

Aboriginal Community Connector initiative

Student Voice Report Semester 3, 2023

Contents:

Executive summary, pp 2-5

Whole sample data by question, pp 6-12

Open ended responses by question, pp 13-19

Executive summary

Background

This report contains the feedback from students who completed the Aboriginal Community Connector initiative student voice survey. The survey was open from 17 July 2023 to 7 August 2023. 57 responses were received from students covering 6 geographic regions from a possible 7 regions. The parent consent processes for student participation are managed by the Community Connectors; in addition, students rightfully have the option of assent (Yes - you can use my answers/No - you cannot use my answers). From the 57 respondents, 39 provided assent for their answers to be used in this report. An automated report format in Qualtrics was chosen to represent these data on the following pages, with overview findings presented in the executive summary. The appendix provides verbatim quotes from student for open-text questions.

Notes on analysis and reporting

The analysis here should be considered to be a relatively context independent overview. Deeper insights will be available where those closer to the work in schools can contextualise these data. In this executive summary some summative statements have been made. An elaborated coverage of the implications of this analysis was not intended, nor was connecting the findings to the literature.

In representing the data, word-clouds have been used in the Qualtrics report. Word-clouds can be considered among the poorest ways to report qualitative data, in effect putting a positivist lens over naturalistic data (Automation bias - counting words, stripped of context and implying meaning that may not exist). Please use caution interpreting the word-cloud representations. In these analyses the word-clouds should guide the reader to consider the richness in the verbatim responses in the appendix.

Where quotes are used in the executive summary some minor corrections to the spelling and grammar are made, enclosed in []. Rather than using quotation marks, italics and coloured tables are used to provide a cleaner read of student voice quotes. Names of people are replaced (e.g., [Community Connector's name] or redacted.

Overview of student voice feedback

Q1 – Full name

Not presented to maintain student confidentiality.

Q2 – Select your Community Connector's geographic region

This question displays the number of students providing permission to use their response, by region. Please note that some Community Connectors had only just begun at the time of data collection.

This report covers student voice at the program level (whole sample for Community Connector regions that participated), analysis at the region level was not conducted.

Q3 – Engagement with Community Connector

Nearly half of the respondents spent 1-6 months with the Community Connector and nearly half spent more than 6 months with the Connector. Only two respondents spent less than a month with the Connector.

Q4 – Thoughts on wellbeing and Culture

The majority of respondents indicated that they have people in their lives who support them and feel culturally strong and connected to their general community. Further, many indicated that their life is going well, whereas some were unsure or expressed neutral sentiment (6 out of 39).

Q5 – Changes in health and wellbeing since working with the Community Connector

All respondents to this question reported that their health and wellbeing has improved since working with the Community Connector. The main themes about why and how this occurred were that the Community Connector has supported students' mental and physical health and provided them with opportunities to connect with their Culture and community. Quotes illustrative of these themes include:

Yes as [I] have now had more opportunities to connect with my [C]ulture (in school and out of school). I have also been able to decide who and what serv[i]ces are best for me and not just made to stay with som[e]one I didn't like or feel comfortable with. I have also gained greater confidence in myself since working with [Community Connector's name]. I'm not afraid to ask for help as I know that [they do] not judge me.

[M]y health and wellbeing ha[ve] improved heaps since joining the [name of program]. I now get up early, go to the [activity], eat a healthy breakfast and then go to school everyday. I now also get out of the house more and get involved with different activities in the community.

Feel really good about who I am, where I'm from and the people I'm surrounded with.

Yeah my health and well-being has changed since working with the community connector because they have taught me self value

Thin[g]s have gotten better in the sense that my community connector makes steps into helping me fill out applications for University so [they have] relived a lot of stress from my mind

Q6 - Thoughts on school

The majority of respondents indicated they feel good about their Culture at school and go to school most days of the week. Many indicated that they want to stay at school to finish the HSC, however some were unsure/neutral (5 out of 39) and some did not want to (5 out of 39). Many also indicated that their teachers have a good understanding of their Culture and that they feel able to engage with their learning at school, whereas a quarter of respondents were unsure or expressed neutral sentiment.

Q7 – Changes in feelings about school since working with the Community Connector

The majority of respondents to this question reported feeling better about school since working with the Community Connector. The main themes around why and how students felt better were that the Community Connector supports students inside and outside of school, motivates them to stay in school, and strengthens their cultural identity. Two respondents reported no change in how they feel about school or that they were not sure, and an additional two reported no change because they already had positive views about school. Illustrative quotes are presented below:

[Community Connector's name] has helped me out with many things at school including helping me receive the right equipment I need to complete my schoolwork properly, and just generally being there in [] case I need help with something.

