



LAUREL TIMES

Welcome to our latest edition of Laurel Times.

You'll find this edition of Laurel Times even bigger and better than ever as we bring you news about all the exciting things that are going on in all four locations of Laurel Place.

Also in this issue, we would like to introduce Sharron, who as our new Centre Support Officer is the face that now greets our visitors to the Maroochydore office..

Sharron, not a complete stranger to Laurel Place - having done a "temp" stint with us in 2014, is taking care of reception and the administration tasks, and generally keeping things running smoothly so that the counsellors can focus on our clients.

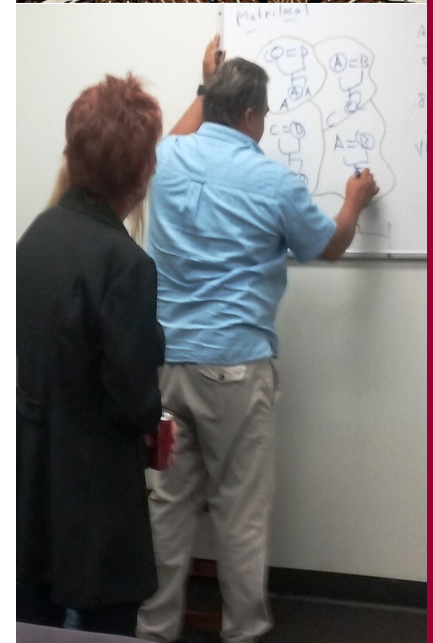
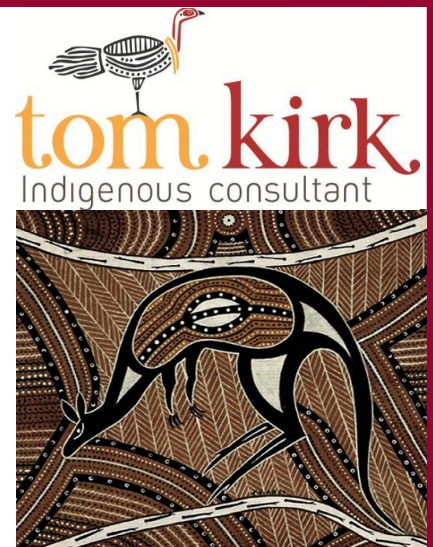


Indigenous Cultural Awareness and Cultural Competency Training



Above: Tom Kirk with Laurel Place Business Development Manager, Coral Gilbert.

Earlier in 2017 the staff of Laurel Place all came together for **Indigenous Cultural Awareness and Cultural Competency Training**, facilitated by the very dynamic **Tom Kirk** (Indigenous Consultant). Tom's style of relaxed and interactive story-telling set the scene for a day that was both informative and inclusive of each person in the room. We learnt new stories about each other and moved through the day both as listeners and participants. The main aims of the day were to assist staff in increasing their cultural perspectives of indigenous peoples, to highlight key issues that might impact on indigenous/ non indigenous relationships in our work and to improve our cross cultural communication skills. Tom led the team through learning of the many different family groups that make up Indigenous Australia and the kinship relationships which are very detailed and quite complicated. Tom also highlighted the devastating impact of colonisation on Indigenous families and his interactive style was a powerful and emotive tool for this part of the day. We will all take so much from this day into our work, but especially a greater cultural sensitivity, an open and curious attitude and being willing to have a go and make mistakes along the way. As Tom suggests, we will now - "not assume that your way is **the** way and be ready for different approaches".



Hi from Gympie:

For the third year in a row Laurel Place has had the pleasure of attending the Little Kids Day out held annually at the Civic Centre in Gympie. The Little Kids Day Out provides a fun filled day of learning and play, all free to families in the Gympie community. The activities range from riding unicycles to reading a book with puppets, there's animals to pet, there's clay to mould, there's bands' to enjoy and science experiments to test. Thousands of children come through the doors to experience a jam packed day full of laughs, smiles and memories all on the foundation of play based learning, and promoting the importance of quality relationships and play in a child's development.



LAUREL PLACE MURGON

Our South Burnett office is unique. Not only are we lucky enough to embark on a scenic drive abundant with deer, echidnas, camels, horses and cows on our drive from Gympie to Murgon, when we get there we are afforded a number of really awesome resources. Each week we find ourselves taking part in a range of roleplays directed by the children during their counselling sessions - dressing up, along with the children, in one or more of the wide range of costumes – complete with magic hats, shields, wands and wigs.

If we're not dressing up, our puppets are coming alive in our sensory tee-pee or we're having tea-parties with our babies on our beautiful donated patchwork quilts.

This play therapy is an important part of counselling that allows the children to express their thoughts, feelings, emotions and experiences in a way that feels safe. Wednesdays and Thursdays between 9am and 4:30pm you'll find our Murgon office is always abuzz with creativity and smiling faces.





DEVELOP WORKFORCE IN A CULTURAL CONTEXT GYMPIE

WHY DEVELOP WORKFORCE IN A CULTURAL CONTEXT?

