



Project Information

Yarning Circle Expansion

24 April, 2022



GREAT SOUTH COAST
Suicide Prevention
Place Based Trial



phn
WESTERN VICTORIA
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YARNING CIRCLE EXPANSION PROJECT

PROJECT SUMMARY

This project expanded the delivery of the Ngootyoong (safe place) Yarning Circle Group Program across the Great South Coast. The Yarning Circle program is delivered to Aboriginal young people, particularly men, to build their suicide prevention and mental health literacy in ways that impact on the community.

The Yarning Circle Expansion project enhanced the awareness of and access to culturally safe youth mental health and wellbeing services for young Aboriginal people in the Great South Coast region.

It delivered early-intervention information and activities regarding mental health, alcohol and other drug use and physical health to Aboriginal young people, with the incorporation of cultural safety components.

The project indicated that the Yarning Circle can provide an important opportunity for raising awareness of support services for participants.

This project was completed in March 2022 and was run by Headspace Warrnambool and Portland, and Brophy, in collaboration with Dhuward Warrong Elderly and Community Health Service (DWECH), and the Drug and Alcohol Responding Early (DARE) Program.

THE PROJECT'S KEY LEARNINGS

- Endorsement by Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Aboriginal Elders is central for the program success. Their endorsement also enables the identification of appropriate content and target groups in their communities.
- Enhancing access to services is a key component of the project, with a focus on providing in-reach services to Aboriginal young people in their community rather than clinical service settings.
- Embedding cultural safety principles through co-design processes and practice throughout all stages of the program is imperative to the engagement of young Aboriginal people and participation in the program.



YARNING CIRCLE EXPANSION PROJECT

BACKGROUND

The “Yarning Circle” Group program model was originally developed in 2018 through a collaboration between Headspace Warrnambool and Portland, Dhuward Warrong Elderly and Community Health Service (DWECH), and the Drug and Alcohol Responding Early (DARE) Program.

The Yarning Circle session format has flexibility in its ability to adapt duration and content, depending on the needs of the cohort and community. The program can be facilitated in a 6 session format in full entirety, or can be adapted for a shorter duration, including one-off “workshop” style sessions.

PROJECT DELIVERY

headspace Warrnambool implemented the project, delivering a total of 4 x Yarning Circle group programs in collaboration with the DARE program and local Aboriginal services.

Completed Sessions

This project delivered 4 x Yarning Circle group programs and supported a total of 24 Aboriginal young people, giving them access to culturally safe early-intervention health and well-being knowledge and support. 16 of the 24 Aboriginal young people participating in the program were male, representing 67% of total participants. Young Aboriginal males were the priority target group, due to higher risk of experiencing co-occurring mental health and harm from substance use, underpinned by intergenerational trauma, which is reflected in suicide statistics.

The program involved cultural safety components such as:

- reviewing of session plans and content by Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing workers;
- incorporating artwork into the program and activities;
- involving Aboriginal Elders;
- having male only or female only groups and
- having trauma-informed practices.

Of the 16 male participants, 13 young males indicated that they had not heard about headspace or DARE or the services they offer prior to attending the session. This indicates that the Yarning Circle can provide an important opportunity for awareness-raising in the target cohort of support services.

Participants were asked to rate the session overall, with scores ranging from 1 “Didn't enjoy it” to a score of 5 “Really Good”. The program scored a 4.6 out of 5.

ADDITIONAL MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES/SUPPORT FOR THIS TARGET GROUP

1. headspace’s Yarn Safe <https://headspace.org.au/yarn-safe/mental-health-and-wellbeing>
2. DARE: Drug and Alcohol Responding Early: <https://brophy.org.au/dare/>.
3. Dhuward Wurrung Elderly and Community Health Service (DWECH): <https://www.dwech.com.au/>.
4. Learn the signs, find the words, connect to care. Participate in free* training suicide prevention training - LivingWorks START - here: <https://form.jotform.com/220807792455058>
*free for communities in Great South Coast only.

MORE INFORMATION ON THE GSCSPBT TRIAL

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