[I]t's just good to know that I have someone who is not a teacher who can also support me in and out of school

<i>[I]t has changed because at my old school there was no one there to support me both inside and outside of school, but now when moving here [I] get a lot of help with school and the push to stay in school to complete my HSC.</i>
<i>I feel good like if there is a [C]ulture question the teacher ask me and I can answer it without thinking</i>
<i>I have been able to see that my school is diverse and willing to connect with [C]ulture</i>
<i>My view has not changed since starting working with the [A]boriginal community connector I have always held in high regard</i>

Q8 – Thoughts on Community Connectors

When considering the Community Connectors, the majority of respondents indicated that they would recommend the Connector to friends and feel confident about knowing where to seek help. The majority also indicated that the Community Connector is a helpful point of contact for support, is someone they can trust, and has connected them to helpful people and/or services. Further, many indicated that they felt they were moving closer towards their goals; however, some were unsure or neutral (4 out of 39).

Q9 – What is best about working with your Community Connector?

The main themes from responses to this question were that the Community Connectors are trusted, supportive, and engaging, connect students to relevant programs and services, and keep students engaged at school by motivating them and providing academic support.

<i>[H]aving the support [I] never had or didn't know [I] need, they help with my [C]ulture that [I]'m so in[]to an[d] help with me school assignments an[d] my HSC</i>
<i>The best thing about working with [them] is that [I] feel like [I] have someone [I] can trust, someone that will support me and someone that genuinely cares about my future.</i>
<i>Fun and knows [how] to get me involved.</i>
<i>Helps me feel in touch with the community and those of my [C]ulture, and genuinely great person to ask for help and keeping me mentally and physically fit by engaging in programs</i>
<i>There has been more opportunity for instance [T]afe courses [I]'ve learned a [] lot and [I]'m now more engaged in school</i>
<i>[T]he best thing about working with the community connector is that [I] can trust that [they] can help me with all of my problems both in school and out[]side of school. [I]t makes me more motivated to stay in school.</i>

Q10 – Is there anything the Community Connector could do differently to support you?

The strong and consistent theme emerging from this analysis was that there is nothing the Community Connector could do differently. Nearly half of the respondents provided a reason for this response, outlining that the Community Connectors are already doing great with everything. When a suggestion was provided, it was about wanting to see more of the Community Connector. Illustrative quotes include:

<i>I wish [they] could be at the school more than twice a week</i>
<i>Not really, unless it's getting to hang out and do more programs together</i>
<i>I can't think of anything. [They've] got my back already and continues to reach out and make sure I'm included.</i>
<i>Not that I can think of</i>

Q11 - Do you give permission for us to use your responses?

This question shows the count of students who permitted their answers to be used in this report. For reference, 2 students indicated 'No - you can't use my answers', and 16 students did not progress to the assent question (and hence their data is not included). This results in a 68.42% assent rate that is comparable with other survey collections of this nature (Pirru Thangkuray student voice survey 2022 assent rate, 70%).

Implications for further work

The data collection phase coincided with some students' trial exam periods, meaning they were too busy to complete the survey. Future work may wish to collect survey data when students are less busy to allow for greater coverage of student voice. Additionally, the response option 'neither agree nor disagree' may be interpreted by respondents in different ways. For example, it may be interpreted as having a neutral position about the question or being unsure about the question. Future work should be mindful of this if it is important to distinguish between unsure and neutral responses.

