

**School of Special
Educational Needs**
Medical & Mental Health



**Understanding the role
Country, Culture and Relationships
Play in the Health and
Educational Support of
Indigenous Australians:**

An Adolescent case study

Debbie de Lacy, Jennifer Martino



Disclaimer notice

This map indicates only the general location of larger groupings of people, which may include smaller groups such as clans, dialects or individual languages in a group. Boundaries are not intended to be exact. The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and not those of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. For more detailed information about the groups of people in a particular region, contact the relevant land councils.

NOT SUITABLE FOR USE IN NATIVE TITLE AND OTHER LAND CLAIMS

The First Nations people of Australia are the longest continuing culture worldwide as much as 60,000 years.

ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA

Names and regions as used in the The Encyclopedia of Aboriginal Australia © Victor Govek Editor, published in 1984 by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (Aboriginal Studies Press) GPO Box 553 Canberra, ACT 2601

-  Mabo: Tribal/Language group name
-  Southwest: Region name
-  No published information available

SCALE 1:4 700 000





Broome

2200 km

Perth

Travel Distance
Perth Sydney
3,290.45 km

Sydney

8 Million square km

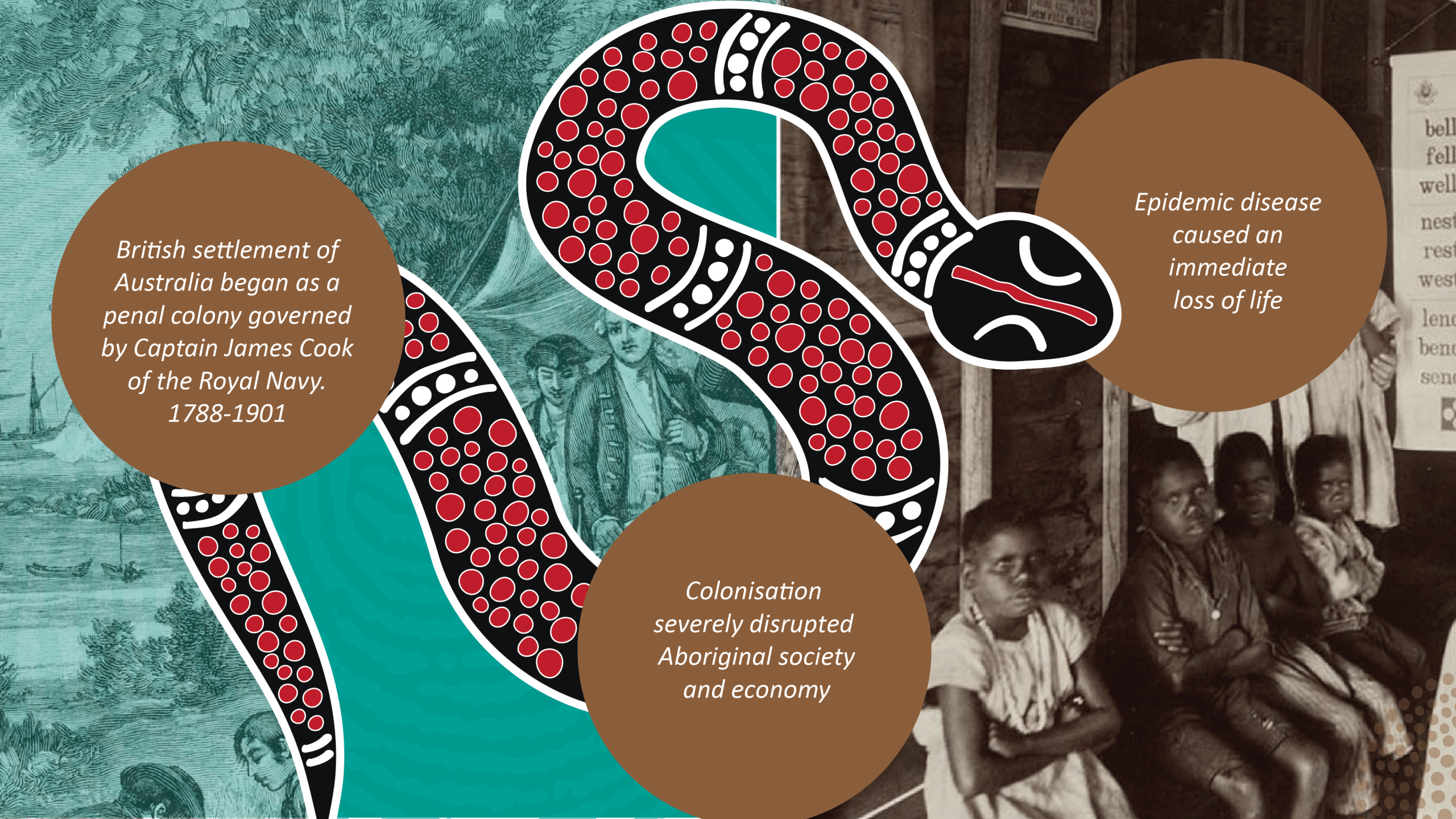
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*British settlement of
Australia began as a
penal colony governed
by Captain James Cook
of the Royal Navy.
1788-1901*

