Name: Louise Lynch

Location: Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre (MRRC)

Position: Aboriginal Education

Name: Betty Champion

Location: Long Bay Correctional Centre

Position: Aboriginal Part-time Teacher
This paper will discuss the importance of the AVETI run course Coorong Tongala. However first I must address the rationale of Education in a correctional facility. For as Educators we must work within the parameters that is set down by corrective services.

RATIONALE OF AVETI EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

The first principles of New South Wales Charter for Equity in Education and training state that:

1. Everyone is entitled to high quality education and training programs that provide recognised credentials and clear pathways to employment and lifelong learning. The outcomes of education and training should not depend on factors beyond the learner’s control or influence.

2. In the allocation of public resources, priority is given to narrowing those gaps in education and training outcomes that reflect need and prevailing social inequalities.

The profile of inmates in NSW gaols indicates high percentages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (14%) and of inmates from non-English speaking backgrounds (26%). These groups are traditionally educationally deprived. Additionally (but not exclusively) 60% of male inmates have lower than functional literacy and numeracy skills.

Inmates in NSW correctional centres are typically from groups recognised as disadvantaged and suffer the additional disadvantage of the isolation of imprisonment. They are in the high risk group for long term unemployed, are educationally deprived and socially and economically disadvantaged. They typically require access to education and training in the areas of:

- Literacy/numeracy/communication
- Vocational education and training
- Life skills
- Employability skills
- Programs for special needs groups eg Aboriginal, non-English speaking background, women, intellectual disability
- Recreation.

Correctional adult basic education contributes to the re-integration of offenders into the community by providing programs which address literacy, numeracy, personal and employment skills necessary to function as law abiding, self-directed members of society. These programs also address the acquisition of equally vital pro-social attitudes and values.

Education programs are designed to address the specific learning needs of:
- Academic improvement (particularly functional literacy)
- Vocational skills (particularly generic skills which are easily transported)
- Interpersonal, reasoning and social skills.
NSW Department of Corrective Services Statement of Principles states that:

“The Department is committed to managing offenders safely, effectively and humanely while preparing them to lead worthwhile and productive lives. It is also committed to providing opportunities for offenders to make restitution to victims and reparation to the community”.

Correctional education programs contribute to the effective management of offenders by addressing the specific needs as outlined above as well as by contributing to the ‘normalisation’ of the correctional environment and thus to dynamic security.

Modern penological practice emphasises the concept of ‘dynamic’ security which is achieved through the positive and continuous interaction of staff and inmates through case management, based on a comprehensive assessment of inmate needs.

The inclusion of effective programs in literacy/numeracy, vocational education and training and life skill, supported by adequate library resources leads to safer and more productive correctional centre management. These programs

Support custodial officers by providing constructive occupation of inmates’ time; they support security, good order and safety in correctional centres;

Enhance inmates’ communication skills and hence assist positive staff/inmate interaction;

Assist development of socially responsible inmates behaviour; and,

Overcome some negative effects of imprisonment and contribute to the effective case management of inmates.

All of these contribute to effective and humane management of correctional centres.

The Importance on Coorong Tongala! Why is it different?

On 12th May, 2001, 16 inmates at MRRC completed 1 module of the Coorong Tongala Course (Certificate 1 in Koorie Education). This course aims to provide accredited training for Koorie people wishing to develop skills for accessing further training, education or employment.

This module the inmates completed was Module 3. Talk Up, Listen Up. This course deals with Koorie Cultural Studies 1 and Oral Communication. This course ran for 60 hours and through the use of computers, media input as well as converting written laws into the form of painting on canvas. The inmates were able to work through changing negative attitudes into positive attitudes through group discussions as well as role playing.
This course includes 5 Core Modules as well as 2 elective modules. Through starting this course at a Remand gaol the inmates have been given an educational pathway to follow once reaching the goal of classification. For on completion of this course they can then start of Certificate 2 in Koorie education which will then lead to Certificate II in Youth Welfare or health care.

Through participating in these courses, the inmate will participate in speeches develop an awareness and knowledge of Indigenous cultural issues as well as improving oral and written communication skills. The reason for the success of this course which was purchased by AVETI from Victoria is; due to the fact it is based on the true history of Aboriginal Culture but from an Indigenous Perspective.
Since completing this module 2 students have received jobs (cortex and laundry), 7 students are now enrolled in computers and 6 are enrolled in art. The success of this course is the fact that these inmates now have a career path mapped out as well as having gained experience and self esteem through completing a module in a Remand environment.

