

Melaleuca Refugee Centre, Darwin

Action Research

Action Research projects are alive and well! We have two projects running concurrently. The first is about access and opportunity in the youth program. We are collecting information from clients about how they would like to access the program and what venue would be the best for a youth program. We do this as we see clients in the first few sessions. We are also asking staff at Melaleuca and other stakeholder organizations what they would see as the best access to the program. Most of our feedback at this point has been about a better venue and more space to “do things.” I will be collating the information and finalizing a report within the next month.

The second project is much larger and less tangible. We are asking what would it take to improve the relationship between young African people and young Indigenous people in the Darwin areas. This has many prongs and what I first found was that I needed to start with a different question. The first question therefore became: What would it take to find out what young people from African and Indigenous backgrounds thought the problems were with each other respectively? This began a five session youth consultation targeting young people from a variety of backgrounds and specific suburbs. The project was collaborative with equal input from Mission Australia’s youth program, The Red Cross youth programs, NT Police Crime Prevention Office, The Multicultural Centre NT and later, Danila Dilba Youth Program (an indigenous youth service). The results of these consultations are still being finalized and will hopefully be finished within the next six weeks. Evaluations are now being undertaken with young people.

Another prong of this project is surveying the attitudes towards Indigenous people from adults in the community. This is being done via bi-cultural facilitators at our FICT programs.

I am also establishing a “control” group in Palmerston, which is an area just outside of Darwin where currently young people have very little interaction with young refugees. I will do a consultation with Danila Dilba youth service on the feelings and attitudes of young Indigenous people in this area and then provide some education about refugee issues to see if their ideas or attitudes change.