Measuring primary school student wellbeing as part of a data-driven, evidence-based multisectoral strategy to prevent youth crime in the City of Townsville

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Overview

What: design community level profiles of risk and protective factors for 5-12 year old children
Why: As a guide to decision making for collective community action to improve child wellbeing and reduce youth crime
Where: in Communities for Children (CfC) communities in Australia (including Townsville)
When: As needed by community level groups (CfCs, schools, NGOs, government departments)
How: using the CREATE prevention support system and data from multiple sources

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19th year in community services and youth justice in north and far north Queensland.
Principal Research Officer assisting Major General Stuart Smith (ret'd) AO, DSC.
Project Manager – Coordinating the implementation of Townsville Voice

The Townsville Voice Project:
Key Points

- Aims to assess the community's views on youth crime
- The consultation, led by Community Champion Major General (ret'd) Stuart Smith, AO DSC aimed to 'go deep' and was guided by three principles:
  - Tend to capture the majority view (not just the most vocal)
  - Themes emerging should be contextualised and driven by local data
  - Recommendations supported by the community should be sustainable and resilient to political cycles
- Over 800 residents consulted with 1493 contacts across the community, base on 7 forums and numerous other forms of contact

The Townsville Voice Project:
Key Points #2

- Clear themes began to emerge early:
  - Share more information on the actions being taken to address youth crime.
  - Hold youth to account for the offending.
  - Support families and youth to remain engaged with school.
  - Promote role models and mentors.
  - Improve the diversionary justice processes and timeliness of the youth justice system.
- The community expressed a clear focus on prevention followed by interventions then rehabilitation.
The Townsville Voice Project: Key Points #3

- Enhance the prevention system through increased support of:
  - Victims
  - Parents
  - Early education screening
  - School attendance
  - Developing cultural resilience

- Enhance the intervention system through:
  - Improving youth services after hours
  - Strengthening mentoring programs

- Enhance the rehabilitation system through:
  - Strengthen diversionary options in the youth justice system
  - Strengthen transition between youth justice rehabilitation services
  - Strengthen the community service system to hold youth accountable for their actions

In summary, the focus was on seeking community views, then looking at the broader research surrounding the themes the community presented combined with analyses of local data.

The CREATE Project: Key Points

- The CREATE Project (Create-ing Pathways to child wellbeing in disadvantaged communities) aims to build prevention science methods and measures WITHIN the routine practices of large scale community service and school systems in two states of Australia, Queensland and New South Wales.

- The focus is children aged 0-12 years, but mainly primary school-aged children 5-12 years.

- CREATE uses a population health methodology similar to Communities That Care – including the development of community-level child risk and protective factor profiles.

- Our data are VERY PRELIMINARY, but demonstrates the great potential of our methodology.

Our goal: work WITHIN existing delivery systems

Make good prevention delivery systems better by constructing and testing a Prevention Translation and Support System

Do this for:
- Communities for Children (CfC) regions in Australia
- Australian State Education Departments
- NGO community services

The Townsville Voice Project: Key Points #4

- In summary, the focus was on seeking community views, then looking at the broader research surrounding the themes the community presented combined with analyses of local data.

- One example of this is the community identifying that early education screening needs to be enhanced to maximise their chance of following a positive educational pathway.

- Research and data suggests that there are many children entering the youth justice system with previously undiagnosed and untreated issues that have direct impacts on positive school behaviour.

- A review of potential tools and processes that could be sustainable, easy to deliver and had been validated, Rumble’s Quest was nominated in the report.

- The CREATE research team has been working with Leanne Pascoe and her colleagues in the Department of Education in Townsville to help implement Rumble’s Quest in schools.
Two major components of the Griffith Prevention Translation & Support System

1. Systems and processes established by Collective Impact Facilitators for:
   - Implementing the CREATE community prevention model
   - Achieving the four conditions of collective impact

2. An interactive web-based set of electronic resources:
   - Tools for CRC community coalition members to strengthen their collective capacity to undertake key activities described in each stage of the CREATE Change Engine
   - Data collection tools for collaborative goal setting and tracking collective outcomes and progress (including coalition cohesion, child and family outcomes, and economic analysis)