*Colonisation
severely disrupted
Aboriginal society
and economy*





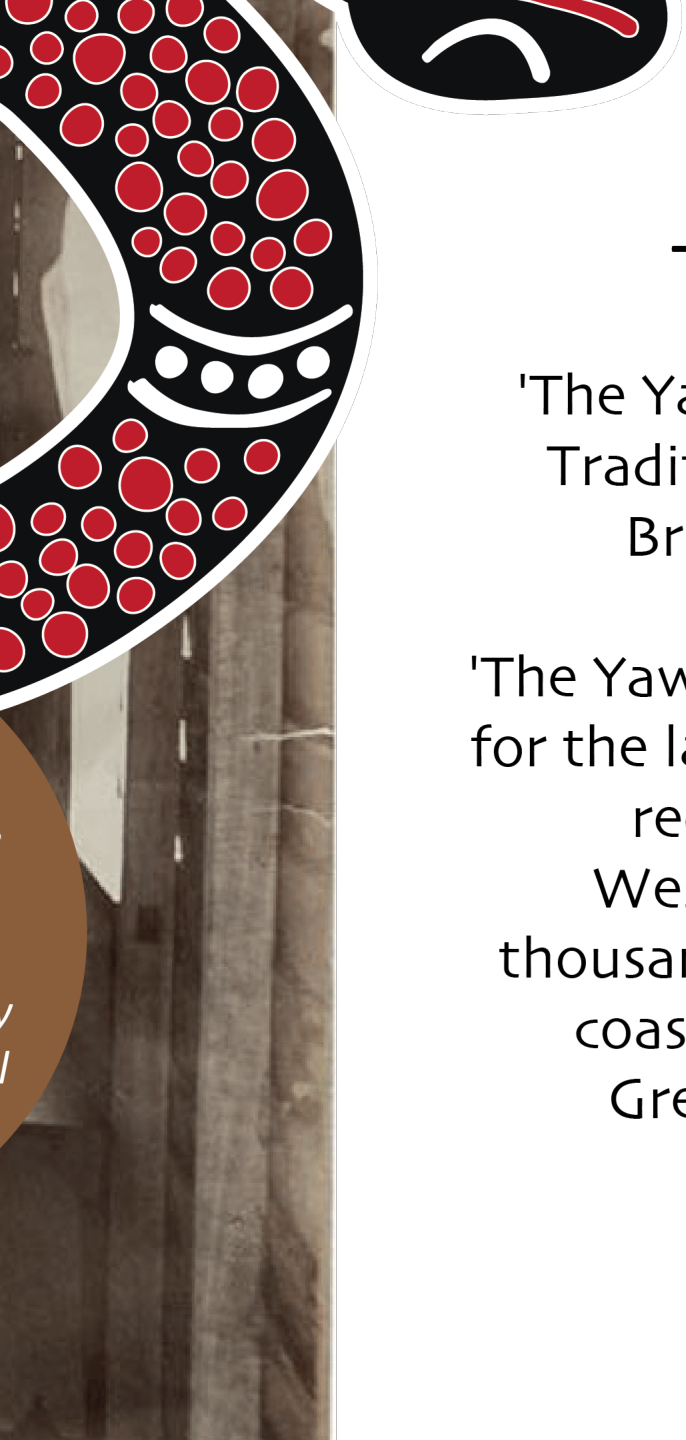
British settlement of Australia began as a penal colony governed by Captain James Cook of the Royal Navy. 1788-1901

