



MINDFUL HEARTS REPORT

2022-2023

www.yogazeit.com.au





mindful hearts report

2022-2023

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Acknowledgment of Country

The Yogazeit team would like to thank the Karajarri, Juwalinny, Managala, Nyungamarta, Yulparija, Gija and Walmajarri language groups for extending invitations to Country and welcoming the Mindful Hearts teams with open arms. Each community committed valuable time and resources, building our knowledge of Aboriginal culture- family, land, law and language. Collaborative learning has resulted in the engagement and growth of all stakeholders, and the development of a community-informed program in content and spirit.

Yogazeit respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land (and/or sea) on which this report was written and the idea for Mindful Hearts was sparked: the Whadjuk Noongar peoples.

We gratefully acknowledge and pay our respect to the continuing culture and the contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to the life, education and mindfulness of our programs, supported by the leadership of elders past and present. Sovereignty has never been ceded.





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Summary

The Yogazeit Story



Our Mindful Movement Education Programs are offered under the umbrella of YOGAZEIT Ltd.

Launched in 2017, Yogazeit is a Not for Profit and Health Promotion Charity (DGR 1 status) dedicated to the prevention and management of both psychological and physical health conditions. We educate and empower educators, yoga teachers, health professionals, parents, teens and children with Yoga and Mindfulness classes, programs, training, and professional development courses founded on the principles of education, ethics and research. To support our activities, we rely on donations, grants, our own fundraising efforts and funding arrangements with strategic partners.

At Yogazeit we believe the physical, mental, and emotional benefits of Mindfulness and Movement should be accessible to all school communities across Australia, regardless of financial circumstances, race, gender, age, physical abilities and challenges.

Our VISION is to provide access to Yoga and Mindfulness to people and high-risk groups in need with a focus on:

Australian School Communities

Empowering students and educators with the resources and activities they can use to reduce their stress and anxiety to best support their resilience, and physical and mental fitness leading to a happier and healthier future.

Aboriginal Outreach / Indigenous Communities

We consult and collaborate with Indigenous Elders, Aboriginal Education staff, mental health experts, schools and Traditional Language Groups in remote communities to develop culturally-relevant Mindful Movement resources and activities to support capacity building.

Based in Fremantle, Western Australia, a small team of diverse passionate professionals are continuing to drive the Yogazeit movement. Embedding time for health and wellbeing (yogatime) into classroom environments, on Country and in communities we foster healthy connections to body and mind. One breath at a time. Thank you for being part of our journey.



Project Mindful Hearts

Project Mindful Hearts, part of Yogazeit's Aboriginal Outreach Programming, is a Mindful Movement Education pilot project which aims to *support resilience and reduce vulnerability in remote communities across the Kimberley region.*

Mindful Hearts educates and empowers some of Western Australia's most remote and underserved communities with strategies to build social-emotional awareness, social-emotional regulation and growth-mindset.

Developed with a capacity building and 'train-the-trainer' approach to support sustainability in remote regions, the 14-month program consulted and worked collaboratively with remote school staff, community organisations, local language groups and Traditional Owners to customise, create and deliver Mindful Movement activities and resources.

Following best practise co-design principles for rural and remote communities, Mindful Hearts embeds a **collaborative approach valuing local language group cultural structure and systems, building strong and mutual relationships with community members and authentically partnering with community for resource creation***.

A variety of culturally relevant, trauma-informed and unique-to-community developed breathing exercises, movement activities (yoga) and relaxation techniques support quick five-minute brain breaks or larger wellbeing sessions.

All activities are designed to be used within the classroom, the community or on Country and continue to be delivered by school staff and Aboriginal Indigenous Education Officers (AIEO) independently following program completion.

Following a call for expressions of interest, Yogazeit selected four diverse schools across the Kimberley which reflected a high need and strong potential in advancing their Social emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) initiatives. Invitations to Country build the foundation to further engage in customised community consultations with Elders, linguists, students and school teaching/support staff and community service providers from the communities in Wangkatjungka, Fitzroy Crossing, Purnululu and Bidyadanga.

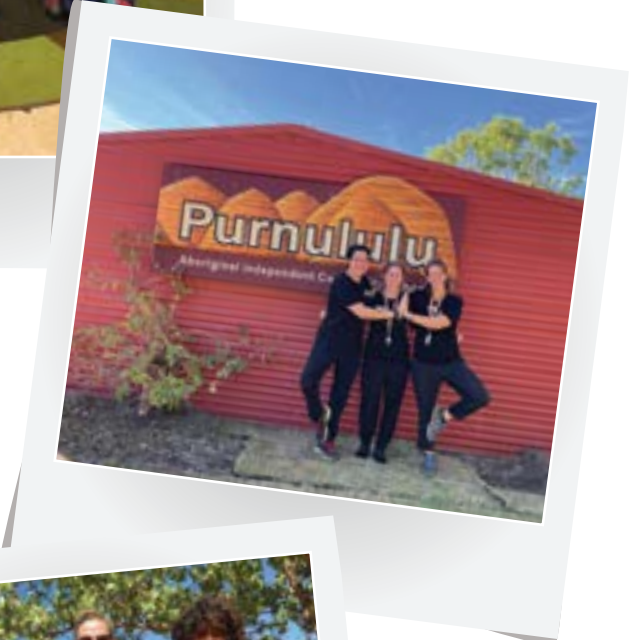
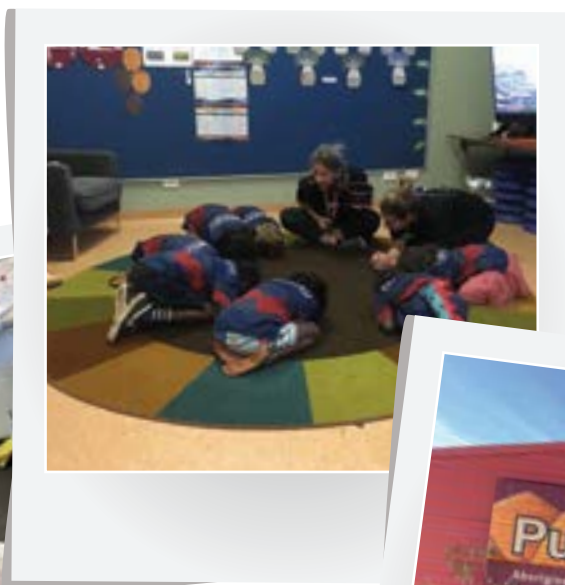
CONSULTATION The Foundation

The consultation visits varied per community, however all visits included wellbeing classes, community events, school incursions, discussions with teachers and yarns with AIEOs and linguists to understand school needs. These learnings supported customisation of resources with elements of the program translated into local language and respectfully incorporating culturally relevant practices related to law, family, ceremony, land.

The Yogazeit team also engaged with community organisations, service providers and government agencies to support a holistic approach in implementing Mindful Movement Education across the region. The extensive community engagement resulted in strong collaboration and the creation of custom-fit resources designed for and by the community - **unique for each individual community to respect Indigenous practices and community-led wellbeing.**

*(for more information on co-design see [here](#))





Rangga barren...
You all listen

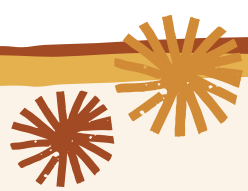
yardem-birri!
 with your ears! → 

moorloom-birri!
 with your eyes! → 

thooworndem-birri!
 with your mouth! → 

marlam-birri!
 with your hands! → 

thambarlam-birri!
 with your feet! → 





RESOURCES

Community led and collaboratively developed

The Mindful Movement Education resources support sustainable development of skills in remote communities and provide engaging opportunities to support healthy bodies and minds. One breath at a time. Resources include a variety of Mindful Movement Education activity cards, guided video/audio relaxations, evidence-based curricular (aligned with Australian Curriculum standards and custom-fit to the schools own wellbeing plan and objectives) and Community Engagement Events (inviting the wider community including other organisations, aunties, uncles and siblings).

The resources were introduced as part of the Mindful Hearts education and training delivery, with the aim of educating and empowering all community stakeholders to confidently learn and use the activities across the community. Each school/community was given their own set of resources to use in their classrooms and admin area.

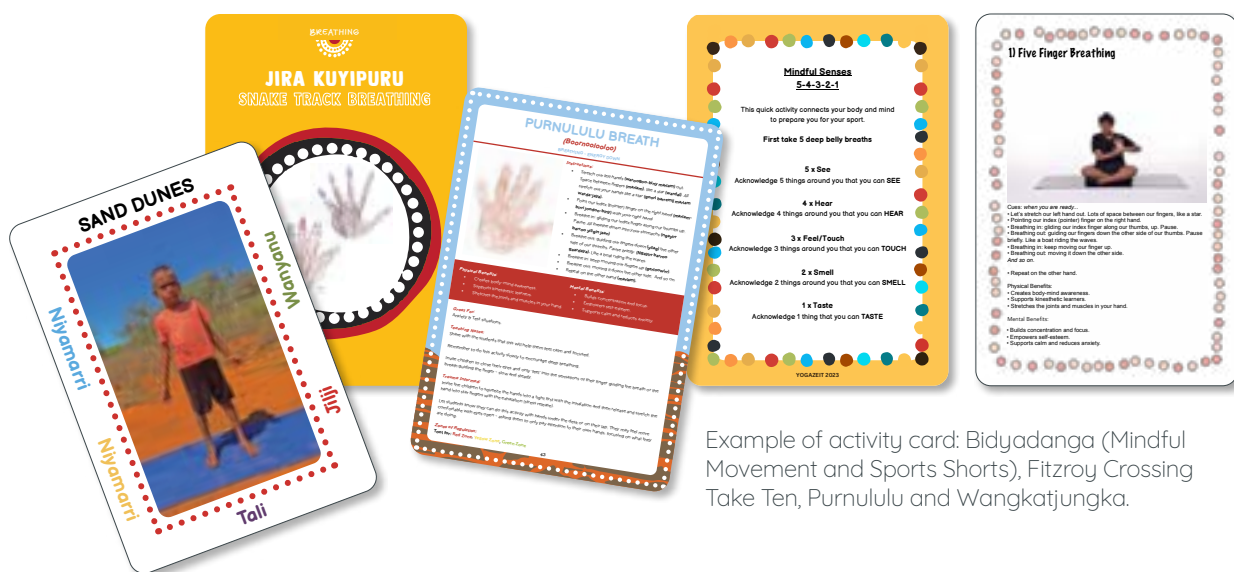
The community-led and collaboratively designed resources delivered included:

- Mindful Movement Professional Learning for school teaching staff
- Mindful Movement Education, yarning style for AIEO's
- Evidence-based curricular, custom-fit for each community
- Mindful Movement Activity Cards supporting local language implementation
- Community-specific resources
- Staff Health and Wellbeing classes



Example of community activity card set resources.





