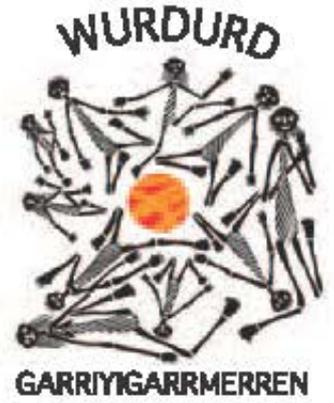
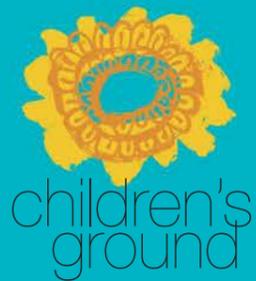


CHILDREN'S GROUND WEST ARNHEM

COMMUNITY REPORT

APRIL 2014





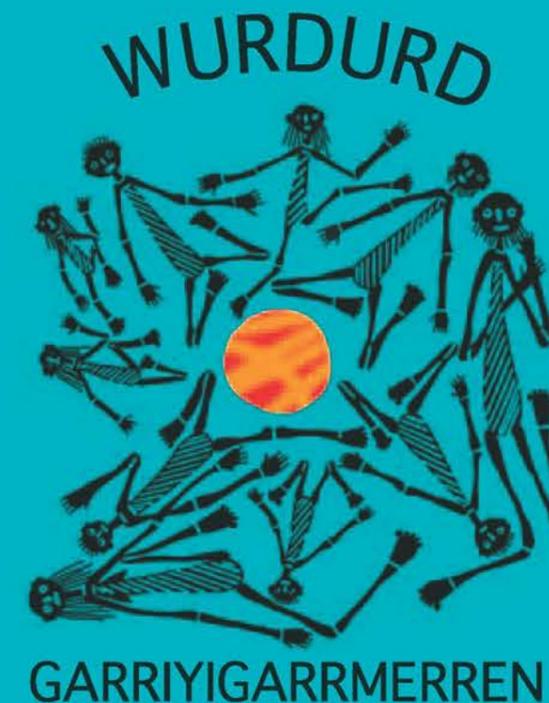
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Photographs by Dominic O'Brien

Wurdurd logo by Tim Djandjomerr

Cover image: Jimmy Marimowa, Kayless Nawilil, Keith Naborlhborlh and Joewina Djandjomerr hunting for turtle on the Mamakarla floodplain



Roxanne Naborlhborlh

Opening

Ngaye ngal-Gangila. Nga-ngeiyo Roxanne. Nga-durrkmirri gore Children's Ground/Wurdurd Garri-yigarrmerren.

Children's Ground has been a great success.

My name is Roxanne Naborlhborlh my clan is Burdoh and my country is Manomyi. My role at Children's Ground is family engagement and media.

I have worked with Dominic O'Brien to interview people from our community to make this report.

Some of this report is in one of the first languages of this region, Gundjeihmi.

THE STORY SO FAR

'Bolkkime birri-gerrnge wurdurd gabirri-borlbme Balanda-gen ba gabirri-wokbimbun dja gabirri-gandihme namba. Dja gabirri-borlbme Bininj-gen man-garre gadberre.'

'The new generation needs to know Balanda teaching like numeracy and literacy, but it must have it's own identity.'

Mark Djandjomerr

25 YEAR PLAN

MAKE IT GOOD

The Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation (GAC) has been helping Bininj people for many years and in February 2013 set up the Kakadu West Arnhem Social Trust (KWAAT). It is designed to support Bininj in the region now and in the future and was looking for a model to put its ideas on the ground.

After long experience in Central Australia, Children's Ground founder and CEO, Jane Vadeloo came up with a 25-year plan to end the disadvantage and support us to give our children a strong future. She began speaking with the GAC board in 2010 and with many elders, including Mark Djandjomerr and May Nango.

In 2012 Jane, Veronica Wellings, Kathy Bannister and myself did "walk and talks" to find out what was needed now and what people wanted for their children's future. KWAAT, the Australian Government and philanthropists liked our plan and decided to fund Children's Ground. When Children's Ground was launched in August 2013 Mirarr Senior Traditional Owner Nida Mangambarr said, *Make it good.*

Jineata Marimowa paints at the Community Centre



CEO Jane Vadeloo, Kakadu West Arnhem Social Trust Chair David Ward, GAC Chair Annie Ngalmirama and Malcolm Nango Jr at the launch of Children's Ground, August 28 2013

Children's Ground West Arnhem is the first organisation of its kind in Australia. It was born out of a need, generosity and vision.

