

• **STRONG & PROUD** •

• *Wumbudin Kool-yee-rah* •



*cultural
heritage*



- TARGETED PROGRAM FOR ABORIGINAL YOUTH -

The Strong & Proud '*Wumbudin Kool-yee-rah*', after school program provides at risk Aboriginal youth, between the ages of 12-17 years old, with culturally appropriate activities that connect them to their culture and country.

The program is built on the foundation that being strong in culture and connection to country assists Aboriginal youth to have pride in themselves and their community.

PROGRAM SUCCESSES ●●●

- A significant change in anti-social behaviour and improved attitudes to work/schooling was recorded by project officers, mentors, parents and teachers.
- Career pathways have been developed by participants
- High achieving participants have gone on to become a mentor for subsequent programs
- Pre and post program surveys and evaluations showed all students increased their cultural awareness and environmental knowledge.

Enduring outcomes have been achieved by carefully matching expertise with local knowledge through strong partnerships, mentoring and peer networking. A collaborative approach, underpinned by strong project management, has delivered better community-supported outcomes for the Region.

CULTURE AND CONNECTION ●●●

Ongoing community consultations identified the need for a targeted program for at risk disengaged Aboriginal youth in Albany W.A. to:

- Learn about their culture and connection to country which is often lacking in families experiencing difficulties.
- Build leadership skills and confidence to deal with the mainstream world.

- Increase physical activity and achieve improved health outcomes.
- Access active and positive after school sport and active recreation that connect them to the community.
- Prevent them from dropping out of school and engaging in anti-social behaviour.
- Improve school attendance through incentives.



PARTNERING FOR RESULTS ●●●

The Cultural team within South Coast NRM coordinated the delivery of the Strong & Proud program in partnership with key organisations including Southern Aboriginal Corporation (SAC), Department of Education (DET), Great Southern Employment Development Committee (GSEDC), Wanslea Family Services Great Southern (Wanslea) and Wirrpanda Foundation.

A project steering group was made up of representatives from the partner organisations, Albany Senior High School (ASHS) and North Albany Senior High School (NASHS) to provide strategic advice and ensure the project achieved its aims. The Cultural team comprised Aboriginal employees, senior staff with teaching experience and project officers experienced in the delivery of similar projects. Community sport and active recreation groups led the sport and recreation activities and the Aboriginal community assisted with the sharing of cultural heritage knowledge and values at the activity locations. Environmental organisations provided restoration

and protection activities at the locations where possible.

Two Aboriginal mentors supported the participants throughout the program and helped with identifying and mitigating any arising issues. The mentors also acted in a role that supported the participants and made them feel comfortable when doing activities that pushed them out of their comfort zone.

The program also involved the following sporting and recreation clubs to lead activities and link participants to their clubs:

1. Albany Boardriders
2. Albany Boating and Fishing Club
3. Albany and Denmark Hinterland Orienteering Club
4. Albany Mountain Bike Club.
5. Albany Cricket Association
6. Albany PCYC, Archery club
7. Camp Quaranup
8. Princess Royal Sailing Club

STRONG & PROUD ACTIVITIES ●●●



The Strong & Proud program was developed around Noongar seasons and runs during school semesters. It involves Aboriginal youth, Noongar Elders, families and community on country in:-

- 8 weeks of after-school activities
- a mid-semester Noongar family residential workshop
- Weekend activity challenge
- Wrap up and awards session.

The program is built on the following strategies:

After school activities – Aboriginal youth can only attend if they have attended school that day. They are picked up from school and dropped home and provided with a healthy afternoon tea. The program of activities is a ‘taste test’ of environmental, cultural and recreational activities led by experts.

They are provided with cultural knowledge and practices to assist with building self-esteem and providing a positive and culturally accepting environment. Team building elements are incorporated in all activities to assist with developing interpersonal and leadership skills.

A Noongar family camp – Aboriginal youth who demonstrate improved

school attendance and behaviour are invited to attend the camp, providing positive inter-generational and cultural experiences. They learn about their culture and country through positive activities and experiences in the environment and are involved in active recreation and team building activities. Separate activities are provided to allow for men’s and women’s business guided by the Elders.

Weekend activity challenge – As a culminating activity, Aboriginal youth are challenged in one of the recreation activities e.g. Munda Biddi mountain bike ride. This is a one day event and past participants are invited to attend.

Mentoring – Two Aboriginal mentors support the participants throughout the program and identify and mitigate any arising issues. Additional to this, past Aboriginal youth participants, who have shown potential in leadership, are invited to attend the program as mentors.



“It has been so rewarding to see the positive growth in the Aboriginal youth participants. They have been challenged beyond their comfort zones which has helped build self esteem, confidence and leadership skills.”

Noongar Seasons - youth engagement activities

Birak (December - January)

The hot easterly winds blow during the day. Noongars would burn scrubland to force animals into the open for hunting.

Bunuru (February - March)

It is very dry during this season. Noongars moved to the coast and estuaries as fish was a large part of their seasonal diet.

Noongar youth involved in coastal activities - surfing, stand-up paddle-boarding, fishing, snorkelling and bush walking.

Djeran (April - May)

The weather becomes cooler with winds from the south-west. Noongars continued to fish and collect plant bulbs and seeds.

Makuru (June - July)

During this time, Noongars moved inland to hunt once rain had replenished inland water resources.

Noongar youth involved in inland activities - mountain biking, planting, fauna surveys, identifying Indigenous artifacts, archery, orienteering and bush survival skills.

Djilba (August - September)

The weather becomes warmer. Traditionally roots were collected and emus, possums and kangaroos were hunted.

Kambarang (October - November)

Noongars moved onto the coastal plains where frogs, tortoises and freshwater crayfish were caught.

Noongar youth involved in waterway and coastal activities: canoeing, fishing, seed collection, water monitoring, sailing and learning about fish traps.

Program duration: 2014 - 2018 (pilot program and continuing)

Program content: 8 weeks of after school activity per semester, residential workshop and weekend challenges.

Location: Albany, Western Australia

Annual Participation rate: 88 students (2016)

FURTHER INFORMATION

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