

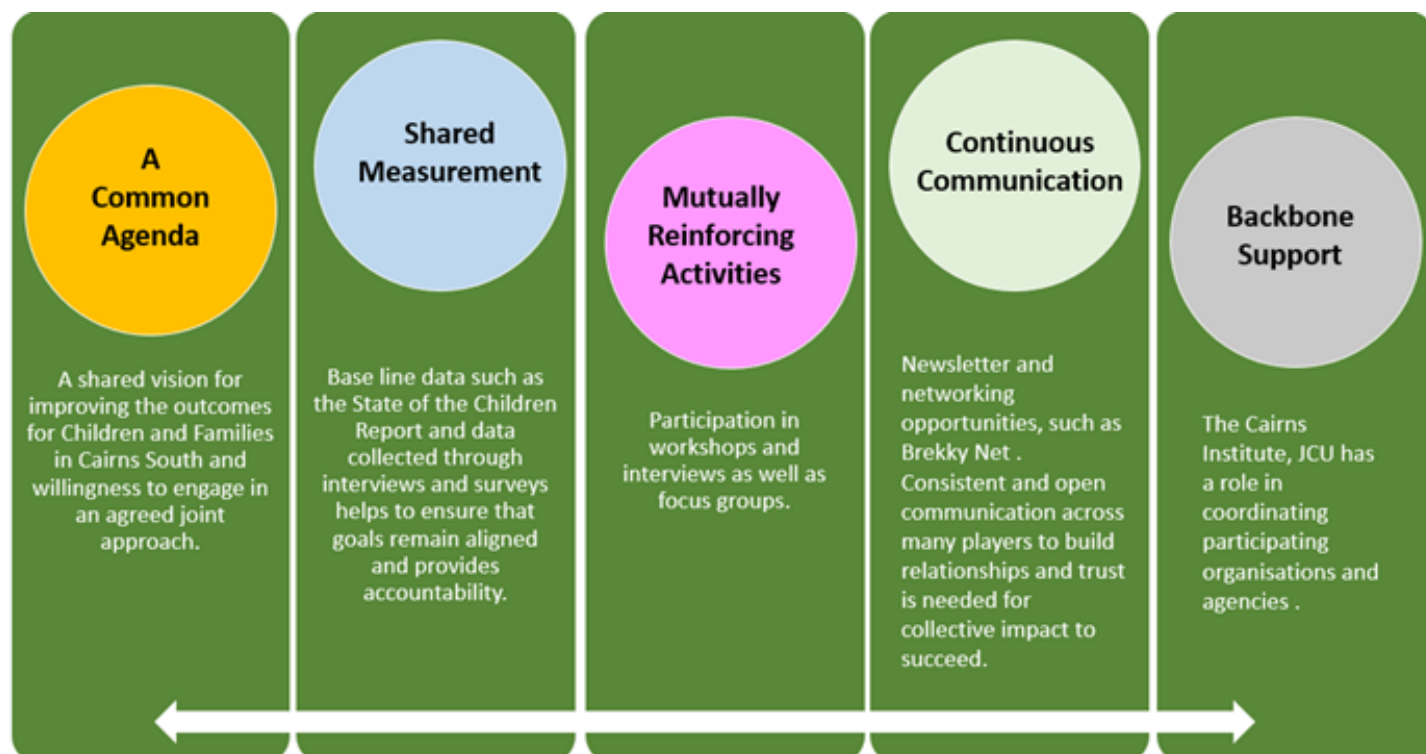


Collective Impact: Cairns South

Collective Impact in Cairns South—A reflection

As we roll into the next phase of the Cairns South Collective Impact (CI) project, as the backbone organization, we felt it may be time for a little recap and reflection. Collective impact is all about working together to achieve better outcomes – in this case, better outcomes for kids between 0 and 12 in Cairns South. Collective impact processes are meant to be highly engaging and data driven. The following outlines the five conditions for effective collective impact.