Example of activity card: Bidyadanga (Mindful Movement and Sports Shorts), Fitzroy Crossing Take Ten, Purnululu and Wangkatjunga.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Train the Trainer to support sustainability

The Mindful Hearts education and training delivery was (as well as all other aspects of the program) also customised to each community. Each delivery included a community and school incursion designed to allow teachers, AIEO's, students and community members to both learn and experience Mindful Movement activities and benefits. School staff (teachers and AIEO's) engaged in Mindful Movement Professional Learning workshops and were supported by 2-3 days of classroom learning and practice teaching. These days were crucial for understanding the program in real-life applications, with Yogazeit's Mindful Movement educators working alongside teachers and AIEOs in the classroom, prompting ideal times to introduce activities and answering questions.





Mindful Hearts Scope



Image 1. Map showing locations of Mindful Hearts program implementation.



Image 2. Map reflecting Native languages across the Kimberley.



Note: Illustrations by Purnululu School.



Mindful Hearts Touch Points





Mindful Hearts Impact Video



Image links to: <https://youtu.be/a5GxHbPamx8>
Mindful Hearts Impact video



COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

Reflecting our custom-fit approach, each community received different variations of the Mindful Movement program due to cultural and social needs. Mindful Hearts is built on each community's story of language, land, law and people. Below we share the four communities' unique stories- the driving force of the Mindful Hearts journey.

WANGKATJUNGKA Strong. Smart. Proud. Celebrating community and language.

Wangkatjungka was the program's first completed community. During the initial community consultation, the Mindful Movement educators had the opportunity to meet a young student called Mary in the library whilst working through language translations with an AIEO and language holder. Mary was upset after an interaction with other students and did not want to go to her classroom. After listening and practising some breaths, Mary chose a sequence of breathing and movement activities creating her own flow. Mary then lay the cards out, adjusting until she was happy with the flow. The resulting "Mary's Flow" is included in the Wangkatjungka Mindful Movement curriculum.

Throughout the consultation process, the Wangkatjungka community immediately saw and understood the benefits of Mindful Movement. Community members began independently sharing the activities at local community events and to other mobs in the wider region. The transmission of the program outside of the school provided strong evidence of community transmission and program sustainability when Yogazeit returned for the community delivery incursion.

Yogazeit also had the opportunity to meet with the year 6 class during a school visit to Perth prior to the program delivery. Meeting at South Perth foreshore, the custom-made cards, created by the Wangkatjungka Remote Community School children, were introduced and the students participated in a yoga and wellbeing class, using their new resource firsthand. The impact on the staff and students was powerful, with the year 6 class later supporting the Mindful Hearts delivery and showcasing their newly learned and uniquely developed breathing, movement and relaxation techniques.





MARY'S FLOW

Wangkatjungka Remote School

YOGAZEIT

KULURU WIRINY MARNU
Quiet Whistle breath

MIRTINY
Rainbow Breath

KARNANGANYJA
Emu

WARLU
Fire

MARLU
Kangaroo

KURRINY MANA
Two Trees

TANYJI MARLU
Strong Kangaroo

MINAJI
Echidna

ZINBILILA
Grasshopper

YUKARNYJA
Rest

INDIVIDUAL MINDFUL MOVEMENT LESSON PLANS

MARY'S FLOW

Breaths:
Quiet whistle breath: Kuluru Wiriny Marnu
Rainbow breath: Mirtiny

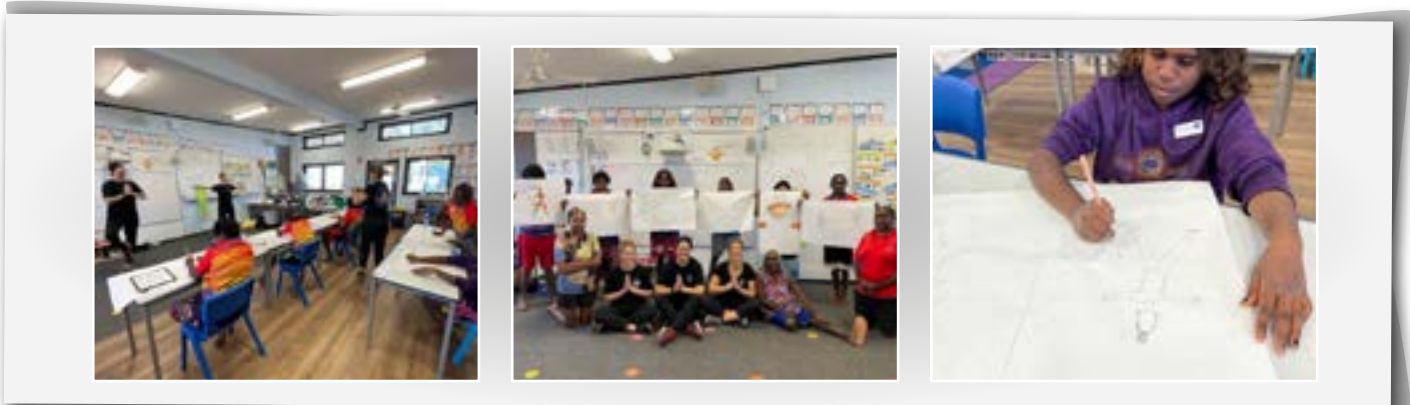
Shapes:
Emu: Karnanganyja
Fire: Warlu [repeat on both sides]
Kangaroo: Marlu

Partner shapes:
Two Trees: Kurriny Mana
Strong Kangaroos: Tanyji Marlu

Shapes:
Echidna: Minaji
Grasshopper: Binbilla

Rest: Yukarnyja

Mary's Flow Lesson Plan, see [page 12](#).



Photos: Wangkatjungka Remote Community School students having a go at drawing some of the yoga shapes as part of the consultation.

Yogazeit meets Wangkatjungka Remote Community School at Perth Foreshore





Image: Sample of the final Wangkatjungka Activity Card Set. Designed by the children of Wangkatjungka Remote Community School.

Following the program delivery, Wangkatjungka RCS experienced a 100% Western staff turnover at the end of the 2022 school year. Keen to continue the Mindful Movement program, students and AEOs presented the resources and benefits to the new principal and teaching staff, advising them of the importance of learning the program.

The transfer of knowledge from community members to the new teaching team is a strong indicator of program sustainability and community buy-in.

With the remainder of funding from this Project and the goal to develop a Mindful Hearts Impact film and customised digital resource for Wangkatjungka Remote Community School, Yogazeit was excited to be able to revisit the Wankatjungka community from August 6-10, 2023 (digital project).

This unique Aboriginal community-driven desire to foster learning and engagement for Western staff allowed Yogazeit to continue education for Wangkatjungka Remote Community School.

- All new Western staff have been trained in the Wangkatjungka Curriculum.
- Extended AIEOS and parents from school children were engaged and trained in Mindful Hearts via Yoga Yarning.
- On Country excursions allowed for holistic experiences of Mindful Hearts while developing digital material for Wangkatjungka school as well as other remote schools in the Kimberley.

The overall **Mindful Hearts Impact Video** is submitted with this report.





FITZROY CROSSING Teacher Wellbeing and Community cohesion

In Fitzroy Crossing, Mindful Hearts reflected a different focus of delivery, **showcasing the importance of customisation and flexibility when working with remote communities that often face incredible challenges.** Instead of focusing on student and staff Mindful Movement Education with traditional language and curriculum alignments, we needed to support the teachers, AIEO's and support staff with practical, easy-to-use and engaging short Health and Wellbeing breaks.

An in-depth community consultation and yarn at Fitzroy crossing was planned with key community Elders and Indigenous School Liaison staff to learn about cultural and community needs. However, upon arrival the Yogazeit team learned about a very recent youth suicide resulting in a sorry camp and violent incidents across the community. A change of plan took place which included consultation with key community stakeholders, such as Women's Center, Youth workers at the Shire, Early Learning centre, Men's Shed, On-Country counselling service as well as Fitzroy District High School's Psychologist, Vice-Principal and AIEOs to allow the team to learn more about community needs and collaboration potential.

Extreme high staff turnover, large percentage of casual short-term fill-in teachers, ever changing principals and low staff morale were identified as a key wellbeing concern - not only at the school, but also in community. Staff were experiencing high levels of stress and burnout.





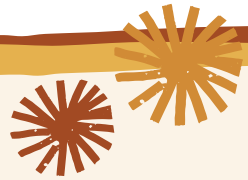
The Mindful Movement Education curriculum (aligned with school standards and supporting local languages) requires substantial community input. This was omitted for the Fitzroy Crossing community, as the low consistency of staff and traumatic time did not allow for this. Respectful language translations and engagement with Linguists and Elders was not possible due to sorry camp in place, therefore - in line with consultation outcomes and to continue customised approaches - Mindful Hearts resources for Fitzroy Crossing would target teacher and AIEO wellbeing. Teacher wellbeing in remote communities is affected by increased isolation, cultural differences and lack of access to services* affecting student educational outcomes*.

The program delivery consisted of a Mindful Movement Professional Learning and a condensed “Teacher 10+1” card pack which gave teaching staff short, **effective strategies to manage stress within the classroom and at home**. Whilst this short program delivery was suitable for Fitzroy Crossing considering the heightened situation, the community is keen for the full-concept program. Community members have already followed up with Yogazeit to further discuss and seek opportunities to implement a full Mindful Hearts delivery, which could be explored pending future funding.

Photos: Staff professional learning focusing on Wellbeing and trauma awareness and Mindful Movement on the oval.



*For more information on teacher wellbeing in remote Aboriginal communities, please see [here](#).





PURNULULU

Celebrating Gija Language and Connection to Country

The Purnululu community program and resources were shaped by the community's strong commitment to Gija language revitalisation and very strong connection to Country reflected in outdoor learning and nature elements across classrooms, curriculum and activities.