Epidemic disease caused an immediate loss of life

Colonisation severely disrupted Aboriginal society and economy

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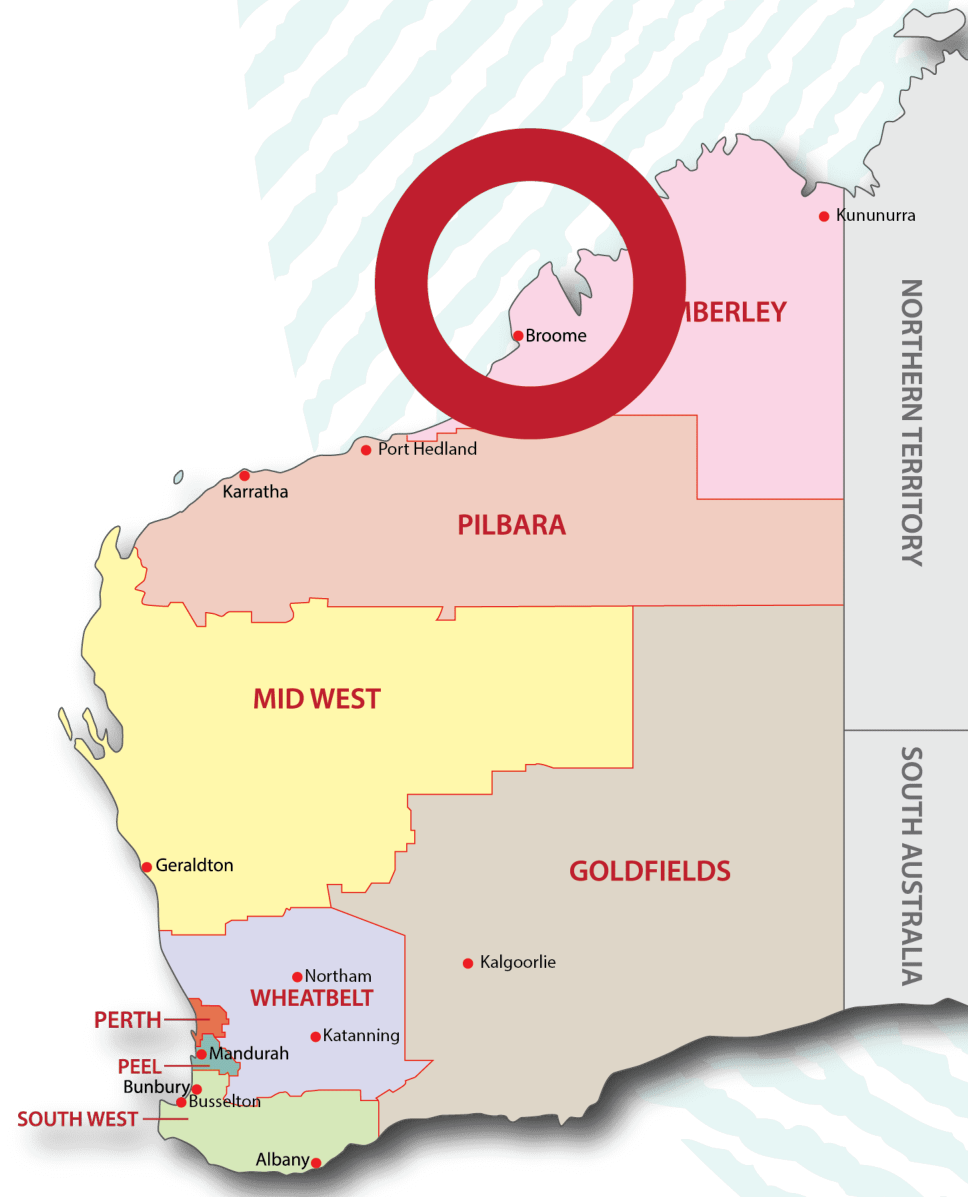
*occupation of land by
settlers and the forcible
removal from family
(1900-1960, Stolen
Generation) significantly
disrupted the Aboriginal
way of life.*



The Yawuru

'The Yawuru people are the Traditional Custodians of Broome, Australia.'

'The Yawuru people have cared for the lands and waters in this region of northern Western Australia for thousands of years, from the coast to as far in as the Great Sandy Desert.'



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CASE STUDY

Student AP

Our student is a 14yo Aboriginal female from Yawuru country.

She is

- ambitious.
- motivated to do well at school.
- has a keen sense of culture.
- strong relationships with family and the land where she was born.

She fell off the back of a utility vehicle ('ute') in 2018. Her acquired brain injury at that time was more functional than neurological.

