liaison Officer, WA Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Jenny Clayton</td>
<td>Aboriginal Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Charlene Watters</td>
<td>Children’s Services Lecturer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre gratefully acknowledges the support provided by:

- **Australian Government**
  Department of Education
  (formerly Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations)
  Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
  (formerly Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs)

- **West Australian Government**
  Department for Child Protection and Family Support
  Department of Local and Government and Communities
  Department of Education
  Department of Training and Workforce Development
  Department of Education Services

- City of Greater Geraldton
- Lotterywest
- Bendigo Bank
- Jobs Australia
- WA Council of Social Service
- **Consortium Partners**
  Joblink Midwest
  Napranum Parents and Learning Group
  Centacare

- The individuals, schools, professional groups and organisations who assist us to provide services to the community and the people of the Midwest, Murchison and Gascoyne
# GERALDTON REGIONAL COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTRE (GRCEC)

## STAFF LIST 2013

**Key:** * denotes that the individual has ceased working in the position

### ADMINISTRATION
24-28 Gregory Street, Geraldton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Jenny Allen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Program Manager</td>
<td>Christie Collard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance Manager</td>
<td>Peta Davey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration Officer</td>
<td>Sylvia Purslow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration Officer</td>
<td>Kim Harris*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration Officer</td>
<td>Pam Sullivan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration Officer</td>
<td>Cassandra Ramshaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardener/Maintenance Supervisor</td>
<td>Mick Aitkin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardener/Maintenance Assistant</td>
<td>Gavin Carvill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### GERALDTON FAMILY COUNSELLING SERVICE (GFCS)
24-28 Gregory Street, Geraldton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Counsellor</td>
<td>Liz Blayney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Counsellor</td>
<td>Kate Foster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### GERALDTON FAMILY AND YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICE (GFYSS)
24-28 Gregory Street, Geraldton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-ordinator</td>
<td>Sarah Forsyth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Worker</td>
<td>Tania Penco</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LEARNING ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION (LEAP)
24-28 Gregory Street, Geraldton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Filip Hansen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Learning Support Officer</td>
<td>Laine-Rose Forsyth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Connections Officer</td>
<td>Karen Feeney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OUT OF SCHOOL CHILD CARE ASSOCIATION (OSCCA)
5 Ramshaw Place – Geraldton

Coordinator
Casual Educator
Casual Educator
Casual Educator
Casual Educator
Casual Educator
Casual Educator
Casual Educator
Casual Educator
Casual Educator

Rachael Reynolds
Kaila May
Michelle Bevan*
Maggie Flynn*
Lauren Mearns*
Shanshan (Jane) Cai
Lachlan Adam
Colleen Chatley
Jordyn Smyth
Gidon Nicholls

THE ANNEXE
Corner of Gregory and Augustus Street

ADMINISTRATION
Corner of Gregory and Augustus Street

Operations Manager
Administration Officer
Casual Reception/Administration Assistant

Suzanne Carter
Colleen Chatley
Milena Milasinovic

YOUTH CONNECTIONS
Corner of Gregory and Augustus Street

Manager
Youth Connections Officer
Youth Connections Officer
Youth Connections Officer
Youth Connections Officer
Youth Connections Officer

Esmeralda de Trafford
Christian Sayers
Rhiana Fernandez
Anna Bartlett
Karina Tester*
Kieran Rigter
Kylie Coulter* (Based in Exmouth)

PARTNERSHIP BROKERS
Corner of Gregory and Augustus Street

Manager
Project Officer
Project Officer
Project Officer
Project Officer

Carolyn Pegler
Lorraine Lambert
Lisa Yurisich*
Emma Howell
Kylie Coulter* (based in Exmouth)
TRAINING AND MENTOR PROGRAM  
Corner of Gregory and Augustus Street

Co-ordinator                   Carmel Starcevich

PARENTS IN TUNE WITH EDUCATION (PiTE)  
LOCAL CHAMPIONS (AEDI)  
Corner of Gregory and Augustus Street

Co-ordinator                   Jacquie Taylor
Project Officer                Lee-anne Taylor

PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (PaCE)  
Corner of Gregory and Augustus Street

Manager                       Jacquie Taylor
Manager, Kalbarri PaCE        Jenny Clayton
Project Officer               Catherine Bedford
Casual Project Officer        Nancy Kirby*
Casual Project Officer        Lisa Yurisich*
Casual Tutor                  Noelene Curley*
Casual Tutor                  Lorraine Dodd*
Casual Tutor                  Trevarus Kelly*

BANKER  
Commonwealth Bank of Australia*  
Community Bank of Geraldton Bendigo Bank

AUDITOR  
Midwest Financial

TENANT  
Taoist Tai Chi Association

LIFE MEMBERS

Gary Evershed                   Ilse Viergutz
Gwyn Dean                       Harry Venville
Lew Eves                        Joan Ward
Paul Canet                      Julie Nelson
Peter Forrestal                 Robert Vickery
Ruth Eszes                      Ian Johnston
Yvonne Krummenacher             Yvonne Boath
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to our AGM for 2014 and a particular welcome to new and first time attendees.

I am pleased to report another outstanding year for GRCEC. Director Jenny and staff have met the challenges and taken the opportunities to enhance the Ed Centre as a leader in the provision of community education and training programs in the Midwest. An acclaimed Director, focused program managers and dedicated staff have all served to bring about this success. Congratulations and thank you all.

Longevity of staff has been a key for the Ed Centre in an industry generally marked by turnover of personnel. Contrary to this characteristic, the Ed Centre possesses a cohort of experienced, long-term employees. It’s opportune to mention them. There’s Colleen Chatley and bubbly Milena Milasinovic in our admin at Augustus St; Mick Aitkin and Gavin Carvill, our dexterous building and grounds team; Sarah Forsyth from GFYSS; Christian Sayers in Youth Connections, Liz Blayney at the ever busy GFCS; Laine- Rose Forsyth in LEAP; Carolyn Pegler heading Partnership Brokers; Carmel Starcevich now heading our mentoring program; a versatile operations and admin group that includes Suzanne Carter, Peta Davey, Christie Collard, Sylvia Purslow and concluding with Director Jenny Allen. Phew, what a list and with several more following in their footsteps.

This level of experience and longevity is not by coincidence. Insightful staff selection, a harmonious workplace, rewarding work conditions and a culture that is family friendly and encourages initiative have all brought about an incentive to serve the organisation. On this note I’m happy to relay that Director Jenny has committed her tenure for a further two years, news which has been warmly received by the Board.

Challenges inevitably lie ahead but with the Centre’s strategic direction and the calibre of the Director and staff we can meet these hurdles and continue to deliver high quality community programs and services to the people of Geraldton and the Midwest.

Thank you to my fellow Board members for their input and enthusiasm in a busy year.

Once again, to Jenny and staff, congratulations on your results, achievements and personal acknowledgments in 2013. The formula and direction is in place to continue the success in 2014.

Kim Stokes
Chairman
MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

In 2013 the Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre staff and Board confirmed our commitment to a vision of strong communities and families where children and young people are valued and connected and realise a future full of possibility. During the year we worked towards this vision through our identified strategic directions for the next five years. When reflecting on the year it is clear that through our dedicated staff, Board members and volunteers we have certainly made progress.

Through all our services we strive to deliver high quality and innovative services that have a positive impact on children, young people, families and the wider community. This can at times be challenging in a world of constant change. When necessary we have brought in additional support through utilising consultants or accessing resources through grants to help us identify areas needing improvement and to implement changes. For example OSCCA, our after school and vacation care service has benefited from additional support in response to the significant changes in the sector and the roll out of the National Quality Framework. We will continue to refine policies, procedures and practices throughout 2014 to meet or exceed required standards.

