When I came back I started kindy in 66, there is no kindergarten in the Torres Strait before, so me and my girlfriend we were the first ones to start kindergarten in the Torres Strait.

At the start there were only five children in the first time I start.

In 72, that’s when they sent me down to Yarrabah, into Brisbane and then back to Yarrabah.

Bamaga, Weipa, all of these, Lockhart River and Kowanyama.

I was travelling since 1973 to 79. That’s where I started, here.

In this building, here.

It looks so different now from where I was before.

The parents are the first teachers at home, to help the children before they are sent here, to kindy.

Even when they go down playing on the beach they can count shells and things like that.

There are lots and lots of things, or walking in town and looking at different things

and talk about them.

Even looking at colours and all sorts of things parents can do to help them.

Make sure they can do things for themselves because they depend on their parents and if their parents send them every day to kindergarten, then one day they will be proud of them.

My name is Leon Filewood, I am a resident of Thursday Island.

I attended this kindergarten back a long time ago, back in the 80s.

Mrs Tardent was a kindergarten teacher there.

I was playing on this veranda and in the sandpit.

I did all my education on Thursday Island, so kindergarten, primary, secondary and then I went to Brisbane to go to law school.

So, looking back at my education, it obviously started here.

And I think really, up until this point I never really appreciated the significance of having Mrs Tardent, who is a local Torres Strait Islander woman, a very proud local Torres Strait Islander woman to be one of my first educators.

I look back now and I feel very honoured and privileged because she did set a very strong foundation, you don’t realise it as a kid but it actually is very powerful to know that she was one of the first people had exposed me to education.

I’ve gone on from there obviously so I’m very proud.

Sorry I don’t want to be upset but it's emotional.

I’m very proud of Mrs Tardent, my Aunty, Aunty Wasie for what she’s achieved.

She didn’t just teach me, she taught a whole generation of children and that they’ve

had the same opportunity like I have to have experienced that through a local Torres Strait Islander woman, here on TI.

When they come to kindy like they come to be one big happy family and everybody, you know, they’re sharing and caring for each other and solve problems.

All these things, lots of things when they come to kindy.

They learn the good things so that’s why the parents should send them every day to kindy.

Teach your child the way he should go and when he’s old he’ll never depart from it.

Plant the seed in the good ground, and it will bear good fruits.