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ABORIGINAL VIEWS

ABORIGINAL EDUCATOR -
SWAN HILL TECHNICAL SCHOOL

* L. Bugeja

I am an Aboriginal educator based at the Swan Hill Technical School. I started work as an Aboriginal educator in the first term of school in 1982.

My duties involve liaising with Aboriginal students, parents, teachers and the community. I liaise with the students to find out if they have any problems at home or school. If they have problems we discuss them and think of ways to overcome them. I like to walk into classes such as Home Economics, and Woodwork - it is easy for them to talk and I don't interrupt them too much. I also like to speak to the students out of class, usually in my office or in the school grounds.

I visit the students' parents at their home quite often. I inform the parents on how their child is progressing through school. If I am not happy with their child at school, we talk about the problems and think of ways to improve them.

Being an Aboriginal staff member enables me to interact with all teachers and administration. If teachers feel that an Aboriginal child is failing in class, they approach me and we think of ways of improvement. I often organise consultations - informing the teachers of the students background and how education is sometimes very hard for particular students and parents to understand.

I also keep in contact with agencies throughout the community, such as - The Aboriginal Co-operative, Community Welfare Services, Drug and Alcohol Awareness Centre, Community Employment Service and the Department of Social Security. I like to keep a knowledge of the services they provide to pass on to any families that I am

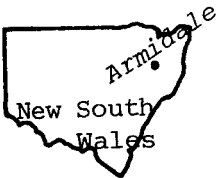
* Ms Lynnette Bugeja, Aboriginal Educator, Swan Hill Technical School, Victoria.

involved with throughout the school and the community.

Although I am based at the Swin Hill Technical School, I work with three other Aboriginal educators and one home visitor in Swan Hill. The three educators are David Tournier, Caroline Steel and John Kennedy and the home visitor is Dolly Maher. Every Wednesday we have Aboriginal educator training at the Aboriginal Learning Centre at Swan Hill North. We learn all different subjects which we think will help us with our jobs. Our resource teacher, Ms Jill Pattenden, is also the co-ordinator for our training day. All of the educators in Swan Hill have had experience in teaching a course on Aboriginal Studies to primary level. We also have large discussions with secondary level students. The training days that we attend prepare us for teaching. It is also a good time for us to get together and give each other ideas.

We, as Aboriginal educators, report to our Aboriginal Education Committee once every fortnight. We hand in a written report to the committee to show what work we have been doing to help our people.

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MY NEW LIFESTYLE

*P. Dixon

It is twenty-five years since I left school. At the moment I'm doing an eighteen month training program to be an Addiction Worker. As part of the evaluation of the training program I have been asked to write down my thoughts and feelings about my training.

Some people involved in the program have suggested to me that teachers might be interested in my early childhood experiences - growing up on a reserve and going to an all Aboriginal school.

* Mrs Pat Dixon, Trainee Addiction Worker, Armidale & New England Hospital, Dependency Resource Unit, Armidale NSW.