Grants from the City of Greater Geraldton have enabled us to build on the successful Youth Science Forum (facilitated by our Partnership Brokers), the Civic Engagement program through LEAP and to kick start the Mentoring for Success Project through the Geraldton Family and Youth Support Service (GFYSS). Similar success in supporting grant applications has allowed Partnership Brokers to continue to support the Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry Future Leaders which will see a comprehensive leadership program developed in 2014, as well as continuation of the school mentoring program. A proactive approach in advocating for a share of additional funding available through the State Government’s Delivering Community Services in Partnership Component II funding has seen substantial increases in funding to GFYSS and the Geraldton Family Counselling Service, allowing us to increase staffing levels and extend our reach.

We use feedback and information from our staff, service users, partners, funding bodies and research to make decisions about what we do and how we will improve. We have a strong focus on ensuring we are responsive to individual and community needs. Through our planning and service delivery we work towards building capacity, rather than creating reliance. This has been particularly evident through our Aboriginal early childhood programs, through the Parental and Community Engagement projects, Parents in Tune with Education and Local Champions Programs. Of note are the outstanding achievements such as the Dolls and Yarning project in Kalbarri and the delivery of the Parents and Learning programs in remote communities. Grants from Aurizon and the Department of Local Government and Communities have resulted in the development of a Love Bites partnership - a respectful relationships program - that will be implemented in response to the Aboriginal Anti Violence Strategy. Sadly this year has seen some communities and family members, including our own staff, faced with significant challenges that impacted on our ability to fully achieve the results we had anticipated in all locations. It is essential to be respectful and supportive in such circumstances and be willing to stand back when required.

While our priority is to retain and enhance our current services including individual support services, education and transition support services and early intervention, we considered new opportunities that align with our identified strategic directions. In particular this has seen us identify the need to expand our services in early childhood education. Through the Department of Local Government and Communities Strategic Grants program we partnered with members from
the Early Years Network to facilitate a highly innovative and successful two day Conference, *Connecting the Dots: What does it take to grow a child?* The considerable time, effort and energy was well worth it to see the Conference come together and to see, hear and read the feedback from presenters and delegates. In 2014 we look forward to another new and exciting early childhood initiative through our partnership with Rangeway Primary School and Centacare to coordinate the Rangeway Child and Parent Centre.

In addition to continuing to seek government funding it is increasingly evident that we must pursue opportunities to develop fee for service capabilities through training delivery and through partnerships with other service providers and business. With the constant rhetoric around tight fiscal environments and the need for governments to reduce spending it will be challenging to retain our current level of service delivery. Through our work with the WA Youth Mentoring Network and through working with local businesses and providers, the value of and need for high quality mentoring programs and effective mentoring in workplaces is obvious. We have been developing a training package that can be delivered as non-accredited or accredited training locally and through a licensing agreement and train the trainer model so it can be replicated in other locations and provide us with some additional income. We have been investigating other options, particularly in the area of leadership training, philanthropic support and sponsorship.

Currently we are in a strong financial position and have some terrific assets in our buildings, grounds and other resources. We do need to utilise some of our “spaces” more effectively to improve amenity and make better use of what we do have.

We are a successful, credible and proactive organisation but we have not been very good at telling our story. We tend to “do” rather than to promote what we do. We need to develop a strategy to communicate more widely and more effectively with the broader community. This process has commenced with plans to develop a new website to be launched in 2014. We have continued to work hard at State and National levels, contributing to campaigns around the success of Youth Connections, alternative education programs and Partnership Brokers and to raise the profile of these services with politicians and in the media. We continue to be proactive on many groups and committees to advocate for youth, children and families and to build local and sector capacity.

We could not be a successful organisation without good people. We have a strong Board with sound governance practices and we have been successful in recruiting, retaining and developing staff. Many are due for, or will soon be due for, long service leave after 10 years of service - quite exceptional in the not for profit sector. We strive to support our staff through family friendly practices, fair remuneration, acknowledging and building on their strengths and providing opportunities for growth. We have made some changes to our structure by establishing a Senior Management team to ensure strong, effective leadership and succession. A highlight of the year was the NAIDOC Awards with Jacque Taylor receiving the Community Service Award. I proudly accepted the Reconciliation Award. These awards acknowledge our acceptance in the Aboriginal community in the delivery of programs to Aboriginal people and acknowledge our commitment to making a difference.

As I move into my tenth year at GRCEC I have reflected on what it is that keeps me here and passionate about the work we do. It is because I am surrounded by people who are committed to our vision and to making a difference in the lives of children, young people and their families and communities. Thank you so much.

**Jenny Allen**

**Director**
In general 2013 has been a stable year for GRCEC in regards to our financial position. Variations in overall income and expenditure and assets and liabilities are minimal when compared to 2012.

The majority of income is derived through contracts with government departments, predominantly through the Australian government’s Department of Education (formerly Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.) The highest proportion of revenue from the State Government is from the Department for Child Protection and Family Support and, in 2014, will be closely matched with funding from the WA Department of Education.

Income Summary, January through December 2013

When considering the income statement in the Financial Report it is important to note that unexpended grants carried forward is shown as a significant loss. This refers mostly to income received in advance for the coming year for programs such as the Rangeway Child and Parent Centre, Partnership Brokers and Youth Connections and for programs operating on a 2013/2014 financial year and therefore is reported as a liability. In addition circumstances in remote communities meant not all funding was expended for PaCE projects and has to be returned. The reported loss is therefore largely a matter of timing and presents no cause for concern.

GRCEC has identified the need to diversify income sources with the over-reliance on government funding, particularly Commonwealth funding as this places the organisation at risk of remaining sustainable in the long term. Strategies have been identified to address this issue.
Expense Summary, January through December 2013

It is evident that the organisation’s expenditure is heavily weighted to direct service delivery with most funding utilised for salaries and project costs. Travel and accommodation in the region is a significant expense due to distance and remoteness, with GRCEC’s commitment to working in remote communities to be commended. Consultancy fees were higher than in previous years as GRCEC engaged consultants to:

- support OSCCA (Outside School Hours Care Service) to work towards meeting requirements of the National Quality Standards for Education and Care Services;
- review the constitution in light of the Charities Act and GRCEC’s charity status; and
- develop a training package and business plan for the delivery of fee for service training.

These are priorities identified in the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan.

As the Treasurer I would like to acknowledge the Financial Officer, Peta Davey for overseeing the finances in consultation with the Director, the Board and Midwest Financial (Accountants and Business Advisors). I would like to commend to you this report which outlines GRCEC’s financial position over the course of 2013.

Katherine Allen
Treasurer
The School Business Community Partnership Brokers program came into effect on the 1st January 2010 as a result of the Australian, State and Territory Governments entering into a National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions. The National Partnership’s objective is to provide opportunities and support for all young Australians to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to participate effectively in society and employment in a globalised economy. To support this objective, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has set goals to lift the Year 12 or equivalent attainment rate to 90 percent by 2015 and improve education outcomes for those experiencing high levels of disadvantage, including young people from low Socio Economic Status (SES) backgrounds, humanitarian refugees and Indigenous students.

The School Business Community Partnership Brokers (Partnership Brokers) program fosters a strategic, whole of community approach to support young people’s learning and development. Based on the principle that education and training for young people is a collective responsibility, the Partnership Brokers (PB) aim to establish sustainable partnerships between schools and training organisations, business and industry, community organisations and parents and families.

The Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre (GRCEC) was contracted to deliver the program throughout the Mid West Gascoyne Region commencing in January 2010 with an initial two year contract, subsequently extended to 2013, and now extended to December 2014.

**Machinery of Government Change**
Following the Federal election in September 2013, there were a number of changes in regards to PB contract management and reporting. The former Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR’s) functions and responsibilities were re-organised, into two new departments: the Department of Education and the Department of Employment. The overarching policy and program responsibility for Youth Connections and Partnership Brokers remains with the Youth Attainment and Transitions Branch which is part of the new Australian Government Department of Education.

