

Working the Mooditj way

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Background/Purpose:

RSE programs often fail to consider Aboriginal culture and ways of working and learning.

Mooditj is a comprehensive resilience, relationships and sexual health program designed for young Aboriginal people aged 10-15 years. The purpose of the program is to help build strong young Aboriginal people, who can have strong healthy relationships and make positive and informed choices about their sexual health wellbeing.

Approach:

The Mooditj program has been developed by Sexual Health Quarters (SHQ) in collaboration with many Aboriginal people and services across Western Australia over the past 20 years. Mooditj is a Noongar word for solid or good.

Mooditj is intended to be run by local community people working in pairs, at least one of the Leaders should be Aboriginal. The program is adaptable to local languages, stories and ways of learning.

Mooditj has three parts:

- ***Mooditj Me*** helps build young people who are strong in themselves. It helps them grow their inner strengths and pride in their identity. They learn to deal with strong feelings in safe ways and to get help when needed.
- ***Mooditj Mates*** helps young people develop their skills to grow strong healthy friendships and relationships with other young people. They learn to express themselves and work their way through problems in safe and respectful ways.
- ***Mooditj More than Mates*** helps young people to grow positive respectful friendships and intimate relationships and make informed choices about their sexual health and wellbeing.

Outcomes/Impact:

Examples of positive outcomes come from a WA school that reported the students had:

- Increased school attendance during and shortly after Mooditj
- Improved hygiene
- Increased respect for self and others
- Increased self-esteem

Innovation/Significance:

From its beginnings 20 years ago, community told us that the program needed to highlight the strengths, bravery and resilience of Aboriginal people. The Mooditj program has worked with a strengths-based approach that embeds Aboriginal culture in all it's sessions.

Disclosure of Interest statement:

None