

# Respectful Relationships: Collaboration Between Indigenous And Non-Indigenous Agencies

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## Abstract

This paper recounts the story of how a non-profit organisation [Interrelate] worked with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation [Mingaletta] to engage the local community by assisting young boys in increasing their knowledge of, and connection to, culture, and the amazing outcomes achieved along the way. It will provide some answers to the question of the approaches organisations should adopt to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males to improve their wellbeing and how organisations can encourage communities to utilise available services by making them more accessible.

We will track the growth of the relationship between Interrelate and Mingaletta, and the development of a group through which Aboriginal boys were mentored and taught a stronger sense of respect and connection to culture. This group, the Young Boys Didgeridoo and Cultural Group, was initially a 10-week pilot program. Eighteen months later and it has grown in popularity and attendance. The boys now learn dance, song and traditional stories. The teachers of the Didgeridoo Group have been talented and spiritual men who engage and motivate the boys. Their leadership, along with the influence of Uncle Bob, provides the boys with great role models from within their community as they move towards manhood.

Invitations for this group to perform at significant events – leading the ANZAC Day march in Redfern NSW and being invited to play on the new Tribal Warrior to various dignitaries – are testaments to this group's success. But this success is only the tip of the iceberg, given that it has resulted in an indigenous and a non-indigenous organisation working more closely together to ensure that much-needed services (counselling, mediation and parenting programs) are now accessible to the community.

The variety of positive outcomes will be explained, including organisational, community and individual outcomes.

To learn more about *Respectful Relationships: Collaboration Between Indigenous And Non-Indigenous Agencies*, contact Interrelate's Research & Service Development team on [rsd@interrelate.org.au](mailto:rsd@interrelate.org.au).