*Symptoms affected her school attendance.
crippling headaches
word finding difficulties
brain fog
fatigue.*





*The goal
To be culturally
responsive in meeting
student's education
and life needs*

*The student has a gift - Liyan.
Liyan weaves people, culture and country together.*

*AP can become physically unwell, her feet burn and
loses pallor at previous Indigenous trauma sites,
which exhausts her.*

*AP is deeply respected by the Indigenous community
for this gift.*

*AP accepted an academic scholarship to a Boarding
School in Perth, 2020.*

*The goal - build a culturally
responsive plan given ongoing
health symptoms and considering
her spiritual gift.
reconnect with community,
inclusive of education.*

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Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework

CONTINUUM

CULTURAL AWARENESS (EMERGING)

CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING (DEVELOPING)

CULTURAL COMPETENCE (CAPABLE)

CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS (PROFICIENT)

THE FRAMEWORK

THE FRAMEWORK PROVIDES A STRUCTURE FOR ALL STAFF TO REFLECT ON THEIR PRACTICES AND IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVED ACTION TO BUILD ON EXISTING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS.

The framework comprises five cultural standards and a continuum.



Each of the cultural standards has performance descriptors and indicators to guide staff when working with Aboriginal students, their parents and families, and communities.

The continuum enables staff to reflect on individual and whole-school progress and to develop strategies to move towards becoming culturally responsive.

Together, the standards and continuum assist school leaders to start discussions about planning for improvement in their schools.

The framework is applicable to all staff delivering services to, and providing support for, students and schools.

The sentiments underlying the framework apply to all schools, even those with few or no Aboriginal student enrolments.



RELATIONSHIPS

STANDARD: Culturally responsive schools foster positive participation, communication and interaction between staff, Aboriginal students, their parents and families, and the local Aboriginal community.

LEADERSHIP

STANDARD: Culturally responsive schools have leaders who develop and sustain an individual and school-wide focus on improving education outcomes for Aboriginal students.

TEACHING

STANDARD: Culturally responsive schools have high expectations for Aboriginal students and teach in ways that enable them to better reach their full education potential.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

STANDARD: Culturally responsive schools build an environment that is welcoming for Aboriginal students and reflects community aspirations for their children.

RESOURCES

STANDARD: Culturally responsive schools target resourcing to optimise education outcomes for Aboriginal students.

Developed respectful relationships with Aboriginal students and their parents and families.

Communicate regularly with parents and families of Aboriginal students about their children's learning.

Establish local cultural protocols for interacting with the local Aboriginal community.

Routinely invite local Aboriginal community members to school events, activities and events.

Seek feedback from Aboriginal students, their parents and families, and local Aboriginal community members to inform the school's delivery of services.

Developed reliable relationships with local Aboriginal community networks to build on their cultural understandings and expertise of the community's needs.

Staff, Aboriginal students and their parents and families have established collaborative, trusting and respectful working relationships.

Staff involve the parents and families of Aboriginal students in their children's education.

Staff have clearly established shared understandings, processes and protocols for respectful interaction with local Aboriginal community members.

Staff and local Aboriginal community members and organisations work together in planning meetings, activities and events.

Staff, Aboriginal students, their parents and families, and local Aboriginal community members are all actively involved in decision making.

Staff routinely participate in local Aboriginal community networks and draw on their cultural knowledge and expertise of the community's needs.