Since white occupation Bininj people around the county have been disadvantaged. We, the Bininj people of West Arnhem Land, survived colonisation but our culture was damaged. We have suffered for many years. We take great inspiration from the Mirarr people. Yvonne Margarula, Senior Traditional Owner says, *We Mirarr are strong and we will use the opportunities to create a better future.*



Mahalia Kitman with a Saratoga at Mula

COMMUNITY CHANGES

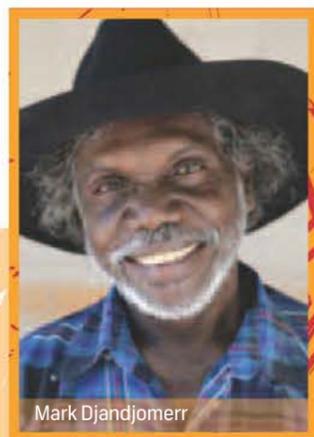
'Bu ngarrben-nahnan wurdurd, ga-mak rouk.'

'Children's Ground means to me *Gamak*. This means good.'

May Nango



May Nango



Mark Djandjomerr

May Nango is from the Mirarr clan in Kakadu, speaks Kunwinjku, Gundjeihmi and English and is also a senior advisor. *Bu ngarrben-nahnan wurdurd, ga-mak rouk. Children's Ground means to me Gamak. This means good.*

I have seen changes for the good with Children's Ground. It is good to see the kids learning both ways. It has been a long time since we have had singing and dancing in our community. It is great to see this happening again.

Mark Djandjomerr is May's partner, from the Bolmo clan near Malgawo and speaks Mayali, Kunwinjku and English.

I am a senior advisor on Bininj ways for Children's Ground. I have lived and worked in this country all my life. I have worked as a stockman, a carpenter, a butcher and in many other trades. My parents taught me Bininj ways when I was young. I teach the children about our culture.

'Gorrogoni dabbarrabolk ngadberre bindi-bukkani wurdurd bedberre bindi-bengyolyolmi.

'From the dawn of time our people have passed on knowledge by elders talking to the children.'

Mark Djandjomerr

I want them to know and respect our culture and environment. When I take wurdurd (children) on country I show them many things. I teach them the names of trees and of plants like Djarduk (the bush apple) and Badju (the bush potato).

I show them how to collect firewood and how people survived in the old days. I tell the kids of the history of this place in language. Gorrogoni dabbarrabolk ngadberre bindi-bukkani wurdurd bedberre bindi-bengyolyolmi. From the dawn of time our people have passed on knowledge by elders talking to the children.

It is important that we carry on this practice so that our culture has a future. Bolkkime birri-gerrnge wurdurd gabirri-borlbme Balanda-gen ba gabirri-wokbimbun dja gabirri-gandihme namba. Dja gabirri-borlbme Bininj-gen man-garre gadberre. The new generation needs to know Balanda teaching like numeracy and literacy, but it must have it's own identity.



Mark Djandjomerr teaches Mahalia Kitman, Javan Djandjul and Kayless Nawilil on country

'Gun-yunggi minj ngarri-wernhbidyigarmerrimeninj larrk.'

'We felt disconnected and were not communicating with each other.'

Roxanne Naborlhborlh

Before Children's Ground we never had a program like this. Jane came along and we did a lot of talking about making it long term and strong. We want Bininj people to be strong with the help of Balanda people. Children's Ground has made big progress toward this. When I pass I want strong people to be there to bring the story of our history forward for the children. I have hope for a strong future.

Kestianna Djandjomerr is from the Bolmo clan and works in Bininj employment and training. Kestianna says, *Things are better since Children's Ground. Great for families and putting people together. The old country stuff is important. Showing the little ones culture and language. My son Keith is six years old. He loves spelling and learning with the teacher Helen.*

Before Children's ground lots of people stayed home with nothing to do. Our culture was left behind. Gun-yunggi minj ngarri-wernhbidyigarmerrimeninj larrk. We felt disconnected and were not communicating with each other.

Little kids didn't go to Pre School. They were scared that they would miss their family. Now we have hope for the future. We are talking to everyone.

The thing I have enjoyed most about my job at Children's Ground is the Walk and Talk. Sitting with people and understanding what they really want and keeping the community engaged around what we are doing here. I enjoy talking to families about what they want for their kid's future. I've seen big change in the community since Children's Ground started.

Young people are helping their community. I have never seen people come together like this before. Children, families and community coming together with pride in themselves.

When I think about all the work and talking I did to get the staff and children into Children's Ground I am really pleased with myself and what it has become.



