

# Wunja Tribal Voice

Newsletter Issue 4: September 2019



Pics thanks to SNAICC

## Taking our story to a national stage

The 12th anniversary since the adoption of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People was marked at the eighth Secretariat for National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) biennial conference in Adelaide this year by a keynote presentation from the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous peoples Victoria Tauli-Corpuz.

PICC staff, including CEO Rachel Atkinson, attended the conference.

"Attending this conference helps make sure that Palm Island is heard across Australia and that PICC can bring back to Palm Island the newest knowledge and best practices of the child care sector," Ms Atkinson said.

"I was fortunate to present on how we built our Palm Island Children and Family and Medical Centres from scratch and without

support from federal or state governments.

"I also spoke on a panel about PICC and its efforts to keep Palm Island's children safe under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle."

Ms Atkinson was applauded by attendees after asking a panel of senior figures in child protection why high-level government plans and changes in practice were not being seen on the ground in

communities like Palm Island.

The next SNAICC conference will be held on the Gold Coast in 2021.

Ms Atkinson said any PICC staff with ideas for seminars and presentations were encouraged to consider presenting at future conferences.

"We want to share the work we do for Palm Island with the whole of Australia and these conferences are our opportunity to do that," she said.



Welcome to our new look Wunja Tribal Voice - the Palm Island Community Company's monthly newsletter. You can also follow PICC on Facebook and we have our own YouTube channel.



# A Message from the CEO...

Keeping our kids safe is a topic I'm passionate about and it's something I've made a priority at PICC, CEO Rachel Atkinson writes...

I've spoken about it a lot recently, including at the SNAICC conference in September, where I spoke about child protection and the Child Placement Principle.

The Child Placement Principle sets the standard for how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are kept safe and connected to their culture and families when they're in out-of-home care or at risk of being placed there.

It has five elements:

1. Prevention – kids have a right to be brought up in their families and in their communities.
2. Participation – every child and family has the right to participate in decisions and processes about them.
3. Partnership – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the right to have a say in child protection, including in the design and delivery of services.
4. Placement – if a child

has to be put in out-of-home care, the child has the right to be placed with its family and community whenever possible.

5. Connection – every child in out-of-home care has the right to stay connected to its family, culture, language and traditions.

In Queensland Child Placement Principle is the law.

It's not perfect, but it's a big step along the way to better outcomes for our kids.

There are many people working in Child Safety who understand what great care for our kids looks like and who understand what the Child Placement Principle really means.

At other times, sadly, PICC and I have had to step in to fight for the best interests of a Palm Island child.

But PICC is always here to fight to keep Palm Island kids safe and connected to their families and this beautiful community.

If your family is involved with



Child Safety Services, talk to the PICC Family Participation Program (see the Service Directory for their contact details).

They can help you understand the Child Safety process and tell you more about how the Child Placement Principle can help your family.

Let us at PICC help you and your family to stay together on Palm.

Have a deadly month.

*Rachel Atkinson*



*A much-needed tidy-up is underway at the PICC Diversionary Centre thanks to the work of someone here and someone there...great work fellas!*







## Workshop aspires to inspire with JT visit

PICC Family Participation Program staff Elsa Morton, Virginia Prior and Aida David were a bit excited to meet Jonathan Thurston at a recent workshop on Family-Led Decision-Making (FLDM) in Townsville.

The three-day Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP) workshop was the second in a refresher skills for Family Participation Program staff across the region.

FLDM is a policy of the Queensland Government which aims for collaboration between the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander families.

By working together to identify and address safety issues in families, the need for ongoing intervention by the Department is reduced and families' and children's wellbeing is improved.

PICC staff are planning a visit to the Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service (TAIHS) to observe their Family Participation Program as a result of the workshop.



**MEANWHILE** several PICC staff attended the second annual QATSICPP Child Protection Awards in Brisbane last month.

The Awards recognise outstanding achievement in the community-controlled child protection sector.

Amongst other awards and certificates presented at the ceremony, our colleagues

at Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service (TAIHS) won the Innovation within the Sector Award for their work at the Yamani Meta House.

Two Townsville residents also won Family Awards for helping

grow up safe, strong and connected children.