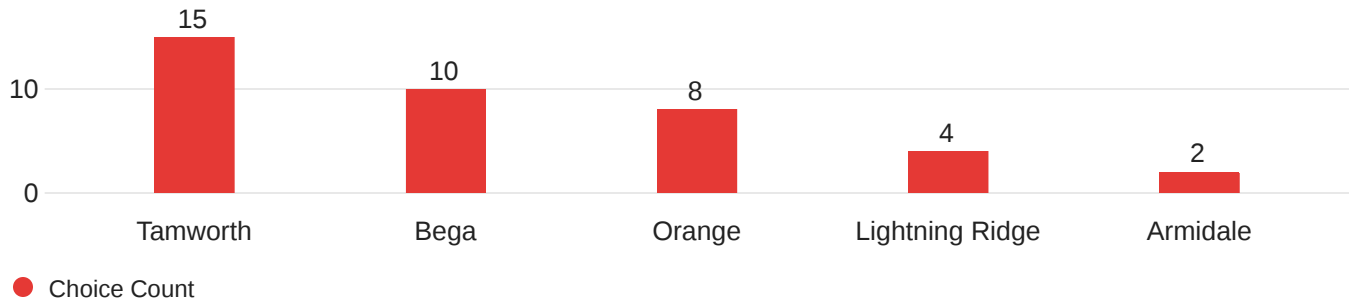
Data governance

The audience for this report is Aboriginal Outcome and Partnership (AOP) Directorate staff and NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations (CAPO). Further distribution or display of these data is not permitted without permission from the data stewards.

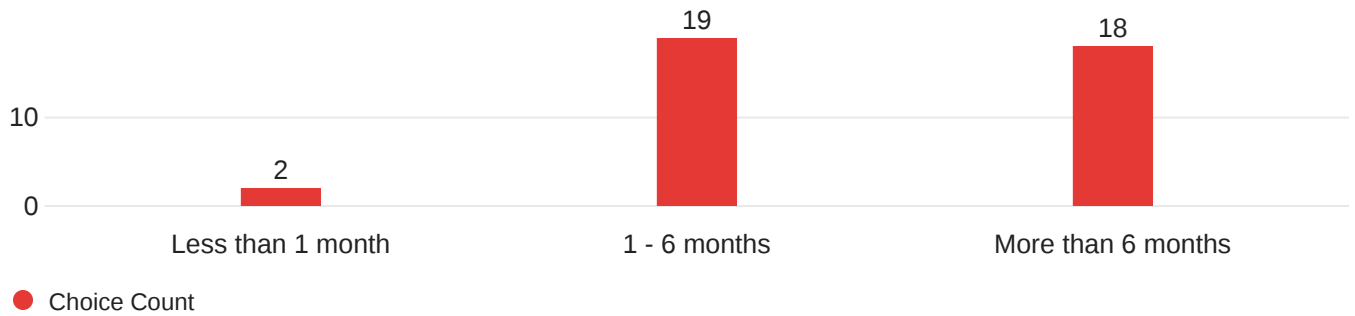
For correspondence, please contact The Executive Director of AOP, at aopcorrespondence@det.nsw.edu.au.

We thank the students for their time in completing these surveys and the insights they have provided.

Q2 - Please select your Community Connector's geographic location.
 (Count of zero removed)



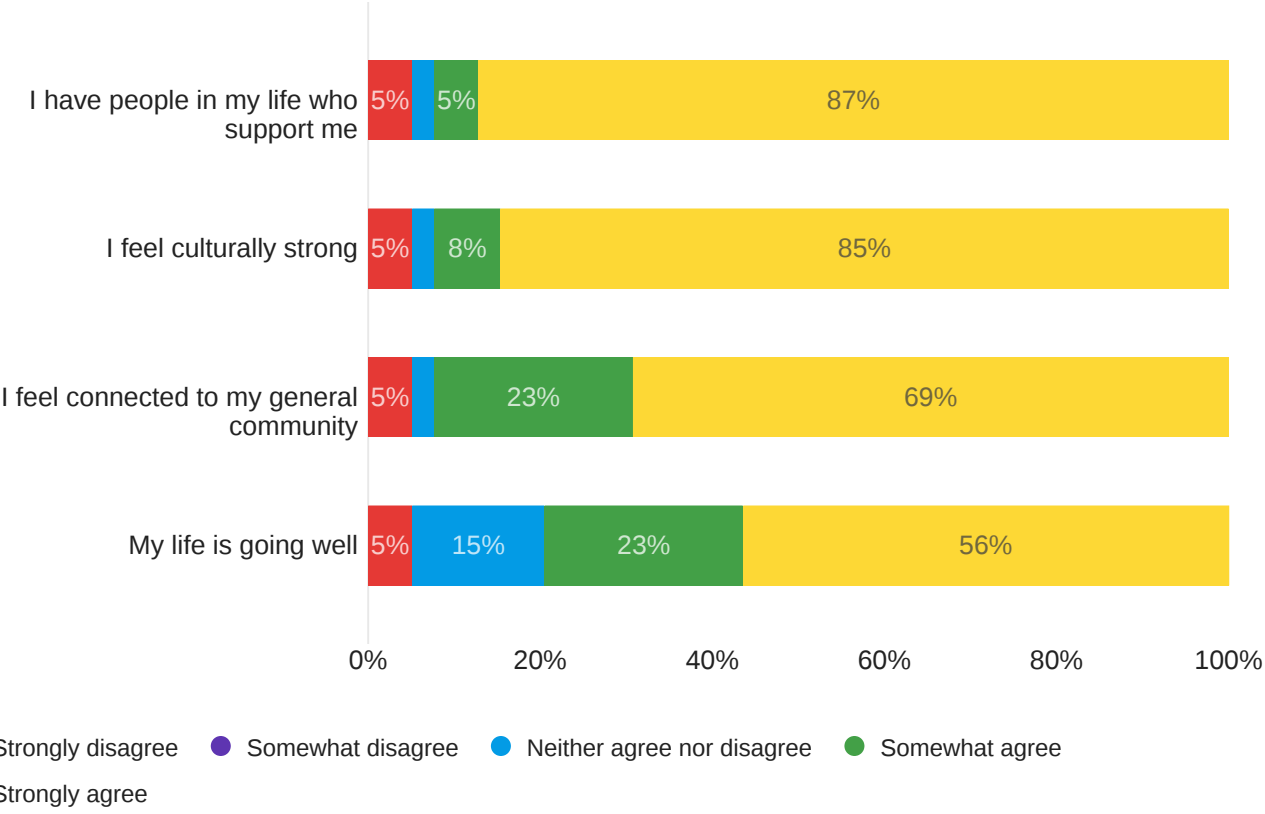
Q3 - How long have you been engaging with the Community Connector?