**Partnerships**
Between the 1st January 2010 and 31 December 2013, 45 partnerships were established with 26 now completed or terminated due to the partnership reaching the end of its life/goal; 7 are self sustaining and being monitored; 7 are inactive awaiting further action (i.e. funding); and 7 are currently active. Active Partnerships require considerable Partnership Broker involvement to ensure that the partnership continues to grow towards sustainability. Many of the 45 partnerships required a medium to high level of initial and ongoing facilitation by the Partnership Broker to ensure success. The majority of the partnerships were brokered as opposed to being a pre-existing partnership we have tapped into and enhanced.

Stakeholder groups represented in our partnerships during the above period of time were:
Business & Industry 94; Community 73; Education 87; Parents and Families 3 = Total 257
As evidenced above, the hardest group to engage with and capture statistics for is Parents and Families. Statistics above reflect that some stakeholders are involved in multiple partnerships.
New partnerships developed between 01 Jan – 31 Dec 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partnership Name</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connecting the Dots Conference</td>
<td>The primary focus of the conference is to bring together education and care services, schools and community organisations to consider National Quality Standards, Australian Early Years Learning Framework, My Time Our Place, high quality care, networking, partnerships, transitioning and professional reflection.</td>
<td>City of Greater Geraldton, St Johns Primary School Rangeway, St Lawrence Primary School, Magic Cottage Child Care Centre, Durack Institute of Technology, Department for Communities, Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre</td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSIRO Pia Wadjari Remote Community School Mentoring</td>
<td>The Australian Square Kilometre Array Project - an international radio astronomy project sits within the Murchison Shire and just next door to the Pia Wadjari Remote Community School, an isolated, K-12, school. As at 2012, 94% of secondary and primary students were of Aboriginal background. This Partnership represents an opportunity to engage CSIRO workers visiting the region to connect with the local community and young people by developing a mentor program that will bring the outside world to the small isolated community and will assist in young people gaining a broader understanding of opportunities outside of their community.</td>
<td>CSIRO Australia, Pia Wadjari Remote Community School, Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre</td>
<td>Self-Sustaining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity Development &amp; Innovation 'Cooking up a Career'</td>
<td>Young people aged 18-25 years of age who are disengaged from education, training and employment will be the target group for this partnership. Young people identified as &quot;change ready&quot; by the Job Service Provider, will participate in a program that will include a three week non accredited training course which will support the development of generic employability skills through work experience, career development and job search training. Eligible participants will receive 1:1 support from Youth Connections and it is hoped to include components of mentoring into the program if participants are willing. The purpose is to re-engage these young people (identified as early school leavers) into further education and training or employment and stop the cycle of disengagement from society.</td>
<td>Skill Hire Geraldton, Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre, Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre</td>
<td>Inactive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 2 day, one off event held in November was a resounding success. Finalisation of the partnership will be in early 2014.

The school and CSIRO are working in a cohesive manner and share a common goal of supporting the students to engage with school and education. The parties have demonstrated a sustainable partnership. PB will monitor.

The project has been completed, however a participant tracking report is required by April 2014.
| Bike Rescue Partnership | Modelled on the successful program through Dismantle Organisation in Fremantle WA, Midwest partners will develop a similar program in Geraldton and Burringurrah in 2013. The program will work with young people at risk of disengaging from school or who have already disengaged, those on juvenile justice orders and young people from remote communities. | **Partners** | Dismantle  
Corrective Services  
Combined Universities Centre for Rural Health  
Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre | **Inactive** Lead Partner Dismantle Organisation was unsuccessful in their funding application for the project to run in 2013 therefore the project has stalled. PB is researching alternative funding options and will re-activate in due course. |

**Connecting the Dots Conference in November and ‘Talking Heads - When I was 11’ display at the Conference**

**‘Cooking Up a Career’ Participant**
Staff Professional Development

- **Shared Learning Professional Development Forums** were held between February and March 2013 and our PB staff had the opportunity to attend one of the 2 day forums coordinated for Youth Attainment and Transitions (PB) service providers. Each forum focused on partnerships involving a specific topic: Sydney - Mental Health; Adelaide - Career Development; and Perth – Alternative Education.

- The **Dave Rendall Workshop** series held in April were an opportunity for staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of the differences that make each person unique. Attendees were provided with a new perspective and ideas which could be applied when working with young people, in the workplace and in their personal lives.

- **WA State Network Meetings** were mostly conducted via teleconference however in October the Director, PB and YC Manager and a PB/YC staff member attended a network meeting held in Perth which incorporated program updates, professional development, sharing best practice and networking.

- **NRGize Training** was held in October with a PB staff member attending a two-day workshop facilitated by the Australian Youth Mentoring Network. The training provided the knowledge and tools needed to run a successful youth mentoring program. These skills were utilised in coordinating the Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry Future Leaders ‘Mentoring in Schools Program’ (MiSP) in which GRCEC is a partner. The MiSP program will continue in 2014.

2013 Partnership Broker Staff

- Carolyn Pegler and Lorraine Lambert have been employed on the PB program since commencement of the contract in Jan 2010. Both previously worked on the Local Community Partnerships program, the program preceding PB.

- Carmel Starcevich has worn a few hats within the organisation - as a PB, a Youth Connections Officer (YCO), and as the Mentor and Training Project Officer.

- Kylie Coulter was based in Exmouth and worked as both a PB and YCO. Kylie resigned from the PB program in July 2013 and has since relocated from the region.

- Lisa Yurisich has worked for GRCEC over many years in different roles. Lisa finished up in her role as a PB in May 2013.

- Emma Howell joined GRCEC in March 2013 appointed to the PB program.

- Jenny Allen, GRCEC’s Director is an active partnership broker in the course of her work for the organisation and contributes greatly to the PB program.

Carolyn Pegler
Program Manager
In 2010 Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre (GRCEC) was contracted on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) to deliver the Youth Connections program. Since 2010 GRCEC has successfully delivered the Youth Connections program on average to over 220 participants per year. At the end of 2013 GRCEC continued its delivery of the Youth Connections program under the Australian Government Department of Education.

During this timeframe Youth Connections continued its objective of supporting young people aged 13-19 who have already disengaged or are at risk of disengaging from school, family and community. Our goal is to help young people minimise barriers that are preventing them from attaining year 12 or its equivalent. In order to accomplish our goals Youth Connections provided individual one on one flexible case management to each of its participants. Youth Connections long term goal is to increase each participant’s personal wellbeing and aid in their personal development.

In 2013 the Youth Connections program was delivered to 223 young people in the Midwest Gascoyne. The table below provides an indication of the type of support provided to each participant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Type</th>
<th>For participants who are part of the caseload for the selected year up to the end of the selected quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Type 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education/Training (Accredited)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/Training (Non-Accredited)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family engagement</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial engagement</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual support</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy/Numeracy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other engagement</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers shown do not tell the whole story. In addition to providing individual support Youth Connections partnered with other organisations to provide services designed to connect with disengaged young people in hopes of assisting them in minimising their barriers and returning to school or into further education, training or employment.
Targeted Engagement
An example of a targeted engagement service is the Midnight Basketball program. Midnight Basketball is a program delivered in at risk areas. It combines basketball tournaments and workshops to provide young people with a safe, healthy and positive environment in hopes of minimising anti-social behaviour. Youth Connections’ role in the program is to provide workshops to teach life skills and other pro social skills to each Midnight Basketball participant while offering each participant the opportunity to receive individual one to one support.

A second example of a targeted engagement is the Learning Engagement And Participation (LEAP) initial Engagement activity. The LEAP activity is designed to help potential participants who are awaiting placement to engage in life skills and other activities designed to reduce personal barriers. In addition to participating in these activities each participant receives one on one support design to indentify strengths, interests and future pathways and to further help minimise their barriers.

Regional Coordination of Services (delivered by the Partnership Brokers)
In August 2013, the Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre’s (GRCEC) Director proposed that staff from the School Business Community Partnership Brokers (PB) program deliver a component of the Youth Connections (YC) program – Regional Coordination of Services.

