

What Next? Workshop: Actioning what we heard at the Childhood Summit

Summary

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Introduction to the What Next? Workshop

Following the success of the Childhood Summit on the 23rd-24th of June, 2023, approximately 60 people came together to discuss What Next? In attendance were 15 Childhood Summit child keynote speakers and their family, representatives from community led groups in Logan, State and Federal Government personnel, the Queensland Family and Child Commission Chief Executive and Principal Commissioner, Luke Twyford and six of his team, personnel from the Mental Health Commission and Griffith University academics and staff.

Preparation Before the Workshop

Prior to attending invitees were provided with information about the key themes discussed at the Childhood Summit. This information outlined the interconnectivity of many of the issues/challenges discussed and how the child speakers drew lines between issues, linking over-worked parents with rises in crime, drug abuse, mental health issues and lack of community spirit (for example). The children also see direct connections between poverty and access to quality play, increases in screen addiction and lack of access to quality child-care. The information also outlined some of the solutions child speakers proposed, including, giving children space to be heard, improving community spirit and reducing the time parents spend away from their families. In preparation for the workshop attendees were encouraged to listen to at least three or four of the speeches (especially if they did not attend the Summit) and to identify topic areas/ challenges/ solutions they heard.

On the Day – What Next? Workshop

Following an Acknowledgement of Country, we reflected on what we heard at the Childhood Summit. This was supplemented by a short video that captured the energy at the Childhood Summit. This video can be viewed at: [Highlights from the 2023 Childhood Summit - YouTube](#). Following a brief opportunity to reflect individually on what they heard workshop participants all had an opportunity to share and discuss at their tables (approximately 6 people at each table) what they heard. The Queensland Family and Child Commission Chief Executive and Principal Commissioner, Luke Twyford, reflected on his experience at the Childhood Summit, commenting that he was still thinking about his experience and what he heard. The children also got an opportunity to reflect what they heard too. Hyahno Moser shared what the children discussed at their table. This included:

- Lots of kids talking
- What kids want in their community
- What kids want for their lives
- Kids telling adults what they need
- Mental stress
- Kids can talk about what they want to work on
- Kids talking about environment, bullying and other things
- Stop littering

The process used to identify topic areas was Open Space Technology. This process was used as it enables participants to create and manage their own agenda of discussion points. As identified by the Child Speakers many of the issues/challenges/solutions they discussed are complex, there is a variety and diversity to those who are involved in these issues, there is a lot of passion and community wanted action yesterday. Open Space process works best in this type of context as it enables discussion points to emerge and are not predetermined by the organisers or others. While Open Space may appear unstructured the process of supporting the emergent agenda is very structured. Open Space is based on four principles, which were shared with attendees (see Figure 1.). In addition to the principles Open Space also gives permission for attendees to move around from discussion topic to another if it suits them. This is the Law of Two Feet and one that many took advantage of on the day, especially the children who were in attendance.

Principles

- whoever comes is the right people
- whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened
- whenever it starts is the right time
- when it's over, it's over

"The Law of Two Feet"

- "If, during the course of the gathering, if you find yourself in a situation where you are neither learning nor contributing, you can go to some more productive place."
- Butterflies – butterflies bring the power of observation and silence and new ideas to the group
 - These people hang out, maybe drinking tea, and don't appear to do much
 - However they may just be involved with the most important discussions of the day
- Bees – cross pollinates groups – they carry from one group to the next ideas for creating new ideas
 - They flit from conversation to conversation bring new ideas, and fresh eyes to the table
 - They can also encourage mingling for those for whom the Law of Two Feet feels a bit rude

Figure 1. Open Space Technology Principles and the Law of Two Feet

Using this process we identified a number of agenda items that were important to those in the room. Table 1. includes the agenda items that emerged from what was heard at the Childhood Summit, along with factors that relate to that topic. On the outside of the agenda were factors that attendees identified as going across all of the discussion topics and need to be considered.