Q3 - How long have you been engaging with the Community Connector?

Field	Choice Count
Less than 1 month	5.13% 2
1 - 6 months	48.72% 19
More than 6 months	46.15% 18
Total	39

Q4 - The following set of questions relate to your overall wellbeing. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements...



Q4 - The following set of questions relate to your overall wellbeing. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements...

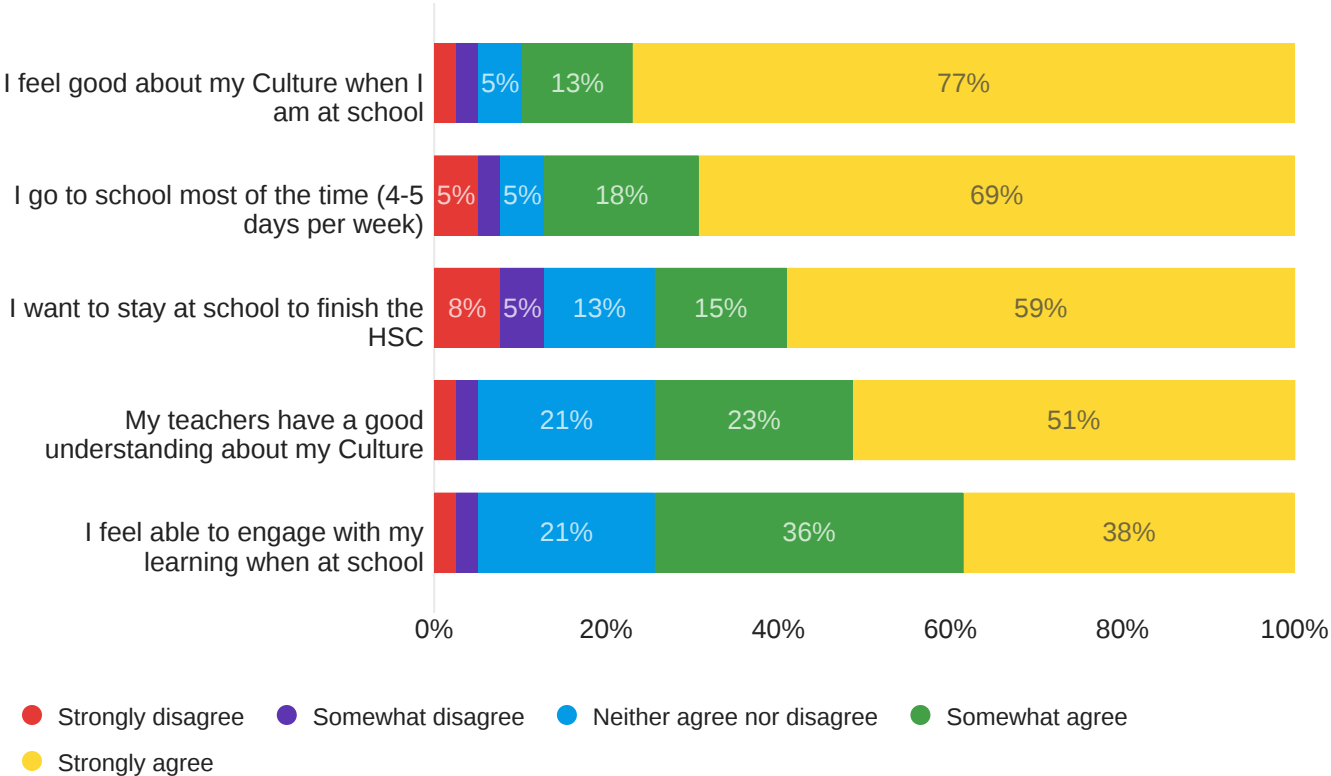
Field	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total
I have people in my life who support me	5.13% 2	0.00% 0	2.56% 1	5.13% 2	87.18% 34	39
I feel culturally strong	5.13% 2	0.00% 0	2.56% 1	7.69% 3	84.62% 33	39
I feel connected to my general community	5.13% 2	0.00% 0	2.56% 1	23.08% 9	69.23% 27	39
My life is going well	5.13% 2	0.00% 0	15.38% 6	23.08% 9	56.41% 22	39

