

NSW YOUTH WORKER OF THE YEAR



Maari Ma congratulates Youth Health Worker, Tarissa Staker, who was named Youth Worker of the Year at the 2018 NSW Youth Work Awards. Tarissa won the coveted title at a gala awards ceremony in Sydney on 25th October where there were 320 people in attendance. It's the sixth year of the annual NSW Youth Work Awards held by Youth Action, which is the peak body for young people and youth services in the state. Youth Action Chief Executive Officer, Katie Acheson, who also chairs the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition, said there were more than 30 nominations in the Youth Worker of the Year category and 157 nominations overall. Ms Acheson said Tarissa was a very worthy winner and described Maari Ma's Youth Health team as impressive sector leaders in innovation for young people.



Tarissa is pictured receiving her award from Elaine Lawler, who is from award sponsor, Hesta. Tarissa has worked at Maari Ma for nine years, first starting in administration before becoming a health worker and undergoing the Aboriginal Health Worker training. She has been at the Youth Health Service since it started three years ago. She said

she was very surprised to be announced the winner and was very honoured and humbled.

"What a tremendous achievement to have won the award. Tarissa certainly embodies all that the awards acknowledge and honor, and we are all very proud of her and for the work that she does with our young people" Bob Davis, Maari Ma CEO.

MAARI MA HEALTH
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KEEPING CHILD LEAD LEVELS IN CHECK



Commonwealth funding has enabled improved lead testing conditions in Maari Ma's clean room to cope with a rise in the number of tests performed. \$14,000 was received from the Service Maintenance Program - part of the Indigenous Australians' Health Program (IAHP). Maari Ma conducts point of care testing not only for lead, but for iron as well as full blood counts. The significant increase in the number of children being tested is a reflection of its close work with families through its Healthy Start program. Maari Ma is seeing more than 100% of the recorded Aboriginal children in the last census under the age of five for testing - 180 were recorded in Broken Hill as being in that age bracket while Maari Ma has 200 children in the testing program.

Maari Ma is lead testing children earlier and testing them more often. Aboriginal health practitioners working in Healthy Start perform the lead testing, and provide education and counseling to families where high levels of lead are detected. The lead field officer also conducts soil sampling and paint testing in homes, and liaises with Broken Hill's Environmental Lead Program to remediate homes with high lead concentrations in the yard or house.



WHITE RIBBON RE-ACCREDITATION



Maari Ma has been successful in its application for re-accreditation as a White Ribbon organisation for another three years. All staff have contributed towards making this achievement possible. Maari Ma became a White Ribbon Accredited Workplace in 2015 and was one of only 14 organisations across Australia's public and private sectors to obtain the title. Being able to call Maari Ma a White Ribbon Accredited Workplace has meant dedication and commitment to supply and document evidence against White Ribbon Australia's Workplace Accreditation Framework. Congratulations Maari Ma.

White Ribbon Committee Members have worked very hard for the organisation's successful three year White Ribbon re-accreditation.

PLAYGROUP CONTINUING TO STRENGTHEN

Maari Ma has taken over management of the Wilcannia Playgroup from Save the Children and has welcomed local workers Valeri Bugmy, Shaylin Whyman and Shanisha Harris to the Maari Ma Playgroup team. The service was also recently expanded with the introduction of home based playgroup on Thursdays and Fridays each week. The additional sessions mean Maari Ma conducts Wilcannia Playgroup every day of the week during the school term – on Monday it's held at the Safe House

premises, and on Tuesday and Wednesday at CatholicCare. Meantime in Broken Hill, Friday's Playgroup attendances have been increasing to an average of more than 30 children and parents. Maari Ma's two trainee Allied Health Assistants, Erin Vale and Mele Tuipulotu, have also joined the Broken Hill Playgroup team. Their involvement is very much welcomed not only because of the high numbers but because of their caring interaction with the children.



Allied Health trainees Erin Vale (left) and Mele Tuipulotu (right) have now joined the Broken Hill Playgroup team. They joined Maari Ma's Healthy Start in May and undergo regular study blocks in Dubbo.

MEETING A STAR



Local Indigenous girls had a once in a lifetime opportunity recently to meet well known Torres Strait Islander singer and ARIA award winner, Christine Anu. At the invitation of Maari Ma, Christine spoke to and inspired the young Broken Hill girls during two sessions – one for primary school students in the morning and in the afternoon another for high school students. Last year Christine was awarded for her Contribution to First Nations' Music at the Australian Songwriting Awards and she didn't disappoint the girls – she not only talked about her background and culture, how she started off in the music industry and what inspires her, she sang a couple of songs and encouraged the students to participate. Included in her time with the girls were lessons on a few Torres Strait Islander words as well. It was a great experience for them to meet such an accomplished Indigenous singer and songwriter.

CELEBRATING CHILDREN'S WEEK

Broken Hill's early childhood education and care sector, and child and family services once again worked together to celebrate Children's Week by conducting a host of activities in Broken Hill's Sturt Park on Wednesday 24th October. Each year the Children's Week Council of Australia selects as the theme of the week a children's right from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) of which Australia is a signatory. This year the committee chose Article 12 - which supports a child's right to have their voice heard on matters that affect them. Maari Ma's Chief Executive Officer, Bob Davis, said the theme acknowledged children's fundamental right to be part of decisions that affect them - respecting children, along with adults, as citizens who have a stake in what happens in their lives now and in the future.



Local families enjoyed a morning of activities in Sturt Park for Children's Week which this year acknowledged the voice of the child.



EQUALITY AND INCLUSIVITY AT MAARI MA

Maari Ma is now a member of ACON's Welcome Here Project where LGBTIQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning) inclusion is recognised in the workplace. Maari Ma welcomes and includes LGBTIQ people, helps to create positive change in the community and celebrates LGBTIQ diversity.



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