



Ngaripirliga'ajirri: The implementation of Exploring Together on the Tiwi Islands

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Abstract

From 1999 to 2003, the Tiwi Health Board, in partnership with University researchers, undertook the implementation of the *Exploring Together Program* as part of a preventive strategy in response to serious social problems affecting young Tiwi people, their parents and families. The implementation of the program necessitated engagement of Tiwi communities in ways that were responsive to issues such as the local context, culture, and patterns of family life, and at the same time maintained a commitment to the core elements of the intervention as a structured intervention requiring relatively advanced professional skills to achieve consistent high standards of delivery. The delivery team included both Tiwi community members and non-Tiwi personnel. They redeveloped a number of areas of content of the program to ensure adequate recognition of important themes in Tiwi parenting and family life while retaining the key elements of structure and content. The adapted program – *Ngaripirliga'ajirri* – showed many highly promising outcomes and, within the limits of the research design, indicated that a structured early intervention program can be effective in remote Indigenous contexts.

Keywords

Indigenous mental health, Aboriginal mental health, children, parents, parenting, implementation, culture, evaluation, program evaluation

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