

## **Dine for Life fund Yarn Up Program to prevent child abuse in Indigenous communities**

Nationally, Indigenous children are 7 times more likely than non-Indigenous children to experience abuse. The reasons for this are complex and influenced by past policies like forced removals, intergenerational trauma, the effects of lower socio-economic status and differences in child rearing practices.

In 2014, Dine-for-Life partnered with Child Wise to raise funds for the development and implementation of a child abuse prevention and early intervention program for Indigenous communities. Through their fundraising events, Dine-for-Life raised \$66,400 to ensure this important project was brought to life.

During 2015, Child Wise formed an Indigenous Advisory Board to provide insight and input into developing a tailored and culturally-sensitive educational program. This consultation process enabled Child Wise to develop *Yarn Up* - a 3 hour face-to-face education program that focuses on empowering, educating and supporting Indigenous communities to better protect their children from abuse.

In September 2015, Josephine Lee was employed as Child Wise's Senior Indigenous Trainer. Josephine has 25 years experiences working with Indigenous communities as a counsellor, Aboriginal practice advisor and manager.

Through Josephine's networks and close ties to Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory and Western Australia, and by leveraging links with Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) in Victoria, Child Wise has identified and selected 4 beneficiary communities. These include:

- **Yuendumu (NT)** - one of the larger remote Indigenous communities in central Australia that is largely made up of the Warlpiri and Anmatyerr people. It lies almost 300km northwest of Alice Springs.
- **Jigalong (WA)** - a remote community of approximately 427 people located in the Pilbara region, approximately 165km east of Newman.
- **Mowanjum (WA)** - a medium-sized Indigenous community, located 10km southeast of Derby in the Kimberley region.
- **Wurundjeri (VIC)** - people of the Kulin alliance, who occupy the Birrarung Valley, its tributaries and the present location of Melbourne.

In 2016 Child Wise will begin the rollout of the Yarn Up program within these communities. As a result, parents and carers will be better equipped to identify signs of abuse, its impact on children, and strategies to deal with various scenarios. By building the capacity of these communities to understand the factors that holistically increase child safety and wellbeing, the aim is to reduce the number of Indigenous children experiencing abuse and ultimately break the cycle of intergenerational trauma.

Child Wise acknowledges Dine for Life for their financial support to develop and implement this program to some of Australia's most vulnerable communities.