Loretta Djandjomerr and son Paddy Brown at an early years session

OUR PRINCIPLES

At Children's Ground we have eight key principles. We apply these principles in every area of our work.



A Community meeting at Bowali



Cecily Djandjomerr

'Bolkkime wanjh dabbarrabolk ngandih-won gun-wok bedberre ba ga-mak garri-djarrkgodjgurlumarnburren.'

'Now the elders have a way of sharing knowledge with us and we are able to plan the way ahead.'

Roxanne Naborlhborlh

WHERE WE WORK

We work across the whole of Kakadu West Arnhem. We are based at the Jabiru Community Centre, have an office in the Jabiru shopping plaza and have a shared office in Melbourne.

WHAT WE DO

Community meetings

Every Wednesday we have a community meeting. We come together and discuss all the ideas for the future. The community meetings are very important for us because it allows everybody to be heard. Before Children's Ground, people didn't come together to share their ideas. Bolkkime wanjh dabbarrabolk ngandih-won gun-wok bedberre ba ga-mak garri-djarrkgodjgurlumarnburren. Now the elders have a way of sharing knowledge with us and we are able to plan the way ahead.

So here we are walking and talking and building up. All the great things that Children's Ground have begun, like singing and dancing, kids education in the centre and at the outstations, the Morle boys program, the art program, the on country learning and more have started as ideas in the community meetings.

Meetings with Elders

We also meet with the elders. It's very important to us to meet with them so that we can learn the old people's knowledge and so that our generation can stay on the right track.



Tyler Hunter and Josabella Cameron at the Jabiru Community Centre

'Bu ngaben-nan wurdurd gun-mak bedberre gabirri-burrbun rouk.'

'I am amazed daily at the incredible ingenuity of the young Bininj children.'

Jill Vizec



Jill Vizec reads to an early years class

Wurdurd (Early Years Learning)

One of the most important programs is Early Years Learning. Our kids have had a lot of trouble adjusting to mainstream education. Children's Ground understands Bininj ways and have adjusted their teaching methods.

I have noticed a big change with my own son Kayless. Gun-yunggi wurdya minj benggayi gore skul, minj wernhborlbminj bu wokbimbuyinj nawu Balanda-gen. He couldn't concentrate in school, his numeracy and literacy were suffering.

With the help of Children's Ground he can now spell out his name.

Another mother who has children at the centre is Darlene Thorn.

I am from the Murin clan on Croker Island. I speak Kunwinjku, English and I'm learning Iwaija. I started working with kids at the age of sixteen as a teacher's aid. I moved to hospitality, then became a mother and enjoy working with children again.

I work in health and nutrition with Children's Ground. I have three children and two attend the early years program. Makayla and Malique love it. They enjoy learning the Balanda side and the Bininj culture side. That makes me feel proud. It is great that they are learning culture from their father's side as the majority of their time is spent with my family in Darwin.

I can see that a lot of people are really committed to this program. I think it's a good, happy environment. All the staff are welcoming and that makes Bininj people feel comfortable and happy to return everyday. Wurdurd ngarduk gabirri-yinggiborlbme gonda ba ga-mak bu skul gabirri-re wanjh gabirri-djalbekkan gabirri-borlbme gun-mak rouk. My kids are learning how to learn to be ready for school.



Eva Pettersson and daughter Ciara at the Community Centre



Malcolm Nango Jr counting

'Gun-yunggi wurdya minj benggayi gore skul, minj wernhborlbminj bu wokbimbuyinj nawu Balanda-gen.'

'He couldn't concentrate in school, his numeracy and literacy were suffering.'

Roxanne Naborlhborlh

'Wurdurd ngarduk gabirri-yinggiborlbme gonda ba ga-mak bu skul gabirri-re wanjh gabirri-djalbekkan gabirri-borlbme gun-mak rouk.'

'My kids are learning how to learn to be ready for school.'

Darlene Thorn

Jill Vizec is Co-Head of Early Years Learning and Wellbeing. She has lots of experience as a teacher, principal and has worked with First Nations Peoples in Indonesia, Aurukun, Far North Queensland and Thursday Island. Most recently she was principal at Northwest Maria Montessori preschool and was also principal at Kalker Montessori.

I started with Children's Ground in February 2014. I enjoy working closely with the children and all of the new learning that comes along with that. Bu ngaben-nan wurdurd gun-mak bedberre gabirri-burrbun rouk. I am amazed daily at the incredible ingenuity of the young Bininj children.