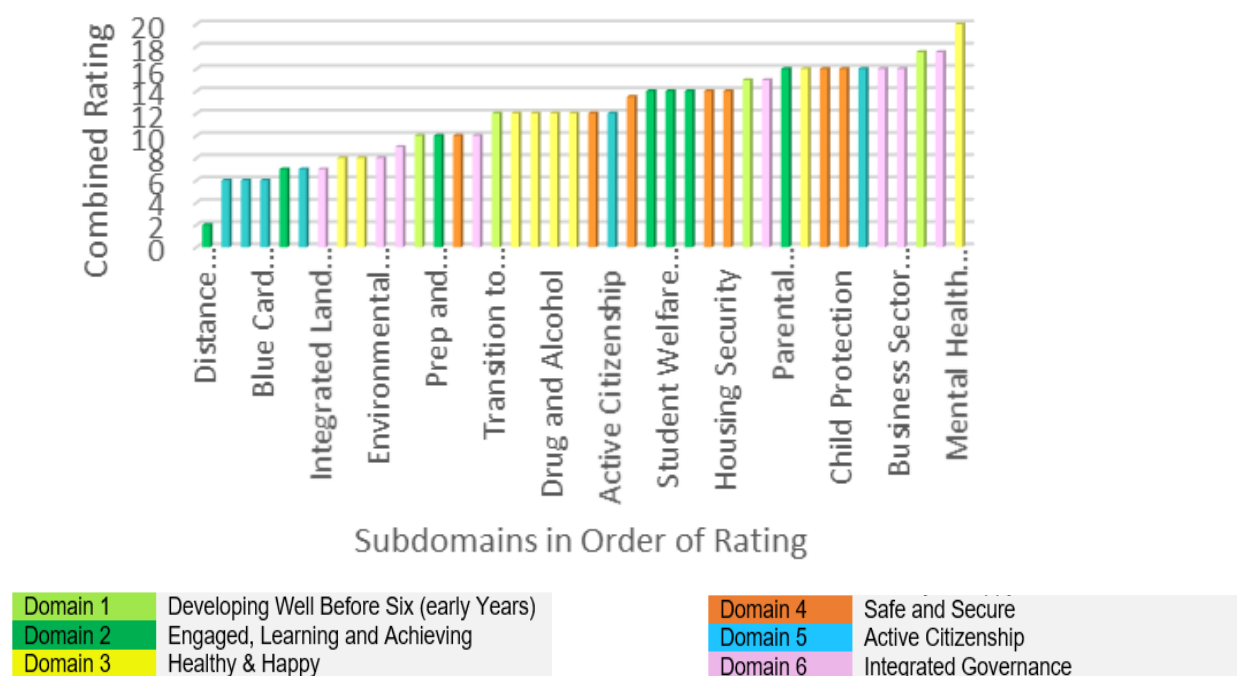
As (Predkill et al., 2014) states “Collective impact is not a solution but rather a problem-solving process that enables solutions to emerge through the application of the collective impact framework.”



The Five Conditions for Effective Impact

The Process So Far

The process of shared measurement was made easier as we were fortunate to have the [2016 State of the Children Report](#) as base line data that could be used to identify priorities and to measure progress. As the backbone organization, we then conducted over 70 interviews to try to get a clear picture of the systematic concerns in Cairns South. This information provided the data that led to the creation of specific detailed data tables and indicators which enabled us to rank those parts of the system that are at most risk of delivering poor outcomes for children in Cairns South.



Taking the data back to the group via workshops and further interviews, we were able to prioritise and create five strategic change projects:

1. Cairns South Community Services Hub: In recent meetings between the State, Council and the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital Board, we secured agreement to jointly explore the concept of establishing some form of Community Services Hub in Cairns South;
2. Integrated Needs Assessment: The project has set up a working group with representatives from key organisations to guide exploration of better ways to assess the needs of children and cohesively respond to these needs. Consultations and other research is underway, with a strong focus on community input;
3. Schools as Networks: The FNQ office of Education Queensland is implementing the “Whatever it Takes” initiative, focused on innovation and capacity building of schools to ensure optimal educational outcomes (see further details in this newsletter). The Collective Impact work is seeking to profile and support this.
4. Towards an Indigenous Service Alliance: We are currently supporting the Southern Cairns Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Organisation for Families and Youths in a deep listening phase in order to strengthen and support Indigenous-led Community Development;
5. Place-based Leadership and Civic Capacity: Community members, government and community services, businesses and families have all raised concerns as well as positive ideas about how we collectively support all children to be resilient. When resilience is lacking, communities can experience poor outcomes for children. For this reason, we see increasing civic capacity and community leadership as a high priority. We have begun conversations around what civic capacity is, as well as arranging screenings of the film *Resilience: The Biology of Stress & the Science of Hope*. The next step will be a wider community forum on this subject to explore how we can increase resilience through improved civic capacity.