Working very closely with Sophia Mung (Elder and important School Liaison), Francis Shoveler (Linguist) and the school community, the Purnululu curriculum also includes local research of Gija language and culture. **The research refers to how emotions are represented as being felt in or linked to physical body parts, most commonly the stomach *jaam*, but also the heart *giningim* and the liver *mirlim*.**

This important piece of research reinforces the importance of mind-body connection and the link between emotional and physical responses to stress, supporting the evidence-base of holistic mindfulness and movement practices.

Image: Teacher and student practising partner shapes at Purnululu Aboriginal Independent Community School.



To increase cultural connection within the classroom, an in-language relaxation resource was one of the additional resources for Purnululu Aboriginal School. Soothing nature recordings of a local stream were combined with an Elder speaking the “Tense and Release” meditation script in Gija language. The resource prompts language revitalisation and also gives teachers and AIEOs a chance to listen and take a moment, rather than narrating the script to the class. This welcoming resource is now utilised as a brain break, transition element and important celebration of Social Emotional Wellbeing for teachers, students and AIEO’s.



Image links to: https://youtu.be/gpcUomf_0MU
(One of the resources prepared with and for Purnululu School)

**VIEW OUR
IN-LANGUAGE
RELAXATION
VIDEO**



BIDYADANGA

Mindful Movement connecting physical activity with release

Bidyadanga is a diverse community with 5 language groups. The community is heavily involved in sports with a local basketball court, football field and pool for water polo and swimming carnivals. This busy community invited Yogazeit to present at their Council meeting for an overall community approach.

Multiple in-person consultations in Bidyadanga were needed to identify the Social Emotional Wellbeing needs and opportunities for customised resources and delivery. While the Aboriginal Islander Education team was excited to celebrate and foster all five languages, access to these languages was challenged due to community business, (Western) staff turnover and general remote community difficulties. Working with Boab Health, the Women's Center, BACLG, Kullarri Regional CDEP and La Grange Remote community school, a strong focus on movement and physical activity was the community-led approach for Bidyadanga.

The Mindful Hearts Mindful Movement Education delivery at Bidyadanga La Grange Community School kicked off with a community event on the sports field, continued with Mindful Movement at the Pool and celebrated the Karajarri language through the resources. Opportunities to include the other 4 languages (Juwalinny, Managala, Nyungamarta and Yulpartja) are prompted through the Activity cards and provide opportunity for AIEOs to include these in language classes as a classroom resource.

Community and service delivery organisations were invited and participated in the professional learning to learn more about how Mindful Movement Education can complement not only kids' physical activity, but also foster resilience and social emotional wellbeing.

To enhance community buy-in and community transmission, a sports-related card activity set was created to support the communities sporting culture. The "Sports Shorts" card set is designed for use during warm-up and cool-down at community and school sports training and events.

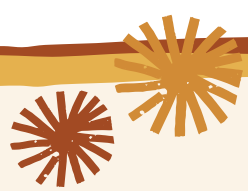




Image 1: Facebook Post from Bidyadanga Aboriginal La Grange Inc to create awareness and community buy in and support.

Image 2: Sports Shorts: Unique resource to foster connection to exercise.

Image 3: Bidyadanga flow activity card.





PROGRAM OBJECTIVES REPORT

The Mindful Hearts funding commitment is to create and implement an “Education project to build resilience and reduce vulnerability in remote regional areas of the Kimberley”. The overarching program objectives are:

- **Developing customised Social Emotional Wellbeing Education for remote Aboriginal Schools and Communities in the Kimberley.**
- **Co-creation of meaningful, place-based and culturally-relevant resources and activities.**
- **Working directly and partnering with the community throughout the process to ensure that community concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.**
- **Development and evaluation of objectives in line with funding purpose and community needs.**

To fulfil and evaluate the funding commitment, **six measurable project objectives** were identified. These objectives are measured using quantitative and qualitative data collected via surveys and yarning circles. It is important to note, objective outcomes are analysed and reported on an individual community basis due to changes in the program resources and implementation. These changes are based on different community needs; and changes to measures and evaluation due to learnings as the project progressed.

The six measurable objectives are:

- 1 Support teachers wellbeing and the ability to independently deliver engaging teaching with the Mindful Movement program.
- 2 Program is sustainable with knowledge transmission from the initial teacher group to student and community members and allied health workers/ youth workers. Supports program longevity and community self- determination of social and emotional wellbeing, and physical health.
- 3 Strengthen cultural connections with an in-language program developed through community consultation leading to strengthened school-community-student relationships.
- 4 Support mental health and wellbeing of students through Mindful Movement and brain breaks to increase self-awareness and self-management (strengthening social emotional learning) and ability to recognise and manage stress levels.
- 5 Program supports and increases physical activity in children.
- 6 Program has a positive increase on school attendance.



PROGRAM REACH AND IMPACT

The Kimberley region was chosen for the Mindful Hearts program due to its remote location reducing mental and social emotional wellbeing service delivery, large Aboriginal population (48.3%) and high levels of disadvantage across the region.

Mindful Hearts: 14 Months. Many Breaths. Mindful Connection.





EVALUATION

Qualitative data collected showed evidence supporting community transmission of the program from within the school to the wider community and the positive impacts of local language facilitation within the classroom. Quantitative data showed strong evidence supporting teachers being confident to use the program within the classroom.

Data Collection

Quantitative and qualitative data was collected using open-ended and closed-ended items from three separate surveys. Teacher responses were collected prior to the Mindful Movement Education workshop (pre-Professional Learning survey), immediately after the Mindful Movement Education Professional Learning workshop (post-Professional Learning survey) and 4-5 weeks after the school incursion (follow-up survey). Initially, we had only planned to collect data from the pre-professional learning survey and follow-up survey. However, due to poor completion rates for the follow-up survey at Wangkatjungka an additional survey (post-professional learning survey) was included to capture teacher observations immediately after the Mindful Movement Education professional learning workshop. This allowed us to evaluate post-professional learning attitudes and counteract dropout rates.

Wangkatjungka completed the pre-professional learning survey only, Fitzroy Crossing teachers and AIEOs completed the pre-professional learning survey and post-professional learning survey only. Purnululu and Bidadanga completed the pre-professional learning survey, post-professional learning survey and follow-up survey. The survey response rate and AIEO participation across communities are:

Survey and Yarning Circle Participation Numbers

	Wangkatjungka	Fitzroy Crossing	Purnululu	Bidadanga
Pre-professional Learning Survey	8	24	7	5
Post-professional Learning Survey	NA	22	9	5
Follow-up Survey	2	NA	4	2
Yarning Circle	3	NA	1	5





Qualitative data was collected via yarning circles with AIEOs, reflecting Aboriginal traditions of collaborative learning and oral transmission of knowledge. Yarning circles provide culturally appropriate safe spaces to answer open ended questions and share community observations of the program benefits, opportunities and impacts. Participants were invited to yarning circles to provide program feedback after participating in the initial community consultation and completing a yarning circle-style professional learning on Mindful Movement.

Finally, an additional indicator of program success can be found via school and community social media posts. Whilst not a formal measure, we are delighted to see schools post updates of on Country trips, with students practising Mindful Movement in red sand and waterways. The posts are a real-life indicator of program take-up and sustainability, and are featured below with the communications content.





Objective
1

Support teachers wellbeing and the ability to independently deliver engaging teaching with the Mindful Movement program.

Objective 1 measured teacher and AIEO wellbeing and confidence to deliver the program. Teacher wellbeing can be impacted by a number of factors including workload, burnout and individual abilities such as resilience and social emotional competence. Teacher wellbeing was measured using quantitative and qualitative data from the teacher feedback surveys. Likewise, AIEO wellbeing is also critical. AIEO's are often a consistent presence in the classroom, bridging teaching staff turnover in remote schools. AIEO's also bring local culture into the classroom, often supporting students to feel safe in a highly structured and unfamiliar environment. AIEO wellbeing was measured using qualitative data from AIEO yarning circles.

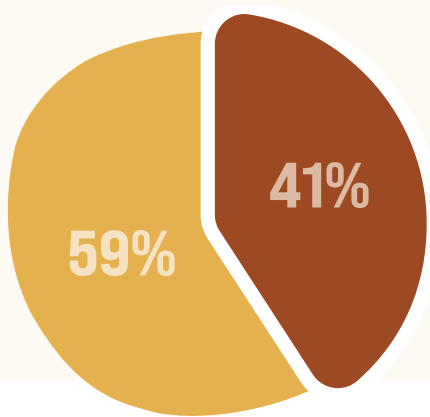
Teacher and AIEO wellbeing highlights show improved teacher knowledge and confidence to teach the program showed strong improvement between the pre-professional learning survey and post-professional learning survey.

- The Fitzroy Crossing pre-professional learning survey indicated 41% of participants reporting they had little or no knowledge of yoga or mindfulness . The post-professional learning survey data showed 82% of teachers and AIEOs at Fitzroy Crossing had the skills and confidence to manage their own wellbeing. A great result and large skill uptake for the cohort.
- Following the Bidyadanga delivery, two participants completed the follow-up survey. Both participants reported they had been using the learned Mindful Movement activities daily to support their own wellbeing. This was also supported by qualitative data responses:
"Great for my own wellbeing, the students can have high needs and it is a reminder for me to take a break from constant behaviour management"
"It has given staff strategies to manage stress"
- Qualitative data from the Purnululu follow-up survey showed high teacher confidence to use the activities in the classroom as a tool to deliver the school curriculum:
"I feel the professional learning has taken what I know about yoga and mindfulness and made it easier to use in the classroom and cover the curriculum"

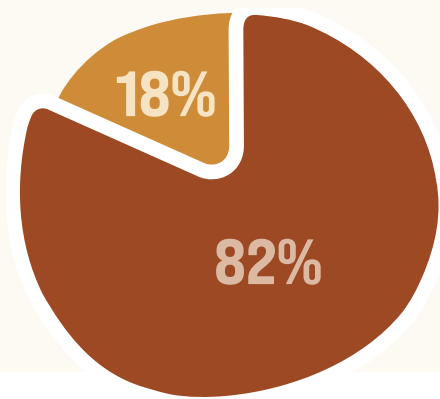


Teacher Wellbeing Percentage Chart

Fitzroy Crossing Professional Learning survey indicated 41% of participants reporting had little or no knowledge of yoga or mindfulness.



The post-Professional Learning survey data showed 82% of teachers and AEOs at Fitzroy Crossing now have the skills and confidence to manage their own wellbeing.



“Great for my own wellbeing, the student can have high needs and it is a reminder for me to take a break from the constant behaviour management.”

“It has given staff strategies to manage stress.”

