



Muurrbay
language
teachers
Dallas
Walker,
Gary
Williams
and
Brother
Steve
Morelli

Sharing words and culture

By UTE SCHULENBERG

TIME for long-term planning is a luxury the Muurrbay Aboriginal Language Cooperative has never had.

But all that has changed thanks to triennial funding from the Federal Government's Indigenous Languages Support Program.

Gumbaynggirr language teacher and researcher Uncle Gary Williams said the funding was welcome recognition of the important work done by the centre.

"We have been operating since 1986, with regular annual funding since 1996 but the process of researching and developing programs is slow - this funding gives us the time to plan ahead and build our capacity," Uncle Gary said.

Linguist Anna Ash said with the funding pressure reduced, the centre would now focus on developing more certificate language courses for adults.

"Courses like this can be years in their development," Anna said.

"Publishing is also a complex process, researching, editing, gaining permissions, tracking illustrations and audio material all takes time ... but is vital to do the material justice."

Muurrbay is a registered training organisation that has been building on the success of its Gumbaynggirr language dictionary, first published in 2001 and its language courses.

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