

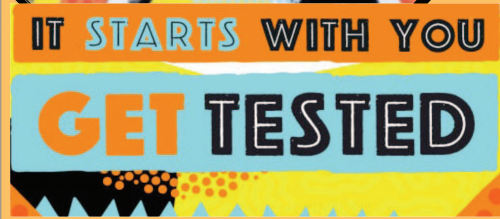
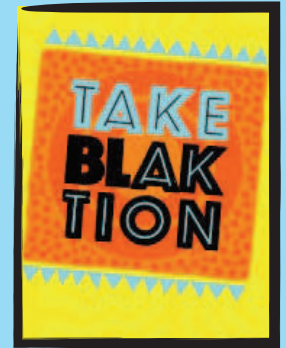
YOUTH WEEK 2016

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IMPLEMENTING SEXUAL HEALTH MESSAGES TO VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE IN
WESTERN SYDNEY FOR YOUTH WEEK 2016

INTRODUCTION

In 2016 the HIV and Related Programs (HARP) partnered with other Government agencies to promote sexual health messages for young people during Youth Week. In Western Sydney Local Health District specific focus was given to the Blacktown local government area which has a marginalised population and average age six years younger than the state average. With 81% of Chlamydia notifications in NSW occurring in young people aged 15-24 years old, Blacktown is an essential target area for delivering messages about sexually transmissible infection testing.



METHODS

The HARP Unit worked in partnership with Blacktown City Council and Youth Off the Streets to deliver 'The Burbs' initiative which hosted a number of local youth-targeted events. Partner agencies involved young people throughout the process to ensure they were engaged successfully. HARP staff set up outreach stations at three events in the area where they collected data about sexual health, engaged young people in sexual health activities and provided service information and condoms. Visual imagery incorporating specific messages around sexual health and targeted at the Indigenous community was displayed on the stall.

RESULTS

- Seventy-two young people completed the sexual health questionnaire
- 17% were from Aboriginal backgrounds
- 19% previously had a sexual health test
- More than half of those who had been tested went to a GP
- 43% did not know Chlamydia can have no symptoms
- Ten young people expressed that they would like follow up contact regarding a sexual health test who were later contacted by HARP staff.

CONCLUSION

The initiative provided sexual health knowledge to a vulnerable group of young people who regularly do not access health services. This was a result of partnering with local services who provide outreach to young people mostly not engaged in school or employment. Future programs should consider local knowledge when targeting vulnerable young people.

*Thankyou to
Youth Off the Streets & Blacktown City Council.*

