



## The ASQ-STEPS for measuring Aboriginal child development



### The ASQ-STEPS study—what was it about?

In 2018 and 2019 we worked on a research study to make the ASQ-STEPS. This study was about making a better way to see:

- How Aboriginal children are developing – how they talk, play, learn and think.
- If early childhood programs are good at helping children learn and develop.

The ASQ-STEPS will let education and health workers look at changes in a child's development. They might do this to see if a program the child is attending is doing what it says it does, or to check if a child is growing well.

### Why did we do it?

The first few years in a child's life are really important for the path their life will take. We need to make sure young children get the best start and that they have healthy development.

Measuring children's development helps us make sure they do well at school and later as adults. It also helps us see if early childhood programs are working. This is important for all communities because we want to make sure the best programs for kids are available.

### What did we do?

To make the ASQ-STEPS we had to change questions from an American tool called the ASQ-3.

***We had meetings and interviewed community representatives, early childhood health and education experts, and the team who developed the ASQ-3; and added pictures to all the questions .***

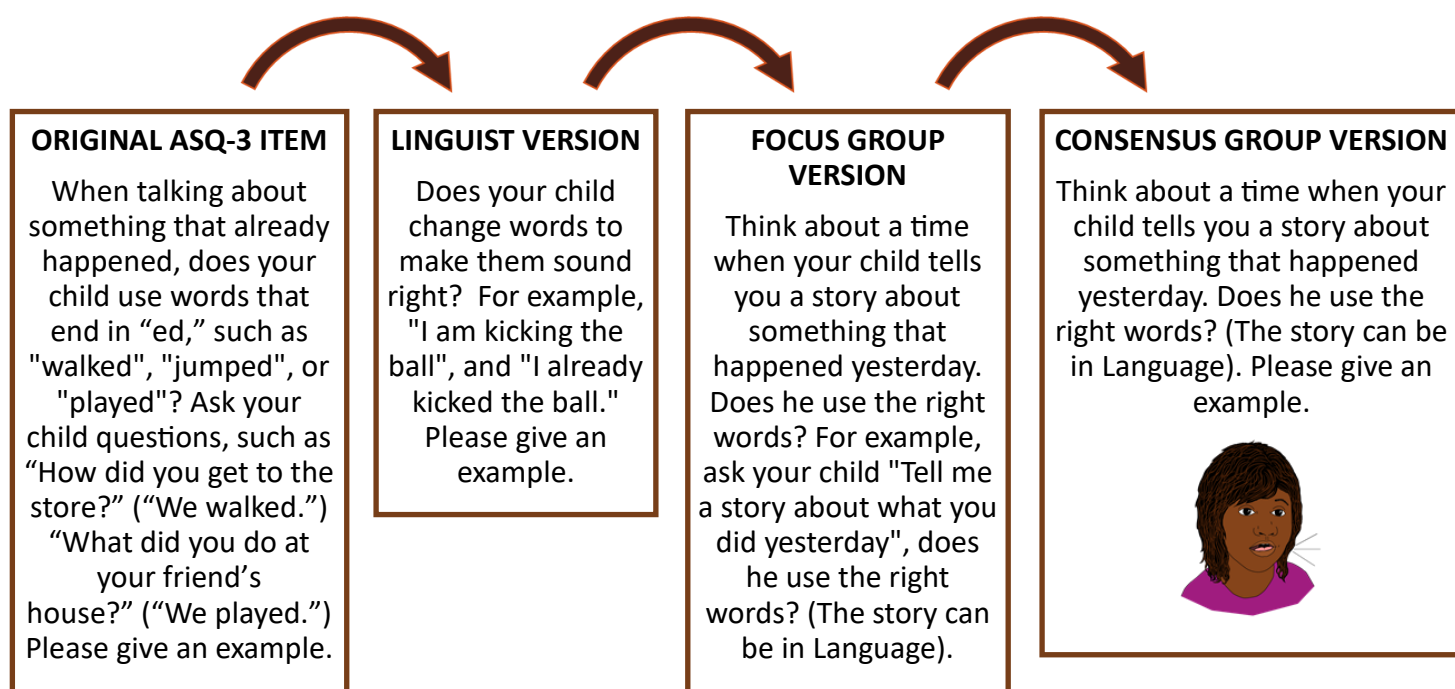
People told us what they thought needed to be changed in the ASQ-3 to come up with the ASQ-STEPS that would be more relevant for Aboriginal people.



*The Consensus Group (from left): Charmaine Hull, Cheryl Campbell, Jeannie Campbell, Alison Wunungmurra, Marjorie Naylor, Anita D'Aprano and Marion Swift.*

***When we had spoken to enough people we met with a Consensus group who made the final decisions about the changes.***

## An example of the changes we made:



## What will we do next?

We have an Indigenous Reference Group who will be guiding us in the next steps of this research. Now we have made the tool we need to test that it works. We want to collaborate with communities, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Government Departments to test that the ASQ-STEPS works. This means we need to use the ASQ-STEPS with health and education practitioners, children and families to see if they like it and if it is easy to use.

If you want to be part of this next research or know more about the study you can contact Anita D’Aprano on 03 9345 6959 or at [anita.daprano@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:anita.daprano@unimelb.edu.au)

## Who are we?

**Chief Investigator:** Dr Anita D’Aprano

**Co-Researcher:** Isabel Brookes

**Co-researcher:** Alison Wunungmurra



We wish to gratefully acknowledge the community members who participated in the study, particularly those in Yirrikala and Ntaria, and community leaders who supported participant recruitment—Djapirri Mununggirritj and Marion Swift.

We would also like to thank the Northern Territory Government Department of Education for making this important work possible.

**KEY CONTACT:** Dr Anita D’Aprano, [anita.daprano@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:anita.daprano@unimelb.edu.au)