Even at a very young age their observation skills are very finely honed. They are also very self-sufficient and don't just wait for things to be handed to them. If they are hungry they will find food, or find an adult who can get them some. It is such a pleasure to spend time with the children, families and community and learn more about the rich culture in Kakadu, West Arnhem.

I also enjoy working with such an expert team of people. There are opportunities for tremendous learning from my colleagues and I am embracing that. Most days I start at around 8am preparing and planning for the day ahead. Monday to Thursday I drive out to Mandjinbardi out-station to collect staff and children. Activity in the Early Years Learning room starts when we are back at 9.30am.

We run two blocks of activities in the day 9.30am-12pm and 1pm-3pm. Activities vary and can include: Food preparation, self-help skills, motor tasks for pencil control, pre-writing/reading activities, songs and stories. After 3pm I drive the bus back and drop the children off. Once that's done I prepare for the next day.



Janeisha Brown, Joewina Djandjomerr, Mahalia Kitman and Ezeriah Djandjomerr at the Jabiru Community Centre



Francis, Tekiysha and Doreen Nadji Freeney at an early years session at Mamakarla outstation



Belinda Morton with Paddy Brown, Janeisha Brown, Gwendalyn Djandjomerr and Makayla Marimowa

'Gu-bolkbuijhuiga ngarrben-nangahnan ba ngarrben-rawon wurdurd.'

'During the dry season, we will be moving out across Kakadu to reach more children and families.'

Belinda Morton



Doreen Nadji-Freeney

Mobile Learning

In March 2014 we began our mobile early years program that offers age-appropriate learning activities to children in Kakadu National Park. We have visited outstations like Mamakarla, East Alligator and Djirrbiyuk where kids find it hard to get into the centre. Belinda Morton, Co-Head of Learning and Wellbeing has been co-coordinating and conducting these sessions.

The service allows children and families without transport access to fun, engaging activities and learning in two or more languages. One big benefit of the community-based programs is that it allows for and encourages engagement from extended family in the children's learning and works within a strength-based model so that children are confident in coming into the space.

A range of activities are set up on a mat and children are supported in exploring these activities as well as using bikes and balls and other activities that build gross motor skills.

The sessions are met with a lot of positive support and we have never had anyone refuse our invitation to run a session. One of the children we visit, a two year old, is the only child who lives in his community and we make sure to take children with us to allow opportunities to play together and build peer social skills.

His grandparents have been overwhelmed by the impact it has had on their grandson. Our teachings are done in English and local languages. We have also discovered children who are learning Iwajia at home. This has prompted us to extend our program to include Iwajia along with Gundjeihmi and Kunwinjku.

This will help support the families in teaching their children these languages that form part of their living heritage. Gu-bolkbuijhuiga ngarrben-nangahnan ba ngarrben-rawon wurdurd. During the dry season, we will be moving out across Kakadu to reach more children and families.

Christine Alangale, from the Bolmo clan, works with the mobile early years program.

It is important to teach the kids the basic skills for them to draw, paint and eventually write. We bring lunch out with us and we teach the kids to wash their hands and to tidy up. I like working with the little kids. The kids are learning culture side and Balanda way. I have a son, Tyler, and I want him to learn both ways. Since Children's Ground came along the community is stronger. We get together now and talk about what we want for the future.



Makayla Marimowa, Kayless Nawilil, Janeisha Brown, Mina Djandjomerr and Malique Marimowa are shown the alphabet on an iPad by Gwendalyn Djandjomerr



Helen Barr with Malique Marimowa and Janeisha Brown



Roxanne Naborlborlh and Sonya Nango conduct an early years session in language

Early Years Learning – TESOL

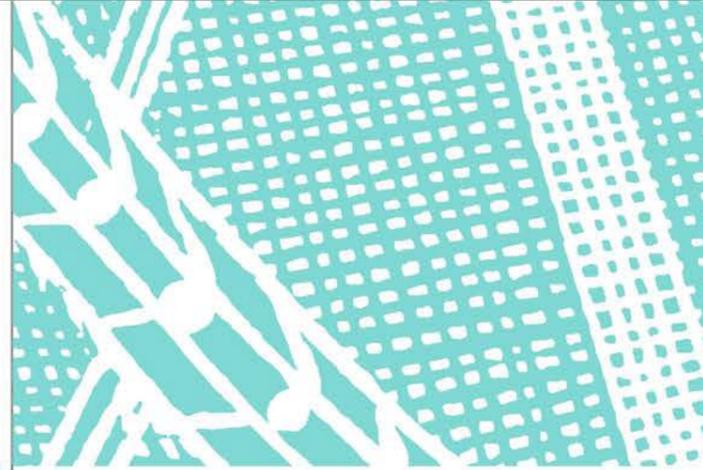
Helen Barr is our TESOL teacher (Teaching English as a Second or Other Language).