“I feel the PL has taken what I know about yoga and mindfulness and made it easier to use in the classroom and cover the curriculum.”



Objective

2

Program is sustainable with knowledge transmission from the initial teacher group to student and community members and allied health workers/ youth workers. Supports program longevity and community self-determination of social and emotional wellbeing, and physical health.

Objective 2 measured the transmission of the program into the wider community using primarily qualitative data from yarning circles with AIEO's, who are mostly Elders and Language Holders. The program is designed to start in the classroom using brain-break activities, however activities can be adapted and combined for use in other settings including local youth groups, cultural centres, mens' sheds and local sports games and trainings. Program knowledge transmission into the wider community will result in a wider reach of the program benefits and also increased program sustainability due to community members sharing and teaching the program versus transient teaching staff. Ideally the implementation of the program will transfer from teacher-led to community-led.

The most compelling evidence came from Wangkatjungka where AIEO's actively started sharing the exercises immediately after the consultation period with a local suicide-prevention group and at a larger inter-community gathering where mobs from across the region come together to yarn with each other.

Whilst AIEOs across all communities showed high levels of buy-in and intentions to share the program across the community, the quality of evidence from Wangkatjungka is due to the Elders being proactive and sharing the program immediately after the community consultation. This allowed the yarning circles to capture program transmission between consultation and delivery, which was almost 4 months. This was just not possible in the other communities.

Qualitative data highlights from Wangkatjungka AIEO Yarning Circle include:

- One participant has already started sharing the program in the community after participating in the community consultation.
"I shared with a girls group we have to stop suicide, ask how they are feeling, showed them the 5 senses activity. Girls said they would like to do some yoga"
- An Elder planned to show the program to an upcoming 2 day meeting where different mobs and communities from the region get together and share community activities, strengths and problems with each other.
"They have more kids, a lot of problems, they need this. A lot of youth around town need this"
- Bidyadanga AIEO Yarning Circle: 100% of AIEO's planned on doing the activities at home with their families.
"The benefits are mental, physical and social too"





AEIO Wellbeing Sharing Outside the Classroom

Bidyadanga AEO Yarning Circle:
100% of AEO's planned on doing the
activities at home with their families.



"I shared with a girls group we have to stop suicide, ask how they are feeling, showed them the 5 sense activity. Girls said that would like to do some yoga."

"The benefits are mental, physical and social too."





Objective

3

Strengthen cultural connections with an in-language program developed through community consultation leading to strengthened school-community-student relationships.

Objective 3 was measured via teacher survey responses and from qualitative data from yarning circles. The Mindful Hearts program seeks to strengthen relationships between schools, students and community by collaborating with school teaching staff, students and community members during the program creation. The program also uses local language to name breathing and movement shapes and instructions. Bringing local language into the classroom supports language revitalisation and students often feel more comfortable when their own culture is celebrated and integrated into the classroom.

Quantitative data and qualitative data from AIEO yarning circles and teacher surveys shows feedback on in-language resources and their impact on the students, teachers, school and community:

- Pre-professional learning survey quantitative data for teachers at Purnululu showed mixed levels of Gija language knowledge ranging from knowing short phrases, knowing single words and not knowing any Gija but wanting to learn. When teachers were asked if they deliver any brain-breaks in Gija language, **83%** of responses indicated they did not but would like to. The follow-up survey responses showed teachers felt the in-language resources support cultural connection in the classroom. Qualitative data provides context for the reported perceptions:
“Yes, it links to culture and first language instruction are effective research-based strategies for learning”
“Yes, it allows the students to connect to their own language and allows them to feel part of a community that is bigger than the school and classroom alone”
- Pre-professional learning survey quantitative data for teachers at Bidyadanga also showed strong support for integration of local language in the classroom with **40%** of teachers using single words whilst teaching and **60%** wanting to learn local language and implement in the classroom.
- Follow-up professional learning teacher surveys at Bidyadanga also provide qualitative data detailing the benefits:
“The in-language brain breaks absolutely increases cultural connection in the classroom”
“The students light up when they hear the teachers speak language words and phrases”
- The Bidyadanga AIEO yarning circle also provided strong evidence and advocacy for strengthening cultural connection using language:
“The cards will help teachers learn the language. It’s the only way the teachers will connect with their kids”
- Wangkatjungka teacher qualitative data from a follow-up survey:
“Having strategies that connect to the students language and culture increases buy in”
- Wangkatjungka AIEO qualitative data from a yarning circle:
“The program being in-language will support language revitalisation”





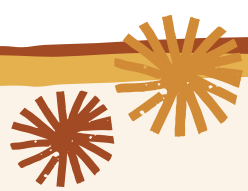
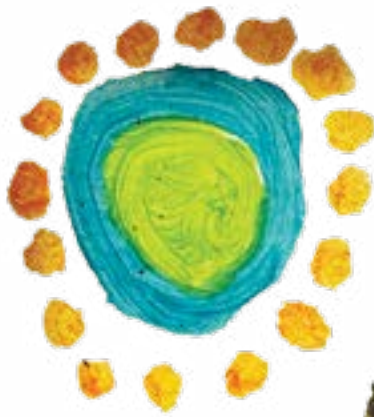
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“The cards will help teachers learn the language. It’s the only way the teachers will connect with their kids”

“The students light up when they hear the teachers speak language words and phrases”

“The in-language brain breaks absolutely increases cultural connection in the classroom”





Objective

4

Support mental health and wellbeing of students through Mindful Movement and brain breaks to increase self-awareness and self-management (strengthening social emotional learning) and ability to recognise and manage stress levels.

Objective 4 was measured using qualitative data from yarning circles and teacher surveys.

Mindful Hearts uses breathing, movement and meditation activities to upskill students with the knowledge and capacity to listen to and feel their body changes. Drawing on the mind-body connection, **students can use Mindful Movement activities to learn to identify when they are experiencing heightened emotions and implement strategies to calm their emotions.**


- An example of a student learning self-awareness and self-management skills was shared at the AEO yarning circle during the Wangkatjungka delivery:
“A student who was hyperactive and disrupting the class was provided breathing and calming shapes to calm his emotions. After practising Mindful Movement shapes the student was able to regulate his emotions, returned to class and continued his school work for an hour”
- Data collected from teacher surveys showed teachers reporting positive changes to student classroom behaviours and their ability to self-regulate.
- Teacher from Wangkatjungka reported in the follow-up survey:
“Students have increased self awareness and ability to self regulate. They are more aware of when their body needs a break, able to identify ways to move and breathe that make them feel good”
- Eight teachers across Wangkatjungka, Purnululu and Bidyadanga completed the follow-up survey, with all responses reporting they believed Mindful Movement brain breaks would support student mental wellbeing in the classroom. Additionally, in the four weeks following each community delivery, all teachers reported they had delivered Mindful Movement brain breaks in the classroom, ranging from once per day to five or more times per day. On average, responding teachers had delivered an average of 2.375 Mindful Movement brain breaks per day.

These additional brain-breaks provided an additional 6.5+ hours of social emotional wellbeing and physical activity in the classroom within a four week period since the program delivery. Similar to our objective of observing knowledge transmission, we feel that longer observation times will show more meaningful benefits at a student and classroom level.





“Students have increased self awareness and ability to self regulate. They are more aware of when they’re body needs a break, able to identify ways to move and breathe that make them feel good”



“A student who was hyperactive and disrupting the class was provided breathing and calming shapes to calm his emotions. After practising Mindful Movement shapes the student was able to regulate his emotions, returned to class and continued his school work for an hour”





Objective

5

Program supports and increases physical activity in children.

Objective 5 is measured using qualitative and quantitative data from teacher surveys, and qualitative data from AIEO yarning circles. Mindful Hearts seeks to support and increase physical activity across the community, however the data measures increases in physical activity in students in the classroom.


- **As reported for objective 4, we have calculated an additional 6.5+ hours of physical activity over 4 weeks based on follow-up survey data collected from teachers at Wangkatjungka, Purnululu and Bidyadanga.**
- Qualitative data from Wangkatjungka also supports Mindful Movement brain-breaks driving an increase in student physical activity in the classroom:
"The program increases physical activity in the students, they are moving more frequently throughout the day through the brain breaks"
- Community desire for additional physical activity within the classroom was shared at the Purnululu AIEO yarning circle:
"We need more movement in the class for the little kids, the teachers need to keep doing the brain breaks all the time"

Yogazeit also built on an opportunity to create a Sports Shorts mini-card pack for use in Bidyadanga, a community with a strong sports focus. During the consultation process, the community shared the positive impact local sports clubs had on youth. To support local sports and introduce mindfulness and body awareness to youth outside of the classroom, cards were designed to be used as part of a warm-up and cool-down during community footy and basketball training.






“We need more movement in the class for the little kids, the teachers need to keep doing the brain breaks all the time”



“The program increases physical activity in the students, they are moving more frequently throughout the day through the brain breaks”



“Yes, it allows the students to connect to their own language and allows them to feel part of a community that is bigger than the school and classroom alone”



Objective

6

Program has a positive increase on school attendance.

Objective 6 is measured using school attendance records provided by school administration. The Mindful Hearts delivery team also observed positive increases in school attendance during our consultation and delivery periods. For example, during the Purnululu delivery, we observed five students arrive 30 minutes early for school two days in a row for a Mindful Movement and wellbeing class before school started.

This objective is difficult to measure particularly in a short time frame of 4 weeks. This is due to a number of other programs running in community which are designed to increase attendance such as bus pick-up and drop-off, breakfast club and awards including pool parties for 100% attendance. Further limitations affecting objective measurement include ongoing effects to school attendance due to transient Aboriginal ways, the covid-19 pandemic and the Kimberley flooding event. Therefore school attendance data will not be submitted for evaluation and reporting due to not being a valid measure of the programs influence on school attendance.

Images: Early morning Mindful Movement with students at Purnululu Aboriginal Independent Community School.





BARRIERS AND LIMITATIONS

The Mindful Hearts program has encountered a number of barriers and limitations, with some listed below:

Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent impacts

After obtaining Lotterywest funding in December 2021 and Healthway funding in April 2022, the project worked with communities to organise safe entry to communities. These steps involved requests to Traditional Owners for visitation approval due to many Aboriginal communities not accepting visitors (in addition to Invitation to Country requests), triple covid-19 vaccination and flu vaccination for all Yogazeit team members, daily RAT tests and mask wearing in community and a risk management plan.

