

CHILDREN’S CHEER AT CHRISTMAS PLAYGROUP



A very busy year for the Early Years’ team was capped off by a Christmas party held at Broken Hill’s Sturt Park on Friday 8th December by Playgroup. Almost 90 children and their families attended the party on what was a perfect day. There were lots of smiles and excitement from the children and it was a great day to wrap up the year. Maari Ma’s Early Years’ team offers a range of programs providing play experiences, learning and relationships to help improve the quality of life for children and their families. All programs were well supported during the year - Intensive

Supported Playgroup – Broken Hill, Little Kids and Books—Broken Hill, Wilcannia, Menindee and Ivanhoe, The Early Years Discussion Group, the Macquarie University Project –science and maths in the early years and the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY). The flow-on from the Early Years’ work, and in particular HIPPY, is being reflected in enrolments in preschools with 50 Aboriginal children enrolled in Rainbow’s three services across Broken Hill – the largest enrolment of Indigenous children they have ever had.



MAARI MA HEALTH
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KEEPING UP WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY



Ann Bennett is pictured practising with the POC machine on colleague Bronwyn Johnson. Staff received training on how to use the machine from POC global leader, Flinders University International Centre for Point-of-Care Testing.

Keeping up with advancing technology is an important component in the effective delivery of health services at Maari Ma and staff welcomed the arrival of a Point of Care (POC) testing machine for the Lead Program. While Maari Ma has a lead testing machine, the POC machine can test the whole blood count and ferritin levels which help to diagnose both children and adults with anaemia. It's carried out at the time of patient consultation, generating a test result that is used to make an immediate informed clinical decision. Staff received training on the equipment from Flinders University International Centre for Point-of-Care Testing which is recognised as a global leader in POC testing and also for its expertise in POC research and teaching.

TOP ENT SERVICE FOR MAARI MA CLIENTS

Maari Ma conducts monthly after hours Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) clinics thanks to the very good services of ENT specialists, Dr Sam Boase and Dr Rowan Valentine from Adelaide. Drs Boase and Valentine visit once a month on an alternating roster. They see up to 18 patients between 6.00pm - to 9.00pm each month and if need be patients are able to be directly admitted to the Broken Hill Health Service or Flinders Medical Centre from the Maari Ma clinic for surgery. The after hours clinic started in July 2016 and has proven to be one of Maari Ma's most successful for patients keeping appointments. It has an attendance rate of up to 95 %.



Pictured left to right: Clinic Coordinator, Lisa Kelly, ENT Registrar Dr Stephen Kao, ENT Specialist, Dr Sam Boase, Aboriginal Health Practitioner, Ann Bennett and Practice Nurse, Heather Curyer. The monthly clinics have one of the highest patient turn-up rates of all of Maari Ma's specialty clinics.

RECOGNITION FOR WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE



Maari Ma was proud to receive recognition at this year's Youth Action Youth Work Awards. The Youth Health team won the Outstanding Service or Project Working with Aboriginal Young People award and WINGS Co-ordinator, Natika Whyman received a highly commended certificate in the NSW Youth Worker of the Year category. Natika was one of 28 nominations from across the state in that category. The awards, now in their fifth year, are an annual celebration of the exceptional work of youth services and youth workers in NSW. Importantly, they are an opportunity for the NSW Youth Work Sector to recognise those who provide an outstanding contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of young people across the state.

COOKING UP A CHRISTMAS DINNER

Preparing and cooking a Christmas dinner for a community is no small job but Dietitian, Elsie Patterson and Community Dinner Assistant, Tania Lawson performed it with ease and a smile. 60 Wilcannia community members sat down to roast chicken, slow cooked lamb, maple glazed ham, potato bake, roast and steamed vegetables, trifle cups and caramel pear pudding for the last Wilcannia Community Dinner of the year. All the children who attended also received a Christmas present or two and remaining gifts were donated to St Therese's School.



MAARI MA'S SMOKE FREE WORKPLACE POLICY – GETTING IT RIGHT

Maari Ma's Tackling Indigenous Smoking program has a multi-level approach to tobacco control. It's locally designed and delivered to prevent the uptake of smoking and support smoking cessation among Indigenous community members – including its staff. Recently, Maari Ma's Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) team conducted a short survey for staff on its Smoke Free Workplace Policy which had been revised following an initial survey last year. Questions for staff included how aware they were of the policy, what their attitudes were towards it and

whether the TIS team needed to increase its work with staff around smoking. The results were very pleasing. 63 staff members completed the survey with 92% aware of the Policy and the reason behind it. Most knew that it includes quitting information, free nicotine replacement therapy, access to monthly Yarning Groups and access to the Smokers Program. Most staff members thought that smoking should be restricted to official breaks or designated areas and 30% believed that smoking should not be permitted at the workplace at all.



(Pictured Left to right) Professor Tom Calma AO, who is the National Coordinator for Tackling Indigenous Smoking, Project Officer Smoke Free Homes & Cars, Jessica Ierace, Project Officer Smoking Cessation Education, Tiffany Lynch, Project Officer Tobacco Control, Anshul Kaul and Manager of the National Best Practice Unit, Desley Thompson. They were pictured at the NSW/ACT Jurisdictional TIS Workshop.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, tobacco smoking is the most preventable cause of ill health and early death, and responsible for around one in five deaths. The Tackling Indigenous Smoking program is a targeted activity funded by the Australian Government to reduce smoking rates among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

WINGS DROP-IN CENTRE

The WINGS Drop-in Centre team is gearing up for a busy school holiday season which starts on January 3rd. The weeks will be packed with activities for kids including sports and other outdoor games weather permitting. The WINGS disco always draws a good crowd with more than 40 kids attending when held during term and next year the team will be aiming for one disco a month. There will also be increased activities for teenagers.

Pictured left to right: Tammy King, Phillip Hunter and Ann Currie serve up healthy tacos to the kids during the after school WINGS program. Up to 30 children and young people attend WINGS each day during the school term and up to 50 go each day during the school holiday program.



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