Trachoma arts-based health promotion brings hygiene to life in remote Indigenous communities

13th National Rural Health Conference
Darwin NT May 2015
The arts and health

Creating arts and health experiences to improve community and individual health and wellbeing.

The arts have been used and well documented in primary health and acute care, in community health at any point in the health care continuum
In creatively birthing and ageing
For mental health
For race, gender, sexuality and religious inclusion
In death and dying across urban, regional rural and remote Australia

There is clear empirical evidence that arts and health activity is a health-promoting endeavour for all members of society. Australian National Arts and Health Framework 2013
Indigenous Australian children are born with better eyesight than non-Indigenous children.

Indigenous Australian adults experience 6 x blindness.

Taylor HR, et al., *National Indigenous Eye Health Survey - Minum Barreng (Tracking Eyes).* 2009, Melbourne: Indigenous Eye Health Unit, Melbourne School of Population Health in collaboration with the Centre for Eye Research Australia and the Vision CRC.
Trachoma

- Major cause of preventable blindness globally
- Australia only high income country
- WHO Alliance for Global Elimination by 2020
- Developing countries declared/declaring elimination: Oman, Ghana, Morocco, Iran, Vietnam, Myanmar, Gambia, Ghana

Around 232 million people live in trachoma endemic areas of 53 countries and need treatment. www.trachomaatlas.org
It is a hygiene related disease.
It will be eliminated by 2020.

Stages of trachoma:

- Normal Healthy Eye
- Active Trachoma (TF)
- Severe Infection (TI)
- Scar Tissue from Prolonged Infection and Reinfection (TS)
- In-Turned Eye Lashes Rubbing Against Eye Trichiasis (TT)
- Blind Eye Caused by Prolonged Infection Corneal Opacity (CO)
Trachoma in Australia

Causes 9% blindness and vision loss in Indigenous Australians

Active trachoma in remote Indigenous communities – later stages around the country

Limited and overcrowded housing, lack of safe and functional washing facilities, poor personal and community hygiene

Spreads from child to child, shared sleeping spaces, dirty faces

Children’s eye, nose, ear secretions common and normalised
Trachoma

• Eliminated with the WHO S.A.F.E. strategy
  Surgery, Antibiotics, Facial cleanliness, Environmental improvement

• 2009 increased screening, treatment & facial cleanliness
  health promotion

• Trachoma prevalence 14% 2009 - 4% 2013

• Clean face prevalence 77% 2009 - 80% 2013
National results 2013
Trachoma prevalence and Clean Face prevalence in children aged 5-9 years in at-risk communities in Australia, 2013

Trachoma prevalence in children 5-9 years

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<td>≥20%</td>
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National Trachoma Surveillance and Reporting Unit (NTSRU) (2014). New South Wales, Australia, Kirby Institute, University of New South Wales.
Trachoma health promotion

Resources in clinics, schools and community work settings 1500+ 90% staff surveyed comfortable talking about hygiene (n 467)

- Increase knowledge trachoma prevalence, how to eliminate it
- Change social norm to that of clean faces in small children
- Encourage specific hygiene actions
- Advocate for safe and functional washing facilities
Big Five Principles of Behaviour Change
Hill and Dixon

Repeated and habitual voluntary behaviours are determined by

- **Motivation**  Wants to do it. To belong to family, community, culture, country
- **Modeling**  Sees others doing it – healthy role models
- **Resources**  Has physical resources and the required capacity – understanding, training, self efficacy
- **Memory**  Remembers to do it, can retain information, has prompts, cues to action
- **Reinforcement**  Positive consequences for doing it or negative consequences for not doing it
Motivation

Want to do it.
To belong to family, community, culture, country
We are the people of Gurindji
Modeling

Sees others doing it – healthy role models
• ROLE MODELS

• Respected TV character Yamba and Honey Ant and Indigenous AFL Players involved since 2010
• Yamba has been special guest with Milpa the Goanna for trachoma health promotion
• Yamba and Milpa Roadshow went to 5 APY Lands Communities big success – day and overnight HP performances out of Alice offered
• Melbourne Football Club conducted Footy Clinics in NT large towns and remote communities since 2010 – interagency opportunities building around hygiene and wellbeing. 2015 Fixture: May 30 Alice Springs and 4 July Darwin.