I have done this work in Spain, Turkey and South Korea. I have also worked as a special needs and English teacher. My students here came with a great knowledge of first language and independence. Mainstream education poses challenges for these kids because it is not presented in their mother tongue.

The curriculum does not always reference the cultural background of these children. Some of the students require one to one teaching and family support. The early years program has put together educational books that use imagery and language that the students know. I've enjoyed the children and adults sharing their cultural knowledge with me.

At Children's Ground we aim to work with the kids strengths. I have used the kids' independence and focus with programs on the iPads. The kids enjoy this learning as it allows them to explore and learn from their mistakes in their own time.

One of the children we work with is 9 years old and he has had little Balanda (Western) schooling. He has strong cultural knowledge and his parents want him to have a strong education in Balanda knowledge also. This year we have worked with him closely and we have watched his numeracy and literacy improve greatly.



Peace Wurrkgidj, Shirley Brown and Jodi Gawuluru at work in the centre's kitchen

Bininj employment and training

For many years most Bininj didn't have work. I have seen big changes in people since they started work. They have a place where they belong.

Thirty-nine Bininj people work regularly at Children's Ground in different teams. For many this is their first job.

Shari Aluni, Children's Grounds' Coordinator of employment and training, has helped people to get tax file numbers, ochre cards, bank accounts and all the things they need for employment. She is also organising training. So far nine workshops have been run. We have run accredited driver's license testing and certificate 4 in workplace training and assessment. We have had trainers run a fire extinguisher course, language workshops, mandatory reporting and family violence sessions. Our professional development programs have also included information sessions on Gundjeihmi and Mirarr, timesheets, centrelink and the police. Kestianna Djandjomerr from the Bolmo clan has just started working with Shari and is doing a great job getting people bank accounts and signing them up for work.

Shari says, *The initial recruitment and sign-up process prepares Bininj staff for a lifetime of work. I have enjoyed finding out their strengths, networking and mentoring on country. It is great to see the positive changes in the Bininj staff and their families over the past six months.*

Kitchen team

Perlin Simon and Shirley Brown from the Community Development and Wellbeing team have done a great job focusing on health and nutrition. The kitchen is really important for kids, making sure they eat breakfast and healthy food. Families attending the centre receive two nutritious meals a day so we have healthy bodies and strong hearts. We are starting a bush foods program.

Shirley Brown from the Waridjngu clan speaks Kunwinjku and English and works in Community Development and Wellbeing as a nutrition worker/cook. She is a permanent staff member.

This is my first job. When I started I was a casual and I found a real interest in being in the kitchen, working with Perlin. For me, Children's Ground is the best thing for this community. It is bringing the community together.

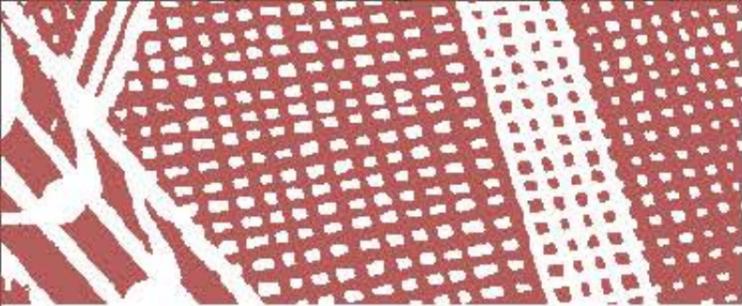
Before Children's Ground there were enemies, fighting and kids out of place. Now there are good kids. They will grow up recognising and respecting each other. They will be strong in the community and everyone in the community will be strong. I haven't seen that for a long time. I never worked before Children's Ground and when I think about what I am doing now, working in the kitchen with Perlin and being part of this I am very proud of myself.



Kestianna Djandjomerr with Keith Naborlborlh and Malcolm Nango Jr



Shirley Brown serves sushi to a community meeting



‘Gorogo dabbarrabbolk minj mak waidiwirrinj gorogo bedberre. Birri-djal worlworlhmerreni medjek.’

‘Back then they had no electricity and had to cool themselves with a goose wing fan.’

Gwendalyn Djangjomerr and Peace Wurrkgidj

On Country learning

One of the most enjoyable activities we do is On Country Learning. We do things like fishing, turtle hunting and collecting pandanas and colour. We also visit elders like Violet Lawson to hear their life story and learn cultural knowledge. Gwendalyn Djangjomerr, from the Bolmo clan who works in early learning and Peace Wurrkgidj from the Gurulk clan who works in the kitchen, visited Violet.