Q5 - Has your health and overall wellbeing (thinking about how you feel about yourself and your Culture) changed since working with the Community Connector? If so, how and why?



Please use caution in interpreting word clouds, meaning cannot be inferred. Word clouds only show word frequency. The full set of student responses are appended.

Q6 - The following set of questions relate to your thoughts about school. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements...



Q6 - The following set of questions relate to your thoughts about school. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements...

Field	Strongly disagree		Somewhat disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Somewhat agree		Strongly agree		Total
I feel good about my Culture when I am at school	2.56%	1	2.56%	1	5.13%	2	12.82%	5	76.92%	30	39
I go to school most of the time (4-5 days per week)	5.13%	2	2.56%	1	5.13%	2	17.95%	7	69.23%	27	39
I want to stay at school to finish the HSC	7.69%	3	5.13%	2	12.82%	5	15.38%	6	58.97%	23	39
My teachers have a good understanding about my culture	2.56%	1	2.56%	1	20.51%	8	23.08%	9	51.28%	20	39
I feel able to engage with my learning when at school	2.56%	1	2.56%	1	20.51%	8	35.90%	14	38.46%	15	39

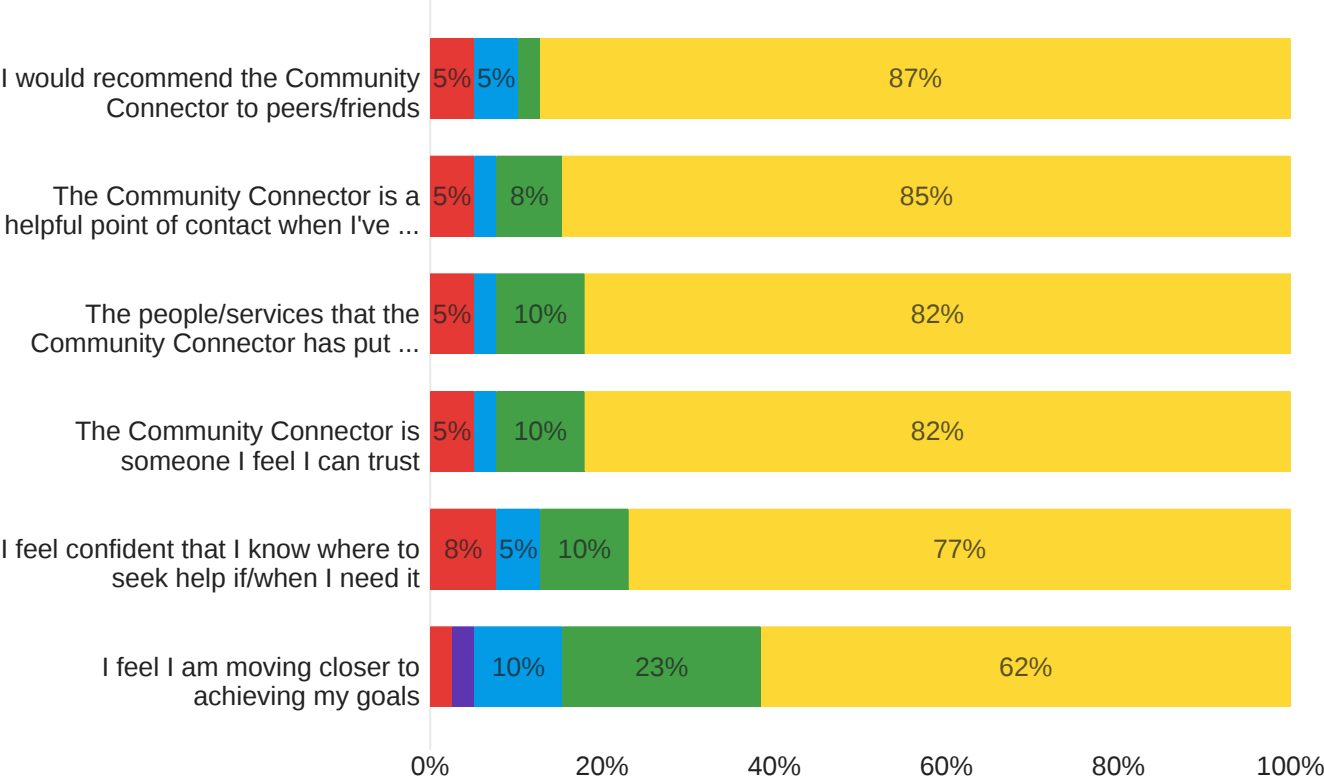
Q7 - How do you feel about school now? Has your view changed since working with the Aboriginal Community Connector? If so, how and why?