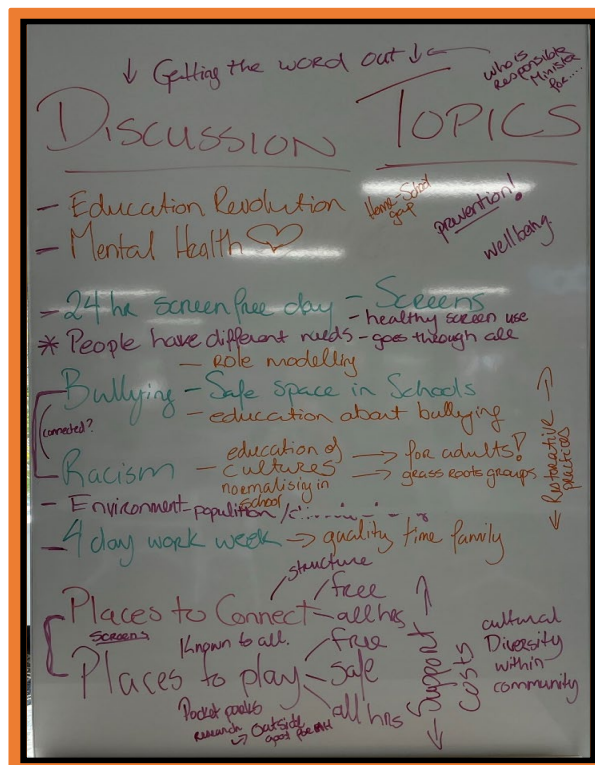
Table 1. Agenda identified by participants at the What Next? Workshop

↓ **Getting the word out about what is happening** ↓

Agenda Item		Related Factors
← Restorative Practices →	Healthy screen use Quality Time with Family	Positive mental health Connection with family Play
	Mental Health	All connected
	Education Reform (Revolution)	Home-School gap Focus on prevention Wellbeing
	Bullying and Racism	Safe space at school and elsewhere Education about bullying and respect Education about cultures – normalise diversity in schools (for Adults) Use of grassroots groups
	Pollution – Environment	Cleaning up local parks
	Places to Connect Place to Play	Cost to community must be minimal People need to know about it Some structure – caters to cultural diversity in community Free Accessible all hours Support for it to happen Safe Pocket parks Research the connection to outside and mental health

← People have different needs →

Who is the responsible Minister for Children?



Whiteboard - Agenda of topics for discussion

Once the agenda had been identified and participants understood the topic areas for discussion (in general) participants moved to the space where the topic they wanted to explore in more depth was. To provide participants with some structure through their discussions, three Disciplined Dialogue questions were shared (Dempster et al., 2017).

Question 1. What do we see in these data?

Question 2. Why are we seeing what we are?

Question 3. What, if anything, should we be doing about it?

Participants were given approximately one hour for this activity. The Child Speakers in the room took advantage of the Law of Two Feet and performed the role of Butterflies and Bees well. Further, there was a brains trust table where Child Speakers were available so the grown-ups could go and check their understanding with them.

Once the hour was completed each topic area reflected back to the whole group what they discussed and highlighted some of the solutions and possible next steps (see Table 2. For detailed outputs). Below is a summary of the possible next steps and actions identified.

Mental Health – It was agreed that the Child Reference Group would be highly useful and essential to responding to this area. The group felt that identifying feelings and normalising talking about feelings (between students, teachers, parents/carers etc.) would assist and suggested a range of ways to do this. The provision of free psychological services at schools, education and connecting children with others (including older Australians), in particular peers, would assist in overcoming some mental health concerns. Those who take up this area of work were encouraged to consider the *Leader in Me program* or peer lead programs where older students could support younger students (eg. Yr 6 to assist Yr 5).

