Stronger Smarter visit Byron Bay High School

The Stronger Smarter team went on a road trip to Bundjalung country in February to meet Principal Peter King and the students of Byron Bay High School.

Michal, Toby, Gab and Josh were welcomed to Bundjalung country by Jarren, a proud young man and year 10 student at Byron Bay High School. Jarren conducts all of the school’s Welcome to Country ceremonies and the team was impressed when they saw him in action at assembly.

The Stronger Smarter team came to the school to collect a basket woven by students and community member Mirrawinni for the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program.

Basket weaving is one of the many activities embraced by Principal Peter King that foster community engagement with the school.
"At Byron Bay High School we take great pleasure and enjoyment in involving our community in everything that we do? for us, the Stronger Smarter journey fits completely into that because it enables our community to come into our school, to be a part of our school, and that's always been a high priority," explained Principal Peter King, a recent graduate of the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program.

"An example of that is today?when we saw Mirrawinni at school working with our young kids, showing her fantastic skills in basket weaving and teaching the younger generation about those important skills," said Peter.

The basket weaving workshop was clearly valued by Mirrawinni and the students.

"They almost run off into the bush to collect the materials themselves. They are really natural at it and it's a joy to watch," said Mirrawinni.

"There's not much culture at schools anymore so it's good that it's being brought back in so we can learn about Indigenous culture and educate other people about it," said year seven student Jessica.

Mirrawinni and the students presented Michal with a beautiful hand-woven basket that will be used to hold artefacts offered by Leadership Program participants at future programs.

"Artefacts are important because they represent something personal about each of the participants. This basket, which comes from the heart, will be perfect for holding something so precious," said Michal Purcell, Stronger Smarter Institute Senior Community Relations Officer.

Learn more about the Leadership Program.

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**Tailored Professional Learning Package**

Victoria has undertaken an innovative professional development project to develop and strengthen the Koorie Education Workforce (KEW)

The Tailored Professional Learning Package (TPL P) has been developed by the Stronger Smarter Institute in partnership with Swinburne University of Technology and the Department's Wannik unit, and Aboriginal Early Years.
Officer (KESO) workshop for the Tailored Professional Learning Package (TPLP) held at Mildura on 14th February.

It recognises the critical role of the KEW in Closing the Gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the need to support this unique workforce of more than one hundred Koorie workers across the state of Victoria.

Ms Rachael Marks the Co-ordinator of the Tailored Professional Learning Package, from the Stronger Smarter Institute explained. "Throughout the TPLP process we hope to capitalise upon the strengths of the workforce including their community links and cultural understandings and enable the workforce to share with others in the wider education community."

Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO) Keran Kramme from the Gippsland region believes this project will be a huge benefit to the workforce. "This is a very important project if the Department wants a skilled and professional workforce. There are not a lot of Indigenous workers and this is an important step to creating a bigger and better workforce."

The TPLP will focus on a strengths based approach and each member of the workforce will have their own Professional Pathway Plan (PPP). This plan will outline existing work and community roles, future learning goals, as well as possible training courses, strategies and supports available to the workforce.

"One of the most important aspects of the project is to build an understanding of the workforce's professional role by schools and the wider education community," said Ms Marks.

"Through the participation in the Tailored Professional Learning Package (TPLP) members of the workforce will have the opportunity to participate in professional development opportunities and have the option to receive accreditation towards formal recognition and vocational qualifications. We hope to signal a new level of professionalism within the school and education communities."

The recently launched Wirnalung Ganai, the Department's Aboriginal Inclusion Action Plan reinforces the objectives of the KEW workforce reform and the TPLP. Including increasing Aboriginal people in management and leadership roles in the Department, improved support for Aboriginal employees, wider career opportunities for Aboriginal staff, proactive measures to attract Aboriginal applications for job vacancies and better collection and use of Aboriginal employee workforce data.

"I think the good thing about the proposed TPLP is that it looks at the individual capabilities and merits rather than a region as a whole or the workforce as a whole which is essential for our own professional
Another day in the office... facilitators Dyonne Anderson and Scott Gorringe


NSW North Coast region starts the year with the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program

The North Coast region of the NSW Department of Education and Communities is hosting another Stronger Smarter Leadership program this year.

Enthusiastic participants from across the region came together at Port Macquarie to start their Stronger Smarter journey.

Despite the stunning location and balmy weather, everyone was totally immersed in program activities and conversations and participants expressed their gratitude for being part of a group where everyone connected. They left Port Macquarie fired up and ready to live Stronger Smarter in their schools, as well as looking forward to getting together at the follow up workshop to be held in late April.

Thanks to Allison Alliston and Dean Files from the North Coast Leadership Centre for their organisation, co-ordination and great support for getting the 2012 program off to a successful start in their region.

Learn more about the Leadership Program.

The National Stronger Smarter Leadership Program returns to Cherbourg in 2012

The Cherbourg Historical Precinct will again be the venue for the National Stronger Smarter Leadership Programs this year.

The first 2 programs are underway, however there are some vacancies for programs later in the year, SSLP 2 starting on 15 April and SSLP 3 which starts on 26 August.

Learn more about the Leadership Program or apply online.

For more information about the Cherbourg Ration Shed please visit: www.rationshed.com.au
Stronger Smarter Online Professional Learning Module

We are seeking participants to trial an online Professional Learning Module based around an introduction to the Stronger Smarter philosophy. The Module is designed for people who have not undertaken the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program, but could also provide a 'refresher' for those who have taken the Program. The Module includes approximately 15 hours of videos, reading, and suggestions for activities, together with an online journal where you can note down your thoughts as you go through the Module.

Participants in the trial will need to be willing to complete a survey to tell us how they found the Module and give us ideas for how we might improve it. If you are interested in being involved in a trial, please contact us on ssi_plm@qut.edu.au.

Stronger Smarter Learning Communities

The Indigenous Education Reference Group (IERG) met recently to review the progress of the Stronger Smarter Learning Communities project and the associated research activities. The Indigenous Education Reference Group is made up of key Indigenous educators and researchers from across the country, employed in senior University roles who are also knowledgeable about research, schooling and community issues currently affecting Indigenous people.

The Stronger Smarter Institute research program is one of the largest ever Indigenous research programs to have been undertaken in Australia and we are privilege to have such a quality group of respected Indigenous researchers providing ongoing advice on this very innovative project.

This year the Indigenous Education Group will expand its activities to design and trial an Indigenous Research filter and methodology. We look forward to their insights and advice on how we continue our journey to a High Expectations - High Outcomes agenda for Indigenous students across Australia.

- Dr Karen Martin Southern - Cross University
- Dr Cheryl Godwell - Charles Darwin University
- Hamiora Werahiko - QUT
- Will Davis - QUT
- Dr Chris Mathews - Griffith University
- Dr Grace Sarra - QUT
- Not in the photo:
- Associate Professor Norm Sheehan - Swinburne University of Technology