Following the easing of restrictions, the economic recovery from inflation was stronger than expected both globally and within Australia, resulting in increased inflation rates. These costs impacted the reach of the Mindful Hearts program from 5 communities to 4 due to increased costs for flights, groceries, car hire, insurance and petrol as well as staffing.

East Kimberley Floods

The Kimberley region was also affected by floods from February to March 2023, cutting off all road freight deliveries either side of the Fitzroy River. The subsequent food and medical shortages affected the Mindful Movement Education delivery for the Purnululu community. Mindful of very limited / no fresh food access in the Kimberley, a healthy food selection was purchased in Perth and flown up to community.

Grapes, carrots and other healthy fruit and veggie snacks were an absolute hit for the young and young at heart community members.



Remote community and cultural barriers

The community consultation visit is vital to ensure each community receives community-developed resources which will benefit the social emotional, mental and physical wellbeing of community members. The 5-7 day visit was well received, however due to competing work, family and cultural commitments for Language Holders and Elders it was difficult to finalise all the cultural knowledge needed for resource development, such as language translations. This was particularly evident at Bidyadanga due to the increased language requirements of five languages in community. Potential future program deliveries would benefit from increased community consultations- an initial visit to learn and listen, followed by multiple continuous visits for in-person and community-led resource development.

High workload commitment was also a barrier for teachers. Teachers often cited high workload, burnout and poor mental wellbeing in survey items evaluating their current wellbeing. Consequently, the poor completion of online surveys was consistent across all four schools participating in evaluations. To counteract this, the post-PL survey was introduced, and all surveys were reviewed and shortened to encourage completion.

Finally, cultural protocol relating to sorry camps in Fitzroy Crossing impacted our ability to sit with community Elders to learn and customise a culturally-responsive program. Although we were able to pivot and create a much-needed school and teacher-focused program, delays due to potential community incidents and subsequent cultural protocol should be considered when grant timelines are mapped out.

Implications for Health Promotion and Research

The current research body of the benefits of Mindful Movement on disadvantaged youth is primarily based on Indigenous American, Indigenous Canadian and New Zealand Maori populations. Creating Australian-based literature will provide an evidence base to extend current SEWB programs and practices delivered in remote Aboriginal communities. The Mindful Hearts program provides initial evidence of a place-based, community-developed SEWB skillset which can be implemented and driven within communities, strengthening the capacity, autonomy and self-determination of Aboriginal peoples and their wellbeing. Whilst the Mindful Hearts program outcomes are promising, the data reflects short time frames and is not indicative of long-term behaviour change or community uptake. Further research capturing data over longer time frames is needed to build on the program's initial success.





COMMUNITY BENEFITS

The Mindful Hearts program's holistic approach consulted over 200 community members and organisations and supported over 400 Aboriginal children, youth and school staff with culturally-sensitive social-emotional wellbeing strategies directly. Learning from school children and AIEOS that yoga practices were shared at home and across communities, we anticipate a reach of over 1,000 people in the Kimberley.

The resulting objective outcomes demonstrate benefits across the community including at an individual level (student, teacher and AIEO) and at a wider community level (Aboriginal capacity building and language and culture revitalisation efforts).

Student Benefits

Teacher and AIEO surveys reported student benefits including

- improved student wellbeing in the classroom and
- increased student responsiveness to the in-language activities.
- Physical activity within the classroom also increases movement, activating the brain's reward system and supporting student-teacher information exchange.

Teacher and AIEO Benefits

Capacity Building: The initial classroom implementation was successful, with teachers and AIEO's learning the skills and gaining confidence to lead classrooms with Mindful Movement.

Selfcare: Teachers and AIEO's also learned regulation techniques for themselves which supports increased mental and physical wellbeing.

Ease of integration: Teachers appreciated having SEWB tools supporting both student and teacher wellbeing without adding to an already full workload.

Community driven and culturally relevant: AIEO's view the activities as a community-led, culturally-appropriate tool which will support the teachers to integrate local language into the classroom and strengthen student-teacher-community relationships.





Aboriginal Capacity Building and Culture Revitalisation Benefits

Traditional owners and language holders informed the program, furthering language revitalisation efforts and strengthening connection to culture within schools. These demonstrated benefits have the potential to extend out amongst the community as the program continues to gain traction with time.

Local community benefits

This program saw schools, shires and service providers coming together, consulting and learning in safe and inviting environments. The cross-agency approach supported holistic approaches in Mindful Movement Education and empowers a continuous practice and point of growth opportunity beyond classrooms.

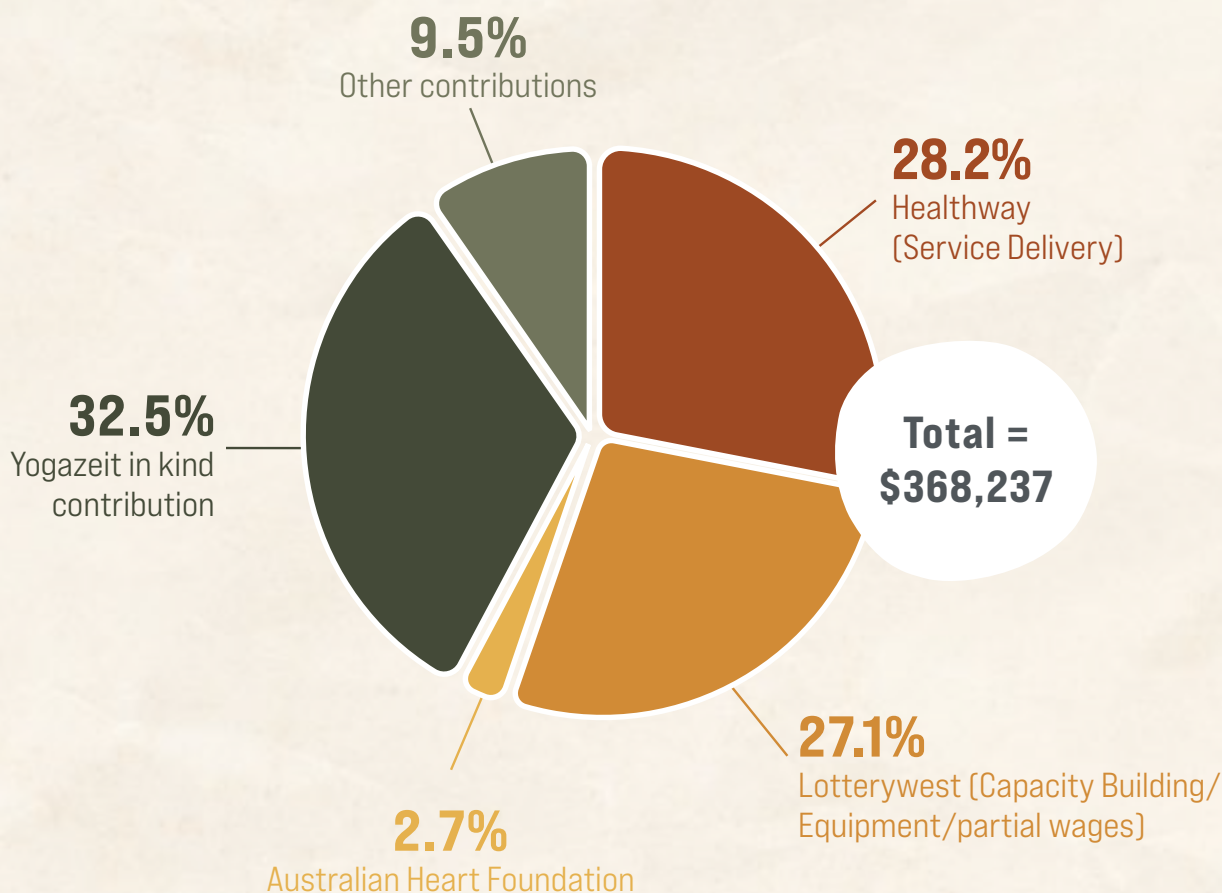


COSTING AND BUDGET

This project was seed-funded from the Australian Heart Foundation (\$10,000) as part of their Innovation Challenge Funding supporting Heart Health in the Kimberley Region. Yogazeit used this opportunity to further engage with the region to maximise impact opportunities while connecting with Healthway and Lotterywest for funding opportunities responding to community needs.

Due to this approach, funding for Mindful Hearts was able to be significantly increased, adding another \$358,237 of additional funding to maximise reach and outcomes.

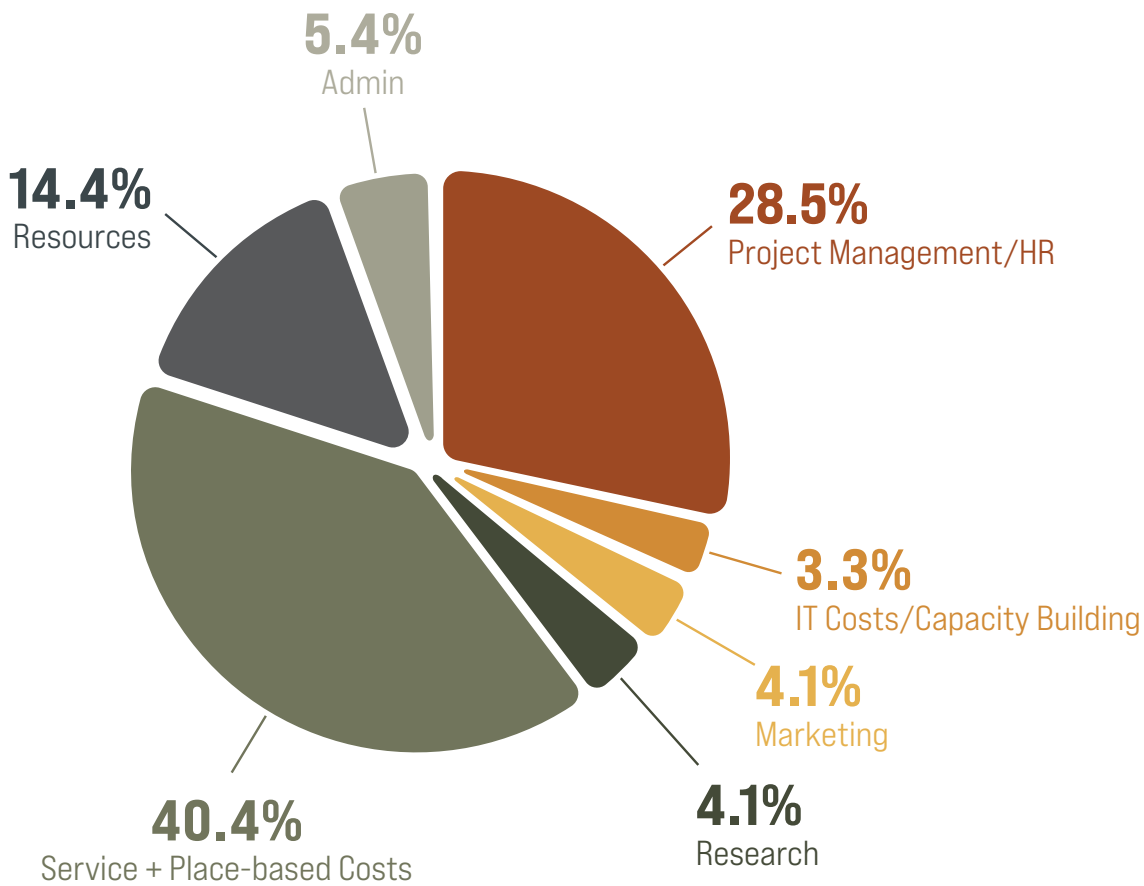
Funding Income:	\$99,237 Healthway (Service Delivery)
	\$104,000 Lotterywest (Capacity Building / Equipment / partial wages)
	\$10,000 Australian Heart Foundation
	\$120,000+ Yogazeit in kind contribution
	\$35,000 Other contributions/Community in kind (accommodation, wages)
	= \$368,237