We went to Paradise Farm to visit Violet Lawson with the kids from the Culture First class at Jabiru Area School. We had a great time! Violet told us her life story with her family pictures. She told us that she lived a very traditional life when she was young. Gorogo dabbarrabbolk minj mak waidiwirrinj gorogo bedberre. Birri-djal worlworlhmerreni medjek. Back then they had no electricity and had to cool themselves with a goose wing fan.

The kids used to make cubby houses out of paper bark. While she was talking to us her cheeky kangaroo “Pancake” interrupted and she had to chase him away. We then went and had lunch at Mardugal campground. After lunch Violet showed us how to make string from palm leaves to make a dilly bag. Al- bangardi ga-burrbun gorogo gah-weigan gun-wok. Violet is very special to us because she has a great cultural knowledge that she shares with us.

‘Al- bangardi ga-burrbun gorogo gah-weigan gun-wok.’

‘Violet is very special to us because she has a great cultural knowledge that she shares with us.’

Gwendalyn Djangjomerr and Peace Wurrkgidj

Violet Lawson shows Jimmy Marimowa and Loretta Djangjomerr a string bag she is making



‘Garri-djalmurrngrayekmen rouk bu garri-djarrkborlbme.’

‘Everyone seems to be standing stronger.’

Lisa Potter

Hunting for turtle on the Mamakarla floodplain



Keith Naborlhborlh practices his circus skills



Mahalia Kitman and Paddy Brown at the Community Centre

Family Health & Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing are taken very seriously at Children’s Ground. Lisa Potter is Head of Family Health and Wellbeing.

My family has been adopted by the Bolmo clan. My skin name is Ngal-ngarridj.

I have a nursing and public health background and have spent many years working in remote areas of the Northern Territory. My work involves mentoring Bininj staff on health concepts so they can deliver a wellbeing message to their community. We liaise with families to create a greater awareness of health and promote ownership. The health team uses a bi-cultural approach, celebrating the strengths and traditions of both cultures. Since the opening of Children’s Ground the Bininj community has been a lot more engaged. Garri-djalmurrngrayekmen rouk bu garri-djarrkborlbme. Everyone seems to be standing stronger.

Employment has empowered people. The Bininj led approach has enabled people greater agency over their children’s future. I enjoy hearing the Bininj people share their stories and cultural traditions. It is wonderful to see them incorporate their beliefs as they navigate the dominant culture.

Richard Van de Veerndonk, Primary Health Care Manager at Jabiru Health Centre wrote to us in December. His letter said more Bininj were coming to the clinic. Richard said, We believe this directly relates to Children’s Ground and a change in mind set by individual adults who have stated how they are working and are proud of their roles. The reasons will vary for each individual but I believe self-esteem, structure day to day and purpose are major contributors.



Mark Djandjomerr shows Dwayne Dakgalawuy how to remove bark from a Stringy Bark Tree



David John Dodd and Andrew Blake help the Morle Boys prize the bark from a Stringy Bark tree

'Nga-nan ga-mak bu yawurrinj gabirri-bekkan gun-wok bu dabbarrabolk gandi-marneyolyolmi. Gabindi-woibukwon dabbarrabolk.'

'It's great to see the men develop a discipline that incorporates respect for the advice of the elders.'

David John Dodd

The Morle Boys

More and more men came to the centre in the first few months and wanted to work so we started the Morle Boys. They do maintenance work at the Community Centre and Madjinbardi and show the young people how to build, how to sing and how to dance. This is how they show the spirit is still alive.

Enoch Nango from the Burdoh clan relates, *The Morle boys are building a shelter for singing and dancing at the Community Centre. We needed bark to make a roof so the old people could sit and sing in the shade and watch the young people dance. We went with Mark Djandjomerr and the boys to Madjinbardi. We drove through the bush until Mark found the biggest Stringy Bark tree.*

He showed us the proper way to cut the bark off the tree. He is an Elder and has done this many times before. It is good in a culture way that he teaches us these skills. To reach high enough, we had to park the Troopy right next to the tree. Gorrogo dabbarrabolk birri-garrmi djarnngal dolobbo bu birri-bidbuni. Wanjh djobdjobgeyi gaddum ganjdji wanjh birri-lowkmangi dolobbo. In the old days the men used to make a ladder out of a forked branch that they would lean against the tree. They would then climb up like a frog and cut the bark with a stone axe.

'Gun-makgaigen bu ngaye ngah-burrbun ba nga-borlbme gun-gudji.'

'It's good for me because I'm learning new skills. I want to learn more.'

