

TAKE BLAKTION:

USING COMEDY TO ENGAGE ABORIGINAL YOUNG PEOPLE AROUND SEXUAL HEALTH

Hearnshaw G¹, Griffen L², Bedford K², Cairnduff S³, Harrison K³, Kailahi M³, Murray C¹, Bourne C¹
¹NSW STI Programs Unit, NSW Health, ²Naya Ngarra Productions, ³Aboriginal Health and Medical Council of NSW
Contact: gemma.hearnshaw@health.nsw.gov.au; scairnduff@ahmrc.org.au

Published: 16 November 2016



INTRO

- Aboriginal young people are a priority population in the National and NSW STI Strategies¹⁻².
- High levels of shame and stigma around sexual health, as well as limited access to culturally appropriate information and resources, present challenges for health promotion efforts for this population³⁻⁴.
- The Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW (AH&MRC) and the NSW Sexually Transmission Programs Unit (NSW STIPU) contracted the Aboriginal media company Naya Ngarra to develop and implement 'Take Blaktion', a multi-faceted state-wide campaign aiming to increase awareness of STI testing and condom use.

RESULTS

Over 850,000 people were reached across the 12 months of the campaign:

- 749,936 people through social media
- 98,400 people through TV advertisements
- 3,430 via the Play Safe website
- 1,773 young people across six events
- 224 young people attended eight workshops

Overall the workshop evaluations showed:

- 38% increase in sexual health knowledge
- 58% increase in intentions to carry condoms, use condoms, get tested for STIs and talk to partners and GPs about STIs

METHODS

The campaign ran from October 2015–July 2016, using a comedy theme to break down this shame and stigma. Campaign components included:

- Aboriginal comedian ambassadors from the hit ABC series, Black Comedy
- TV advertisements shown on National Indigenous Television (NITV)
- Social media campaign through Facebook and Instagram
- Interactive activations at large Aboriginal community events
- Comedy-themed workshops held around NSW

CONCLUSION AND SUCCESS FACTORS

This multimedia campaign was highly engaging for Aboriginal young people and achieved significant reach. Success factors included:

- Delivery by an Aboriginal media agency guided by an Aboriginal Governance Group
- A partnership approach by NSW STIPU and the AH&MRC
- Aboriginal Health Workers and Aboriginal Health Services driving the campaign at the local level
- The use of comedy and high profile Aboriginal ambassadors to engage young people, break down the taboo and normalise sexual health
- Use of social media to reach large numbers in targeted way

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Australia Government Department of Health, Naya Ngarra Productions, Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW, NSW Sexually Transmissible Infections Programs Unit, NSW Health, Aboriginal Comedian Ambassadors: Steven Oliver, Elizabeth Wymarra and Bjorn Stewart, Take Blaktion Aboriginal Governance Group, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, Local Health Districts and HIV & Related Program Units, NSW Sexual Health Infolink, Family Planning NSW, National Indigenous Television (NITV), the communities, schools and local organisations of: Bateman's Bay, Broken Hill, Campbelltown, Central Coast, Coffs Harbour, Coonamble, Dubbo, Kempsey, Nowra, Quirindi, Redfern, Sydney, Wagga Wagga and Western Sydney.

REFERENCES:

- 1 Australian Government Department of Health (2014). Third National Sexually Transmissible Infections Strategy 2014–2017.
- 2 NSW Health (2016). NSW STI Strategy 2016–2020. Sydney: Centre for Population Health.
- 3 North Coast Area Health Service 2009. NSW Aboriginal Sexual Health Resource: Cultural Respect & Communication Guide.
- 4 Newton et al. (2013). Key informant perceptions of youth-focussed sexual health promotion programs in Australia. Sexual Health, 10, 47–56.