Funding Spent:

Project Management/HR	\$ 105,000
IT Costs / Capacity Building	\$ 12,000
Marketing	\$ 15,000
Research	\$ 15,000
Service + Place-based costs (Travel, Facilitation)	\$ 149,000
Resources (Development, Printing)	\$ 53,000
Admin	\$ 19,237
Total	\$ 368,237



MEDIA, COMMUNICATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships

The development and delivery of Mindful Hearts was driven and built upon partnerships with remote schools, their local service providers, government agencies and media.

Seed funding for Mindful Hearts was gained through the Australian Heart Foundation, which allowed Yogazeit to reach out early to remote communities obtaining EOI's and buy-in. All of the below listed organisations have been consulted with and are in support of Mindful Hearts.

Partnerships included - but were not limited to -





Media Release

12 April 2023: The Media Release in early April officially kicked off the launch of Mindful Hearts and opened further opportunities for expressions of interest submissions as well as volunteering opportunities for passionate Yoga Educators as part of this program. Statements from Lotterywest/Healthway are included in this MR. [Link to Media Release](#). The Media Release was sent to all news outlets in the Kimberley and across WA, as well as to the Ministers (Indigenous Affairs, Mental Health, Education) for consideration.

Additionally this MR was supported with Yogazeit’s own newsletter (1k+ subscribers) and promotion activities (events, training, social media).

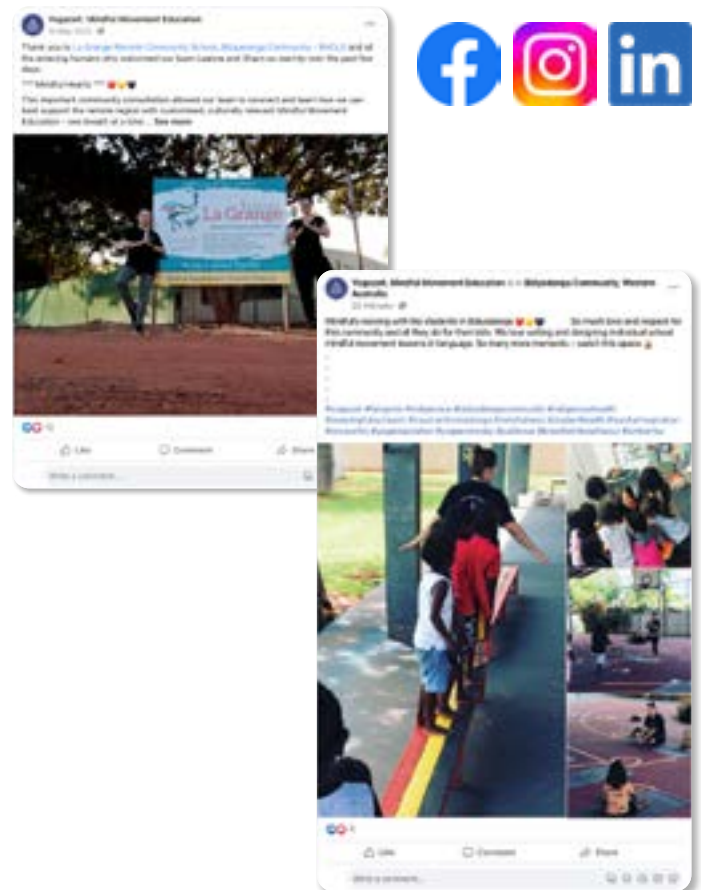
Expressions of Interest

Yogazeit received over 20 expressions of interest submissions for this program in the Kimberley region. The submissions came from Early Learning centres, schools, community organisations to local shires expressing a need to further social emotional learning and wanting to learn the skills for sustainable and holistic culturally-relevant practices in community. Due to funding timeframe and budget constraints, a selection of initially four communities across the Kimberley took place. These communities were identified due to buy-in from schools, local community/shire as well as other place-based organisations supporting best possible outcome opportunities for a whole community approach.

Social Media Marketing

Mindful Hearts was celebrated, promoted and mindfully shared across Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. Healthway and Lotterywest were tagged and we saw many cross-shares and likes throughout the funding period. Some examples below.

Note: Mindful of privacy regulations YZ did not publish any photos on social media without the remote school sharing the photos first, allowing YZ to cross-share and tag accordingly.





WATERLOO

Health

In health, the team, teachers have been learning about their students and how they can be better and understand their feelings. We have been developing awareness of our emotions and understanding different strategies to effectively respond to those feelings. Students have been engaging in programs which is a program developed in collaboration with the 'Wangjibanggi' community using 'Waterloo' language. The students in this program have practiced effective breathing techniques and yoga poses in a safe when dealing with big feelings.

Physical Education

The Physical Education this Term, we have been learning to identify, align and control playing basketball. We have become strong by not giving up, start by learning the rules to play basketball, and aimed by playing tennis with others.



Waterloo Primary Community School

At Waterloo Primary Community School, we have been learning about our emotions and how they can be better and understand their feelings. We have been developing awareness of our emotions and understanding different strategies to effectively respond to those feelings. Students have been engaging in programs which is a program developed in collaboration with the 'Wangjibanggi' community using 'Waterloo' language. The students in this program have practiced effective breathing techniques and yoga poses in a safe when dealing with big feelings.



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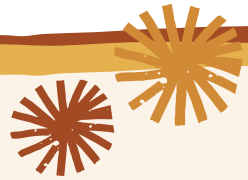
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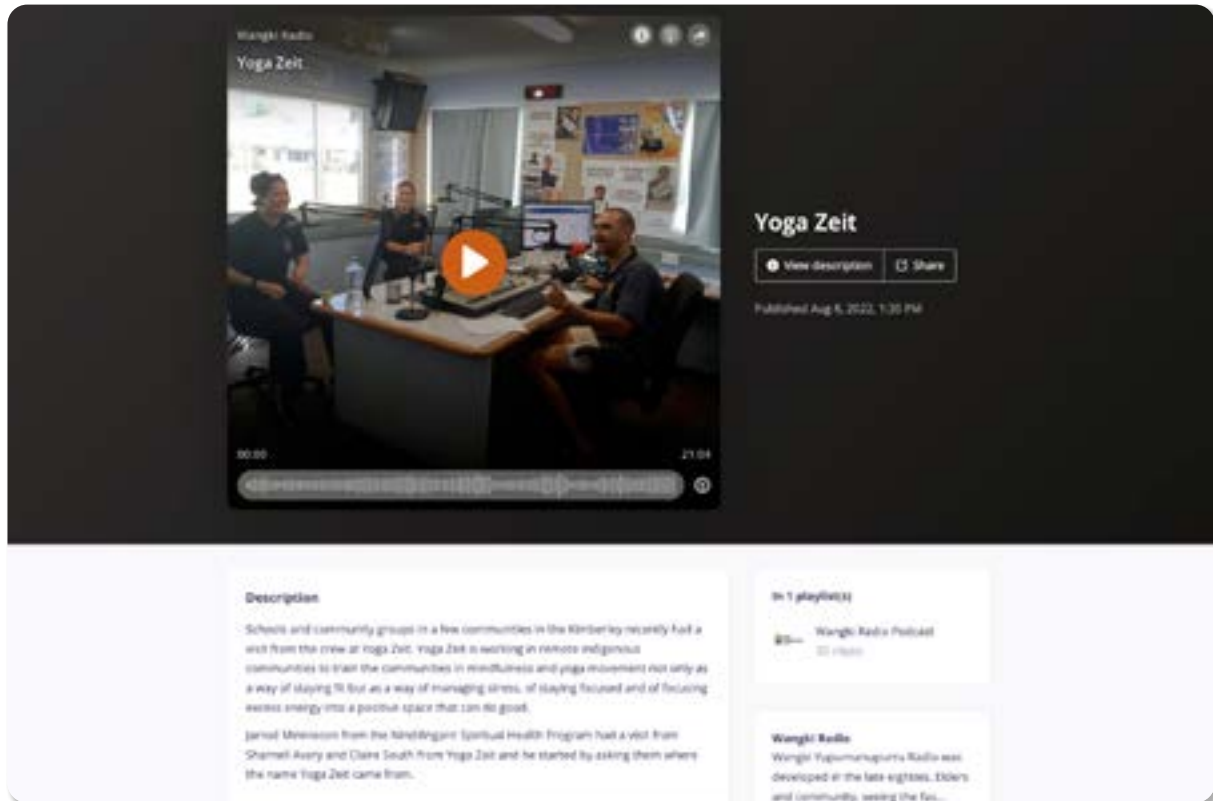
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Radio

While consulting in Fitzroy Crossing, the Yogazeit team were invited to yarn about Mindful Hearts at Wangki Yupunanu Purru. Listen here: <https://omny.fm/shows/wangki-radio/yoga-zeit>



Film - further media opportunities

During July and August YZ used some of the funding budget and allocated this purposefully to develop a Social Impact film for Mindful Hearts. This film will include statements from Healthway, lead-researchers at UWA and Telethon, Professor Michael Rosenberg and Professor Ben Jackson, as well as the Yogazeit team - showcasing the impact of Mindful Hearts throughout the funding period. This video will also have the potential to be used as a training tool for selected schools experiencing high staff turnover as the overarching potential of Mindful Hearts will be shared together with some yoga shapes and breathing exercises for practice teaching.



