

Be You video transcript

Truth-telling in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions

Dwes Wiggan-Dann

I think it's really important for educators to really build positive relationships with parents, children and community, because it actually encourages active participation in that space.

It promotes a sense of ownership within the parents to be actively involved in their children's education and development.

I think it's really important to build those positive relationships with communities, with parents and with children, because when you're looking at it from a cultural context, the community takes quite a lead role in rearing up children.

The parents can be engaged quite proactively to encourage the kids to actively participate in education. And then if there are barriers to learning for the child, they actually have a quite a big group of people to discuss those barriers with. And they can actually put quite a clear plan for this young person to be more engaged with education.

So, when you're looking at Ranger programs in local Indigenous communities, such as One Arm Point, which is a Bardi Traditional Owner group, they have activities outside of the school where kids are actively promoted to attend.

If the school was to piggyback on top of those already existing programs, it actually builds greater outcomes for kids to learn and develop in a culturally safe way, but also, they're getting those educational outcomes, whether that be in maths or science – marine science is something that's promoted in the Bardi area.

So how do we actively include young people in that space? I would strongly encourage that the schools really use the AIEOs as a tool to really engage community participation.

The AIEOs know the structures of our families. They know the vulnerabilities of each child. They understand the community dynamics. So, when there are issues that are going to arise in community, these should be the first point of contact for the schools to really encourage active participation of the community.

It's about open communication channels. I feel being transparent and open the community around the actual barriers that you're experiencing as educators, encouraging whether it be parent teacher meetings, encouraging young kids to play an active role in regard to what they feel is important to them and their learning.

You're really taking into context the language barriers that might exist there, also the traditional cultural barriers that might exist, and really utilising the AIEOs to actually inform how that is done in a culturally appropriate way.

I think you need to allow time for you to develop in that space, but be respectful as well, and really learn from the experts. And I think AIEOs are the experts in that field and really allow yourself to partner with them.