An excerpt from the YC guidelines state:
Youth Connections providers must focus on developing coordinated and integrated service delivery in the region for young people at risk. This requires a focus on joining up all the relevant, available services to provide a more effective and collaborative approach that is responsive to the needs of young people in the region, particularly for those young people at risk. Regional Coordination Services aim to provide a coordinated regional approach to support young people into a positive transition pathway. Partnerships will need to be demonstrated through mechanisms such as:

- Coordinate integrated service delivery and develop effective referral mechanisms.
- Demonstrate partnerships through agreements and protocols.
- Develop relationships with potential employers, business and industry to broaden transition outcomes for young people.
- Coordinate a regional approach to support those young people into a positive transition pathway.
• Work closely with the PB to build partnerships that will ultimately improve services to young people.

Much of the work the PB was already delivering fitted easily under the Regional Coordination of Services model for example:

- Youth Coordinating Network Mid West (YCN MW) Partnership currently has over 26 youth service provider agencies connected and supported by:
  - monthly E-Newsletters
  - quarterly get togethers to share information, best practice and challenges
  - professional development opportunities

- Dave Rendall Workshops, a series of high quality professional development workshops for youth services providers, teachers, parents and employers designed to improve their capacity to understand and work with young people, especially those at risk of disengaging from education or training.

In each example above, the PB played an active role in developing relationships, supporting partners to coordinate workshops and gatherings and develop the very popular YCN E-Newsletter. Therefore, delivery of YC’s Regional Coordination of Services component sits logically and efficiently within the PB’s scope, freeing up the YC Officers for the important role of one on one support and small group work.

Carolyn Pegler, Manager, Partnership Brokers

In 2014 Youth Connections aims to increase and refine the service it delivers to the community. We hope to increase our partnerships in targeted community to perfect our delivery in all areas. Engaging with other organisations will provide Youth Connections with the opportunity to increase our services while minimising duplication. All of these goals are done in hopes of providing a better service to all our communities while helping our youth decrease the barriers that will keep them from achieving their life goals.

Esmeralda De Trafford
Manager
2013 proved to be a very busy year on a number of levels but all the time and effort invested into the program has paid off and we have seen nothing short of a real transformation in a number of the students. Towards the end of the year the students were asked to take some time to reflect on their journey, what it was like before LEAP, were there any significant struggles or barriers in comparison to where they are today. Below are just a couple of examples, taken straight from their stories, testifying to the transformation that they have seen in themselves this year.

“The program helped me pull my head in and figure out where I wanted to go with my life, and how I needed to get there. And within a year, they have helped me get there. The staff have been nothing but selfless, assisting myself (and other participants) to mature into responsible adults and prepare us for the world.”

“LEAP has assisted me in my journey because I am now more excited and motivated about coming to school and figuring out what I would like to do with my future rather than avoiding it. I have gained much more confidence than I had a year ago and it is easier to talk to new people or do things for myself now. I have a lot less anxiety issues and it is so much easier to think about the future and try to plan what I want to do with it.”

The number of self-referrals increased significantly this year, a possible flow on effect from an increased profile and from the students actively promoting the program. The relationships with local service providers, schools and agencies would have had a positive impact on the number of referrals this year, including self-referrals.

One of the challenges this year was the extra support needed for the students to complete their work, impacting on the duration of the stay at LEAP. A number of the twenty (20) enrolled and actively engaged students for 2013 remained engaged with LEAP for a longer period, with some attending the full forty (40) weeks. Six (6) students transferred out of Geraldton, which is unprecedented, resulting in less than anticipated number of successful transitions being able to be recorded, which totalled eleven (11). Four (4) students are set to continue in LEAP in 2014, with an expected transition to happen somewhere around mid-2014.

The focus of the learning program was once again the Curriculum Council Endorsed Life Skills modules. The students were also given the opportunity to enrol in Certificate I in Preparation for Work and seven boys enrolled in Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management through the Batavia Coast Maritime Institute. A total of thirteen (13) Life Skills modules, twelve (12) Certificate I and four (4) Certificate II qualifications were completed. A number of students participated in work experience with a combined total of 203 hours.

The Civic Engagement Program was a clear highlight of the year with thirteen (13) students participating in the program at various times. Six (6) students went on the excursion to Canberra and Sydney. The excursion was for most of the students a mind-blowing and life changing experience. One boy in particular overcame his fears of heights and cramped spaces, which resulted in increases in both self-esteem and confidence. For a number of the students, going interstate was not only a personal first but also a family first, which evoked a real sense of pride and accomplishment in them. The program was underpinned by a 16-hour educational component delivered on site and externally, including at the City of Greater Geraldton Civic Centre and the Police Station.
As part of the Civic Engagement Program, the students were required to participate in a community project. The students, in partnership with the LEAP staff, identified that a dune rehabilitation project would be the best option. As a result, approximately 150 native plants were introduced back into the dune system to help prevent further erosion by acting as a stabiliser and windbreak. It was this project that opened up the door for a number of students to enrol in and complete a Certificate II qualification.

As part of the wrap around support provided to the students, LEAP has a designated Youth Connections Officer (YCO) assigned to the program. The YCO is responsible for individual case management with the aim of supporting the students in identifying potential personal barriers and then assisting the young person in addressing issues. This is done through, for example: SMART goal setting, problem solving, guided conversations and referrals to external providers. The total number of barriers addressed and achieved in 2013 was 45. The YCO plays an integral role in the support system and structure at LEAP.

Funding for LEAP comes predominantly from both the State and Federal Departments of Education and continues to be a challenge as it impacts on the number of options available in terms of program delivery. Luckily the City of Greater Geraldton came to the table with $22,000 for the Civic Engagement Program and the Charity Golf Day hosted by the Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry raised $5,000. Without this additional funding significant changes to the learning program would have to be made and implemented.

In conclusion 2013 has been a very successful year, despite the various challenges along the way. The personal progress made by each student has simply been astounding and testifies to both the value and effectiveness of the LEAP program. A special mention must also be given to Laine-Rose Forsyth (Learning Co-ordinator) for her dedication to the LEAP program and especially to the students she works with. Her professional attitude and attention to detail, coupled with her ability to connect with and relate to the students, continues to add significant value to the learning program and contributes to the outcomes achieved by students.

Filip Hansen
Manager LEAP
The aims of the Training and Mentor Project Officer position were to:

- Build partnerships to align services, raise the profile of mentoring and ensure access to quality programs
- Develop / deliver non-accredited Workplace Mentor Training
- Develop / deliver non accredited Youth Mentor Training
- Provide information regarding the Australian Youth Mentoring Network National Youth Benchmarks to individuals and / or organisations that offer youth mentoring
- Strengthen services through Youth Connections Type Four delivery
- Investigate fee for service opportunities
- Develop / deliver non-accredited fee for service workshops such as Life Skills and Job Search Training

The position was funded through the Youth Connections and School Business Community Partnership Brokers Programs. Funding to deliver specific projects was received from the Youth Development Support Program (YDSP) and the Government of Western Australian Training and Workforce Development. Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre (GRCEC) received fee for services from CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation) and Bridging the Gap (BTG).

**Youth Transition Support and Workplace Mentor Toolbox Project**

The Youth Transition Support and Workplace Mentor Toolbox project was delivered with funding from the YDSP. The overarching outcomes of the project were to support young people to develop an individual career plan and gain work experience culminating in a “Workplace Mentor Toolbox” for employers.

The project was delivered in three phases:

**Phase one - Transition Planning.** Intensive support was provided to fifteen young people aged between 15 - 17 who were disengaged from school, community and work to develop a meaningful individual career pathway plan. Thirteen of the young people were attendees, or previous attendees, of the Learning Engagement and Participation (LEAP) Program.

**Phase two - Work Experience Program.** Participants embarked on work experience in an occupation or field that matched their interests and career goals. Interested host employers and /
or their staff were offered workplace mentor training to gain the skills and confidence to support a young person to make a smooth transition into their workplace.