Suggested Next Steps

- Identify hosts (2-3 people) willing to drive discussions and action with the CIA as reference group
- First consideration – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, Local First Nations groups, Sponsor (Mental Health Commission?), other Stakeholders



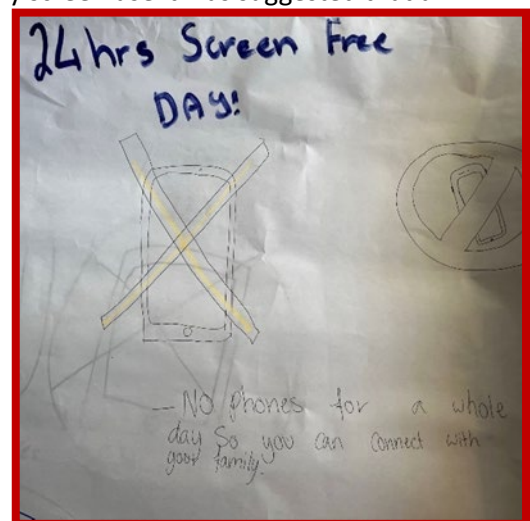
Education Reform (Revolution) – A student focused approach to education was highlighted indicating that Education currently comes from an Adult lens (eg. length of the classes, number of breaks do not support learning and wellbeing) and is not child centred. Building relationships between students, teachers and parents/carers was encouraged due to the gap between home and school. Reviewing suspensions and punishment, restorative justice practices, as well as learning about what is appropriate for your age (brain development), a focus on prevention and Smiling Minds (as a great activity for students to help them regulate themselves) were all suggested as possible solutions.

Suggested Next Steps

- Identify hosts (2-3 people) willing to drive discussions and action with the CIA as reference group
- First consideration – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, Local First Nations groups, Local Principals, Sponsor (Pasi/Regional Director), other Stakeholders



Healthy screen use Quality Time with Family - 24hr Screen Free Day campaign – In order to assist children, parents/carers, families, schools and communities to discuss healthy screen use it was suggested that a 24 hr Screen Free Day campaign be initiated. The children in the room emphasised that it had to be no screens for the whole day, giving children an opportunity to connect with their family. Supports and activities to be done when not on screens could be developed, including a festival, so people have things to do and don't get bored and go back to their screens. The Queensland Family and Child Commission, Chief Executive and Principal Commissioner Luke Twyford, who was in attendance, committed in principle financial support for this campaign.



Suggested Next Steps

- Identify hosts (2-3 people) willing to drive discussions and action with the CIA as reference group

- As this is more defined/focused action hosts bring together a working group to design and implement the action
- First considerations – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, First Nations groups, Community, QFCC, Schools, Community Groups, Police, Reference group, Sponsor (QFCC Principal Commissioner?)

Racism and Bullying – Those in attendance agreed to group Racism and Bullying together as they share some elements such as how best to respond and the provision of safe spaces (as an example). Listening to the story and not suspending at school, peer support, safe spaces, calming zones, developing a culture of respect of difference and different cultures at school – Culture Week, relationship building and the use of grassroots groups were suggested as actions that could be taken.

Suggested Next Steps

- Identify hosts (2-3 people) willing to drive discussions and action with the CIA as reference group
- First considerations – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, First Nations groups, Community, Schools, Grassroots Community Groups, Sponsor, Stakeholders



Pollution – Environment – Cleaning up local parks – Children expressed concern about rubbish in parks and playgrounds. Some present described seeing kids playing with rubbish and were concerned about their wellbeing. It was suggested that neighbourhoods could have working bees to clean up playgrounds with the possibility of having a BBQ to reward the community effort. Flyers, Facebook community pages could help in spreading the word.

