## DHARLMBALINK

Summer 2020, ISSUE NO 14

Connecting our Community

## **NEW LOOK** for the JANE ARDLER CENTRE

Check out our plans for updating our Health & Wellbeing Centre

VIEW OUR MAGAZINE ONLINE @ southcoastams.org.au

## BUILDING STRONG FOUNDATIONS

FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE
See page 6

Can you help?

# Tips for eating good tucker

BE HEALTHY & DEADLY IN 2020

See page 11

### KEEP OUR KIN CONNECTED

TO CULTURE & COMMUNITY

See page 9

South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation







QR Codes are like barcodes. QR stands for Quick Response which refers to the instant information linked to the code. They are a great way to connect print with online content.

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## Message from our CEO

It's been an action packed end to 2019, and an even busier start to 2020. Our team has been kept busy with many challenges and developments within our organisation, and in our community.

The recent fires affected all of us in some capacity, with our Falls Creek and Batemans Bay offices forced to evacuate during the turbulent Christmas period. Fortunately all our locations were spared and are now fully operational.

We have been able to offer some support to those in our community who were effected by the fires by providing a safe place for people to evacuate to, and delivering much needed supplies.

SCMSAC in partnership with Waminda, also established an after hours support line for members of our community who were experiencing stress, displacement, or worrying thoughts due to the fires, and needed help after 5pm. Our experienced social and emotional wellbeing workers were on-call to provide culturally safe, caring support to all members of our South Coast community.

We encourage anyone still suffering and in need of support to get in touch with our Health & Wellbeing team.

Our Governing Committee and Management team have also been busy in consultation with architects, planning the upgrade to the Jane Ardler Centre, scheduled to start in March this year.

Great care has been taken to ensure the new design supports our holistic approach to health and wellbeing, and provides an optimal patient journey for our clients. We are planning to make the construction period as smooth as possible for our valued clients and appreciate your patience during this time.

For more information on the Jane Ardler Centre upgrade, head to page 21 of this Newsletter, or visit our website for the latest information.

**Craig Ardler** 

Chief Executive Officer

'raig Ardler







The Koori Kids Wellbeing program is an early intervention program that provides culturally appropriate support and education to Aboriginal children and their families about mental health and wellbeing. The aim of the program is to promote help seeking behaviour and help students build resilience. The program is held weekly during the school term. It is delivered to selected schools in the Shoalhaven area. The program is inclusive of a school-based group program, counselling and school holiday activities.



Our aim is to raise awareness of mental health wellbeing, encourage help seeking behaviours, increase resilience and build stronger communities.

In January we held a School Holiday program at the Lady Denman Huskisson for kids in the Strong Foundation Program and our Aboriginal Child and Mentoring Program (Jerrinja).

The kids enjoyed cultural yarns with Uncle Raymond Timbery on welcoming, artefacts, local knowledge and history, and had fun painting boomerangs and talking on our bush tucker walk.

We run four School Holiday Programs throughout the year, for all Indigenous students from Years 3-6, who are in our Strong Foundations Program. At the moment we have seven primary schools participating; Jervis Bay, Cambewarra, Bomaderry, Culburra, Nowra-East, Saint Michaels, and Sanctuary Point.

In our Wellbeing program, students participate in a variety of activities such as;

- Yarning Circles (Group Discussion)
- Mental Health Literacy
- Arts and Crafts
- Aboriginal Culture activities
- Physical wellbeing activities
- Team-building activities
- Leadership activities
- Cooking activities
- Individual counselling

If you'd like to find out more about getting your child or school involved, contact our Health and Wellbeing team: (02) 4448 0200 / option 1













## Keeping our kin connected

"As a member of our community I was very motivated to care for kids as I saw firsthand that our kids needed their own kind to care for them, and they needed to remain in their communities. I feel this was so important to the kids and the families." SCMSAC Respite Carer

#### What does our Permanency Support Program do?

Our Permanency Support team passionately believes that all Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander children and young people in foster care should maintain strong connections with their community and culture. We are dedicated to finding carers who share the same vision and who can provide safe and supportive homes filled with love, understanding and encouragement.