Please use caution in interpreting word clouds, meaning cannot be inferred. Word clouds only show word frequency.

The full set of student responses are appended.

Q8 - The following set of questions relate to Community Connectors. Based on the last year, please indicate your agreement with the following statements...



- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Q8 - The following set of questions relate to Community Connectors. Based on the last year, please indicate your agreement with the following statements...

Field	Strongly disagree		Somewhat disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Somewhat agree		Strongly agree		Total
I would recommend the Community Connector to peers/friends	5.13%	2	0.00%	0	5.13%	2	2.56%	1	87.18%	34	39
The Community Connector is a helpful point of contact when I've needed support	5.13%	2	0.00%	0	2.56%	1	7.69%	3	84.62%	33	39
The people/services that the Community Connector has put me in touch with are helping me	5.13%	2	0.00%	0	2.56%	1	10.26%	4	82.05%	32	39
The Community Connector is someone I feel I can trust	5.13%	2	0.00%	0	2.56%	1	10.26%	4	82.05%	32	39
I feel confident that I know where to seek help if/when I need it	7.69%	3	0.00%	0	5.13%	2	10.26%	4	76.92%	30	39
I feel I am moving closer to achieving my goals	2.56%	1	2.56%	1	10.26%	4	23.08%	9	61.54%	24	39

Q9 - What is best about working with your Community Connector? Please write a sentence or two in the box.



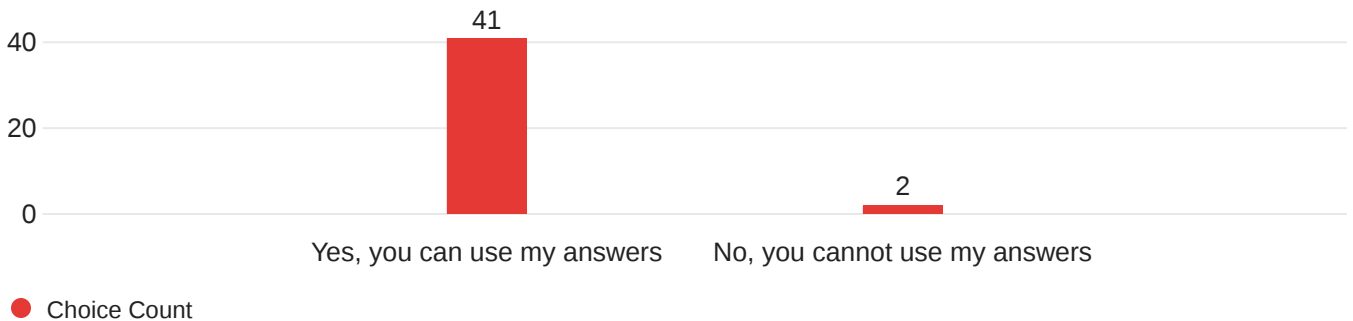
Q10 - Is there anything the Community Connector could do differently to support you?



Please use caution in interpreting word clouds, meaning cannot be inferred. Word clouds only show word frequency.