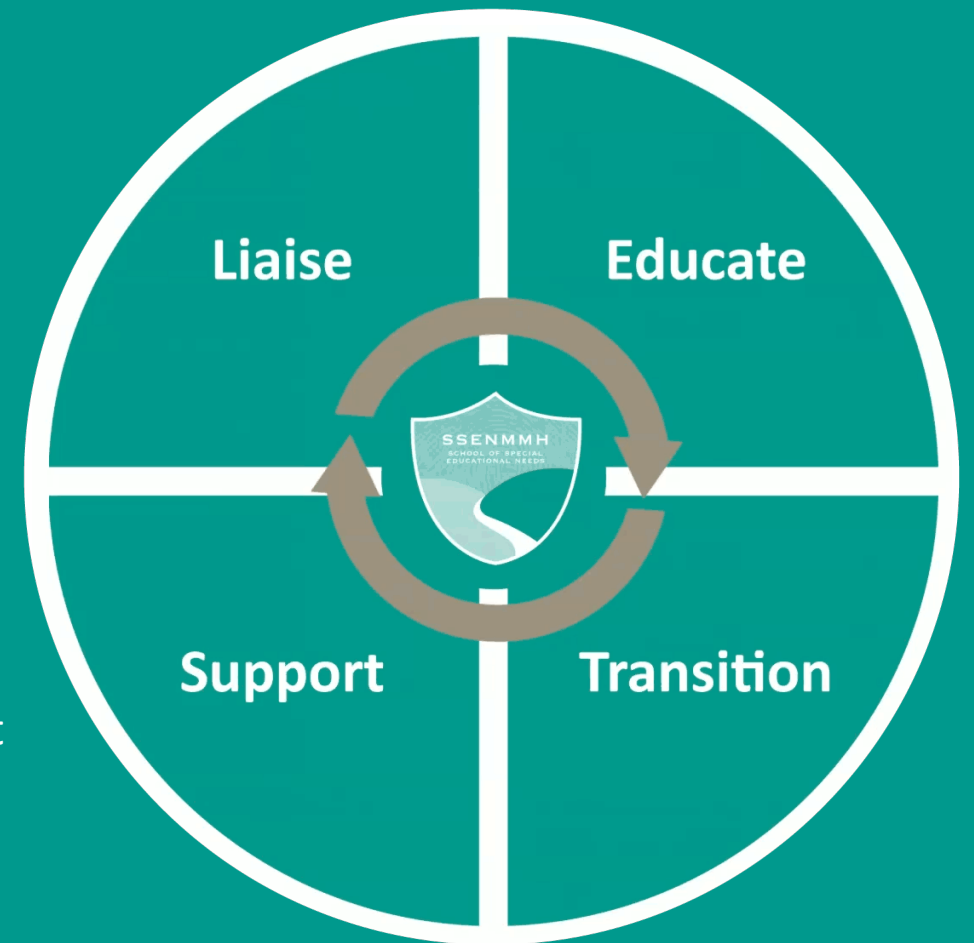
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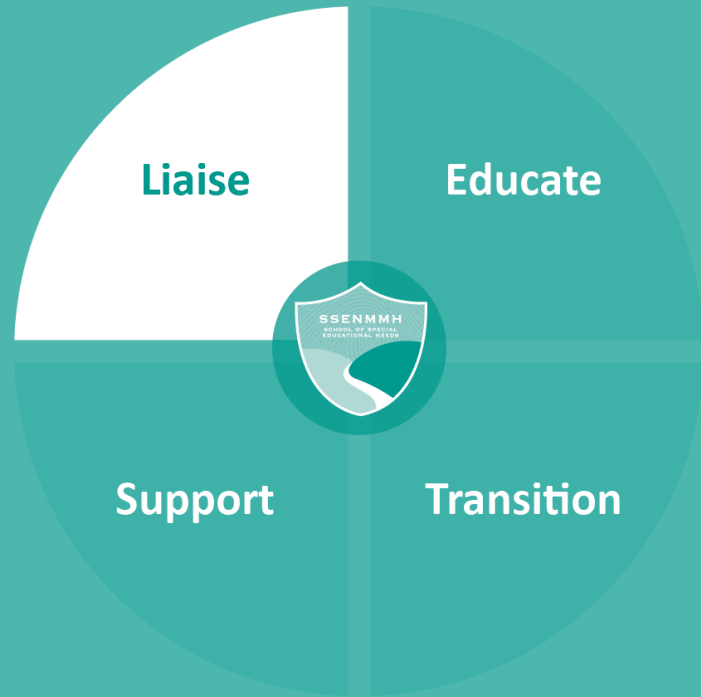
Danjoo, Kaartdijin, Moorditj

Connect, Learn and Thrive

'The SSEN:MMH Model of Liaise - Educate - Transition - Support (LETS) provides teachers with a framework to optimise students' educational continuity which reduces gaps when partnering with the enrolling school, health team and family. The teacher can provide an educational perspective to the treatment approach.'



