

## News from our place: AICCAS and MACS Australia-wide:

*This column will be available in every issue of Children Australia for 1993. All Aboriginal & Islander child care agencies and Multifunctional Children's Services are invited to let us know about issues, needs and problems in your area; things which are happening; notable achievements; and ideas and dreams for the future.*

### Yera Child Care Centre, Batchelor

**Lisa Paddison – Director**

Yera Child Care Centre is the MACS attached to Batchelor College in the Northern Territory, 100K south of Darwin. Batchelor College is a multi-purpose institute of Tertiary Education for Aboriginal and Islander people, offering accredited courses in such things as Teacher Education, Health, Broadcasting and Journalism, Office Administration, Community Management, Early Childhood Education, Sport and Recreation, Language and Linguistics and Land, Parks and Wildlife Management.

The Child Care Centre offers services for the children of students attending the college. Our services include a 25 place long day centre, a 15 place Family Day Care scheme and an after-school Enrichment Program for primary school aged children.

1993 will be a year of change for Yera. We are getting ready to move from a temporary facility into a new, purpose-built 50 place centre. Although this new centre will be licensed for 50 children under the age of 6, we will not be able to increase our numbers due to no increases in funding (operational subsidies etc) from the Commonwealth. We hope that this situation will change in the future, as the College continues to grow and to offer more and more courses to more and more students, and there is an ever-growing demand for child care.

A notable achievement in our centre in the last month has been that we have been lucky enough to be able to employ a new qualified child care worker, Dee Uibo, who is a graduate of Batchelor College with a Diploma in Teaching. Dee is an Aboriginal woman who was born and raised in Numbulwar in the Gulf of Carpentaria. She has lived and worked in many Top End communities, and she speaks many Aboriginal languages, including Yolgnu Matha and Kriol. This is a great asset to our centre, as our children come from bush communities all over the Northern Territory and Top End of Western Australia and Queensland, and many of them do not speak English. Dee is also a great resource for our other staff, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, and her input into the centre will be invaluable.

There are many dreams and ideas for the future at Yera. Some are simple ones, like wishing, hoping and waiting for the funding for a bus for the service. We would especially like to be able to extend our Enrichment Program, both in the hours we can offer the program, (presently 20 hours per week), and to reach a greater

number of children, especially post-primary children aged 12–16 years. There is very little for kids this age to do in Batchelor, and they mostly just hang around. There are no jobs, no sport, no recreation, nothing. It would be great if we could offer something for these kids, who often seem to get left out of the equation. Even if it was just a place to play pool.

Well, that's all from the Top End. I look forward to seeing the national journal, *Children Australia*, especially reading thoughts from colleagues in other MACS and AICCAS.

### Coolabaroo Neighbourhood Centre

**Joanne Della Bona**

Coolabaroo's child intake is fifty-seven. Of those fifty-seven, 80% are Aboriginal. Some of these children are referrals from Department of Community Development, which is a concern as some of these children have certain problems. We are funded for staff according to the staff-child ration in the regulations. Due to the nature of funding it is impossible to provide 1 on 1 for those children, who have 'difficulties/problems'. Therefore we feel we are unable to provide for these Aboriginal children as adequately as we would like.

Coolabaroo has received funding from ATSIC and lotteries, and did our own fundraising for the development of a playground – which should be completed by June. Our children will then have equipment such as slides, flying fox and a fort to play in. Prior to this development Coolabaroo has had 'near to none' outdoor climbing equipment. We take in 15 babies, 15 toddlers, 15 3–4s and 12 pre-schoolers and 30 out-of-school hours care children.

Coolabaroo set up a program in 1992/93 called 'Yarning Program'. The program involved many older members of the Aboriginal community coming to Coolabaroo to share their knowledge with the children. The children were encouraged to talk and learn the Noongar language. The interaction between young and old ranges from talking, reading, telling stories. This program was a finalist in the *Project 92 Awards*, run by Children's Advisory Council.

For the future, we have had plans for an extension, which will incorporate offices for the Health Department of WA, the Aboriginal Legal Service and an Aboriginal Medical Service as well as an increase in space for children's rooms. Up to this time, we have been unsuccessful in obtaining the funds of \$300,000 needed for this to occur.

Coolabaroo will still strive to obtain its dream for the future.

## ABORIGINAL & ISLANDER CHILD CARE AGENCIES

### NEW SOUTH WALES

Betsy Coe  
Aboriginal Children's Services  
130 Redfern Street  
REDFERN NSW 2016  
Ph. (02) 699 9835

Joe Perry  
Hunter Aboriginal Children's Services  
PO Box 282  
HAMILTON NSW 2303  
Ph. (049) 612 423

#### NSW Branches:

PO Box 796  
ST MARYS NSW 2760

PO Box 50  
WAGGA NSW 2650

PO Box 610  
COWRA NSW 2794

### NORTHERN TERRITORY

Merle Simpson  
Central Australian Aboriginal Child Care Agency  
PO Box 2438  
ALICE SPRINGS NT 5750  
Ph (089) 527 140

Barbara Cummins  
Karu Aboriginal Child Care Agency  
PO Box 40639  
CASUARINA NT 0811  
Ph. (089) 227 171

### TASMANIA

Lisa Coulson  
Tasmanian Aboriginal Child Care  
89 Lower Lindsay Street  
LAUNCESTON TAS 7250  
Ph. (003) 316 671

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Lorraine Whitby  
West Australian Aboriginal Child Care Committee  
21 Pinewood Place  
BEECHBORO WA 6063  
Ph. (09) 377 5082

Irene Stanton  
Yorgonop Aboriginal Child Care Corporation  
124 Parry Street  
EAST PERTH WA 6000  
Ph. (09) 227 9022

### QUEENSLAND

Robin Moylan  
Yuddika Aboriginal & Islander Child Care Agency  
91 Draper Street  
CAIRNS QLD 4970  
Ph. (070) 511 388

Caroline Munns  
Mt Isa Aboriginal Child Care Agency  
PO Box 1324  
MT ISA QLD 4825  
Ph. (077) 439 626

Racheal Cummins  
Townsville Aboriginal & Islanders Child Care Agency  
PO Box 312  
HERMIT PARK QLD 4812  
Ph. (077) 726 466

Norm Brown  
Brisbane Aboriginal & Islanders Child Care Agency  
751 Stanley St  
WOOLLOONGABBA QLD 4120  
Ph. (07) 391 5466

Linda Black  
Rockhampton Aboriginal Child Care Agency  
PO Box 158  
ROCKHAMPTON QLD 4700

Jacky Cannon  
Barambah Aboriginal Islander Child Care Agency  
PO Box 168  
MURGON QLD 4605  
Ph. (071) 21 2108

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Brian Butler  
South Australian Aboriginal Child Care Agency  
29 North Terrace  
ADELAIDE SA 5000  
Ph. (08) 212 1112

### VICTORIA

Darren Lovett  
Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency  
4 Brunswick Place  
FITZROY VIC 3065  
Ph. (03) 419 7899