

Media release



22nd October 2015

Yarn Safe at headspace Darwin

headspace Darwin will launch the second phase of the Yarn Safe campaign at an event on Friday the 23rd October and will also celebrate the first-year results of its youth-led national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth mental health initiative.

The national **headspace** Yarn Safe campaign has seen a dramatic 32 per cent increase in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people accessing **headspace** centres in the 12 months since the campaign launched.

Phase two of the campaign will delve deeper into the issues commonly faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people such as stress and pressure; family and relationships; racism and drugs and alcohol.

There will be new health promotion resources for young people and importantly cultural training is being provided to select headspace staff nationally to ensure that young people receive a culturally appropriate service.

Sally Weir from **headspace** Darwin, said "the campaign was helping to remove the barriers stopping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth accessing support when they are going through a tough time. Since Yarn Safe was launched last September, almost 18% of the young people visiting our centre have identified as Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander. This is extremely pleasing but we know that there is a lot more to be done in this space and we are committed to continuing this important work. We are particularly grateful for the support and advice we have received working in partnership with Danila Dilba Health service both in their Youth service and their Social and Emotional Wellbeing team".

"The need to access a culturally appropriate early intervention service is imperative for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island youth using our centre. We will continue devising ways to address this and other issues affecting those who use our resources and services."

Yarn Safe was developed with a group of 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people from across Australia, including Broome, Elcho Island, Darwin, Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Perth.

The campaign aims to raise awareness of mental health issues and encourages young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to seek help at **headspace**, or other appropriate mental health services.

headspace CEO Chris Tanti said the unprecedented response to Yarn Safe was great, but more work needed to be done to address the disproportionate burden of mental health disorders among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

"We are thrilled by the success of the Yarn Safe campaign so far, driven by the outreach work of **headspace** centres and important partnerships across Australia," Mr Tanti made the following statements in regards to Yarn Safe: "Overwhelmingly, these Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people feel that **headspace** is a culturally safe place.

“However, addressing the needs of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people is an organisational-wide ongoing commitment to partnership with communities and culturally sensitive practice, including evaluation to ensure that many more young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel comfortable to talk with us.”

“We’ve created a targeted and culturally appropriate initiative that will, I believe, continue to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to access the help available for all young Australians.”

An Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report 2011 showed in 2008 almost one-third of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (aged 16-24 years) had high or very high level of psychological stress – more than twice the rate of young non-Indigenous Australians.

Increasingly, research findings suggest that early intervention can prevent the worsening of mental health problems.

NOTE TO MEDIA:

Yarn Safe Campaign Launch

Date: Friday 23rd October

Time: 3pm to 7pm

Venue: “The Shak”, 3/58 Bradshaw Terrace Casuarina

Contact: Rebecca Halsey, Operations Director headspace Darwin

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headspace national media contact: Carly Wright – 0413025385 - cwright@headspace.org.au

About headspace

The primary focus of **headspace** is the mental health and wellbeing of young Australians. **headspace** helps 12 – 25 year olds going through a tough time through a national network of 70 **headspace** centres (soon to be 100) and online and telephone counselling service **eheadspace**.

headspace can help young people with general health, mental health, education and employment and alcohol and other drug services.

headspace was established and funded by the Commonwealth Government of Australia in 2006.

Visit headspace.org.au to find a **headspace** centre or access help.