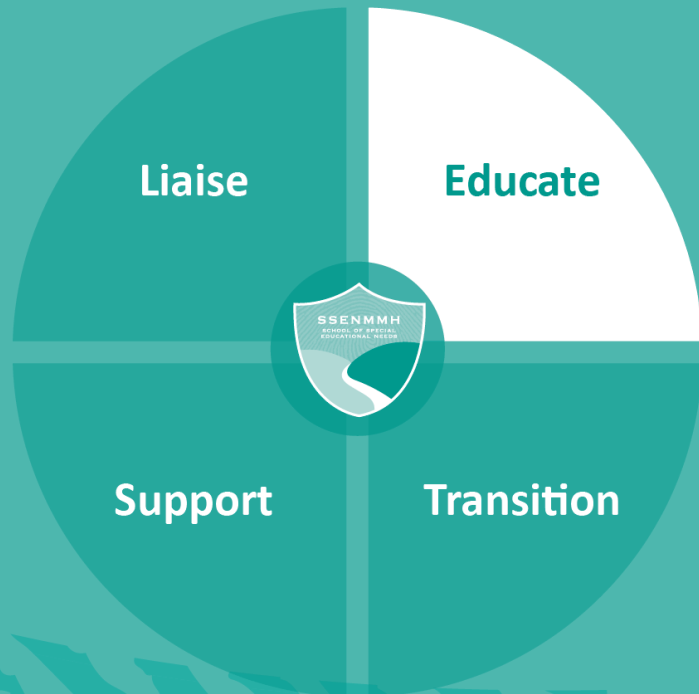
Our Model - LETS



After meeting with student, family and medical team:

- *Liaise with enrolled school to discuss strategies to implement that support the student. Eg. modified timetable, sleep in separate room in boarding house, have safe card to leave class and attend medical centre, when required.*
- *Participation is the goal in transition phases, zero expectation of homework and assessments.*

Liaise

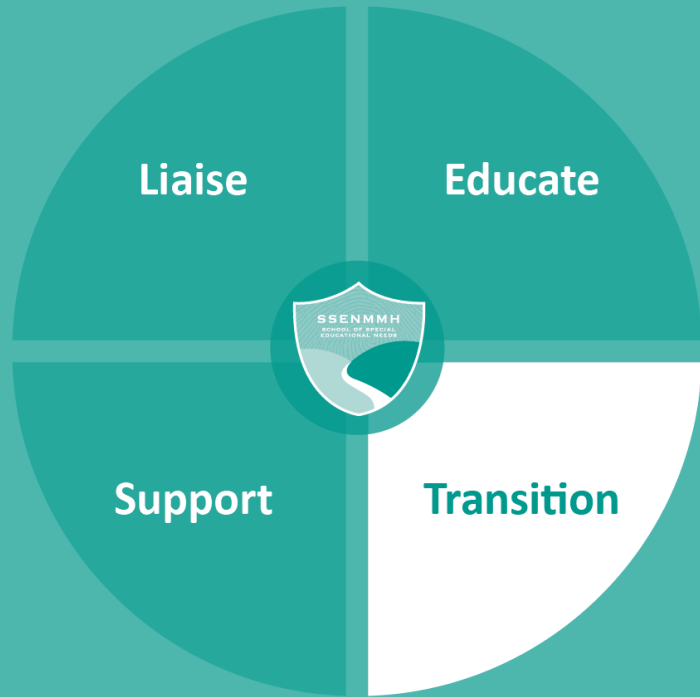


Educate

After meeting with student, family and medical team:

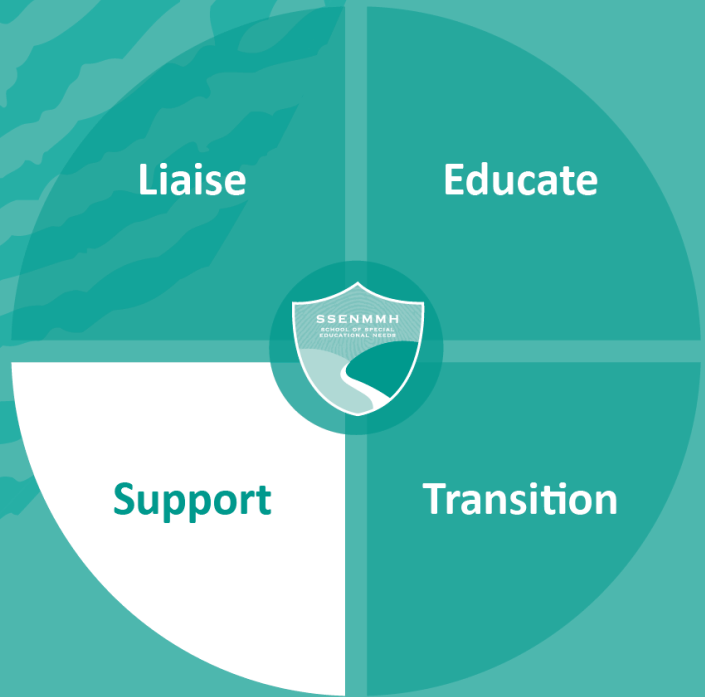
- *SSEN teacher educate school on FND and limitations at school.*
- *SSEN teacher educate health team on reasonable school modifications.*
- *Case Conference to enable communication between student, family, Aboriginal Education Officer re 'Country and Culture.*
- *Outcome as student returned to Yaruwu country (Broome).*

Outcome was possibility of student returning to country (Broome).