Laurel Place Gympie is excited to be involved in this innovative PROJECT rolling out in Gympie from August until November. It aims to bring workforce and community leaders together to collaborate on building a diverse and inclusive sector with a shared purpose of creating a stronger sense of unity within the Gympie child and family support system.

An initiative of Health and Community Services Workforce Council, the project involves a series of workshops to explore a range of issues and to:

- Reflect the community in which our service operates and acknowledge that people are more likely to access a service where they can see themselves represented and their culture visible.
- Build the knowledge and awareness of non-indigenous staff in order to provide culturally appropriate services.
- Build stronger connections across community and keep children and families connected to culture.



LP Biddy Adams caught up with (L – R): Jennifer McClay (SC Cultural Healing Program), and project facilitators Rona Scherer and Christine Payne.



Local elder, Auntie Lillian Burke has been generously providing her knowledge and support to the project

For more information call Chris or Rona
from the Workforce Council on 1800 112 585

Laurel Place Inc acknowledges the Gubbi Gubbi people as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices are located in Maroochydore, Morayfield and Gympie, and the Wakka Wakka people as the traditional custodians of the land on which Laurel Place is located in Murgon.



Welcome to the Laurel Times: 'Community News'. This is a regular feature of the newsletter in which I try to bring informative, inspiring and even amusing items of interest to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with whom I am privileged to work.

Biddy

Biddy Adams.
Indigenous Community
Liaison & Support Worker



The importance of networking - Opportunities to listen, learn and share.

We have been very busy with service displays at community events since the last issue. We are grateful for the opportunity to network and raise awareness at events like Booin Gari, D&FV Month and NAIDOC across all four service regions.



Bec and Biddy (above) enjoying the activities and entertainment at Gympie NAIDOC, where Bec and Sammy (right) got to know Agro.



Above: Sean Choolburra shares his time, talent and cheeky smile with Biddy & the crowd at Booin Gari.

OCTOBER IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

WE NEED YOU TO WEAR! SHARE! DECLARE!

The Pussyhat Project we launched in March is gaining momentum, and we are excited to be partnering with the USC to present a range of SVAM activities around the Pussyhat theme.

Donations of bright pink hats – crocheted, knitted and stitched, are steadily growing in numbers. We'd particularly like to acknowledge the generosity of the Hibiscus Quilters Group for their efforts to bring us pussyhats along with the beautiful patchwork quilts they regularly supply, and also the staff at the North Coast Region Department of Communities Child Safety and Disability Services for their colourful contributions. They will surely create an awesome visual display when we come together.

Over the coming months we'll keep you informed, through media articles and on social media, about the events we have planned to raise awareness around the issue of sexual assault, and how it impacts on the whole community.



In the meantime checkout our website and the Pussyhat Project website to find out more, and, feel free to call in and pick up a pattern or a ball of wool from our Maroochydore office - get knitting and come and join us on the day. If you're not into knitting, sewing or crocheting, don't worry, we will have other bright pink stuff you can wear - we'd really love you to join us!

Right: The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services' Graeme Wiseman has been busy knitting for the Pusshyhat Project



FROM THE MANAGER...

Over the past few months we have seen a sharp increase in demand for counselling and support across all four of our service locations. Regrettably, we now have over 110 people waiting for counselling and support across all four services.

This increase in demand for services may be influenced by the media focus on sexual assault over recent weeks with the release of two reports from The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Change the Course: National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities (2017). These reports highlight the prevalence of sexual violence in Australian society and the under-reporting of sexual assault as a crime.

Taylor Swift has also increased the awareness of sexual assault in her successful trial against a

prominent U.S. Radio Announcer. The Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network in the United States (RAINN) reported an increase of 35% in the number of calls to their national hotline on the weekend after the trial.

Laurel Place counsellors and managers are working hard to prioritise access to our services for clients on our waiting lists and we encourage you to give us feedback about your concerns. This feedback will be presented to Minister Fentiman, the Minister overseeing our sexual assault funding, to increase our capacity to meet the increased demand for our services.

I'd like to specifically thank our dedicated counsellors and Centre Support staff members who tirelessly devote their time and energy to provide Laurel Place clients with the best possible support to recover from their experiences of sexual abuse.

Training in Narrative Therapy

In March 2017, the Dulwich Centre invited Viviane Oliveira from the children's team in Maroochydore to deliver a Narrative Approach Workshop together with Tileah Drahm-Butler (Aboriginal Teacher for the Dulwich Centre) to Aboriginal workers in Cape York Peninsula. During three days Aboriginal women shared stories of survival, resilience and strength using the methodologies taught during the workshop. Viviane had the honour of learning traditional ways in which Aboriginal women are standing up against domestic violence, drugs and intergenerational trauma.

Laurel Place has fully supported Viviane with this project and is happy to announce that she will be running a similar workshop to all staff members soon. In this two day workshop Viviane will be sharing some practical tools that can be used with our clients including the Team of Life and The Tree of Life as well as the basic foundations of Narrative Therapy.



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We welcome new membership. Visit our website for information on becoming a member.

www.laurelplace.com.au