Collaborative Art Work done by, Merele Dutton, Gerry Mesiti, Ken clack, Joe Miles, Sonny Poulson. Teacher Monique Van Bentum.
Course Structure
Outline of course structure
As indicated in the table below, the course consists of five core modules – modules 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 and two elective modules – modules 6 and 7. Students must complete one of the elective modules.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Modules</th>
<th>Module code</th>
<th>Module name</th>
<th>Nominal hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VBF 826</td>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td>Stand Up You Fellas! Individuals Management Skills</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VBF 827</td>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td>Where are You Goin? Career Pathways</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VBC 854</td>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>Talk Up, Listen Up! Koorie Cultural Studies 1 and Oral</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>VBC 850</td>
<td>Module 4</td>
<td>What’s the Story? Koorie Cultural Studies 2 and Reading and Writing Skills</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>VBC 858</td>
<td>Module 5</td>
<td>What’s Your Number? Life Skills Numeracy</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elective Modules</th>
<th>Module code</th>
<th>Module name</th>
<th>Nominal hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VBF 828</td>
<td>Module 6</td>
<td>So What Doin ? Focus activity selected and developed according to community needs</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VBF 829</td>
<td>Module 7</td>
<td>Who’s the Boss? Leadership, Politics and Land rights.</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Requirements to receive the qualifications
Successful completion of modules 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 or 7 is required before the Certificate can be completed. A statement of attainment will be provided upon completion of some of the modules.
## General competencies

The modules relate to the Key Competencies developed by the Mayer Committee as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Competencies</th>
<th>Module 1</th>
<th>Module 2</th>
<th>Module 3</th>
<th>Module 4</th>
<th>Module 5</th>
<th>Module 6</th>
<th>Module 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collecting, analysing and organising information</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication ideas and information</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning and organising activities</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working with others and in teams</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using mathematical ideas and techniques</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Solving problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Using technology</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Recognition given to the course

Not applicable

### Licensing/regulatory requirements

Not applicable

### REMEMBER

Education is an area that everybody has an emotional attachment to and we bring those thoughts and feeling with us when we enter a classroom environment. In a goal setting many inmates name negative conditions to education and therefore this is an area that his to be over come with dynamic teachers, evaluated courses and means for measuring these outcomes.

Important to remember the educational maxim is to begin where the students are. In teaching reading, this means starting where the students are means beginning with their life interests and present reading tastes, not with their knowledge of language structure and their recognition of sound and letter shape correspondences.

**Example** -

- **Traditional Law** – converted to canvas.
- **Music** – integrating students with traditional songs
- **Canvas** – different working together on a project.
- **Computers** – Typing life stories, poems and court statements.
In every language in every part of the world, story is the fundamental grammar of all thought and communication. By telling ourselves what happened, to whom, and why we not only discover ourselves and the world, but we change and create ourselves and the world too.

Motivation
Living Skills
Self Esteem
Pathway
Attitude Change
Dominant
Culture

We rely a lot on written material. We have to become affluent and hold in high regard vocational courses which add to and enhance literacy and numeracy. Because of inmates reflection education a lot wont work from books you have to build their self esteem first to give them the courage to try a task where there is possibility they will fall like they have in the past.

Heart's Of Gold
Here I am alone again
Thinking of my lifetime friend.
Blue coat’s walk rattling keys
Again I find myself on my knee’s
Sick, sorry, sore and cold
I swear I feel three times as old.

Merry go round comes round again
Remand, sentence; where’s my friends.
Sometimes I wonder is my life for real
Is there any way off this spinning wheel.

Drug and alcohol report’s again,
Maybe this time I will get a ten.
Don’t get me wrong I know wrong from right
But when I’m released, it’s hard to fight.
My brother’s inside we all feel the pain
We try so hard but it’s always the same.

We were never crim’s and surely not thieves
It’s just our fight inside that will never heal.
We should always remember our Elder’s who died
That is why our great race will always survive.
The massacres, disease’s and stories untold
In my eyes every brother and sister has a heart of gold.

Poem by Noel Dixon – MRRC
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