**Phase three - Develop and distribute the “Workplace Mentor Toolbox”**. Participants attended workshops to develop a Workplace Mentor Toolbox. They designed the cover and discussed the content. The final draft was sent to a graphic designer which resulted in a professionally produced resource containing information for employers to mentor young people in their workplace.

During the work experience phase the young people and their host employer were interviewed regarding their time in the workplace and the supports provided to enhance their transition. Each host employer and young person’s account was added to the booklet. These stories provided additional information to employers and / or their staff to become an effective mentor in the workplace.

The Workplace Mentor Toolbox was launched in June 2013, to 58 people including employers, young people and a representative of the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Workplace Relations (currently the Australian Government Department of Employment).

**Community and Employer Feedback**

Thirty eight people participated in an online survey regarding the resource. The following responses were received:

- “The Workplace Mentor Toolbox provides information that could help to engage young people in work or community activities.” Strongly Agree: 58% Agree: 39% Neutral: 3%
- “I plan to use the Workplace Mentor Toolbox.” Strongly Agree: 45% Agree: 42% Neutral: 13%
- “I shared knowledge gained from the Workplace Mentor Toolbox with others.” Strongly Agree: 45% Agree: 42% Neutral: 13%

The following email was received from the Youth Mentoring Reform Manager - Department for Communities:

*I think Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre has produced a really attractive Workplace Mentor Toolbox booklet with accessible information about building, maintaining and supporting the mentor/mentee relationship. I like the inclusion of examining the youth mentoring relationships in the workplace; that the mentor/mentee relationship is also about learning new skill, not just learning the work/trade; focus on solutions, not problems; brain development reconstruction during the teenage years; and the punchy excerpts from a mentor or mentee at the bottom of most pages. The case studies were great!*

The project was nominated for the Bendigo Bank “you like” campaign. This was a Facebook campaign which recognised local community projects. The Workplace Mentor Toolbox project received 868 “likes” during the campaign and was placed second in the competition.
Cooking up a Career
Cooking up a Career was delivered by GRCEC with funding from the Western Australian Government Department of Training and Workforce Development through the Equity, Development and Innovation Projects. The aim of the project was to support young people aged 18 -25 to build the skills and confidence to connect or re-connect with employment, training or education. Ten young people participated in the project of which eight received a Certificate of Participation upon completion.

Cooking up a Career was based on participants learning in a professional kitchen with a qualified chef. They visited the kitchen one day per week for three weeks. Participants prepared meals as per industry standards and requirements in a professional but informal environment.

Other activities which assisted the participants to connect with employers, community service providers, training providers and / or mentors included:

- Tour of Radio MAMA
- Workshop at the Digi Hub
- Site visit to Geraldton Crayfish Factory
- Experience on a professional, licenced cray fishing boat
- Orientation of Durack Institute of Technology
- Visit to Joblink Midwest / Workforce Development Centre
- Visit from the Manager of Skill Hire Geraldton
- Job search training and career pathway planning workshops
- Work experience opportunities

Many of the young people were severely disengaged from education, training or employment and required high levels of support and information throughout the project.

Six participants completed an evaluation using the Interactive Turning Point System. Key areas of change included increased confidence in applying for a traineeship or apprenticeship, having learned more about themselves and a keenness to become engaged with learning and/or employment.
CSIRO Pia Wadjari Mentor Program
The CSIRO Pia Wadjari Remote Community School Mentor Program continued during 2013. Three scientists from the Astronomy and Space Science Division of CSIRO attended a full day mentor training session to prepare them for their role to mentor the upper primary students of Pia Wadjari Remote Community School. The Training and Mentor Project Officer developed and implemented the program in consultation with Robin Boddington, Australian Square Kilometre Array Pathfinder (ASKAP) Aboriginal Liaison Officer for CSIRO Midwest.

GRCEC handed over the co-ordination and delivery of the program to CSIRO in the latter stages of the partnership agreement with CSIRO.

Effective Mentoring in the Workplace
The Training and Mentor Project Officer co-delivered “Effective Mentoring in the Workplace” training on behalf of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The fee for service, non accredited training was attended by more than 80 people in Geraldton and almost 50 in Carnarvon.

Midwest Chamber of Commerce and Industry Future Leaders Mentoring Program
The Midwest Chamber of Commerce and Industry Future Leaders Mentor Program continued to provide mentoring services during 2013. The program attracted 23 mentors and 29 secondary students. Mentors received training and obtained a Working With Children Check prior to meeting their mentee. The career mentoring program matched mentees to mentors who had experience or knowledge in the mentee’s field of interest. Mentors met their mentees once per week for a ten week period. They supported their mentee to understand the particular industry or occupation the mentee is working towards as well as the pathway/s required to achieving their career goals. Geraldton Senior College and Nagle Catholic College participated in the program.

Certificate I - Work Preparation
The Training and Mentor Project Officer delivered Certificate I Work Preparation to 11 participants of the LEAP program. The accredited course comprises the following the three units:
- Work Health and Safety
- Apply Basic Communication Skills
- Work Preparation
The course was delivered as a result of an agreement between GRCEC and Job Futures Bridging the Gap. All participants were assessed as successfully completing the course.

Future Directions
The priority remains to explore fee for service and funding opportunities to implement and deliver projects which align with the vision and values of GRCEC.

Carmel Starcevich
Training and Mentor Project Officer
GERALDTON FAMILY & YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICE

The Geraldton Family and Youth Support Service (GFYSS) is funded by the Department for Child Protection and Family Support (DCPFS) to provide services primarily to disadvantaged young people aged 11 to 18 years. GFYSS aims to provide a service that is client focused and supports the individual needs of the participant to assist in effectively managing their lives. The prominent risk areas within the GFYSS participant group are low self esteem, family and relationship conflict, inappropriate behaviour and truancy.

The programs and activities offered to engage young people and build supportive, inclusive relationships include:
- After school activities program
- Individual mentoring support
- In school support
- Provision of information and advice, individually and in groups

**After School Activities Program**
The After School Activities Program has been modelled to assist in building resilience and gaining self confidence through recreation based activities within a group environment. Activities were delivered each term in 2013 on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons by GFYSS Youth Support Worker Tania Penco.
Some of these activities include:
- Swimming
- Sand boarding
- Cooking
- Greenough River walk
- Golf
- Geraldton Regional Library

The focus group for participants receiving support from the After School Activities program were aged between 11 and 15 who were having difficulty socialising with peers. The core group usually consisted of 5 participants per term.

The GFYSS holiday programs were delivered in January and October school holidays. All excursion costs, entry fees, snacks and transport were provided free of charge to participants. Some of the excursions include:
- Cinema
- Swimming
- PCYC
- Sun City Christian Centre
- Archery
Excursion times varied depending on the activities and interest from participants. Evaluations received from participants for the Afterschool Activities Programs and Holiday Programs were all positive.

**Mentoring Assistance**
Mentoring Assistance Program provides mentoring support for young people with a range of at risk factors. The mentoring assistance was delivered inside school or outside school, dependant on the individual participants need. Participants benefited from working with a mentor on a one to one basis. The Mentoring Assistance Program has proven very successful for participants deemed at risk who would not otherwise have access to the support and encouragement a mentor provides. The mentoring assistance program has been designed to assist the young person to enhance their personal growth through positive role modelling.

The Mentoring Assistance Program is changing in 2014. GFYSS will deliver the Mentoring for Success program, which has been designed to have up to 15 volunteer mentors working with 1 or 2 mentees for a minimum of 12 months. The GFYSS coordinator will provide case management to the mentees, whilst overseeing the mentors. Funding was received by the City of Greater Geraldton in 2013 to support the development of the program.

**Workshops**
GFYSS maintained the Cyber Bullying presentations throughout 2013. Information was regularly updated and added to, to ensure it’s relevance to the audience, and activities have been included to maintain audience engagement. Altogether 36 workshops were delivered during the year to age groups ranging from 11 years to 18 years old.

