

WELCOME TO THE MK NATION – TEST TO TREAT – TEST TO TREAT: USING HIP HOP TO ENGAGE AT RISK YOUTH IN MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES AROUND STIS

Background: Chlamydia Trachomatis and Neisseria Gonorrhoea are the two most commonly notifiable sexually transmitted infections (STI). The prevalence of STIs in the Midwest region is among the highest in Western Australia. They are most prominent in the 15-29 year age group, and are significantly more prevalent among Indigenous people.

Argument: After promoting safe sex messages the next critical intervention to reduce the transmission of STIs is regular STI screening, timely treatment and contact tracing. Access to screening and treatment is a challenge in small communities where shame might hinder health seeking behaviour. The use of Hip Hop dancing and music has been shown to engage Indigenous youth when other more traditional health promotion approaches have failed.

Indigenous Hip Hop Projects (IHHP) work alongside communities across Australia promoting the three R's - Rights, Respect and Responsibilities - to help keep young people safe in relation to sexual health.

The project, delivered in partnership with WA Country Health Service - Midwest and the Shire of Meekatharra, used Hip Hop to give participants the confidence to be in control of their health and be comfortable going for testing for STIs and treatment.

Outcomes: We recruited 12 young people to be part of the program, who worked together with the IHHP writing the lyrics to their own Hip Hop song. Over four days, IHHP worked with these young people to record the rap song and film them on various locations in Meekatharra.

“It was awesome to see their concentration and passion for this process.”

Applications: The process of creating the video-clip was critical in highlighting the importance of screening and treatment of STIs in this community, subsequently the presentations to the clinic for screening increased significantly. The results of this intervention and the 4 min video-clip will be presented at the conference.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krY62cEWqd0&t=17s>