We are the only Non-Government, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) providing Permanency Support services in the Shoalhaven and Far South Coast regions, all the way down to the Victorian border. We have offices in Nowra, Batemans Bay, Goulburn and Bega.

We provide services in all aspects of Aboriginal Foster Care for children and young people aged 0-18 years. We are here to support our Foster Carers in their journey, and are with them each step of the way, providing training, resources and specialist support when it is needed.





## Tips for Eating Good Tucker

#### Fruit, vegetables & wholegrains

These foods are high in fibre, vitamins and minerals. Eating plenty of vegetables, fruits and wholegrains is consistently linked to people having healthier hearts.

#### **Healthy protein foods**

Healthy eating patterns include a variety of healthy protein sources, especially fish and seafood, legumes (such as beans and lentils), nuts and seeds. Smaller amounts of eggs and lean poultry can also be included in healthy eating pattern. If you choose to eat red meat, make sure the meat is lean and limit to 1-3 times a week.

These foods are good sources of macro and micronutrients such as proteins, iron, zinc and vitamins, particularly the vitamin B group.

#### Halt the salt!

It's better not to add salt during food preparation. If you want to add flavour use herbs and spices. When shopping for the ingredients choose foods labelled 'no added salt', 'low salt' or 'salt reduced' where possible.

#### Use healthier oils

Choose from a variety of vegetable and seed oils when you are preparing food. Healthier choices include canola, sunflower, soybean, olive, sesame and peanut oils.

#### **Choose water**

Choose mainly water, tap water is fine and free! Water can be flavoured with many natural ingredients such as lemon, lime, ginger and mint.





**SERVES** 

4



PREP TIME 10 mins



COOK TIME
10 mins

#### **Ingredients**

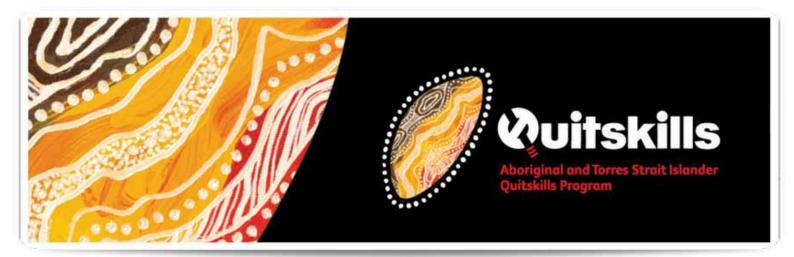
- 24 pippies, minced
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp of milk

Mixed herbs of your choice

This recipe was provided by Board Member John Bolt. A healthy and tasty meal that can be shared with the whole family.

#### Method

- 1. Mince the pippies.
- 2. Put pippies, flour, egg, onions and herbs into a mixing bowl and slowly add milk to achieve an even consistency.
- 3. Add heaped tablespoons of the mixture into the frying plan and cook until golden brown on both sides.
- 4. Serve with lemon or lime and green salad or vegetables.



#### Thinking about quitting?

Quit before, but want to try again?

Never thought about it, but want to know more?

#### We can support you to:

- Manage cravings
- Identify triggers
- Understand nicotine addiction
- Learn about the harms associated with tobacco smoking
- Learn about and access free Nicotine Replacement Therapy

#### 24th -26th March

9:00am - 4:00pm

Venue: TBC closer to the date

For more info contact:

- thomas@southcoastams.org.au
- mikayla@southcoastams.org.au
- (02) 4448 0200 or 1800 215 099



## Wellbeing in the workplace

Our events team planned a wellbeing day to coincide with October's Mental Health month. The theme for 2019 was 'Share the Journey', so we focused on *Share the Journey* at work. The idea was to create a space where our team could interact, yarn and pick up some useful resources. The main focus was highlighting the importance of mental wellbeing in our everyday lives and seeking help when needed.

Our Health & Wellbeing Counsellor, Martin Billingham kicked off the day with a grounding meditation and an overview on mental health and positive wellbeing.

Dan Patterson from our Preservation team, who is also a personal trainer, shared his knowledge on physical health and the way it can affect our mental wellbeing. Dan provided some great info on how we can improve this aspect of our lives.

Our Shared Services Manager, Ross James discussed wellness in the workplace, and took us through a range of activities. Ross also shared personal experiences and great resources to take away and explore.