Darren Marimowa

'Gorrogo dabbarrabolk birri-garrmi djarnngal dolobbo bu birri-bidbuni. Wanjh djobdjobgeyi gaddum ganjdji wanjh birri-lowkmangi dolobbo.'

'In the old days the men used to make a ladder out of a forked branch that they would lean against the tree. They would then climb up like a frog and cut the bark with a stone axe.'

Enoch Nango

Those people would have walked in and not have the trouble of a flat tyre like we did! Once the cutting was complete Mark showed us how remove the bark with a big stick. We all gave a cheer when the bark dropped off the tree.

Darren Marimowa from the Mandilari clan on Croker Island says, *I work with the Morle Boys and I want to be a role model for the kids. I started work with the CDEP when I was 17. I used to do the mail run between the Ranger mine and Gunbalunya. I also did landscape work around Jabiru. I enjoy working with Children's Ground because I get to work with my friends and meet other people. Gun-makgaigen bu ngaye ngah-burrbun ba nga-borlbme gun-gudji. It's good for me because I'm learning new skills. I want to learn more.*

David John Dodd is the support worker for the men's program: *I have seen the men grow from strength to strength and take up more responsibility in the community. I see Children's Ground like a tree offering support for this community as it grows and spreads out in different directions. The men have learned to work together as a team. They work hard and strong supporting each other with words of encouragement. Nga-nan ga-mak bu yawurrinj gabirri-bekkan gun-wok bu dabbarrabolk gandi-marneyolyolmi. Gabindi-woibukwon dabbarrabolk. It's great to see the men develop a discipline that incorporates respect for the advice of the elders. I feel proud to be a Morle Boy.*



Darren Marimowa, David Cameron, Mark Djandjomerr Jr, Lee Nabarlambari, Tim Djandjomerr and Dwayne Dakgalawuy



Morle boys Tim Djandjomerr, David John Dodd, Lee Nabarlambari, Darren Marimowa, Reu Williams, Enoch Nango, Malcolm Nango, Mark Djandjomerr Jr and Dwayne Dakgalawuy



Janeisha Brown at Jabiru lake



Keith Naborlhborlh watches Dwayne Dakgalawuy draw a barramundi



Creative & cultural activities

Children's Ground has hosted community engagement projects including: Printmakers in residence, The Djagarna Circus, movie nights, a disco and singing and dancing at Madjinbardi.

Holiday Programs

During the two school holidays we ran a special program for our kids and the Jabiru Area School. We took the kids bushwalking, swimming and had a movie night. We also had sports clinics and took the children on a Yellow Water cruise.

Printmakers

Printmakers Dianne and Andrew Blake have set up in the community centre. Dianne and Andrew have been running workshops since 2011 for the Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation. Their recent visit continued their work of teaching printing skills that remain in the community.

Andrew says, *The experience has been intense and positive. Participation at the start was hesitant, but now we are almost swamped with interest. People have gained confidence in the process and the development of their own ideas. We acknowledge that the Aboriginal artistic tradition of this region is oldest known to mankind.*

We see our work as a re-stimulation of this ancient tradition. We hope the introduction of new media will contemporise attitudes to an art that speaks of deep connections to land. Children's Ground has afforded us the space to work with young people in the presence of their elders.



Belinda Djangjomerr draws as Shirley Brown and Loretta Djangjomerr watch



Neville Namarnyilk



Tim Djangjomerr

We have been working with this community for many years and since Children's Ground we have seen a marked positive change. The people understand that the community centre is here for them and are here in numbers everyday. I'm witnessing a happy community here. We now have artworks representing artists from Djirrbiyuk, Madjinbardi and Manabadduma in Kakadu.

Artists are paid for their prints when they are sold. This connects them to the art market and encourages them to pursue their artwork with greater confidence and with a feeling of pride in what they create. Limited edition prints have been shown and sold at local festivals and galleries around Australia.

Artist Tim Djangjomerr is from the Bolmo clan and his skin name is Na-bangardi. I work as a teacher with Children's Ground teaching kids culture, both Bininj and Balanda and with the Morle Boys. We named the men's group the Gundjeihmi word for didjeridoo because when we play it we come together.

Children's Ground is a way of sharing and respecting our culture. It is good to see kids going out on country to learn and feel the spirit. I am a painter and have enjoyed the arts program. I have just finished the design for the logo for Children's Ground. I painted a picture of a family sitting around a campfire. Mum and Dad are telling their stories to the kids. This represents to me what Children's Ground is all about. I hope that our culture carries on and we pass the knowledge to the wurdurd (children).