- *Student returned to Broome and began SIDE, reduced 3 courses.*
- *SSEN Teacher liaised with SIDE teachers on adjustments. Manageable routine for school per day with health recovery.*
- *Student engaged with learning much better through SIDE as back on country with family & culture.*

Transition

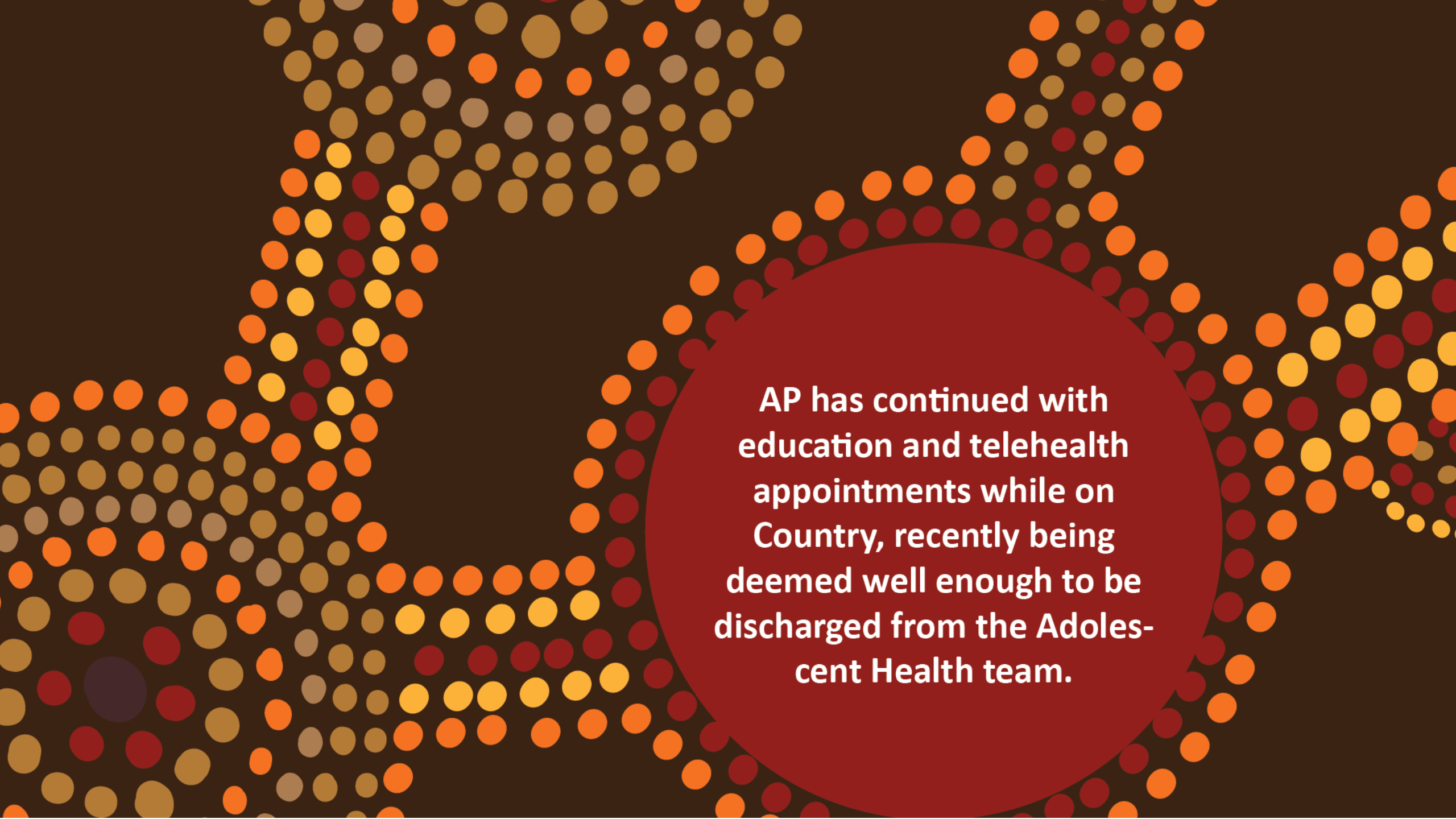


- *SEN teacher ongoing support and updates on health progress.*
- *Medical certificate reviews.*
- *Feedback to health team on educational progress.*
- *Transition support to return face to face on campus in 2023.*

Support

Result and Outcome






AP has continued with education and telehealth appointments while on Country, recently being deemed well enough to be discharged from the Adolescent Health team.

activities, though
to manage fa

**Her Liyan and connection
to culture is one of her
strengths and provides her
with resilience and
connection to family
members and the wider
community.**

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When she is on Country, she spends a lot of time with her family participating in activities, though still needs to manage fatigue.