Palm Island and PICC did not win any awards this year, although in 2018 two Palm Islanders, Noel and Jenny Cannon, won a Family Award.



In early September PICC hosted an Activity Fun Day at the Women's Service to mark Child Protection week with lots of fun activities for parents/carers and their children including water and spaghetti play, drawing and listening to the Wiggles. A healthy morning tea and lunch was provided, and speeches were made about the importance of valuing and caring for children. Families said it was a good day and took home an information book with some colouring books, pencils and information on parenting.







*PICC hosted an Elder's luncheon on Thursday 5th of September at the Coolgaree Bar and Bistro in the lead-up to this year's very successful Palm Island Spring Festival Our Elders enjoyed a roast meal lunch and chat with PICC staff the day before our Diversionary Centre staff shared photographs, history and info with more than 1,000 visitors to the Island as well as local Festival goers.*





# PICC Services Directory

PICC Services offers a wide range of everyday and special programs and services to the Palm Island community. Residents are welcome to visit all programs and services they need.

## **Children and Family Centre (CFC):** Reid Lane: 4791 4031

- Medical Centre
- Early Childhood
- Parenting and Health & Wellbeing Project
- After Hours GP Clinic: Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday nights until 9pm. We welcome walk-ins or call Reception on the number above.
- Night Café: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday; Wednesday night at the PCYC: 3-7pm. Safe Haven: 4791 4006. Light meals provided.
- Playgroup: (0497 656 460) Monday to Friday 10am-1pm, outdoors on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Mobile playgroup will be in various safe locations on the Island. Transport and meals are provided for children and parents.
- Wednesday Night's Women's Yarning Circle: . 6-9pm including dinner.
- Youth Patrol: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday CFC; Wednesday PCYC: 4pm to 9pm.

## **Community Justice Group:** Reid Lane: 4791 4001



## **Community OP Shop:** Beach Road: 4770 1677.

Open Monday to Thursday 9am-5pm and Friday 8am-4pm. New and second-hand clothing and home wares, footwear, bags, reading and sunglasses, prepaid phones and technology items, bric-a-brac and gift lines.

## **Diversion Services:** Reid Lane: 4791 4071 or 4791 4072

- Diversionary Adult Patrol: 0491 295 342. Patrol Hours: Wednesday 6-8pm; Thursday -Friday 4-10pm; Saturday 9am-12pm & 5-10pm; Sunday 9am-12pm & 2-5pm. Diversionary office hours are 8.30am-5pm Monday to Friday.
- Men's Gathering: Monday 6-8pm: for transport contact Milton or Frank by 4pm on 4791 4070. We invite all men to come along for a light meal and great company to discuss all topics of concern in our community. A regular night of story telling, sharing and learning from one another.

**Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Service:** Reid Lane: Janet King (0448 707 789)

**Family Participation Program:** Main Street: Elsa Morton: 4791 4006

**Family Wellbeing Centre:** Palm Island Mall: 4791 4050

**Mental Health (Stepped Care Program):** 4791 4031

**NDIS Community Connectors: Sharon Defeo:** 0499 167 543



**PICC Bakery and Fuel - the cheapest fuel on the Island!** Farm Road: 4770 1653

- Bakery: Monday-Friday 8am-3pm. Specials: Doner Kebabs + Ham & Cheese Croissants.
- Fuel open seven days a week, 6am-7pm. Fuel cards accepted.

**Palm Automotive:**

PALM ISLAND: Farm Road: 4770 1257.

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday 8am to 5pm; Friday 8am to 3pm

TOWNSVILLE: Unit 3/27 Hamill St, Garbutt: Shane Stewart: 0459 817 408 Opening hours: Monday- Friday 8am-5pm; PICC off-pay week Fridays 8am-5pm and Saturday 8am-12pm.

**Safe Haven (Creating Safe Communities):** Palm Island Mall: 4791 4006

**Safe House (Residential Services):** Bentley Street: 4791 4020 or 4791 4024

**Townsville PICC Office:** Suncorp Plaza, 61-73 Sturt Street, Townsville: 4421 4300

**Women's Services (Women Shelter):** Mango Avenue: 4791 4010 or 4791 4011

- Women's Yarning Circle: every Monday from 10am – 12pm

