



National Disability Coordination Officer Program



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Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Suddenly more than talk

- A few changes in the Australian landscape:
- The hung parliament gives new power to regional areas
 - Rhonda's electorate: Lyne – Rob Oakeshott
 - Gwen's electorate: New England – Tony Windsor
- A few changes to the regional landscape – DEEWR has allocated additional NDCO Program funding to regional areas with distance issues, including Region 7



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ISSUES: Time and Distance

- ❑ It's a lot further from Moree to Goodooga than it is from Goodooga to Moree
- ❑ Time taken in travelling is very rarely taken into account when governments fund programs
- ❑ Consultations – regional forums held in one or two centres hundreds of kms apart are not sufficient – eg. Aboriginal consultation for North Coast at Coffs Harbour (2,164 or 3.2% compared to Kempsey's 2645 or 9.4% of population).



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Solution to Time & Distance – VIDEOCONFERENCING

VIDEOCONFERENCING:

- ❑ In collaboration with three universities, the NDCO Program ran a seminar on disability discrimination law, videoconferenced to four sites, to more than 100 professionals in regional areas
- ❑ Gwen & Rhonda ran a videoconferenced assistive technology demo by Quantum with help from Armidale's STT, Suzanne
- ❑ The NDCO Program, DEAN, UNE, UTS and TAFE collaborated on a mental health professional development day. Taree and Armidale linked through UNE, so could continue discussions while the usual technical hiccups happened.



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ISSUES: Aboriginal community needs

Facts:

NSW has the largest Aboriginal population of any State or Territory. Over 29 per cent of the total Aboriginal Estimated Residential Population of Australia live in NSW, and more Aboriginal people reside in NSW than Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, ACT and Northern Territory combined [*Two Ways Together Report, 2009*]



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What Aboriginal people said

In a survey by Aboriginal Disability Network NSW (ADN) and People with Disability Australia (PWD), Aboriginal communities identified, among other things, these issues:

- ❑ There is a lack of accessible transport options particularly for people living in regional and remote communities
- ❑ A common experience for Aboriginal people with disability and their families and carers is the degree of poverty experienced. **This is exacerbated by the lack of information on entitlements and the lack of educational and employment opportunities**



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Solution to assist with Aboriginal Community Needs

Transition and Career Advice For Families (TACAFF) Project

- ❑ DEEWR funded through the NDCO Program
- ❑ Aimed at providing transition information to Aboriginal families, not to the students in school
- ❑ Based on the PACTS concept developed by the Brotherhood of St Lawrence – using the concept but not the material
- ❑ Targeted families in collaboration with AECG & DET
- ❑ Appointed Aboriginal Liaison person to network with community



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POSITIVES

- ❑ The need to run with small numbers makes it ideal for regional support. It also makes it a yarn-up rather than a top-down info session
- ❑ The involvement of the AECG – the chair was very supportive
- ❑ Having an Aboriginal Liaison Person to co-facilitate
- ❑ Gave info on disclosure, TAFE & DESs, school-based traineeships, how to use the Job Guide etc.
- ❑ Those who attended gave really positive feedback
- ❑ Request for follow-up, especially on barriers for Aboriginal kids in employment and a cross-cultural workshop addressing these barriers



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NOT SO POSITIVES

- ❑ Usual barriers to attendance put forward – eg. factions in the community; transport problems
- ❑ Difficulty appointing an Aboriginal Liaison person – lots of no-shows
- ❑ Initial attempt to run the program in Bowraville proved ill-fated



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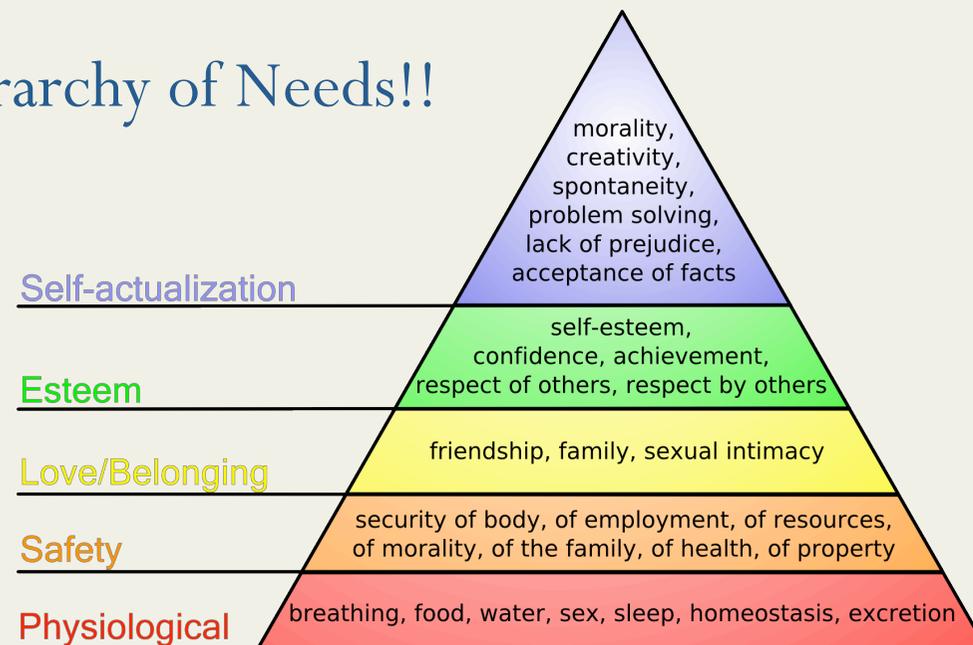
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LESSONS LEARNED

- Know your Aboriginal community - not necessary but sure helps
- Apply Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs!!



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