The role of the backbone organization is not to drive the agenda (5 strategic change projects), but to support the community and the support agencies to progress these issues together. While it is important to be adaptive and have a degree of flexibility we feel the best way to focus our limited resources is to continue to support all of the five strategic change projects while strengthening some of the core elements of CI, such as strong relationships and communications.

Reflections on Collective Impact Elsewhere

More people started talking about Collective Impact approaches from 2011, though it has its roots in community development theory and practice. It has been widely adopted in Australia with an estimated 80 Collective Impact style projects underway (Graham & Weaver, 2016).

With the majority of the research conducted being North American based it is important to consider the significant difference in the Australian experience. Unlike North America, governments play a much larger role in service provision and funding, with the role of government being even more significant in rural and remote regions. According to a report written for the Australian Institute of Family Studies (2017), the larger role of government can lead to inflexibility as service providers are required to be accountable to their contracts. This often lessens their ability to respond to community needs.

A report prepared by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) identified a number of gaps in community level data and CI initiatives.

This is largely due to the difficulty in accessing or identifying the appropriate data to determine the issues facing the community. They consider that, "In Australia there is a tension between the emerging need and market for data at the community level, and a lack of technical expertise and resourcing for its access and analysis (Productivity Commis-

sion, 2016). ARACY acknowledges the incredible benefits for improving operations and services that data can provide but notes the true value of data can be limited for many reasons including the risk averse approach to data sharing and linkages (Productivity Commission, 2016)."

Salignac, Wilcox, Marjolin & Adams (2017) authored a paper titled 'Understanding Collective Impact in Australia: A new approach to interorganizational collaboration' and noted that CI is still in its early stage in Australasia. Their research also noted the importance of strong relationships, and that backbone organisations take a number of forms, and are critical to the success of any CI project.

Research also indicates that to create a successful CI, not only do the five conditions for effective impact need to be in place, but significant mindset shifts need to occur. Kania, Hanleybrown and Splansky Juster (2014) believe that in order to achieve large-scale change CI partners need to consider who is engaged, how they work together and how progress happens.

They note the importance of building relationships and trust and having the right people involved. They also consider the importance of paying attention to adaptive work, not just technical solutions, as complex problems are unpredictable and constantly changing adaptive problem solving is required and may require a combination of interventions.



Source: Adapted from Salignac et al., 2017

References

- Gill, Z., & Smith, C. (2017). *Data and community: How Collective Impact initiatives in Australia use data to support action*. Canberra: Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY). Retrieved August 2019 https://www.aracy.org.au/publications-resources/command/download_file/id/336/filename/Collective_Impact_Research_Report_-_Data_and_Community_-_How_initiatives_in_Australia_use_data_to_support_action.pdf
- Kania, J., Hanleybrown, F., & Splansky Juster, J. (2014). *Essential mindset shifts for collective impact*. Stanford Social Innovation Review, Fall. Retrieved August 2019 https://cfrk.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Essential_Mindset_Shifts_for_Collective_Impact.pdf
- Salignac, F., Wilcox, T., Marjolin, A., & Adams, S. (2018). *Understanding collective impact in Australia: A new approach to interorganizational collaboration*. Australian Journal of Management, 43(1), 91-110. doi:10.1177/0312896217705178
- Smart, J. R. (2017). *Collective impact: Evidence and implications for practice*. Australian Institute of Family Studies. Retrieved August 2019 <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/collective-impact-evidence-and-implications-practice/what-collective-impact>
- Productivity Commission. (2016). *Data Availability and Use: Draft Report - Overview and Draft Recommendations*. Canberra: Australian Government

So what have we learnt?

A qualitative evaluation by Dr. Anne Stephens, on the project in 2018, determined that "the project team has conducted the CI project in accordance with the CI methodology, and with an expertise that has enriched the perceived outcomes of the project to date. Research and background work conducted by the 'backbone organization' has been rigorous and well received. The workshops and communications have effectively maintained project participation. The CI concept is understood and the 'Big Babies' are supported."