NEXT STEPS

This Pilot Project shows immense potential to further Social Emotional Wellbeing Initiatives for Indigenous peoples in remote communities.

Out of four communities - 100% reflected desire to further the program in their school and community, fostering increased capacity building and longevity.

Local service providers, community organisations and local governments and shires supported the program implementation and word of mouth advanced awareness of Mindful Hearts beyond communities we engaged with.

From a research perspective as well as from a facilitation point of view we've been able to only capture a snapshot of the potential impact due to the limited budget and timeframe. Despite challenging external impacts (floods, Covid, Inflation) and therefore increased risk-factors to the project, Mindful Hearts made a significant impact. These impacts demonstrated an even further need to foster SEWB in community and support initiatives to increase resilience and support vulnerability.

"Children smiled and laughed as they embraced the physical activity and connection to body and mind through yoga. They enhanced their language skills and often excitedly shared a new (or forgotten) word that was revitalised. Western and Aboriginal teaching staff worked closer together to facilitate Mindful Movement. Shoulders relaxed as we collectively breathed out and found our balance. On Country. In community. In the classroom."

Sharnell Avery, Indigenous Outreach
Lead Yogazelt





To further outcomes, understanding and impact - a multi-year funding project with multiple community touch points and growth opportunities is needed. All communities wished to be revisited - with individual funding limitations by the schools being the biggest barrier.

In light of the success of Mindful Hearts, our goal moving forward is to secure further funding for a 2–3 year period. This will have the potential to further maximise impact for Western Australia’s most under-served communities through community participation, an evidence-based approach, the development of further resources and capacity building.

Particularly the Fitzroy Valley region appears strongly hit by the impacts of the past couple of years and a desire to further Mindful Hearts in this region is identified. A potential collaboration and consultation project includes multi-touch points incl. Early Learning Areas, Shires, Community Service Providers.

This multi-year funding should be supported by:

- Furthering additional resources in communities (e.g. development of Mindful Movement stories relating to community, digital resources, breathing exercises, movement, consulting schools for implementation and extension opportunities (calm zones, teacher wellness, on-country camps)
- Term visits to each schools/community (min 3 x per year) to foster capacity building and training for Indigenous and Western staff
- Extending community partnerships with service providers and shires/LGA’s and advancing the train-the-trainer model and training of locally based Indigenous Youth Yoga Teachers (**Deadly Minds**) across the regions.
- Continuing to revitalise language and working with Linguists and Elders collaboratively
- Supporting evidence-based Social Emotional Wellbeing approaches (Research)

Potentially focusing on Fitzroy Valley region to maximise the footprint:

- Schools/regions suggested are (but not limited to) Djugerari Rem Com School, Fitzroy Valley District High School (expanding activities with a student focus and student-teacher), Wangkatjunga Remote Community School, Halls Creek District High School, Yakanarra Community School, Yiyili Aboriginal Remote Community School.



THANK YOU

We would like to sincerely acknowledge our gratitude to Healthway, Lotterywest, the Australian Heart Foundation and our many community partners - incl Act Belong Commit - for their continuous support and belief in this program.

Special thanks to Prof. Michael Rosenberg and Prof. Ben Jackson for their guidance in qualitative and quantitative data analysis as part of this program.

With thanks to your support we've been able to actively empower over 600 Mindful Hearts through training and consultation in remote regions in the Kimberley. One Breath at a Time.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT



Purnululu School



AISWA



Fitzroy Valley District High School



Shire of West Kimberley



Garnduwa



Bidyadanga La Grange



Wangkatjunga Remote Community School



2/5/2023

Purnululu Aboriginal Independent Community School
Woorreranginy Community

To whom it may concern,

I am the Principal of Purnululu Aboriginal Independent Community School in Woorreranginy Community located on the lands of the Gija people in the remote East Kimberley in WA. In March of this year after extensive community consultation with Elders, linguists and educators, Yogazeit completed the delivery of our customised, trauma informed and culturally sensitive Mindful Movement Program.

The Mindful Hearts Project was well received by both the students and the educators at PAICS with the team of Yogazeit educators ensuring that all levels of ability were catered to in a safe and nurturing way all while encouraging students and teachers to use the Gija language.

I would highly recommend the Mindful Hearts Program to any remote Aboriginal School. It is a creative way to revitalise language, encourage young people to move their bodies in a mindful way and create lifelong positive habits around their own mental and physical wellbeing. While the Mindful Hearts team were at the school, we had a concurrent visit from the Kimberley Child and Adolescent Mental Health team. While on campus, their Aboriginal liaison officer carefully reviewed the Mindful Hearts resources developed for our students and she said "I think this is the best thing I've ever seen"

We would like to see continuing support from Yogazeit around training and ongoing support for implementation with our own staff, especially the local Gija staff. Investing in further training and support for local Gija staff is a way to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes of the project beyond the tenure of non-Aboriginal teachers who tend to leave the community after a couple of years. By training local residents further, we can ensure the continued use of the beautiful resources we have received. We know this will support the health and wellbeing of children at the school and their families.

It has been a pleasure to host the Yogazeit team and we thank you for your time and commitment in delivering such a unique and high quality program.

Kind regards,

Dr Libby Hammond,
Principal
principal@purnululuschool.wa.edu.au





On Tue, Mar 28, 2023 at 11:52 AM Joanne MacLachlan <JMacLachlan@ais.wa.edu.au> wrote:

Hi Shamell,

I am writing to say hello say how nice it was to meet you and your team at Purnululu Community School last week.

Also, I would like to add my personal and professional thoughts and observations on seeing your work and practice being played out in a school context.

We all know that Wellbeing and Mindfulness are important and necessary for optimal achievement and daily operation. Everyday, this is becoming more apparent in general for all stakeholders and never more so than in a school context.

I am an experienced educator with over 30 years of teaching experience. I have worked in many schools, private, independent and government sectors, as well as a range of metropolitan and country schools, including semi remote settings. Over this time, I have seen the children's levels of escalation, experienced trauma, learning difficulties and inequality in accessing appropriate curriculum increase in schools all over the state.

So many strategies, programs, initiatives and well-meaning ideas are brought in to try and address these areas. At the end of the day, children cannot learn unless they are happy and at calm, trusting relationships are built, child agency is established and the environment supports all of this. Basically, the Early Years Learning Framework: Being, Belonging and Becoming is in place, supported and nurtured.

I saw all of the above last week in the remote school setting I was visiting. The Yogazeit team demonstrated all the effective and necessary elements required to make a difference to the children's state of being and ultimately, wellbeing, through the researched and evidence based vehicle of Yoga. It was lovely to see.

I believe that programs such as Mindful Hearts will make a positive difference in these young children's life. I wish you well in going forward and I am grateful to have witnessed your team at work.

Kind regards
Jo

Joanne MacLachlan
Early Childhood Consultant – Remote School Support
Working days: Monday and Tuesday

AISWA

Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia

M: 0419 514 185

E: JMacLachlan@ais.wa.edu.au W: www.ais.wa.edu.au

U:

A: Suite 3, 41 Walters Drive, Osborne Park, WA 6017
PO Box 1817 Osborne Park DC, WA 6916



----- Forwarded message -----

From: CHESTNUT Megan [Fitzroy Valley Dist High Sch] <Megan.Chestnut@education.wa.edu.au>
Date: Thu, Mar 23, 2023 at 3:31 PM
Subject: RE: Mindful Hearts at FVDHS
To: Shamell Avery <sharnell@yogazeit.com.au>

Hi Sham

I think having the Mindful Hearts program running through out our school and community is highly desirable. What we have seen from the program so far has worked really well for our staff and students. Staff & student wellbeing is our high priority of ours and Mindful Hearts supports our staff and students to develop effective self-regulation strategies. We have a high percentage of trauma effective students and staff who would benefit greatly from learning these practices. The program being culturally appropriate and relevant to our students context and languages is exceptionally beneficial. Our language teachers are looking forward to working with the mindful hearts team to develop our own school resources using our three languages.

Kind regards

Megan Chestnut

Deputy Principal - Curriculum



Fitzroy Valley District High School

Strong Minds, Strong Culture

PO Box 106, Fitzroy Crossing, 6785, WA.

Ph: 9163 8600

Mobile: 0406 040 322

I acknowledge the traditional owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land and community. I pay my respects to them, their cultures, and to elders past, present and emerging.





Shire of Derby / West Kimberley

OUR REF: 10052023

YOGAZEIT LTD
Regina Cruickshank
Founder and Board Director
1A Pakenham Street
FREMANTLE WA 6160

10 May 2023

To whom it may concern,

I'm the Youth Services Coordinator for the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley. I was very excited to see that Yogazeit were at Fitzroy Crossing in the Kimberley. I have previously engaged with Yogazeit to coordinate a number of months of Yoga workshops which were successfully implemented in one of my previous roles at the Youth Community Development Officer at the City of Fremantle. I know that they really strive to connect with their audience and participants and deliver life long self care techniques through yoga for young people.

I am writing in support of Project Mindful Hearts, which delivers customised, trauma informed and culturally appropriate mindful movement programs to remote Aboriginal communities across the Kimberley region this year. The concept has been trialled and the long lasting benefits in training community members that live in this region.

As a member of the community who has worked for over two decades with at risk young people, I know the potential and value of a program that is community led, culturally relevant and supports and educates our young people to develop skills in emotional and self-regulation, stress management and the ability to foster a healthy body, mind and spirit.

There are huge impacts of stress on young people in the community. Stressors include socioeconomic disadvantage, family violence, homelessness and overcrowding, trauma and limited access to essential services due to geographical location, all of which have been further impacted due to flooding in the region this year. Many families are still displaced and the recovery and rebuilding process will take many many months. The complex reality of these external factors and limited healthy coping mechanisms can put our young people at a much higher risk for severe mental health issues and disengagement from education.

I see an enormous potential in partnering with Yogazeit to continue to deliver and maximise the impact of Project Mindful Hearts, especially the wider reach to outlying Fitzroy Communities as well as the town and I fully support their initiatives. Their collaboration and consultation with community organisations such as the Shire Youth Service, local health services in the region and wider networks is a wonderful example of cross-collaboration for a whole community approach.