The full set of student responses are appended.

Q11 - Do you give permission for us to use your responses? Remember: your answers are confidential, so no one will ever know which answers were yours.



Appended full set of usable text data: per question, sorted alphabetically

Q5 - Has your health and overall wellbeing (thinking about how you feel about yourself and your culture) changed since working with the Community Connector? If so, how and why?

Feel really good about who I am, where I'm from and the people I'm surrounded with.

M

Feeling positive about getting to interact with others in the community and engage with those of my culture

Good

I feel more connected with my culture

I feel much happier and confident in myself as [REDACTED] has supported me in ways to benefit my health and wellbeing.

It has been great and learned about culture and a lot of support

It has improved as I'm able to engage and connect with my culture.

It has, [REDACTED] has encouraged kids to come together and have fun but at the same time learn about our culture. Which in doing this makes us more connected to each other and our culture.

It is great

Its improved

It's been good

I'm good and it helped me a lot

I'm learning more about my culture and the monitor that is here

Learning a lot

More connected to community

Thinks have gotten better in the sense that my community connector makes steps into helping me fill out applications for University so [REDACTED] has relived a lot of stress from my mind

This program has made us all happy and happy to get out of [REDACTED] instead of sitting in [REDACTED] found nothing

Yeah I push myself to my limits and try my hardest

Yeah my health and well-being has changed since working with the community connector because they have taught me self value

Yes

Yes

Yes I have met more people who work with my community connector and have helped me with my culture

Yes as i have now had more opportunities to connect with my culture (in school and out of school). I have also been able to decide who and what servoces are best for me and not just made to stay with somone I didn't like or feel comfortable with. I have also gained greater confidence in myself since working with [REDACTED] I'm not afraid to ask for help as I know that [REDACTED] does not judge me.

Yes it has

Yes it has changed I have been actively engaged and feel supported

Yes it has it has boosted my confidence about my culture and stepping out of my comfort zone in many ways

Yes, attending [REDACTED] program and [REDACTED]

Yes, [REDACTED] has opened more doors and more opportunities for to grow culturally

Yes, since i've been working with [REDACTED] i've been given heaps of new opportunities and [REDACTED] helped a lot with getting my life on track which had 100% helped with my health and well-being, culturally i feel a lot more connected with my people.

because im started to connect with my culture and do other great things around the community

before working with the [REDACTED] community connector i was not in a good headspace and wasnt travelling well. since working with [REDACTED] has helped me get on my feet assisting me with getting the help i need both outside of school and in school when [REDACTED] comes and works with myself and my indigenous peers.

my health and wellbeing has improved heaps since joining the [REDACTED]. I now get up early, go to the [REDACTED] eat a healthy breakfast and then go to school everyday. I now also get out of the house more and get involved with different activities in the community.

this program has been a big turn for me as i am in year 12 it has helpt me through my assignments an get me prepared for my HSC not only the program helps me with school, it has taught me more about my community i live around an my culture as i am a indigenous woman i have gotten so much encouragement from [REDACTED] working with [REDACTED] has made my mental wellbeing much better then the state i was in before working with [REDACTED] as i am grateful for this opportunity.

yes it has

Q7 - How do you feel about school now? Has your view changed since working with the Aboriginal Community Connector? If so, how and why?

Alright. Definitely like talking to the cultural connector and engaging with each other, definitely great help

██████ does everything █████ can to help me with school. █████ even talks to the teachers to help them understand what is going on with my life. I love how we can see and talk to █████ whenever █████ is on the school grounds. █████ is never too busy to talk to me. The teachers though still need a lot of work when it comes to cultural things and what and where our students come from.

Could have more indigenous education in classrooms

Good

Good

Good to have great role models

I am enjoying school more now that I have had the opportunity to work with our schools Aboriginal Community Connector. █████ has helped me connect with my culture through art.

I am unable to finish my hsc due to lack of attendance, but my aboriginal community connector had been supportive in and outside of going school.

I don't know it's just changed ever since we started going out with █████ █████ leaning more about our culture it's good to get out off █████

I enjoy school more now that I have a good support system who help me out with my schoolwork, health and wellbeing.