Suggested Next Steps

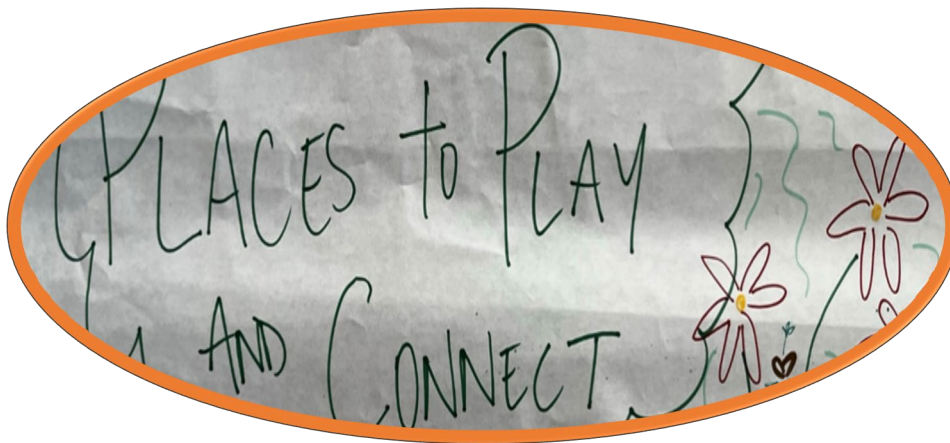
- Identify hosts (2-3 people) willing to drive discussions and action with the CIA as reference group
- As this is more defined/focused action hosts bring together a working group to design and implement the action within one or two neighbourhoods to begin with

- First considerations – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, First Nations groups, Community, Local neighbourhood groups, Schools, Sponsor, Stakeholders

Places to Connect and Places to Play – This topic area combined many of those already discussed. Safe space where no bullying or racism occurs, with no screens (parents/carers and children), parents/carers involved but not ‘hovering’, and children feeling disconnected were among some the issues people heard at the Summit. It was discussed how we should be looking for opportunities in the community where resources already exist but are not used. For example, schools as community resources, intergenerational spaces, spaces like the Arboretum on Logan Campus. Making spaces open, available, accessible and known! was highlighted as what was needed. Children expressed a need for opportunities for Risky-Play → Children want to **TEST** themselves! Mapping spaces in Logan was suggested as one step as well as exploring policies that will need to change to support play.

Suggested Next Steps

- Identify hosts (2-3 people) willing to drive discussions and action with the CIA as reference group
- As this is more defined/focused action hosts bring together a working group to map and identify spaces in Logan that could be used for play – as a first step
- First considerations – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, First Nations groups, Community, Local neighbourhood groups, Schools, Council, Sponsor, Stakeholders



Immediate Next Steps Identified

As some of the actions were more focused or better defined there are some actions were responding can occur now (while other topic areas will need more yarning). The following is a brief summary of the immediate next steps or projects that could potentially be designed and implemented in the next 6 months.:

Healthy screen use Quality Time with Family - 24hr Screen Free Day campaign – Hosts with the CIA as reference group bring together a working group to design and implement this initiative. First considerations – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, First Nations groups, Community, QFCC, Schools, Community Groups, Police, Sponsor (QFCC Principal Commissioner?)

Pollution – Environment – Cleaning up local parks – Hosts with the CIA as reference group bring together a working group to design and implement the action within one or two neighbourhoods to begin with. First considerations – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, First Nations groups, Community, Local neighbourhood groups, Schools, Sponsor, Stakeholders

Places to Connect and Places to Play – Hosts with the CIA as reference group bring together a working group to map and identify spaces in Logan that could be used for play – as a first step. First considerations – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, First Nations groups, Community, Local neighbourhood groups, Schools, Council, Sponsor, Stakeholders

Support – The Pathways in Place Project (Griffith University) is willing to provide facilitation support and guidance to hosts and working groups.



Table 2.