Workshops were delivered to:
- Flexible Learning Centre
- Learning Engagement and Participation program
- Rangeway Primary School
- Mount Tarcoola Primary School
- SHINE Program at John Willcock College
- Geraldton Senior College
- Midnight Basketball

Evaluations were completed at the end of each workshop with majority of feedback received being positive. From January to December 2013 GFYSS operated for 35 hours per week (including Youth Support Worker) over a 43 week period. 19 young people have received ongoing significant interaction for the year and 563 young people have accessed the service through workshops.

Participant data as follows;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (years)</th>
<th>Clients Annually</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 -14 years</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 – 17 years</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over 18 years</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Clients Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Clients Monthly</th>
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<td>Culturally and/or Linguistically Diverse</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number &amp; types of group/activities facilitated</th>
<th># Groups</th>
<th>Total hours</th>
<th># Attended</th>
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<td>After School Activities Group</td>
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<td>Holiday Activities Group</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHINE Cyber Bullying Workshop</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geraldton Senior College Cyber Bullying Workshop Yr 10</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>246</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Midnight Basketball Cyber Bullying Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEAP Healthy Relationship Workshop</td>
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<td><strong>156</strong></td>
<td><strong>601</strong></td>
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Sarah Forsyth  
Coordinator
GERALDTON FAMILY COUNSELLING SERVICE

The Geraldton Family Counselling Service (GFCS) is funded by the Department for Child Protection and Family Support to provide counselling services for individuals, groups and families in the Geraldton area. Counselling is primarily delivered from the centre however the service has continued with the outreach to the Northampton community during 2013.

GFCS has a lengthy history of service provision to the Geraldton and Midwest region and for many years existed under a committee of community members based in the Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre (GRCEC). The service has now been within the auspice of GRCEC for the past 16 years. The service was recontracted to GRCEC in March 2012 for a further three year period.

During 2013 our service has received a significant increase in additional funding from the Department for Child Protection and Family Support following a successful submission by our Director Jenny Allen. These additional funds have enabled the service to increase staffing and maintain a direct one-to-one counselling service, build on professional practice, increase group work activities, develop service provision in surrounding communities and ensure continuity of service provision when staff are on leave or attending professional development opportunities. Kate Foster joined the counselling team in March 2013 under supervision. Kate has demonstrated a healthy interest and commitment to building her skills and knowledge in working as a counsellor across a variety of counselling situations and will increase her counselling role in 2014.

DCPFS funds GFCS to provide a low-cost counselling service to the members of the Geraldton community. This enables more marginalized members of the community to access supports and counselling without having a severe impact on personal or family budgets. During 2013 and following the increase to our funding, a decision was made to reduce the voluntary contributions clients make for counselling. Clients now contribute $10.00 per session across the board and the capacity to waive fees in extreme situations continues to be applied where appropriate.

The Geraldton Family Counselling Service has continued to provide a quality support service within the local Geraldton community. Over the past twelve month period, the service has continued to work in partnership with other GRCEC Services, in particular the Geraldton Family Youth Support Service and Youth Connections. The service has maintained our working relationship with Centacare Family Services and maintained our established contact with The Northampton Aboriginal Women’s Group in conjunction with GRCEC’s PACE project. GFCS provides Healthy Relationships and Parenting Adolescents Workshops for both organisations. The counselling service continues to maintain healthy social and community network links to many agencies within our local area, particularly those that have DCPFS funding.

GFCS has established a link with Carer’s WA and Young Carers to broaden our network and to reach out to other groups in our communities who are often experiencing high levels of isolation, stress and grief and loss. Although we haven’t received a large number of contacts, we are intent on building our connections in this community. GFCS has also been invited to become a member of the new Midwest Family Support Network coordinated by Parkerville Family Services. The purpose of the Family Support Network is to provide supports to individuals and families experiencing troubled times who tend not to meet the criteria of statutory services but continue to experience difficulties. Although 2013 has primarily been about setting up for the establishment of the hub in 2014, GRCEC’s participation through the counselling service and GFYSS has been significant in the final quarter of 2013.
During this reporting period we have seen an increase in presentations particularly in the areas of Family Separation, Child/Parent Issues and Couple Relationships. Where appropriate children and their families have been provided with counselling and information and encouraged to access the Family Youth Support Program to increase social skilling and team building activities. Young people are referred to the Youth Connections program for individual supports in the school environment. Referrals to both services are made with the consent of children, young people and their family members.

We have also experienced a significant increase in our client base returning for an increasing number of counselling sessions – where in previous years clients would attend for two or three sessions, we are now experiencing clients returning for five or six regular sessions. We have also had a number of couples attending relationship counselling prior to marriage.

We continue to have a number of clients attending for marital issues and in particular separation issues. In a number of cases we have been successful in supporting couples to achieve positive outcomes through focusing on encouraging healthy communication practices and building solid partnership goals. Where couples have not been able to reconcile problems and issues, support has been provided to encourage each party to access appropriate local services and resources to minimise the impact of separation on all family members.

Counselling provided by GFCS during 2013 has assisted clients to address a variety of presenting problems/issues. The six most common reasons for seeking counselling from this service for the past twelve months are:

- Self esteem/Personal Growth
- Family Separation Issues
- Depression/Anxiety
- Child/Parent Relationship
- Parent/Adolescent Conflict
- Anger Management Issues

The above most common reasons for contact reflect the primary issue for the presenting client; hence there is generally little change in these areas. Further analysis of counselling service data revealed six clients having regular contact with the service over the reporting period. These include three regular Disabilities Services clients and three young children in the care of the State.

The following table provides a statistical snapshot of the contacts for the 2013 year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Jan – June 13</th>
<th>July – Dec 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of counselling sessions</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of clients in sessions</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total New Clients:</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non English speaking background</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple and dependent children</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single person and dependent children</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single person</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended family</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCD Referrals</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Children</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GFCS has continued to be well accessed by the community and feedback from clients is positive with an increasing number of clients attending on a more regular basis. Demand for services varies and a small wait list for clients wishing to attend the service has been implemented when necessary.

GFCS has an excellent reputation in Geraldton and is frequently the first point of contact for people in crisis. Accordingly we are able to assist clients in the first instance by providing telephone support and/or referral to other agencies when appropriate.

While there have been some changes to our service delivery (two counsellors), GFCS looks forward to many more years of providing the Geraldton community with a quality service at a reasonable cost.

**GERALDTON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS SERVICES**

During 2013 GRCEC has continued to maintain its partnership in the consortium that successfully tendered for the delivery of Family Relationship Services, a Commonwealth Government funded programme through the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

Centacare is the lead agency for the Consortium through the Geraldton Family Relationship Centre and provides a range of services aimed at assisting and supporting child/parental contact in a positive and healthy way. Services provided to the community by the Family Relationship Centre include Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) following separation and divorce, resources to support families and referral to appropriate support services. Other members of the consortium are Geraldton Resource Centre, Chrysalis Support Services and Midwest Men’s Health. The Geraldton based Combined Universities Centre for Rural Health has agreed to work in partnership on an action research project.

The Geraldton Family Youth Support Service has provided a significant number of Youth Healthy Relationship workshops during 2013 and I would like to thank Sarah Forsyth for her support and diligence to undertaking this work for both GFCS and GRCEC. She has provided quality information to young people on highly contentious issues within the community, in particular on Cyber Bullying, and ensured we continue to meet our targets.

GRCEC and GFCS look forward to working with Centacare in 2014.

**Liz Blayney**
Family Counsellor
Parents in Tune with Education (PITE) falls under the Indigenous Children Program and was funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) prior to the change of Federal Government. Towards the end of 2013 it was moved to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

This project aims to increase parents’ understanding and skills to enable them to support their children’s participation in school. PITE focused on Indigenous children and families living within the Midwest, Murchison and Gascoyne regions.

