

## **The Jaru Pirrjirdi Project**

.....Building on past success.....

The Mount Theo Sniffing Prevention Program is the current best-practice strategy in the prevention of petrol sniffing at Yuendumu.

The Mt Theo Program was developed by Warlpiri people in 1994 to deal with the petrol sniffing at the community level. Since this program has been operating, petrol sniffing has dramatically reduced and is now regularly completely absent from Yuendumu.

Despite these successes, petrol sniffing continues to be present in Yuendumu on a cyclical basis. The need to go beyond current youth activities has been identified repeatedly in camp-fire based discussions among the numerous community members involved in the Mt Theo program.

The Jaru Pirrjirdi Project builds upon and goes beyond the successful Mt Theo Petrol Sniffer Prevention Program to address the issues underlying petrol sniffing behaviour in Yuendumu.

## **...Helping young people create more meaningful futures....**

The Jaru Pirrjirdi project is about listening to and supporting the voices of Yuendumu community members, particularly those young people, to create more long-term and systemic solutions to youth substance misuse in Yuendumu.

'...People only abandon a dysfunctional drug use when it interferes with too many other valued aspects of their lives' (Maggie Brady, Heavy Metal: The Social Meaning of Petrol Sniffing, 1992).

Based on action research principles, Jaru Pirrjirdi works to assist young people in exploring their concerns, aspirations and the contemporary meaning in their lives as the first step in developing initiatives from which young people can create more meaningful futures.

## **Aims of Jaru Pirrjirdi**

- The central aims of the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project are:  
to engage with the young people of Yuendumu in exploring central issues in their lives
- to support young people and members of the wider Yuendumu community in developing activities and initiatives that address issues underlying petrol sniffing behaviour
- to facilitate youth empowerment and community capacity building in Yuendumu regarding youth issues
- to generate a body of information regarding the issues pertinent to the lives of young people in Yuendumu
- to document and evaluate the entire process so people both within and outside Yuendumu can learn from and build on the successes of Jaru Pirrjirdi

## **The Jaru Pirrjirdi Process**

Based on action research principles the Jaru Pirrjirdi project involves three overlapping and cyclical stages which include:

1. Exploring issues related to petrol sniffing and Indigenous youth well-being
2. Action for positive social change
3. Evaluation

Primary to the Jaru Pirrjirdi process is a series of educational, motivational and healing-style workshops which will be attended by a facilitator and small groups of young people.

During these workshops, a facilitator will assist young people to explore their feelings and thoughts regarding their lives and futures.

Young people who show particular interest in the workshops will be encouraged to form a youth council of which members will be trained and assisted in planning and facilitating future workshops and liaising with relevant groups.

As the Jaru Pirrjirdi process continues, workshops will also provide a forum for members of the wider Yuendumu community to discuss the planning, implementation and finally evaluation of initiatives for enhanced youth well-being

## **Target Group**

The Jaru Pirrjirdi Project is targeted primarily at young people living in Yuendumu who are aged between 12-25.

The secondary target group of the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project is the wider Yuendumu community who will be partners in many of the youth initiatives developed from the Jaru Pirrjirdi Project and eventually benefit from these projects and a low prevalence of petrol sniffing at Yuendumu.

A further target group is those working within relevant academic, professional and policy fields who may benefit from enhanced knowledge of the concerns, aspirations and valued aspects of young Indigenous people's lives.

When complete, it is envisaged that participation in the entire Jaru Pirrjirdi Project and the pursuits generated from it will have promoted a lasting sense of self esteem, hope and empowerment from which young people can continue to build more meaningful futures in Yuendumu

## **Jaru Pirrjirdi Strong Voices)**

A community action project to create more systemic solutions for petrol sniffing in Yuendumu

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