



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

This article was originally published in printed form. The journal began in 1973 and was titled *The Aboriginal Child at School*. In 1996 the journal was transformed to an internationally peer-reviewed publication and renamed *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*.

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NEWS RELEASES :

NEED FOR MORE ABORIGINAL INVOLVEMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

There was a need for more Aboriginal involvement in the development and implementation of early childhood programs according to a report commissioned by the Commonwealth Department of Education.

The report, *Early Childhood Services for Aboriginal Children*, was prepared by Mr Keith McConnochie, the senior lecturer in Aboriginal studies and deputy director of the Aboriginal Study and Teacher Education Course at the Underdale campus of the South Australian College of Advanced Education, and Dr Alan Russell, the Senior lecturer at the School of Education, Flinders University, Adelaide. It was based on a study carried out between July and December last year (1981). The report says -

Aboriginal women are increasingly becoming involved in programs as para-professional staff, and recently programs have been developed to enable Aboriginal students to obtain professional qualifications...However, Aboriginal communities still exert little influence on the development and administration of early childhood programs

Further, only 17 Aboriginal students were identified as being enrolled in enclave/special entry programs leading to Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood Education) qualifications in 1981. All of these students were enrolled in programs in South Australia.

The number of Aboriginal students in Dip.T. (ECE) programs through normal entry procedures was also small with an estimated maximum of 19 enrolled. All were in Victoria or New South Wales.

The researchers suggest that target numbers should be set for ECE and Child Care Certificate programs similar to those developed by the National Aboriginal Education Committee (NAEC) for primary and secondary teachers.

They say that an intensive program should be established to increase dramatically the numbers of qualified Aborigines working in education and related fields.

The report says that the past 15 years have seen a "very significant increase in the provision of pre-school services to Aboriginal children." There were an estimated 5,692 Aboriginal children enrolled in pre-schools throughout Australia in 1981 compared with a reported 2,164 in 1968. The researchers believe the latter figure was overestimated by 100 per cent.

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs reported that for 1980/81 its expenditure on Aboriginal pre-schooling was \$2.34 million with \$1,289,700 being allocated to grants to the States and \$1,050,300 in grants directly to organisations. This compares with a reported \$424,573 in 1971/72. The report says -

There is little doubt that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people are looking to early childhood programs to provide assistance in improving the chances of Aboriginal children succeeding in primary and secondary schools.

Further information :

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NATIONAL MAPS ON ABORIGINALS AND FORESTRY

The Division of National Mapping of the Department of National Development and Energy has produced two new maps - "Aboriginal Land and Population" and Forestry Reserves".

"Aboriginal Land and Population" (produced in collaboration with the Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs) is a full-colour map which distinguishes all freehold, leasehold, reserve and mission land of 10 hectares or more held by or on behalf of Aboriginal groups. It also shows the 350 centres of 80 or more Aboriginal inhabitants. Both maps are available unfolded (840 x 925 mm) or folded, for \$3.50 from Map Sales Division of National Mapping, P.O.Box 31, Belconnen, ACT, 2616, or through any Natmap agent.

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