**PITE workshops**
PITE workshops were delivered across the Midwest, Murchison and Gascoyne regions in 2013, mainly being aimed at parents, caregivers and families. In total there were 50 participants that attended PITE workshops in the communities of Geraldton, Northampton, Carnarvon, Yalgoo, Kalbarri, Mt Magnet and Meekatharra. Most of these workshops were delivered in conjunction with the Parental and Community Engagement (PaCE) projects that GRCEC had undertaken in 2012. As a result of PITE workshops most participants provided feedback that they have understanding and knowledge of early brain development, the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), including local results and their role as a parent/carer in supporting their children’s education.

In addition to delivering information and workshops PITE has been promoted at community events such as Durack Institute of Technology open day, Maggie Dent seminar and the “Connecting the Dots: What does it take to grow a child” Conference. Promoting PITE at local events has increased the awareness and knowledge of community members and local agencies of this service. Following these community events the PiTE coordinator had requests from attendees wanting to access resources and further information.

**PiTE Presentations**
In 2013 PiTE information was presented at the following:
- Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health Conference Perth
- “Engaging our Youth” workshop Mt Magnet
- Aboriginal Child Health Upskilling Course Carnarvon
- Maggie Dent Seminar Geraldton
- Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) Local Champions Training Perth
- WA Primary Principal’s Association Conference

**PiTE Resources**
A complete PiTE resource guide is near completion and will include all areas covered in the PiTE presentation, including further information to support agencies and clients.
The distribution of Healthy Brain, Healthy Child DVD and the postcards continued with agencies across Australia purchasing these resources. Also these resources have been provided to participants at PiTE workshops and at community events.

In addition PiTE resources have been used as part of promoting projects such as the Parental and Community Engagement (PaCE) program. GRCEC delivered PaCE to 6 locations across the Midwest region. The Geraldton PaCE “Reaching into Schools” project involved developing a school kit for parents that provided PiTE information and resources. In total 500 kits were made and delivered to 3 Geraldton schools. PiTE resources have been included in “show bags” handed out at conferences such as Connecting the Dots Conference held in Geraldton. At this conference 200 show bags were developed and handed out to participants.

Other
PiTE coordinator attended conferences, forums and training opportunities in 2013. This included:

- Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health Conference Perth
- Aboriginal Child Health Upskilling Course Carnarvon
- Maggie Dent Seminar Geraldton
- Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) Local Champions training Perth

Nancy Kirby was employed to support PiTE coordinator with the administration of the project and researching options around developing a resource that shows how to deliver PiTE workshops in a format that can be used over a period of time with each focus area.

The PiTE Coordinator and Director of GRCEC are actively involved on a number of Boards and committees that create connections across the region; contribute significantly to building capacity within the community; promote the program; and emphasise the importance of a focus on the early years. This is a time consuming but important role that has resulted in the development and implementation of a number of new Aboriginal early childhood projects funded through PaCE. PiTE has been a "launching pad" for these activities, which was not anticipated, with benefits to a number of Midwest communities. Overall, in 2013 PiTE has provided opportunities for agencies and parents to start those important discussions around childhood development and early learning.

The PiTE manager acknowledges all the fantastic work that everyone involved has contributed since the beginning of PiTE to make it as successful as it is today.

Jacquie Taylor
PiTE Coordinator
PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (PaCE) PROJECTS

In 2013 the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations’ (DEEWR) funded the Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre’s (GRCEC) to run six projects under its Parental and Community Engagement (PaCE) program. The PaCE program aims to support parents and/or carers of indigenous children to ‘reach in’ to schools, (and) participate in local level school decision making...”. PaCE projects are parent driven and community owned.

The main objectives of the PaCE Program are to enhance the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to:

- engage with schools and education providers in order to support improved educational outcomes for their children
- build strong leadership that supports high expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students’ educational outcomes
- support the establishment, implementation and/or ongoing progress of community-school partnership agreements; and
- support and reinforce children’s learning at home

Geraldton Reach into Schools Project

The Geraldton “Reach into Schools” Project aimed to enhance the capacity of Aboriginal families in Geraldton to have an increased understanding of school processes, build relationships with Principals and teachers and to connect with schools to achieve the best results for their children. The three local schools involved in this project were Rangeway Primary School, Bluff Point Primary School and Beachlands Primary School.

This project involved the development of a kit for Aboriginal families by Aboriginal parents/carers in consultation with local education providers. The kit was made up of locally developed resources such as Healthy Brain Healthy Child DVD and Meeka 123 storybooks. Also included was information around early childhood development and early learning, with information relevant to each school. The kits were developed during a series of workshops with local Aboriginal families that had children attending all three schools.

Parents and Learning (PaL) Program Mt Magnet, Morawa/Perenjori and Carnarvon

GRCEC delivered Level 1 and Level 2 of the Queensland program Parents and Learning (PaL) to Mt Magnet, Morawa/Perenjori and Carnarvon families in 2013. PaL is an early childhood parent engagement program owned, developed and implemented by Indigenous people. It builds capacity in Indigenous communities by supporting parents and family members to become engaged in their young children's learning. PaL is a two-year home based program, which focuses on early literacy and numeracy, with parents as teachers of their own children and parents.
teaching other parents. PaL is primarily a resource based program and has 2 levels comprising 56 kits. Each PaL kit contains a high quality picture storybook and related educational activities.

GRCEC employed three local Aboriginal women as PaL tutors, one each to work with families in Mt Magnet, Carnarvon and Mungullah Village (Carnarvon). GRCEC PaCE project officer had the role of tutor in Morawa/Perenjori. There were a number of challenges faced in the delivery of this project, in particular getting it off the ground in a new location (Morawa/Perenjori). Although there were challenges experienced with this project there was success in enhancing the capacity of Aboriginal parents and carers to be teachers to their children. Highlights for 2013 included level one participants graduating in the completion of the PaL program over 2 years.

**Meekatharra Teaching our Teachers Project**
The Meekatharra “Teaching our Teachers” Project aimed to enhance the capacity of Aboriginal families in Meekatharra to “Teach our Teachers” and promote the Meekatharra community to new staff at the local school.

Due to sorry business issues in the Meekatharra community this project has been challenging to deliver. In the Meekatharra community there were three deaths over a three month period, and participants involved in this project were close relatives to those that had passed. Although GRCEC staff remained in contact with the families during this period it was not an appropriate time to discuss the delivery of this project. Contact with Meekatharra District High School remained ongoing by GRCEC staff and resources continued to be developed without the support from the Meekatharra PaCE participants. In addition to this GRCEC PaCE staff were also going through sorry business in Geraldton which also affected the delivery of this project.

Although this project did not meet the anticipated outcomes there is still an interest amongst participants and Meekatharra DHS to successfully complete this project. It is evident there is a need to continue supporting Aboriginal families to engage in their children’s education. The aim of this project is to build the capacity of Aboriginal parents to “Teach our Teachers” and promote the Meekatharra community to new staff because of the continued staff turnovers. This remains an issue in the Meekatharra community and parents are concerned this is another factor in unsuccessful educational outcomes for their children. It is anticipated that GRCEC will have an opportunity to continue the delivery of this project in the future.

**Other PaCE Programs**
GRCEC delivered a PaCE project in Kalbarri which is reported separately under a different co-ordinator. In 2013 a number of GRCEC staff, including the GRCEC Director have continued to support other agencies PaCE projects in Northampton.

**Future Directions**
The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has announced a further year of PaCE funding. GRCEC will aim to deliver projects in the communities of Mt Magnet, Carnarvon, Geraldton and Morawa/Perenjori. PaCE staff will include Catherine Bedford as PaCE project officer and Jacquie Taylor as PaCE program manager.

**Jacquie Taylor**
PaCE Program Manager
Kalbarri Dolls and Yarning

After reading about the success of making of dolls by Noongar communities in the Wheatbelt and viewing the 2010 exhibition *Yarns of the Heart* at the WA Museum in Perth, GRCEC conducted a highly successful Dolls and Yarning project in Geraldton/ Northampton in 2012. It was identified that the Kalbarri community would benefit from a similar, though smaller project.