The workshops were very well received and feedback from our team was great! We are planning bigger and better things for 2020.

The meditation was brilliant! The leaders sharing and explaining their vulnerability made it easy to engage and connect. Thanks for the very interesting yarns." Wellbeing Workshop participant

Program (EAP). This is a voluntary, work-based program that offers free and confidential assessments, short-term counselling, referrals, and follow-up services to SCMSAC employees & their partners who have personal &/or work-related problems. To use this services call 1300 364 273 or contact our HR team.



## Tackling Indigenous Smoking









Our teams had a great time at the National Indigenous Soccer Championships held in Nowra late last year. Our amazing TIS ambassador Shak Tungai was there to yarn with, along with all our TIS and ITC staff. Congratulations to all the players and the teams on what was a great weekend!

With the devastating fires in our region over the Christmas break, many of our communities have suffered incredible losses. Our TIS, Justice Support, and Health and Wellbeing Team headed down to Mogo to support our mob. They held a BBQ and supplied 50 men's care packs to those who were affected by the recent bush fires down the Far South Coast.



# Women's healing group







Our Shoalhaven Women's Healing Group is a supportive and safe place where we come together to support one another with social and wellbeing concerns. We have built a strong foundation among the women to ensure the best outcome for their wellbeing.

As a group we do a range of activities including: sand therapy jars, cooking sessions, personal goal setting, op shopping, blanket making, knitting and connecting to Culture.

We work closely with other organisations ensuring our women are aware of the services that are available to them and where they can find support around:

- Emotional and Mental Health
- Domestic Violence
- Job Readiness
- Legal Aid
- Physical and General Health and
- Budgeting

Our group runs every Tuesday between 9:30am – 2pm open to women 16+.

For more information contact our Health & Wellbeing Team (02) 4448 0200 / option 1

## Shared Services

The past couple of months have been quite tough on many of us. The fires that spread across the region were devastating and traumatic, and if you weren't directly affected by the fire, I'll bet you know someone who is. My family were very lucky and I'm extremely grateful to have everything that I had before.

I do not want to dwell on the past, but it's important to note that the past forms part of our present moment, so I thought I'd reflect back and see what Shared Services achieved in 2019.

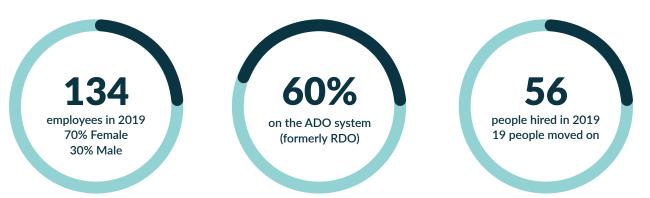
#### **Dashboard project**

improved data visibility for everybody

Our organisational dashboard started to get more substance to it, and continues to grow with numerous reports for the Permanency Support Program (PSP), Health & Wellbeing Services (H&WB), HR, Compliance and more. Below is an example of the graphics from one of the HR reports.



#### A snapshot of staffing at the end of 2019



The organisation had 50/50 split Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal staff. Craig and the Board acknowledge that this is below the historical target of 70%. This is due to a number of challenges with recruitment such as;

- Large and rapid growth over a short-term
- Competing with other Aboriginal agencies
- Receiving low numbers of Aboriginal applicants who meet the specific funding and contracted role requirements

Our awesome HR team (Emma Bennett and Tamara Hopcroft) work closely with Managers, the Executive team and Craig, to try and address some of the challenges above, such as by updating our recruitment policies and compiling a Workforce Development Strategy.

#### Website

With the new uniform rollout now complete, Our Design & Communications expert Janice Brown, is slowly chipping away at our website, making improvements to styling, user-friendliness and adding more content for community members, clients and staff. This is an ongoing project with more improvements on the way. By the end of the year, we hope to have portals for members, carers and collaborative partners.

#### Fleet management

We installed the Teletrac Navman GPS devices across our fleet of 40 vehicles, allowing us to gather real-time data and remove the need for paper forms. As with many projects, this one had its challenges. Please continue to contact our newly appointed Property and Fleet Officer, David Pringle, for all Navman, fleet and property related matters.