#What Ever It Takes

#Whatever It Takes (#WEIT) was introduced by QLD's Department of Education in FNQ. It was initiated in 2018 across 92 schools in FNQ to build a culture across the region that highlights joint responsibility and accountability across education and all departments and agencies for the transition from birth to a successful pathway into adulthood for each and every student. The essential parts of this innovation include the realisation of the importance of student well-being, optimizing student participation and enhancing student engagement to maximise student academic, social and emotional outcomes for K-12 students.

#WEIT provides a framework through which to respond at an individual school level and collectively to DET's State-wide objective of 'every student succeeding'. It recognises that in helping students succeed 'one size does not fit all' and that flexible implementation of education-based practice and policy delivers better student outcomes. As such, #WEIT aims to provide structure within which more 'flexible' responses can be made to the particular needs and circumstances of each school's students and community.

The initiative has three overarching values: courage, connection and creativity. It also has collaboratively developed and agreed ways of working, which include: 'establishing clarity of purpose', 'unlocking the potential of partnerships', 'creating innovative solutions' and 'celebrating successful practice'. Collaboration and innovation, customised to each school and its community, are clearly key elements of #WEIT. These are already delivering positive outcomes. This collaboration and innovation are described by the Department as follows.

#WEIT seeks to create customized approaches to the unique needs of school communities and clusters. The work begins by identifying who needs to be involved and creating ways to ensure the authentic participation of all relevant stakeholders. Throughout the process, participant experiences are honoured, evidence is critically examined and research is considered to identify specific school community challenges. Inherent in this process is a visioning element that describes a preferred future including desired actions and behaviours. This element of the process fosters hope, aspiration, commitment and momentum to undertake the emerging work. A purpose built action plan is collaboratively constructed for each community. This plan contains the typical components including goals, strategies, timelines, resources and progress measures. A unique feature of this action planning process however, is the detailed differentiated capability development strategy that underpins the enactment of the action plan. The Far North Region plays an important role in the co-design and delivery of the capability development plan. Chains of evidence are used to measure progress. Each chain of evidence maps emerging challenges, the knowledge acquisition required and the behaviour changes needed to achieve the preferred future. Each of these links in the chain has specific milestones and measures.

#WEIT cont...

An example of #WEIT's impacts and outcomes is the 'On Trek' adventure-based learning program, initiated and delivered by Cape schools. These schools deliver the Australian Curriculum but in ways that engage vulnerable 10 to 14 year-old students so as to develop their personal and social capabilities. Clusters of schools in the Innisfail and Tully areas have also developed a customised approach to respond to increasing levels of student disengagement in their local areas through #WEIT. The schools have come together to build an effective coordinated case management service to ensure vulnerable students are identified, appropriately supported and tracked to ensure they effectively transition along their school journey. Innovative approaches established by individual schools include the Cairns West Hub, an on-site interagency hub that provides wrap-around support for students and families at Cairns West State School requiring assistance with issues such as trauma, dependency, poverty, mental health etc...

The Department points to multiple challenges to implementation of #WEIT, both inside and outside of the school gate. For instance, there are difficulties for school and regional staff in terms of resources (having sufficient time and accessing relevant expertise), and there is significant cultural change required within school communities and departmental offices to trial new ways of working. It is important to address these internal challenges to ensure #WEIT delivers good outcomes. Some challenges sit outside of the educational system, adding a degree of complexity. For instance, ad hoc, cyclical government resourcing to agencies responsible for student and family support leads to duplication of and inconsistency in provision of support being provided by services. The Department states:

'While all agencies have their own specific purpose there is a part of student engagement work that requires intentional collaboration. Defining this work and partnering to make it happen continues to be our greatest challenge.'

Emerging from these and other challenges is the 'next piece of work' for #WEIT, with many of these challenges and responses to them requiring innovation in collaboration. A comment by the Department about #WEIT in particular, but applicable more broadly is that if we 'can overcome the challenge of effectively working together' we will achieve 'a far greater impact for vulnerable students and families.'

The STEPS program at Bentley Park is a further #WEIT initiative. See details below on Brekkynet.

Brekkynet

The next BreckyNet will be hosted by Department of Education (Bentley Park College STEP team)

Adam Catalano (Deputy Principal Education Services) will present an overview of the STEP program, implemented to help to improve outcomes for disengaged students.