MENTAL HEALTH			
What did we hear?	Why are we hearing this now?	What could we do?	Potential NEXT STEPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highest problem identified/spoken about at the Summit - Eva shared her topics and research relating to Mental Health - Views about medication, financial burdens and access to services - Breaking stigmas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highest rates of anti-depression medication use - Access to mental health services for under 18s – Suicide foundation and support avoids children/adults under 18 - Assessment tools/models/research from a young-person perspective – No assessment tool for diagnosing suicide in children - Eva – first experience at 4 years old, prep-Yr3 → overcoming her experiences with the school dealing with bullying → felt like she was ‘rushed’ back to class (no solutions) - Wellbeing room felt like I was supposed to move on as soon as possible (children are timed) - Not uncommon experience for other children Eva knows at school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EVA suggested providing a comfortable environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Staff → comforting and calm o Education on mental health for all (feelings) o Not sure where else to go to get help o Prevalent amongst peers - School Programs → Leader in Me / HABITS - The Leader in Me and HABITS could be added across more schools – happens at Springwood SS - Posters for children that describe feelings (worried vs anxiety) - QFCHC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Platform for young people to get their thoughts and feelings out - PHN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Co-design with children o Connecting schools/ health/ community orgs → Anyone else? - Open parent communication - Support for male and female parents - People with lived experience are better, maybe older (child-teenager) - Fortify (7 – 65 year old, psychological health and NDIS) - Normalising talking about feelings – normalising mental health conversations - More time outside 	<p>Identify hosts (2-3 people) willing to drive discussions and action with the CIA as reference group</p> <p>First consideration – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, Local First Nations groups, Sponsor (Mental Health Commission?), other Stakeholders</p> <p>Moving forward the Child Reference Group – highly useful!!!</p> <p>Identifying feelings and moving forward to working on overcoming mental health. Covering mental health from all areas.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓ ↓</p> <p>Consider –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader in Me program → peer lead programs (Yr 6 to assist Yr 5) – Should include other year levels - Normalising talking about feelings between students and parents and students - Supported by feelings posters - Feelings that don’t make you feel good, could be helped through socialisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Program with Children and Elderly (Nathaniel) - Psychologists at schools – free to families

- Psychologists need to be more affordable
- Getting children's perspective
- Ongoing reference group with children (CIA)
- Queensland Mental Health (well health, ill health, wellbeing, languishing) more preventative
- Opportunities for support models other than medical intervention

- Talking to people in similar experiences from Young People not just professionals

EDUCATION REFORM (REVOLUTION)

- **Student-focused eg. systems and structures that work for kids not adults – Adult lens**
- **Home-School gap**
- **Focus on prevention**
- **Wellbeing**
- **Connectively**
- **Lack of consistency**
- **Focus on achievement – wellbeing measures**
- **Friendly, cool (a lot of teachers too)**
- **Smoke detectors in bathrooms to deter vaping**
- **Cool down room passes – could be a reason for vaping**
- **Student Council - NOT student focused**
- **1 period is 1hr10mins (some teachers gives breaks) – BRAIN Breaks sometimes**
- **Suspensions – student who broke the vape got the same thing as the person who was vaping**
- **More awareness instead of punishment**
- **2x30, 1x30, 1x45 – Monday breaks shorter because of assembly**
- **Not many HS (??) bring food**
- **If I didn't bring a container for cooking class – then had to pick up rubbish**
- **Not a lot of h'work @ Yarra**
- **Upload online – What if you have no internet?**

- Restorative Justice – needs to be implemented
- Divide in transitions K-P/ 6-7
- Expect more from high academic students yet same age
- Different pathways in HS
- Teachers teach in a way that caters for everyone
- Teachers understand students
- Don't not like
- Leader positions/ interschool sport
- Childhood Summit
- Activities
- Kids would like more
- Going to different classes
- ↑ 'ing teachers
- Suspension – being suspended doesn't = being naughty – shift to student focused solutions
- Transition from Kindy to Prep need to be smoother
- Subs Teachers – not aligning to school expectations or know students – don't listen to students – rude
- Socials – Primary school did a lot around cyber bullying– real people you can trust – older people would love to be around kids instead of socials – no education around app age limits etc.

