



For Immediate Release

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CHILD PROTECTION AND INTERVENTION PLAGUED BY CROSS-CULTURAL BLUNDERS

Child protection workers across the country are being called on to take part in cross-cultural training amid mounting evidence that child protection agencies are failing to meet the needs of children at risk.

Richard Trudgen, CEO of the not-for-profit Indigenous Organisation: Aboriginal Resource and Development Service Inc (ARDS) said many child protection staff lack the basic skills and background to work in Indigenous communities in a culturally effective way.

“What you have is child protection staff, forced to deal with child abuse issues in a cross-cultural arena, without any training whatsoever,” Mr Trudgen said.

“Child protection workers are leaving in droves; stressed out and traumatised because they don’t know how to deal with Aboriginal people at the coalface.”

Mr Trudgen called on Government agencies, facilitating programs within Indigenous communities, to take responsibility and equip their staff with cross-cultural training “for the sake of the Indigenous client and their own employees.”

“When are we going to come to grips with the original Australian language and culture, we’re still in colonial mode” Mr Trudgen continued.

“How can we expect the system to work when both sides can’t even communicate with each other?”

Mr Trudgen facilitates the *Bridging the Gap* seminars which deliver strategies to overcome communication and cross-cultural barriers.

The methods outlined at the seminars have been successfully used by the people of north-east Arnhem Land, the Yolngu people who still practice one of Australia’s oldest living cultures.

Trudgen is the author of acclaimed book *Why Warriors Lie Down and Die* and ARDS is a driving force behind bridging the gap with Indigenous communities.

Trudgen brings with him two co-presenters from north-east Arnhem Land: Witiyana Marika, founding member of internationally renowned band Yothu Yindi and Dianne

Gondarra, presenter on Yolŋu Radio.

The next round of seminars are scheduled for;

Melbourne – Melbourne Business School 19/20 November

Canberra – Canberra National Convention Centre 23/24 November

Sydney – Australian Museum 26/27 November.

Seminars start from 8am each day.

To find out more about Richard Trudgen's *Bridging the Gap* seminars or ARDS go to www.ards.com.au

>ENDS<

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