

## Early Days: The experiences of early vocational education and training programs for young Aboriginal learners



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**The research project:** The experiences of early vocational education and training programs for young Aboriginal learners: perceptions of practitioners and young people

**The research process:** NCVET Building Researcher Capacity Community of Practice

**V Tracks:** An early intervention program for young (Years 9 and 10) Aboriginal learners on the North Coast of NSW concentrating on strategic and collaborative partnerships between TAFE and schools to increase the retention and engagement of these learners in education, employment and training

**Why V Tracks?**

- High School completion rates less than half that achieved by non-Aboriginal learners
- 40 – 50% of Aboriginal population on North Coast aged between 5 and 24

## Key messages

### For learners

- Greater insight into education, training and employment pathways
- Improved attendance and engagement at school
- Increased self-esteem and confidence
- Increased cultural affirmation and pride

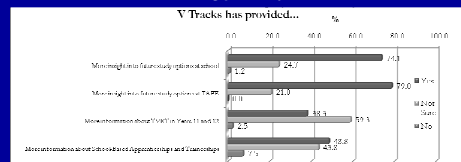
### For school and TAFE staff:

- Increased professional currency and knowledge – VET, schooling and inclusive learning environments

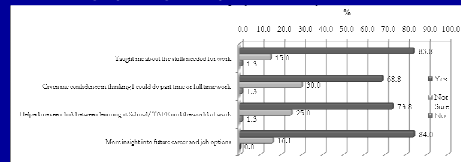
### Overall:

- Many positive outcomes - supporting previous research regarding earlier VET programs and retention and engagement of students at risk of early school-leaving
- Challenges – relating to adequate systems and funding to support such programs as 'built in and not bolted on' to school curriculums and objectives

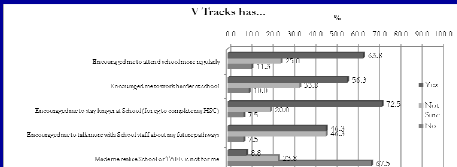
## 1. Education and training pathways



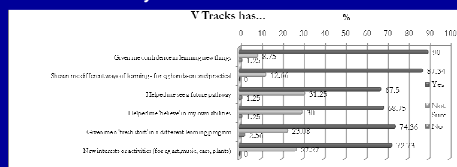
## 2. Employment pathways



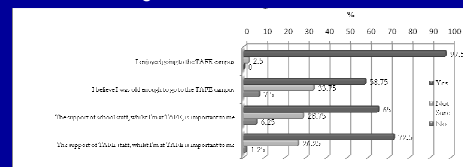
## 3. Attitudes to school



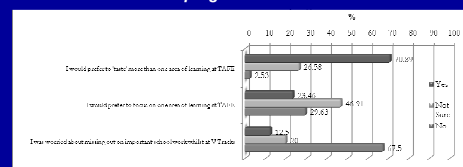
## 4. Self-efficacy and confidence



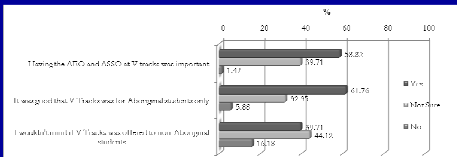
## 5. The learning environment



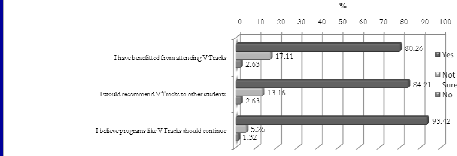
## 6. Structure of the program



## 7. Cultural considerations



## 8. Overall perceptions



## Recommendations

### The research project - Early VET for young Aboriginal learners:

- Equip staff to explore multiple pathways with students
- Identify learners who will benefit the most from such programs
- Provide flexibility at local planning levels – 'one size doesn't fit all'
- Encourage 'built in – not bolted on' design and implementation
- Invest in such programs – moving from 'margins to mainstream'

### The research process – NCVER Building Researcher Capacity:

- Community of Practice
- AVETRA mentoring
- Applications of research – funding applications; submissions to Government standing committees; strategic planning; program design



## QUESTIONS & CONTACT DETAILS

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