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Use of child restraints

A pilot program in Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services

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Background

Road traffic injuries - leading cause of child death in Australia. In 1 year:

- Fatalities: 36 in 0-4 yo; 25 in 4-8 yo *
- Serious injuries in approx 400 children
- Aboriginal child passengers
 - **3 x** more injuries
 - **2½ x** more hospitalisations

Child restraint use reduces injury risk in the event of a crash - yet use of restraints is low in Aboriginal communities

* Fatal road crash database (2006)

http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/safety/road_fatality_statistics/fatal_road_crash_database.aspx

Berry JG, Harrison JE. *Serious Injury due to land transport accidents, Australia, 2005-06*. Adelaide 2008.



How to increase use of child restraints?

- **Educate parents on:**
 - how restraints work
 - the 'right restraint for age'
- **Involve peers & community**
- **Provide hands on demonstration**
- **Subsidise & distribute restraints**

Lane (2000); Winston (2006); NHTSA Safety Facts (2009) 'Identifying Information That Promotes Belt-Positioning Booster Seat Use'



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Project Aims

STAGE 1

Consult with members of an urban Aboriginal community on issues surrounding use of child restraints for children when travelling in cars

STAGE 2

Develop & implement a program to facilitate & encourage the correct use of child restraints, & evaluate its acceptability



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Methods



STAGE 1: consult with members of an urban Aboriginal community on issues surrounding use of child restraints for children when travelling in cars

APPROACH

- Series of focus groups conducted in 2 ACCHS
- Interviews & meetings with staff of health services
- Presentation at staff meeting
- Workshop with staff about promoting safe travel in cars



Development of a program for Stage 2



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Methods



STAGE 2: develop & implement a program to facilitate & encourage the correct use of child restraints, & evaluate its acceptability

APPROACH

- Staff capacity building
 - Individual training & provision of program manual
 - Restraint fitting training
 - Staff training at early childhood education service
 - Co-host sessions with staff
- Provide subsidised child restraints & booster seats

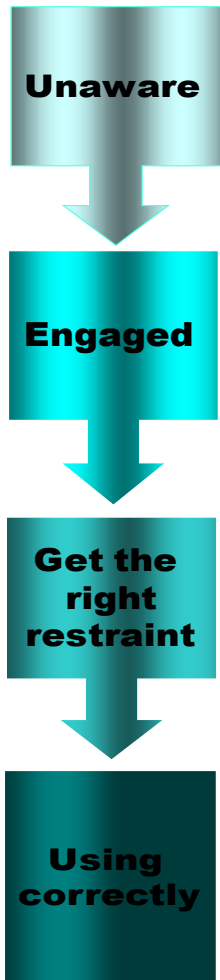
Focus groups



<i>Date</i>	<i>Group location and composition</i>
8/9/2010	AMS WS; 3 men, 9 women
8/9/2010	Tharawal; 3 women from Indigenous Childrens Program
26/10/2010	Tharawal: 13 women who were members of art group

All sessions audiotaped, transcribed & thematic analysis conducted

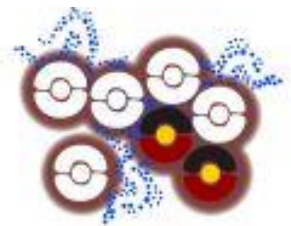
Themes: opinions, attitudes & beliefs



- **Lack of awareness of the law & confusion about the age & type of seats**
- **Adults don't think of safety on day to day journeys, perception that short trips are safe**
- **Confusion re: the right seat for a child eg. age vs weight**
- **Lack of financial resources, cost of seats**
- **Large families**
- **Children not wanting to use seat every time, unplanned passengers, attitudes of other carers**
- **Problems with older vehicles, taxis**

Staff consultation & planning

- Need clear information
- Hands on demonstration will work well
- Many families use transport services as well as a mix of private cars, taxis, many don't own vehicles
- High level of interest in the project
- Anticipated some problems engaging with families on this issue