The objectives of the Mindful Hearts Project meet aligned objectives in the Shire of Derby West Kimberley's Strategic Community Plan, particularly for our second objective, 'Community' and all four target areas within this objective: Safe communities, Healthy communities, Vibrant and culturally rich communities, and Sustainable communities. The Shire Strategic Community plan is available on our website: www.sdwk.wa.gov.au

If this program had the funding to maximise impact in terms of additional consultations and longer service and delivery periods over multiple years, outcome measures and capacity building of community members could be significantly increased. It is not affordable to contract in facilitators to run a one off program. The training of local community people builds capacity. This will support place-based social and emotional wellbeing of our young people and also the wider community.

I look forward to working with Yogazeit and hope to see the continuation of Project Mindful Hearts across the West Kimberley over multiple years.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Kind Regards,

Christine George
Youth Services Coordinator
Shire of Derby/West Kimberley
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17th April 2023

Sharnell Avery
Outreach Coordinator
Yogazeit - Mindful Hearts Program

Dear Sharnell and the Team at Yogazeit,

I'm just forwarding my appreciation for bringing your Mindful Hearts Program to the Fitzroy Valley Remote Indigenous communities throughout 2022 and the start of this year 2023. I was fortunate enough to catch your program delivery in the Valley as well as in Bidyadanga Community 2 hours South of Broome.

The way the program is carefully designed to engage each Indigenous Community and the ability of the Yogazeit instructors to connect with community people in a culturally sound, respectful and education way, proved the Mindful Hearts program a great success. The program and instructors helped build capacity of local people to pass on skills of mindful movement to other community members and young people. The benefits of the program not only included upskilling local aboriginal people with the ability to help their communities have strong minds and lead healthy lives but also to share the importance of mindful movement, in an enjoyable, engaging way to strengthen the minds of remote indigenous community members.

Given a very difficult few years in the Kimberley with one of the highest rates of mental health concerns, I believe Yogazeit's program is important to share messages around mental health, strong bodies and healthy *liyan* (body, heart and spirit) and have received positive feedback from community members about the program. Please see this letter as recommendation and request to continue your programming throughout the Kimberley and continue to build the links and capacity you have with other stakeholders to strengthen communities for years to come.

Yours faithfully

Rachel Southam | Fitzroy Valley Active Communities Coordinator

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think
MENTAL HEALTH

Garnduwa Amboorny Wirnan acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.





8th May 2023

To whom it may concern,

In March of this year Yogazeit Ltd visited La Grange Remote Community School to deliver their Mindful Movement Program – Mindful Hearts which was positively received by both the students and staff at our school.

Community members were involved in designing curriculum and cards specific to our school context with artwork and images from students at the school.

The Yogazeit team took time to get to know and build relationships with the students, staff and community members, helping out and getting involved wherever they could. The staff wellness yoga sessions after school were a highlight for everyone who attended and it was great to have the opportunity for staff to prioritize their own mental wellbeing.

The Mindful Hearts Program has the potential to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of children in our Remote schools and is a fun and engaging way for students to learn their local language, be active and learn tools to help them self-regulate.

We would like continuing support from Yogazeit at La Grange Remote Community School with regular visits over the year to continue to deliver incursions, wellness sessions and personal development workshops to our staff, in particular our AIEO's, so we can work towards being able to use our resources confidently and continue to support our students and staff. However, future engagement with the program would rely upon external funding being available to our school either through a funded place or grant from an organisation such as Bidiyadanga Aboriginal Community La Grange council.

Thankyou to the Yogazeit team for delivering the Mindful Hearts Program with such care and being part of our community for the week.

Kind regards,
Bree Wagner

Primary & SAER Deputy Principal



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Locked Bag 4006, Broome WA 6725

lagrangercs.wa.edu.au



On Fri, Aug 18, 2023 at 4:36 PM ETHERIDGE Hamish [Wangkatjungka Remote Comm Sch] <hamish.etheridge@education.wa.edu.au> wrote:

Dear Regina and Sharnell,

Thank you for visiting and supporting Wangkatjungka Remote School this week. It was a pleasure to learn about the Mindful Hearts program and seeing it in action.

As you know, our school had a 100% teacher staff turnover including myself being new from the previous year. The Indigenous staff at Wangkatjungka, relayed to us that Yogazeit's Mindful Hearts project made a meaningful and positive impact on the wellbeing of our students, teachers and community and it was so important to have you back out.

Our AIEOs shared the importance of implementing Mindful Hearts into our school's curriculum, to support social and emotional well-being, student self-regulation and educator wellness.

I found the program to be a culturally-safe and trauma-informed. The Mindful Hearts resources are deadly and it is warming to see the pride in our community as they see their language and artwork showcased in our customised curriculum and cards.

The relationships that you built with the staff and community were amazing and the ability to follow up from last year was not only important for the implementation/sustainability but also for our community to know that people do come back and care. Our AIEO's and teachers have mentioned that they are using it for their own self care, and that Mindful Hearts has had a positive effect on our student's behaviour.

I thank you for your kindness, openness and willingness to listen and learn about the needs of the educators, students and families in our community - your efforts here have not gone unnoticed and are appreciated.

We look forward to welcoming you back to Wangkatjungka, on a regular basis, to continue to capacity build our AIEOs and educators so that the Mindful Hearts practice becomes ingrained in our SEWB plan and wider community.

I will be sharing our joint experience with the Fitzroy valley network and will be recommending embedding Yogazeit's Mindful Hearts.

Look forward to hearing from you soon

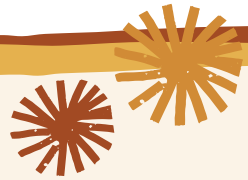
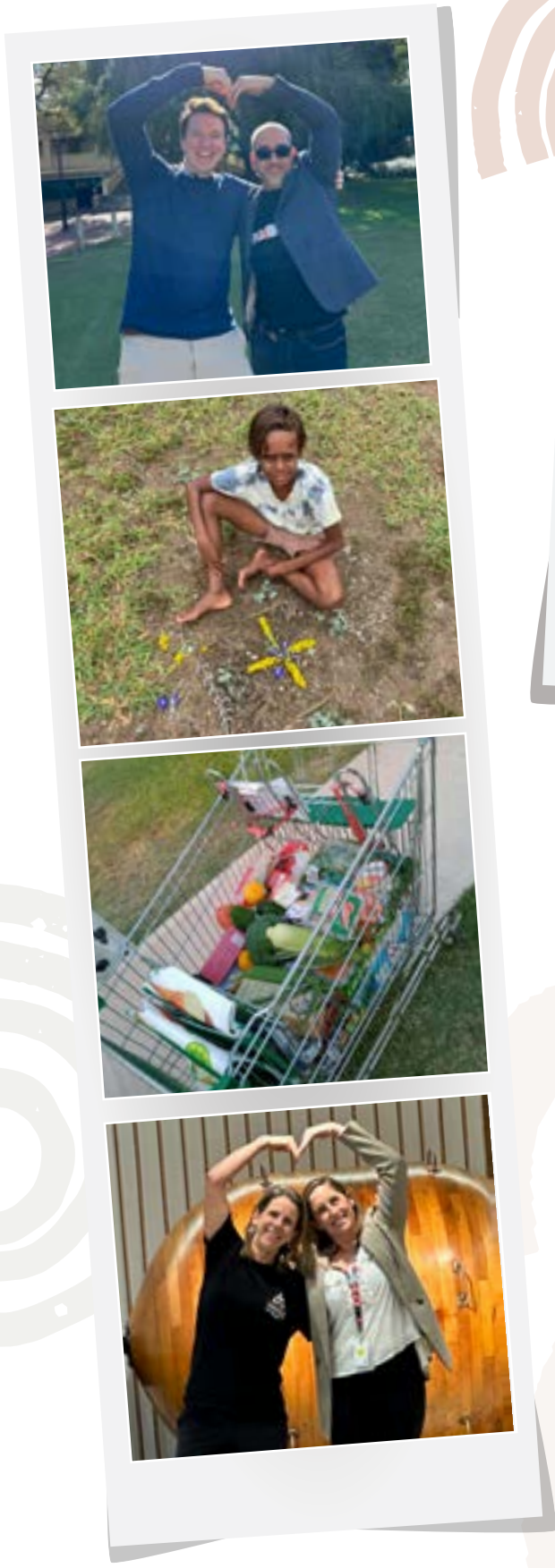
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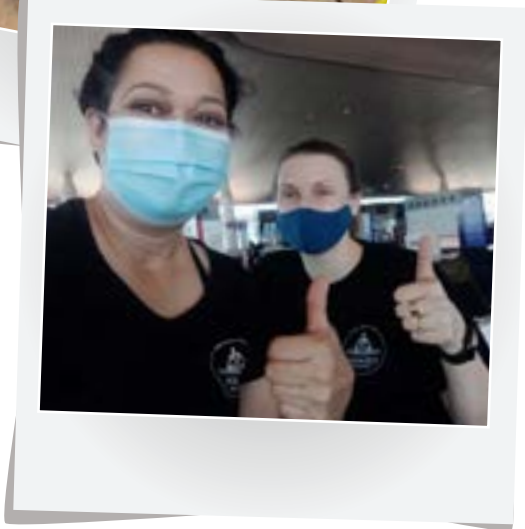
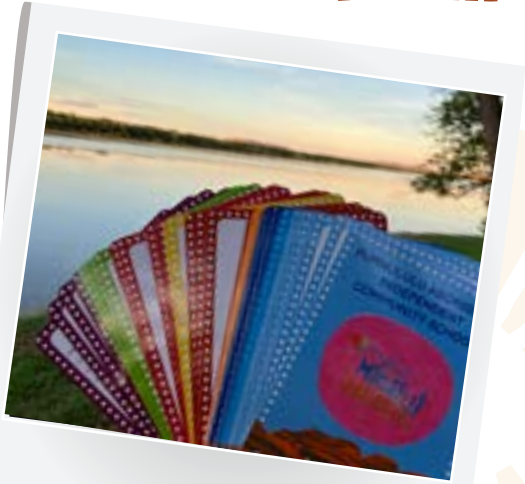
Hamish Etheridge | Principal
Wangkatjungka Remote Community
0474807352



Wangkatjungka
Remote Community School
STRONG SMART PROUD









With gratitude to:



www.yogazeit.com.au