- **Identify hosts (2-3 people) willing to drive discussions and action with the CIA as reference group**
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- **Always tested in maths – boring – modules assigned**
- **Pimpima – got rid of suspensions/ exclusions – sense of belonging**
- **Problem solving days on Fridays**
- **Attendance – are our goals achievable? Changing culture so students want to be there**
- **Uniform too strict**
- **High Expectations of relationships – Stronger Smarter Institute High Expectation Relationships (HER)**
- **Canteen/ vending machine – no cash**
- **Breakfast club x 2 – ham/cheese toasties, cheese toasties, pancakes, toast etc. – sometimes Year 12; Outside organisation**
- Gaming – YouTube kids – suitable for kids (YouTube should rate it by previewing it first) (arrow to no education around app age limits etc.)
- Learn about what's appropriate for your age – brain development
- Saying inappropriate things eg racism, they shouldn't even know about this
- Educating students to have empathy
- Essays – using racist terms and think it is cool
- Smiling minds – great activity for students to regulate – breathing activities
- **WHO**
- Pasi
- Jason Clare
- Grace Grace
- Principals
- RDs for regions
- DG

Healthy screen use Quality Time with Family - 24hr Screen Free Day campaign

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign to help children, parents/carers, families, schools and communities to discuss healthy screen use and what else you could be doing when not on a screen • No phones for a whole day – so you can connect with your family • Aims to promote: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Healthy screen use 2. Connection with family and friends 3. Healthy activity. 4. Promote a face-to-face life • Could hold a festival so people don't get bored • Play day • Have a screen time warning like TikTok. It tells you've spent 1 hour and asks you to type 1234 if you want to continue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote play for adults during work time • Pathways to Resilience offered to help shape messages around brain/body health • Department of Education offered to help promote to schools • Queensland Family and Child Commission, Chief Executive and Principal Commissioner Luke Twyford to financially support campaign | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify hosts (2-3 people) willing to drive discussions and action with the CIA as reference group • As this is more defined/focused action hosts bring together a working group to design and implement the action • First considerations – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, First Nations groups, Community, QFCC, Schools, Community Groups, Police, Sponsor (QFCC Principal Commissioner?) |
|--|---|--|

- It must be the full 24 hours
- Campaign for children and adults

Bullying and Racism

What did we hear?

- Safe space at school and elsewhere
Safe place in school
- Safe place to connect with people who have some experience
- Education in culture/ normalising culture
 - Languages week (the children can show their language/ culture at their lunch break/ after school)
 - Celebrating the culture week → how can we expand it?

Bullying

- No one has acted to the issue
- Stereotype**
- People bullying due to also being a victim of bullying
- No support for people who are a victim of bullying
- Lack of safe place for people when disclosing it
- What kind of actions to support to change behaviour or provide emotional support?
- Not hearing the whole story → rather than go straight to discipline
- Gender bullying/ sexual abuse → it can occur and it is hard for the children to understand/ shame
- Pattern of behaviours passed down
- Education about bullying and respect
- Education about cultures – normalise diversity in schools (for Adults)

Why are we hearing it now?

- Racism
- More awareness; culture events
- More people interested in combating racism
- More celebrating different cultures
- Less tolerance about racism
- The issues
- People lack of understanding → generation issues
- People normalising the stereotype (try to make the joke that is no longer funny if it ever was)
- Big stigma
- The internalise racism → people can feel that they can act/ feel because the environment/ culture is different

What could we do?