Marcella, Phil and Michelle from Kindred Circus with Mahalia Kitman

Circus

Kindred Circus came to help Children's Ground set up a circus show. Michelle, Phil and Marcella spent three weeks working with the young kids and staff in the mornings, with Jabiru Area School kids in the middle of the day, and ran an after school session for older kids. Circus is very important for kids and adults. It helps with fitness, energy, power and confidence so Bininj people can be strong. Everyone loved what they were doing. They were taught back flips, front flips, skipping, forward rolls, hoola hoops, juggling, diablo skills and an obstacle course for the little kids.

We called the circus "Djagarna Circus" which means Jabiru Circus because it represents the people of Jabiru. Djagarna Circus put on a show at the Community Hall so that the parents and community could see what the children had learned.

'Ngarri-djare ngarrben-bengdaihge
bu man-garre gadberre man-djad
ga-djaldi dja gun-gange ngadberre
ga-murrngayek munguih-munguih.'

'We wanted to represent Bininj
culture and remind everyone that
our spirit is alive.'
Roxanne Naborlhborlh

The performers pose at the end of the circus show





Dwayne Dakgalawuy



Jineata Marimowa skips with Marcella from Kindred Circus



Darius Cameron, Flint Djanjomerr Jr, Clive Lane, Ezeriah Djanjomerr and Alphonse Naborlhborlh prepared for a song and dance night at Manaburduma



Lenny Wood



Tim Djanjomerr painted up for a dance night at Madjinbardi



Lee Nabarlambarl, Keith Naborlhborlh, Kayless Nawilil and Tim Djanjomerr

Ngarri-djare ngarrben-bengdaihge bu man-garre gadberre man-djad ga-djaldi dja gun-gange ngadberre ga-murrngayek munguih-munguih. When we opened the Djagarna Circus show, we wanted to represent Bininj culture and remind everyone that our spirit is alive.

Lenny Wood and David Cameron sang and played and people loved it. This was the first time we had Indigenous people showing the way. The people were happy to see Bininj come together and put on a show. The audience clapped and laughed to the serious and the funny bits. This is how Bininj parents like seeing their children. Happy and healthy and strong.

We have started regular circus practice at the Community Centre. The Morle Boys demonstrated their skills and the kids joined in. They love seeing them and joining in. It is important for the kids to pick up physical skills so they can be healthy and strong. The old people were very active and our children should also be active.



Lee Nabarlambarl practices the hoola hoop

Song & dance nights

Mark Djanjomerr has started regular singing and dancing sessions at Madjinbardi. This is a great way for kids to learn culture and respect for their elders. On the first night Johnny Lemibanda played didgeridoo, Mark sang, Tim Djanjomerr and Lee Nabarlambarl led the men's dancing. May Nango and Belinda Djanjomerr led the women's dancing and invited the Children's Ground staff to join in. The kids were really happy to learn the dances. Everyone had a great time sharing this cultural experience.

The Staff



Able Naborlborlh



Anna Dempsey



Christine Alangale



Clancy Allen



Gwendalyn Djangomerr



Belinda Djangomerr



Belinda Morton



Darren Marimowa



David Cameron



Helen Barr



Cecily Djangomerr



Christianna Djangomerr



Dwayne Dakgalawuy



Enoch Nango



Jill Vizec



Vienna Wood



Eva Pettersson



Dwayne Dakgalawuy



Enoch Nango



Susan Ingawala



Jodi Gawuluru



David John Dodd



Kayleen Djangomerr



Kestianna Djangomerr



Lisa Potter



Loretta Djangomerr



Patsy Raglar



Peace Wurrkgidj



Roxanne Naborlborlh



Sandra Djangjul



Tim Djangomerr



Sonya Nango



Johnny Lemibanda



Josabella Cameron



Lee Nabarlambarl



Lenny Wood



Mark Djangomerr



May Nango



Perlin Simon



Raelene Djangjul



Shannon Nango



Shari Aluni



Julie Djangjul



Leonie Sheedy



Neville Namarnyilk



Ritchie Nabarlambarl



Violet Lawson



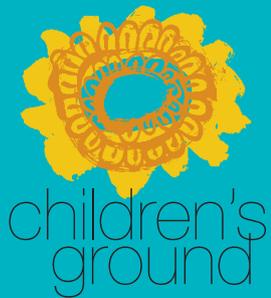
Shirley Brown

Closing

We want to thank the Mirarr People and other supporters for making Children's Ground possible. I feel that our culture has been reignited. I want this flame to be handed to our children so they can carry it into the future.



Kayless Nawilil and Keith Naborlborlh



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