

**Social inclusion,
multicultural competence
and innovative service
delivery**

Children
Communities
Connections
Mawson Centre November 13 -14
2008
Conference Breakout Session

**Building relationships and
crossing cultural divides**

Gayle Farnsworth

Where does this story take place?

- High levels of unemployment and underemployment
- Low incomes
- Low levels of home ownership
- High levels of non English speaking at home
- Low level of educational achievement

Is multiculturalism new to this place?

- The Indigenous population of the area
- Post World War 11 immigrants
- Post Vietnamese War immigrants
- Polynesian immigrants



Traditional approaches to social inclusion

- No formalized practice of social inclusion
- Has happened through osmosis but has taken several generations
- Multicultural inclusion in mainstream activities is not proportionally representative of per capita population of different cultural groups
- Organizational structures and community infrastructure engender social exclusion

Traditional approaches to multicultural competence

- Cultural awareness training
- Sharing of cultural customs such as food and special celebrations happened at personal and private level – between bosses and workers, or neighbours
- Ad hoc use of interpreter and translation services

Traditional approaches to service delivery

- Centre based
- White, middle class, monocultural
- Western – evidence based, grounded in theory, value laden

How have things changed in this place since Communities for Children?

- Members of diverse cultural groups have been listened to and heard
- Their strengths have been acknowledged and built on
- The health service has gone out into the community to engage previously disengaged families

How did we do this?

- Set up a mobile visiting play program
- Set up a referral system
- Engaged referring agencies
- Ran a pilot program
- Evaluated pilot
- Formalized program

Sousang and Luc

Culture and respect at one level



Culture and respect at another level

- Mismatch between Sousang's culturally shaped perspectives and western approaches to special needs and early intervention
- Impact this has on outcomes for child and other family members

Finding a way forward - MVPP paves the way for innovative approach to service delivery

- Building strong supportive relationships
- Being patient
- Understanding where the client is 'coming from'
- Using this understanding to inform ways of helping the client see where they are 'going to'

Underpinning our work with pluralist approaches

How we conceptualize multiculturalism is important to us and to the client
 Benevolence, separatism, assimilation, biculturalism, civic pluralism