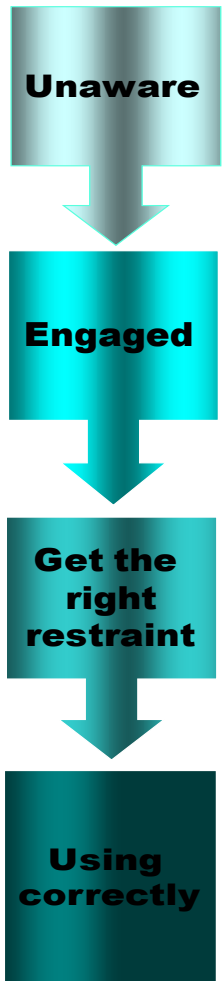


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Program Development



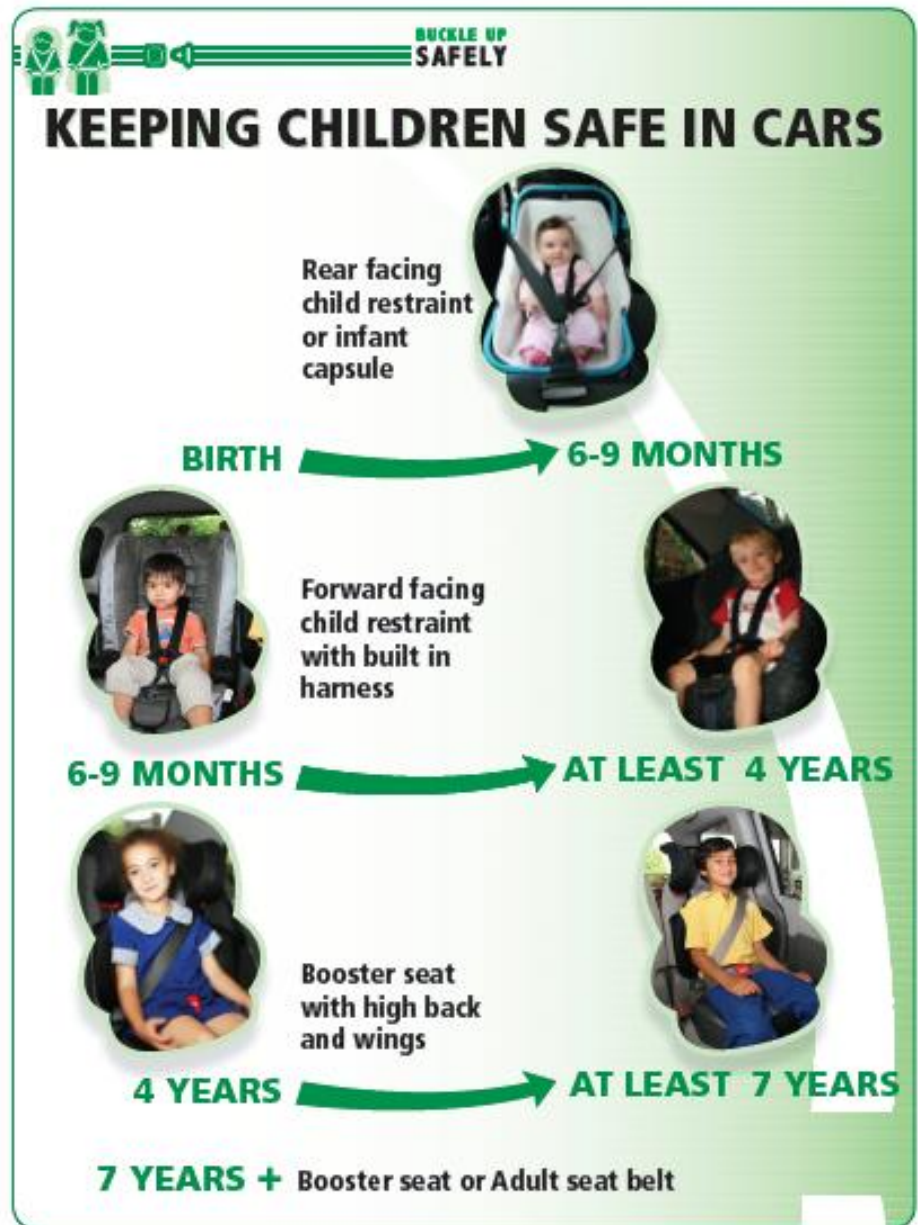
Education & motivation

- Personal approach to clients
 - Posters, printed material
 - Policy on transport of clients
-
- Presentation at community days; staff training & workshops
 - Interactive material (height charts)

Distribution & installation

- Demonstration of seats to families
 - Selection of forward facing child restraint & a belt positioning booster seat
 - Supply child restraints/booster seats at subsidised \$50 to client
-
- Staff trained to be able to install the child restraints correctly
 - All staff familiar with appropriate child restraint for age
 - Integrated themes of correct use & right seat for age into parenting programs

- Program manual provided to all staff
- Educational DVD
- Print material
- Poster boards
- Demonstration seats