The teacher's facilitation of online schooling has

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spends a lot of time with her family participating in activities, though still needs to manage fatigue.

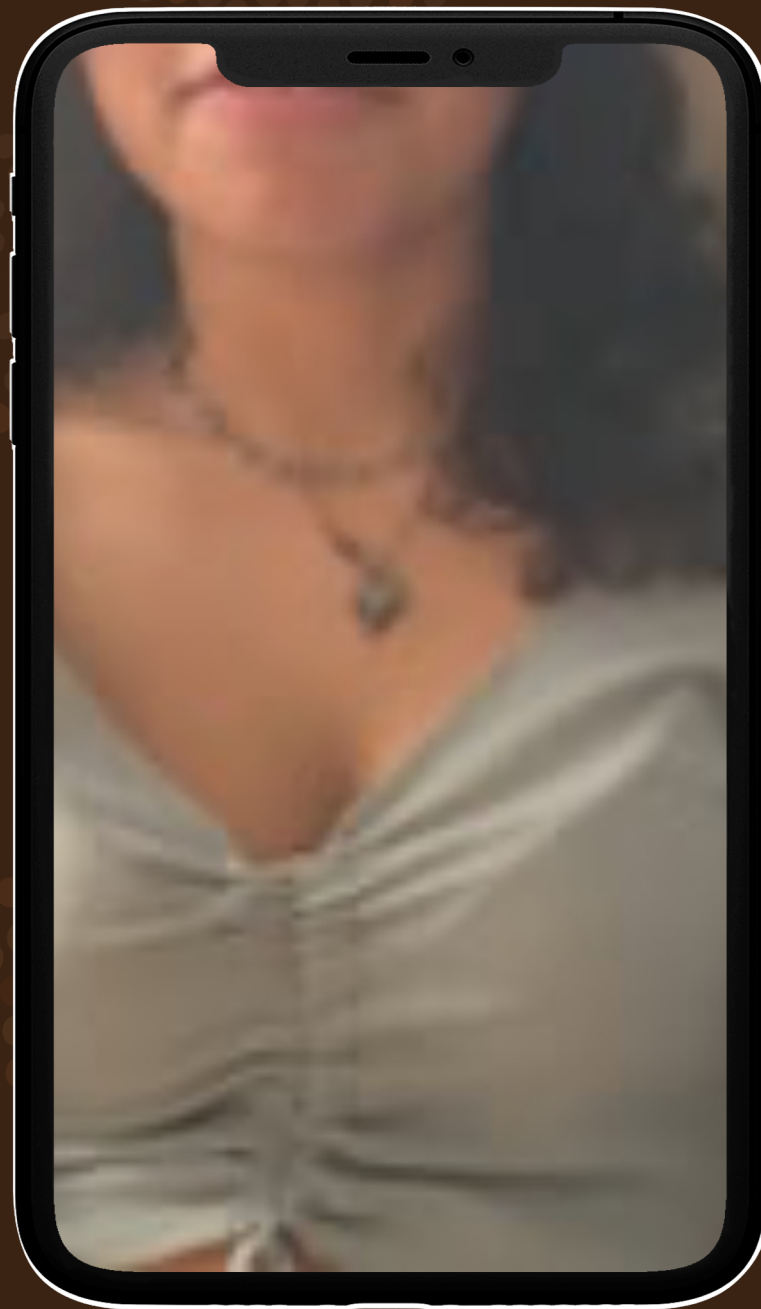
The teacher's facilitation of online schooling has supported her relationship with Country and Family. AP is planning to complete Business Administration in 2023 to help with the family Bush Medicine Business.

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s and the wider
community.

with the family Bu
Business

Her recovery now means she is well enough to begin participating on campus in a more normalised school environment. She is currently enrolling in F2F schooling for Year 11 and 12 in Perth.

Student Testimony



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Thank you!