Background of STEP Program:

In 2019, Bentley Park College (BPC) facilitated an alternative learning program called the STEP program targeted at disengaged and at risk youth in years 7,8, and 9. The STEP program has provided an alternative learning environment to mainstream schooling. The program aims are to reduce student disciplinary referrals and suspensions, re-engage target students and reduce the local crime rate; essentially providing young people with a stepping stone back into mainstream schooling.

When: Friday 18th October 2019

Time: 7.30am to 8.30am

Where: Edmonton PCYC ; 10 – 20 Walker Road, Edmonton

RSVP by: 3pm, Wednesday 13th October 2019

To RSVP or subscribe to the Brekkynet,

contact: KattabH@missionaustralia.com.au



A familiar face at TEDxJCUCairns 2019

Many of you are probably familiar with the [TEDxJCUCairns](#) event. Being its 6th year you have probably seen some of the talks or know some of the speakers like [Molly Steer](#), [Amy Eden](#) and [David Hudson](#). This year will feature a strong advocate for Collective Impact and a passionate supporter of initiatives that support families and children. On Saturday the 9th November the Hon. Stanley Jones AO QC, a former QLD Supreme Court Judge with an impressive legal career spanning 42 years, will take to the stage and deliver a talk to the global TEDx platform.

For more information visit the website

<https://tedxjcucairns.com/>



Resilience Screening

Since purchasing the rights to screen Resilience we have shown it to a broad section of the community including Cairns Regional Council for the August CI workshop, Edmonton PCYC in September and at JCU in October. All screenings have been well attended and lively discussions have followed. Allan Dale believes the film “provides a great example of how we can collectively improve outcomes for children by starting with some of the basic principles of civic capacity of being engaged or caring.” Plans are currently in place to show the film at Education Queensland's Regional Cairns Office and at one of the school's in South Cairns.

Pathways to Success

The former Community Liaison Officer at Bentley Park and Woree, Mr. Aquillar Luki, has been busy arranging another Pasifika Family Evening. Aquillar passionately believes in the importance of family and community in achieving post school success. The next night aimed at Pasifika families will be on 15 October 2019.

'Pathways to success' Pasifika Family Evening

The family is the most important unit in time and eternity and as such, transcends every other interest in life. Home may seem a common place at times with its routine duties, yet its success should be the greatest of all our pursuits. It is the involvement of parents and carers at home that leads to higher school achievement for your children. Programs and interventions that engage families in supporting children's learning at home are linked to higher student achievement. Students and parents/carers are invited to join us at an informal evening to hear university and TAFE graduates speak about their 'pathway to success' via university and TAFE study, and about the importance of education and family support today.

James Cook University Smithfield Campus
Cairns Institute Building, Smithfield
Tuesday 15 October 2019
6.00 pm to 7.15 pm

For more information

Contact: Aquillar Luki

0455122520



MAKE
GREAT
HAPPEN



Useful links

Cairns South Communities for Children webpage

<https://www.cfcsouthcairns.com.au/HOME.3.0.html>

Cairns South Community for Children Facebook Page

https://www.facebook.com/Communities-for-Children-954957344544429/?_tn=%2Cd%2CP-R&eid=ARCZHQGbNldRDD3FaSmcTI54ikxCOUOUdly893sKfEWweQ581ICDXxd-uDX-jDSIQ7cWWBY2JG_0JS66

Centre for Disease Prevention and Control; Information on ACEs

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/index.html>

ARACY; Publications and information on Collective Impact

<https://www.aracy.org.au/publications-resources/area?command=record&id=260>

For more information on the Cairns South CI Project

Contact: Jennifer McHugh

Collective.impact@jcu.edu.au

07 42321718



THE CAIRNS INSTITUTE
Research in tropical societies



2019 Courtenay Lecture

Presented by Dr Dan Woodman

'After the Generations Wars: Building a better future for the young people'

Free public event. All are welcome to attend.

5.30pm, Thursday 17 October - CAIRNS D003-054

Please register to attend at www.bit.ly/CourtenayLecture

Parking at JCU free from 5pm.

The Courtenay Lecture Series was established in October 1996 by a donation from the Cairns Trinity Junior Chamber of Commerce. The annual lecture consists of a public presentation on a current issue by a prominent Australian or international person.

The lecture has been named in honour of Professor Philip Courtenay, former Rector of JCU, Cairns campus.