FORWARD FACING CHILD RESTRAINT

– up to at
least 4 years



Correct use of
forward facing
child restraint



Too small for
booster seat

- Educational materials



**Correct use of
lap/sash belt with
booster**



**School aged child
too small for
lap/sash**

**BOOSTER
SEAT**
– up to at
least 7 years

- **Educational materials**

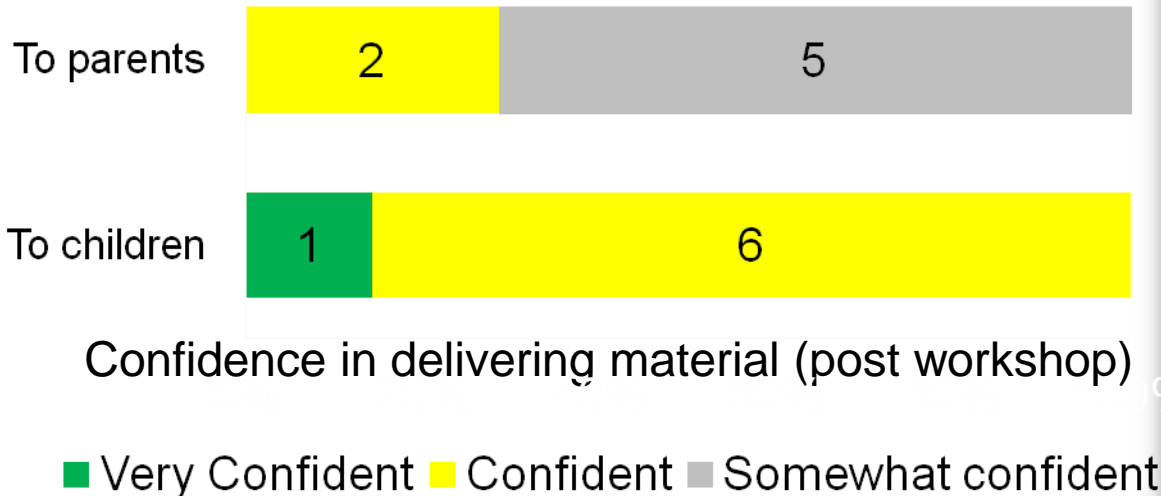
Selection & installation of child restraints

- Full day course by Mobility Engineering (agency responsible for training & certification of restraint fitters in NSW)
- 14 staff trained at Tharawal
- Well received by staff
- Increased confidence in practical skills
- Certificates supplied to all staff
- Tharawal has booked additional workshops (funded by RTA)



Pre-School Staff Workshop

Kids & Traffic Early Childhood Road Safety Education (Macquarie University & RTA) delivered 2 hour staff training workshop to 7 staff at Ooranga Wandarrah Aboriginal Childcare Service, Airds



Confidence in delivering material (post workshop)

■ Very Confident ■ Confident ■ Somewhat confident



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Out and About: Safe Journeys with Kids in Cars

Why are young children at risk as passengers in vehicles and what can we do to minimise this risk?

Discover how to engage children and their families in learning together about passenger safety through interesting and interactive programming.



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Uptake subsidised restraints



	<i>Types of seats (30 offered to each service)</i>
<i>Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation</i>	8 booster seats, 13 forward facing child restraints
<i>AMS Western Sydney</i>	2 booster seats, 10 forward facing child restraints

Supplied at cost to client of \$50
Retail price ~ \$150 - 250



Forward facing child restraint



Booster seat

Program Evaluation

Semi-structured staff interviews (n=13)

- Child passenger safety is an important issue within health service
- Enthusiastic support for the program particularly 'hands-on' demonstration & print material
- Staff benefited from training with greater knowledge & practical skills in selection & fitting of child restraints
- Subsidised seats were considered a critical part of the program
- Need dedicated resources to sustain this program including a staff member who can champion the program
- There are challenges in engaging with families on this issue
- A program to promote passenger safety needs to include transport services as well as personal cars

Summary

- This pilot project developed a program to promote child restraint use within Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services
- Program was feasible & acceptable within this setting
- Impact on child restraint practices needs to be evaluated in a larger scale prospective trial

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- **Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation**
- **Aboriginal Medical Service Western Sydney**
- **The George Institute for Global Health, University of Sydney**
- **Woolyungah Indigenous Centre University of Wollongong**
- **Royal Australian College of General Practitioners**
- **Kids & Traffic Early Childhood Road Safety Education Program, Macquarie University**
- **Roads & Traffic Authority**