Bullying

- Quiet space
- Listening to the story
- Not suspending at school
- ↓
- Children can provide the support to each other
- ↓
- What kind of mechanism to do it?
- Safe/trust worthy person for the children to go to
- Safe friends
- Safe space at school
- Calming zones → place people can share their story safely

Racism

- Create a respect place for diversity
- Create a culture lessons at school at extra curriculum
- Culture weeks
- Relationship building
- Use of grassroots groups

- Identify hosts (2-3 people) willing to drive discussions and action with the CIA as reference group
- First considerations – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, First Nations groups, Community, Schools, Grassroots Community Groups, Sponsor, Stakeholders

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do we speak to these issues? - Police <p>People who doing the bullying</p>			
Pollution – Environment – Cleaning up local parks			
<p>What did we hear?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerns about rubbish in our parks and playgrounds - Kids playing with rubbish is a health concern (dangerous) 	<p>Why are we hearing this now?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ideas – do we keep playgrounds clean? 	<p>What should we DO?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eg. Working bees in the community to clean up rather than relying on council services etc. - Deliver flyers/Facebook community page inviting local community members to clean up for a couple of hours and have a BBQ afterwards - Contact local council about more bin pickups at busy parks following weekends - Bring your mower and whipper snipper etc. and take into our own hands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify hosts (2-3 people) willing to drive discussions and action with the CIA as reference group • As this is more defined/focused action hosts bring together a working group to design and implement the action within one or two neighbourhoods to begin with • First considerations – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, First Nations groups, Community, Local neighbourhood groups, Schools, Sponsor, Stakeholders
Places to Connect and Places to Play			
<p>What did we hear?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SAFE SPACES – No Bullying, No Racism, physical safety - Connection – Leaving phones and screen alone – but not ‘Hovering’ or interfering - Kids are feeling lost and disconnected - What is there for Teens? Where are spaces for children to be together? - It’s cool to play – and we want to take risks - No age-differentiated play spaces – they should be for EVERYONE - High Schools need play spaces too! 	<p>Why are we hearing this now?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools as community assets → schools can decide for <u>themselves</u> as to the use of the space - Intergenerational connection → working across different age groups in the community - “System” of Connection → planning, transport, open space, recreation, other public infrastructure → how do we get this <u>working together</u>? - Children make there <u>own</u> spaces – that then get pulled down → how do we change this? 	<p>What can we do about this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Let’s Take Action! <p>TAPPING INTO THE RESOURCES WE ALREADY HAVE!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mapping spaces available in Logan → neighbourhood audit - Making use of \$ on spaces that people <u>actually</u> use - Think creatively about what spaces are relevant – schools, shop fronts, parks etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o AND about how they could be used – gardening, library, sport space, cooking space, green space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify hosts (2-3 people) willing to drive discussions and action with the CIA as reference group • As this is more defined/focused action hosts bring together a working group to map and identify spaces in Logan that could be used for play – as a first step • First considerations – who else needs to be involved? – First Nations Elders, First Nations groups, Community, Local neighbourhood groups, Schools, Council, Sponsor, Stakeholders

- Spaces should be easy to access, close to home and free - Cost to community must be minimal
- Don't have to worry when you use the space – support for it to happen
 - o Supervision
 - o Over-night camping
 - o Want to feel safe
- We want places that ANYONE can come to – Little kids to older people (eg. grandparents)/ caters to cultural diversity in community
- RESPECT! Common Sense! Don't be rude!
- People need to know about it
- Some structure
- Pocket parks
- Research the connection to outside and mental health

- Griffith University working to open-up use of the Arboretum on Logan Campus → Making spaces open, available, accessible and known!
- Making use of existing beautiful spaces → How do we open-up public spaces? → What are the unnecessary restrictions?
- Opportunities for Risky-Play → we want to TEST ourselves!

- Policy change – harnessing what children build for themselves
 - o Policy change is needed



References

Dempster, N., Townsend, T., Johnson, G., Bayetto, A., Lovett, S., & Stevens, E. (2017). Using Disciplined Dialogue and Evidence to Build a Strong Moral Purpose. In N. Dempster, T. Townsend, G. Johnson, A. Bayetto, S. Lovett, & E. Stevens (Eds.), *Leadership and Literacy: Principals, Partnerships and Pathways to Improvement* (pp. 39-55). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-54298-0_3