Case Study

Strong Aboriginal Families in Eidsvold (SAFE) LDAT.

Activity aim: This LDAT aimed to prevent the use of methamphetamine, alcohol and illicit drugs among people aged 12–30 years old, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth.

Issue being targeted

The Eidsvold community was experiencing significant harms associated with alcohol and other drugs, particularly among young people. The LDAT wanted to focus on creating more opportunities for people to connect and participate in shared activities.

Drivers for the activity

The LDAT identified issues in the community by conducting a range of different consultations, including regular school and community meetings, talking to young Indigenous parents at playgroup, visiting young people at the local football club training, etc.

Additionally, the LDAT was able to identify relevant data from the census, which highlighted key risk factors for alcohol and other drug (AOD) related harms in the community, including the number of people that identify as Aboriginal (>35%), number of single parent households (31%), unemployment (38.6%), disability among the Indigenous population (11.4%) and low socioeconomic status (63% have an income of less than $400 per week).
Description of activity

The LDAT worked to strengthen community and cultural engagement, which is known to protect against the harms associated with the use of alcohol and other drugs, and improve family relationships via the SAFE Program.

The LDAT also facilitated the development of a series of twelve video vignettes, which were created by the Burnett State College and Kepnock State High School secondary students in collaboration with the school nurse, Bridges staff, community Elders and Stepping Black.

Please note: The Local Drug Action Team program has evolved to include the SMART approach to objective setting since the completion of this Community Action Plan.

Impacts

The LDAT achieved the following:

- Two meetings held with 13 males and three female participants
- Nine people indicated they would like to join a Women’s Group; six were interested in a Men’s Group and three a Youth Group (18 in total)
- The community is keen to work with providers to establish community run activities
- Cultural connections with other groups have been made
- Thirty-four women came together in a beautiful mountain landscape to learn new skills, reconnect with families and meet new people over a weekend in March.

Key processes used

The LDAT completed the following steps and activities as part of this Community Action Plan:

- Conducted consultations with community
- Identified key community Leaders
- Hosted key stakeholder meetings to inform and to develop partnerships
- Conducted a community BBQ with five service providers supporting the event
- Developed a communication strategy
- Determined best methods for communicating with community
- Established a Women’s Group and held regular craft sessions and yarning each Wednesday
- Provided netball activities for young people
- Conducted photographic workshops
- Established a Men’s Group
- Hosted a successful Weekend of Weaving, Wellbeing and Wonderful Women.
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Were there any unintended consequences?

The unintended positive consequences included:

- The Women’s Group was successful, with participants wanting to learn more about culture through exchange visits with other cultural groups
- The women also wanted to develop more arts and craft skills to use in potential future microenterprise
- The women were willing to share and support each other
- Photography was seen as a good medium for sharing stories.

Strengths in the approach

The LDAT found strength in building community and co-designing the approach to this Community Action Plan. The focus on bringing the community together, whether for consultations, or for specific activities, was positively received. In general, participants were broadly receptive to the program and keen to be more involved.

Lessons learned

- Young people’s biggest issues are boredom and unemployment
- People and family do not acknowledge there is a problem
- Ice was not being used by a large number of residents
- Community is not aware of service providers or their service offering
- Utilising a wide range of communication platforms works best
- The group wishes to learn more about culture through exchange visits with other cultural groups
- There is a definite need and desire for a Men’s Shed.
Reflections from community

• Feeling excited and inspired at a deeper level; can’t explain...this is the knowing, the pathway to travel.

• A most excellent weekend, in fact nobody wanted to go home...however, they all went home with a native plant from the education centre’s nursery and a lot of hope, joy and aspirations.

• I enjoyed being reconnected to country and having my heart sing - I am going through trouble at the moment, being torn between two choices, this weekend I realised that I NEED to chase MY dreams to help MY People - the weaving was a bonus.

- From the Weekend of Weaving

With thanks to:

Lead organisation
- Stepping Black Indigenous Corporation Australia

Partners
- Bridges Aligned Services Inc
- North Burnett Regional Council
- North Burnett Mental Health and Other Drugs Hub
- North Burnett Community Services
- Eidsvold Police Station
- Burnett Inland Economic Development Organisation
- Sunshine Coast, Wide Bay and Central Qld PHN
- Eidsvold State School
- Central Queensland Indigenous Development (CQID)