Reference
ROUND

DREAM,

POSSIBLE

Reference
Reference
Resources

Have physical resources and the required capacity, understanding, training, self efficacy
Culturally Appropriate Resources

- Partnership Indigenous Eye Health Unit Melbourne University, the Centre for Disease Control NT Department of Health, Katherine West Health Board and Ngumpin Reference Group.

Development of Culturally Safe and Relevant Health Promotion Resources for Effective Trachoma Elimination in Remote Aboriginal Communities. "Aboriginal & Islander Health Worker Journal 36(2): 9-16
The Trachoma Story Kit

The kit is really good because it actually shows you how they get trachoma and what happens and how you can prevent it. It’s all about education, screening, treatment and the importance of follow-up. If you don’t follow up with the hygiene, well, you may as well be flogging a dead horse.”

Rhonda Henry Aboriginal Health Practitioner
Katherine West Health Board NT 2012
- Occurs at the community’s own place
- Brings people together in a culturally safe space
- Does not occur in a setting where illness is the focus
- The activities are visible to a wider audience
- Ripple effects out to wider community
National consistency with local adaptations

- Creative commons approach
- Quality control
- Keeping ‘on message’
- Technical support and free art
- Networks with trachoma programs
- 100+ adaptations
Australia is the only developed country in the world to still have active trachoma in remote Indigenous communities. Great progress has been made in the reduction of trachoma rates since 2009 and Australia is on track to eliminate trachoma by 2020 or earlier.

The Trachoma Story Kit is the primary trachoma health promotion resource and the basis for a social marketing campaign. The Kit is also the starting point for creative community health promotion activities including children’s songs, hip hop DVDs, community murals, weavings, craft booklets, interactive posters in language and much more.

This new user friendly DVD brings everything together for clinical, school and community staff to help to eliminate trachoma and improve holistic hygiene in remote Indigenous communities.
Reference
Memory

Remembers to do it, can retain information, has prompts, cues to action
STOP TRACHOMA & OTHER INFECTIONS

- Blow nose with tissue
- Wash hands with soap and water
- Wash faces with water whenever dirty
- Don't share towels
Reference
Every morning we...

1. ara patjila
   wash our hands

2. mulya munila
   blow our noses

3. katiti paltjila
   brush our teeth

4. yunpa patjila
   wash our faces
Reinforcement

Positive consequences for doing it or negative consequences for not doing it
DIRTY FACES CAUSE EYE INFECTION
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

DVD of trachoma resources has 25 multi media DVDs, songs, radio and television CSAs and radio features

Have been broadcast on Imparja Television, CAAMA radio since 2011 and now also ICTV.

2015: new radio CSAs, TV commercials, community songs to play on ICTV and be uploaded onto Indigitube

Will load material onto USBs for easier access
• Safe and functional washing facilities are still lacking in many homes schools
• Staff in schools, early childhood services and clinics need training about the health risk of dirty faces
• Education department, curriculum, principal groups all avenues for HP approaches
• 250 safety mirrors and 7000 Good Hygiene Bags are being prepared for HP in 2015
• Trachoma Story Kit resources and multi media social marketing provide prompts and calls to action

• Language adaptations and local community input for incorporating local priorities will help to retain information

• CSAs will be broadcast on television and radio throughout 2015

• Training being conducted with School Attendance Officers and Supervisors to incorporate clean faces and hands into being ‘school ready’
Trachoma art and media collaborators

CAAMA Radio
PY Media
Imparja Television
Fred Hollows Foundation
Central Australian Aboriginal Congress
Mukgkarta Artists
Yamba’s Playtime
Yamba and Milpa Trachoma Roadshow
ICTV
Jimmy Little Foundation
Muso Magic
Indigenous Hip Hop Projects
Red Dust Role Models
Shellie Morris - Fred Hollows Foundation
Caper – Sight for All