The Kalbarri Dolls and Yarning Project aimed to enhance the capacity of Aboriginal families in Kalbarri to have an increased understanding of school processes, build relationships with the school Principal and teachers and to connect with schools to achieve the best results for their children.

Partners in the project were:
- Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre (GRCEC)
- Kalbarri District High School
- Kalbarri Visitors Centre
- Kalbarri Development Association and ZEST Festival Committee
- Shire of Northampton
- Kalbarri PCYC
- Department of Environment and Conservation

The Dolls and Yarning Project was highly successful in utilising doll making, storytelling and photography as catalysts for engaging parents in conversations about their children’s learning and the importance of parent/family connections to school and education providers. Yarning sessions during the workshops included opportunities to share thoughts about:
- Early childhood development and school readiness, including local Australian Early Development Index and NAPLAN results
- The importance of education and sharing responsibility for learning – at home and at school
  - Aboriginal ways of teaching and learning, their own childhood, life, family and community experiences
    - Values and strategies that can be shared between the school, the family and the community
    - School, family and community partnerships and communication.

The parents felt at ease to discuss issues with other parents about strengths of the school and educational opportunities for their children as well as any concerns or challenges they faced in a friendly environment during the workshops. Parents discussed the need to be more up-front, to be more resilient and to encourage the teaching staff to understand the different ways that Aboriginal children learn. The parents indicated they have become more confident with approaching the teaching staff to discuss issues concerning their children.
The majority of parents now attend school assemblies and sporting events and sit in with their children and listen to them read and play educational games before school starts, especially the kindy and pre-primary children’s parents. Parents listen to their children read their reading books and read bedtime stories to their children at night. Parents help prepare and serve healthy food the school canteen. They have an increased understanding why these activities are important in contributing to their children’s education as a result of workshop presentations and the opportunity to yarn together.

During the project participants engaged with the Kalbarri District High School Principal, the Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer (AEIO), the Art teacher, the early childhood teacher and playgroup co-ordinator and older students. The opportunity to work with educators and photography students in locations of importance to the parents enhanced their confidence and capacity to engage in education.

The ZEST Festival provided an opportunity for 15 dolls to be put on display and to make connections within the community. Approximately 60 visitors to the festival visited the stall, with approximately 30 making woollen dolls and sharing their stories about their education.

Participants played a role in developing and reviewing a stunning booklet that was launched at a school assembly. The participants handed these out to children, parents, teachers and community members and spoke to them informally about the project. The feedback from those receiving the booklets was extremely positive. For example teachers indicated that they would be reading the books to their class and including copies in “class libraries”. One of the teachers had prepared an article for the Midwest Times and other media outlets.

The creation of the dolls and the booklets ensures a degree of sustainability, as they remain in the community as a reminder of the importance of connections between families, schools and the wider community, as well as acknowledging on an ongoing basis the commitment of Aboriginal parents to education.

Jenny Clayton
Project Officer
PaCE Kalbarri
The overall aim of the AEDI program is to improve early childhood development outcomes for all Australian children by providing communities, governments and policy makers with the information they need to plan and evaluate their efforts in improving outcomes for young children.

The AEDI, collected nationally once every three years, is a population measure of children’s development providing community level data to assist communities in understanding how children are progressing against five developmental domains as they reach school. The domains are:

- Physical health and well-being;
- Social competence;
- Language and cognitive skills;
- Communication skills and general knowledge; and
- Emotional maturity.

Following the success of the first national collection in 2009, teachers again administered the AEDI to all children in their first year of full time schooling (pre-primary in Western Australia) in 2012. As with the 2009 data (similar to census data), the information derived from the second national data collection has been collated into profiles for each community, which can be used by government and non-government organisations to improve planning for early years’ policy and initiatives.

As part of the AEDI Cycle Two, 2012-2014, Western Australia has allocated funding through the Department of Education, provided by the Australian Government, for ‘local champions’ enabling ‘champions’ to work directly with communities to respond to their AEDI results.

GRCEC is delivery this project largely through established networks and leveraging off existing programs. The AEDI team is based in Geraldton and has been promoting the AEDI ongoing since 2011 through other programs delivered by GRCEC such as Parents in Tune with Education (PiTE) and the Parental and Community Engagement (PaCE) program, and through the Early Years Network. This has included working with local service providers and providing them with kit that included AEDI information that they provide to their clients. Other work included delivering AEDI information to the parents of the “Ninny Jinas” Aboriginal playgroup and to tutors of the PaL home visiting program in Carnarvon and Mungullah and as part of the Kalbarri Dolls and Yarning Project. The AEDI booklet developed in 2011 has been updated to include 2012 results.
The AEDI has been promoted through meetings and presentations such as the

- Midwest Gascoyne Human Services Regional Managers Group
- Carnarvon Human Services Managers Group
- Midwest Early Years Network
- Carnarvon Aboriginal Congress
- Carnarvon Non-Government Organisations Network
- Partnership Forum (reporting to Premier and Cabinet)
- Department of Aboriginal Affairs Executive
- Midwest Principal’s Conference
- Maggie Dent with over 400 people in attendance. The audience included early childhood professionals, educators, health workers and the local community. There were 2 sessions held on the one night and AEDI information was presented to the audience as well as being displayed at the GRCEC stall throughout the night.
- Connecting the Dots conference, held over 2 days in November 2013 with service providers and professionals such as health workers, educators and early childhood workers attending. During the conference the AEDI was promoted and information was included in the conference bags that were distributed to over 100 people.

GRCEC will be co-ordinating the delivery of services at and through the Rangeway Child and Parent Centre. This will include supporting the local AEDI community to map early years services and programs against the AEDI data and to identify programs that can be delivered through the centre and, where there are gaps, plan and purchase new services.

Jacquie Taylor
Program Manager
OSCCA

OSCCA is the Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre’s longest running service having operated for over thirty years. This service provides high quality after school and vacation care for primary school aged children.

After School Program
In 2013 OSCCA serviced the following primary schools: Waggrakine, Mount Tarcoola, St Francis, Geraldton, Beachlands, Bluff Point, Leaning Tree, Allendale, Geraldton Grammar, Rangeway, St John’s and Strathalbyn Christian College.

Two in-house workshops were held for the educator’s which focused on the educational program. This was facilitated by Kate Foster and Angie West. During the workshops we were able to get a better understanding of the programming cycle which allowed us to re-develop a program that focuses on child interest and aligns with the new Regulations and National Quality Framework. The program still offers a balance of indoor and outdoor play, planned and spontaneous activities as well as open ended or invitational learning.

We continued with the Active After Schools Program, still running twice a week. We have been able to purchase sports equipment in relation to the sports chosen each term and utilise these during our sessions.

During the afterschool program we offered the children afternoon tea. This year the menu was reviewed and adapted to ensure a healthy balance of the food groups for children while including foods the children like. We will continue to review and adapt the menu.

The utilisation for afterschool sessions averaged 21.8 children per day. 185 children from 129 families attended the service throughout the year.
**Vacation Care**
During the school holidays the Educational Program is more extensive than the afterschool program. We continued to provide indoor and outdoor activities, incursions and excursions, craft and cooking. Children were surveyed to determine what they liked and what they didn’t like. We also looked at what they would like to do next time to ensure we plan for their likes and interests and evaluate the aspects that have room for improvement.

Attendance numbers throughout the year during the vacation care periods have been lower than previous. The average utilisation during the vacation care periods over the year was 32.8.

**Educators**
During 2013 there has been a quite high staff turnover. Rachael Reynolds is still fulfilling the position of Coordinator. Lauren Mearns stepped into the position of 2IC in March but sadly gave notice towards the end of year and will no longer be returning due to family health issues. A number of casual educators provided invaluable support to the program.

Rachael Reynolds
OSCCA Co-ordinator

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[Image of children and educator]