#### **IT** projects

Most of the work to keep our IT systems top-notch goes on unseen by the majority of employees. Our dedicated IT guru, Michael Wilson-Craig, goes over and above to meet the IT needs of the organisation – he's a one man army! In mid-2019 we conducted an organisational-wide cyber security audit, which identified some key areas of improvement such as improving our VPN architecture and enabling Two-Factor Authentication for specific users. Our Microsoft security score was below 20 at the start of 2019, and is now 109 - the global average for organisations of a similar size is 73, so we are tracking very well indeed.

As cyber-crime is a very real and growing threat across the globe, our goal is to ensure the security and safety of all our client data, by having high quality systems, hardware and security measures. Please keep an eye out for more notifications in relation to cyber threats in the next few months and our suite of updated IT policies.

#### **Policies**

With thanks to our passionate Legal and Policy Officer, Alison Carter, we reviewed and updated over 55 policies and procedures in 2019!

### 2019-2022 Enterprise Bargaining Agreement

Emma Bennett and Craig, supported by Yvonne Walker from *HR with Ease*, completed the 2019-2022 Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA). Again, this was a phenomenal task. There was a great deal of communication between SCMSAC, Fair Work, the Australian Services Union as well as important collaboration with a number of employee representatives.

#### **PSP systems and infrastructure**

Annie Hilzinger – PSP Systems Support Officer, has built a strong relationship with the PSP team, working to bring on-line, additional modules in their database; Community Data Solutions (CDS). We have new modules for Family Support and Family Preservation programs, plus many other customisations to make life easier for caseworkers, and ensure we meet all Schedule 2 reporting requirements.

### H&WB services, systems and infrastructure

Communicare went 'live' in February and after the normal level of teething issues, things have settled down and we are starting to see some improvements in our data - but there's still some work to do yet. By the end of this first quarter we'll have a suite of dashboard reports that directly link to Communicare, covering Medicare claiming, encounter analysis and others, showing performance against various Key Performance Indicators.

We also upgraded our dental practice software (Titanium) to the latest version, including implementing basic integration between Communicare and Titanium's appointment books to streamline our patient check-in process.

This years goal for Shared Services is to free up some resources to enable us to work closely with the Health & Wellbeing team on improving functionality and reporting across all program areas.

#### Things to look out for in 2020:

- New Strategic Plan
- JAC upgrade news
- New Sharepoint 365
- User friendly policies and procedures
- Skills audit info and an updated annual training and development plan
- Improved Incident and WHS Reporting systems
- Improved workflows, such as repairs and maintenance tickets, and employee onboarding
- Increased communication from Shared Services

Please keep an eye out for our surveys too. We are always looking for ways to improve, so if you have any suggestions please feel free to email sharedservices@southcoastams.org.au

Cheers

**Ross James** 

Senior Manager Shared Services

Ross James





The South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation submitted the Development Application (DA) for the Jane Ardler Centre upgrade just before Christmas. For those that don't know, our previous Special Projects Officer, John Rumble, was instrumental in obtaining \$2.5m in funding from the Department of Health to upgrade the Jane Ardler Centre. With an additional injection of SCMSAC's own funds, we hope to have completely refurbished the Jane Ardler Health & Wellbeing Centre by sometime in early 2021.

The main objective of the upgrade was to capitalise on the current floor space, enclose the two courtyard areas at either end of the building, increasing our service delivery capacity and creating a better flow of service for clients. We will also increase the floor area on the upper level so we can host more staff, and increase our number of meeting rooms.

#### So where will the staff go from the JAC?

An important part of the project is happening right now. We've rented the ground and top floors of Caledonia House, 59 Berry Street, to accommodate the Health & Wellbeing team and some staff at level 1 North Street (as the PSP team are outgrowing that space).

We will maintain the top floor of Caledonia for three years, but only the ground floor for 12 months – timing the end of that lease with the planned completion of the JAC upgrade.

In addition to increasing services at our outreach clinics, we are also renting 1 McGrath Avenue in Nowra, setting it up as a short-term clinic for patients displaced from the Jane Ardler Centre. Nathan Deaves and Tracey Hansen-Smith are working to ensure minimal disruption for all clients. Keep an eye out for posters and notifications in the clinic space, via email and online.