I feel better about school because I've joined in more aboriginal activities within the school

I feel good about school I enjoy going to the school everyday hanging out with my friends

I feel good like if there is a culture question the teacher ask me and I can answer it without thinking

I feel good that they have more opportunities for aboriginal kids

I feel great

I feel proud to be the █████, and am motivated to finish my HSC

I have been able to see that my school is diverse and willing to connect with culture

I have more opportunities for work after being showed all opportunities that comes with my culture

I'm enjoying school more knowing that my community connector comes here to mentor and guide me in the right direction

It ok

Its easier and better since the program

My view has not changed since starting working with the aboriginal community connector I have always held in high regard

No but █████ made the school a better place

Not really

██████ has helped me out with many things at school including helping me receive the right equipment I need to complete my schoolwork properly, and just generally being there incase I need help with something.

School has been a lot more better and fun

School it good with more culture awareness

Yes, I feel more positive about school especially when I attend the wake up well program in the mornings

Yes, easier to complete work

i hate school but working with ████████ i just wanna graduate an get through it all

it has changed because at my old school there was no one there to support me both inside and outside of school, but now when moving here i get a lot of help with school and the push to stay in school to complete my HSC.

it is better working with the aboriginal community

it's just good to know that I have someone who is not a teacher who can also support me in and out of school

its hasnt changed much but i like going to school because i get to go on some ████████ and other things and ██████ in school ground and out of school grounds for the community

Q9 - What is best about working with your Community Connector?

Please write a sentence or two in the box.

Best things about working with [REDACTED] is all the good chats and activities we do

[REDACTED] is someone I can trust and rely on. [REDACTED] always makes sure that me and my family and friends are safe. [REDACTED] cares so much about me.

Connecting with my [REDACTED] and attending the programs

Connecting with my culture and meeting more aboriginal people within my community

Fun and knows are to get me involved.

Having a person to help

Having fun and learning

[REDACTED] helps me like if I am getting in trouble and just and overall a great person to look up too

[REDACTED] is very kind and always makes sure we are okay .

[REDACTED] is very nice

[REDACTED] understands differences from people to people, knows ways to help and over come barriers

Helps me feel in touch with the community and those of my culture, and genuinely great person to ask for help and keeping me mentally and physically fit by engaging in programs

How [REDACTED] engages with all students

I feel comfortable with [REDACTED] as [REDACTED] is someone who is trustworthy. [REDACTED] is always there for me when I need help with anything.

I know [REDACTED] has always got my back, [REDACTED] always finds opportunities that will benefit me and others both at school and in the community.

I learn more culturally conected

If I would like you to look in to something to do with any of my goals in life, [REDACTED] would help to point me I. The right path to do so

It gives us a oppportunity to have a break from normal school monotony and learn and have fun with Aboriginal culture.

[REDACTED] has been great

[REDACTED]'s a good [REDACTED] always up for a chat and always knows how to help

Learning my culture more

[REDACTED] someone I know, and someone I trust to have my best interest at heart.

[REDACTED] I enjoy the group [REDACTED] helps keep me calm

That they can help you with what ever you need

The best thing about working with [REDACTED] is that i feel like i have someone i can trust, someone that will support me and someone that genuinely cares about my future.

The best thing about working with the Community Connector is having someone to talk to and someone to support me when I need it.

The best thing is that [REDACTED]

There has been more opportunities for instance tafe courses ive learned alot and im now more engaged in school

They are fun, trustworthy, honest and reliable

They are very helpful

We get to do fun things and just talk about problems and experiences

We get to do things we like to do.

having the support i never had or didn't know i need, they help with my culture that i'm so in to an help with me school assignments an my HSC

i like working with the community connector because [REDACTED] helping us kids get our assements done when there over due and other little thing which is good

learning a lot from great role models

[REDACTED] has and is stilling helping me get through year 12 which is really hard

the best thing about working with the community connector is that i can trust that [REDACTED] can help me with all of my problems both in school and out side of school. it makes me more motivated to stay in school.

Q10 - Is there anything the Community Connector could do differently to support you?

Doing everything perfectly

I can't think of anything. [redacted] got my back already and continues to reach out and make sure I'm included.

I don't know

I wish [redacted] could be at the school more than twice a week

Idk

Idk tbh

Nil

No

No

No

No

No

No

No [redacted]

No [redacted] doing perfect

No they do a fantastic job

No, not really

No.

No.

Nope they are perfect

Not really

Not really [redacted] is doing great with everything

Not really, unless it's getting to hang out and do more programs together

Not that I can think of

Nothing

Nothing they are perfect

Stay at our school all day, everyday and never leave.

no everything [redacted] is doing is great

no [redacted] is doing everything that i need to be supported

nothing at all

nothing different it is perfect