1. The CREATE model

The CREATE Change Cycle

2. Interactive web-based resources

Child risk and protective factors at suburb (SA2) level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Positive relationships and peer acceptance</td>
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<td>3. Adherence to norms and standards</td>
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<td>4. Impulsivity/self-regulation</td>
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<td>5. Emotional Health (optimism, positive outlook, problem solving skills)</td>
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<td>6. Self-esteem</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Social Skills - Prosocial Orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Parent support for learning involvement and potential activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Enduring presence of caring adult</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Exposure to conflict/violence/unsafe environment</td>
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<td>11. Life events (e.g., adversity, possible discrimination)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Attachment to school</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Family Function (e.g., Family routine and structure; Age appropriate Supervision)</td>
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<td>14. Engaged in learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Positive school climate (and recognition of effort)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16. AEDC: Readiness to learn/School readiness</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17. AEDC: Individual factors that may facilitate academic achievement</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18. AEDC: Individual factors that may impede academic achievement</td>
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Note: 5 factors not yet included, including 3 community safety & stress factors
Multiple sources of aggregated data

How do we examine these?

Community child risk & protective factors:
Suburbs (SA2) and Communities for Children (CfC) region levels

This methodology does the same job for primary aged children as the CTC needs assessment using their Youth Survey

AEDC items
118

Government/ABS items
328

Community child risk & protective factors:
Suburbs (SA2) and Communities for Children (CfC) region levels

This process is repeated for the 149 SA2s and 22 CfC sites in NSW & Qld

This methodology does the same job for primary aged children as the CTC needs assessment using their Youth Survey

Rumble’s Quest Wellbeing Scores

An Interactive computer game that provides psychometrically valid and reliable measures of the social-emotional wellbeing of primary school children 6-12 years

www.realwell.org.au

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An Interactive computer game that provide psy...
Combining the data sources

Guided by the risk and protective factors

Example of mapping items onto a risk factor

Risk and protective factor profiles for 6 SA2s within an urban CFC region (CfC2)

Comments on risk profile for CfC2

• So far, out of 30 state schools and 18 Catholic and Independent school in Townsville, 7 have registered to use Rumble’s Quest, and 3 have completed some data collection.
• Only 2 of the 3 schools are in the CfC region in Townsville, and it is only these 2 for which both AEDC and Rumble’s Quest data are available.
• Not all children in the 3 schools used Rumble’s Quest. This could have been because parent consent was not obtained or because the school selected only some children.
• Understanding more about within-school selectivity and use of their data repurpose the focus of a Rumble’s Quest implementation study which is about to begin.

The Townsville Voice Project: Key Points #5

Note: Because we have identified Townsville as a whole, we have removed the scores for 5 out of the 18 risk/protective factors that are derived largely or wholly from Rumble’s Quest scores. This is to protect the anonymity of the schools.

Removal of these scores does not change the fact that the children in SA1 are more ‘at risk’ that children in SA2.
Comments on risk profile for SA2 in Townsville

SA2 is clearly at risk on a range of factors compared to SA1:

But note that this assumes that the sample of children in each school is representative of the whole school student population.

And that there are no other schools in the SA2 that have yet to use Rumble’s Quest.

Within SA2, the following factor stands out:

• Emotional health (optimism, positive outlook, problem solving skills)
• Family function (family routine and structure; age appropriate supervision)
• Impulsivity & capacity for self-regulation

Other high scoring risk factors include:

• Difficult/disruptive behaviour
  • Gets into fights
  • Bullies or is mean to others
  • Friends get into trouble
  • Laughs at other children’s discomfort

SA2 is clearly at risk on a range of factors compared to SA1:

Comments on risk profile for SA1 in Townsville

SA1 is clearly less at risk on a range of factors compared to SA2:

Within SA1, the following factor stands out:

• Adverse life events & possible discrimination
  • Good things (do not) happen to me
  • People (do not) treat me in a fair way
  • Trauma, isolation or difficulties associated with resettlement

Within SA1, the following factor stands out:

• Poor family function
• Few disabilities/barriers to academic success
  • Few visual, hearing or language impairments
  • Few learning disabilities

One high scoring risk factor & one high protective factor:

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