## Our Permanency Support Team

#### **Boori Preschool**

The highlight of 2019 for our Preschool was our SNAICC event which was a great success. (The Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care [SNAICC] are the national non government peak body in Australia representing the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families). The children loved the visit from the mobile Reptile Petting Zoo and enjoyed lots of other fun activities.

Our Boori's learnt about the continents of the world, with the theme continuing throughout the year, and their end of year celebration. They celebrated the end of year with a Christmas concert with their families and a graduation celebration for the 13 children who headed off to Kindergarten in 2020.

Our Preschool re-opened this year on January 28th and are already enjoying our SWAY Program (Sounds, Words, Aboriginal Language and Yarning).

#### **Carer Recruitment & Support**

Our Carer Recruitment and Support team provide carer support to our carers through the facilitation of carer meetings and a monthly carer morning tea that occurs on the third Friday of each month. Our carer meetings alternate between day and evening times to accommodate different work/life schedules, and all carers are welcome and encouraged to join us.

Our carer meetings are an opportunity to contribute and provide feedback in the planning of support for our carers. They provide an opportunity to gain training and information to support carers in their very important role in the lives of children in care. The groups also help to build carers support networks and allow them space to enjoy some time with people that share their experiences.

Our team consists of Cassie, Sam and Ashley, who are available to talk about the support carers may be needing, and to continue to conduct Annual Carer Reviews. The team is also involved in the recruitment of people in the community who may be interested in becoming a foster carer.



#### **Special Acknowledgements**

Congratulations to Audra Smith and Martika Stewart for all their hard work and dedication in our PSP program! Audra and Martika were recognised at the recent AbSec Conference held in Coffs Harbour in November, and we are very grateful to have them as part of our team.

See below for details of the awards.

**Foster Carer of the Year nominee** - Audra (Nikki) Smith This award recognises the outstanding contributions of a carer for an Aboriginal child or young person.

**Community Members of the Year Award Nominee** - Martika Stewart This award recognises the contributions of an Aboriginal person to the welfare and wellbeing of Aboriginal families and their community. Awarded to an Aboriginal Community member that has demonstrated outstanding commitment to and positive impact on the wellbeing of families and communities.



The Out of Home Care (OOHC) Program continues to support foster care placements in the Shoalhaven, Far South Coast and the Southern Tablelands.

In recent months we have supported some of our young people who reached the age of 18 to transition into independent living. We wish these young people well as they enter adulthood, and remind them that our door is always open if they require aftercare support.

The program is in the process of recruiting more Permanency Support Workers in each of our service areas, with four of these position recently filled in our Nowra office. We would like to congratulate the successful applicants Chloe Booth, Alissa Coppin, Stacey Kelly, and Mathew Coogan, and welcome them to the team.

During the December 2019 Christmas period, we again joined with our partner agency, William Campbell Foundation for our annual Kids and Carer Christmas Party at William Campbell's farm in Nowra Hill. The party was well received by all in attendance, with a host of activities for the children to participate in such as waterslides, jumping castles, mini animal farm and face painting. The food and BBQ was also well received, with samples of kangaroo, crocodile and emu sausages for everyone to try.

Lastly, 2019 was a re-accreditation year for the Out of Home Care Program, and we are happy to say we were successful in achieving our accreditation. This is a wonderful outcome and could not have been achieved without the ongoing hard work and commitment from the Out of Home Care team and the support provided by other key people in the agency. Congratulations to all involved!

#### Look who's in our >

## **EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT**



#### Tell us a little bit about your role at the SCMSAC

I am a Family Preservation Caseworker at SCMSAC, working alongside families to prevent children entering the OOHC system. I am part of an amazing team in Preservation! We support keeping families together because we all know children are best placed with their family.

#### What do you like most about your role?

I love being there for my families, being the person they can rely on to be there for them and support them through, and not give up. I love being able to give families hope and bring out their strengths. I love being able to walk alongside my families and work as a team, getting through it together.

## What are your proudest moments at SCMSAC?

Watching families make positive changes to keep their family together.

Having Family Preservation at SCMSAC to give families a chance to make changes, and to help prevent children from entering OOHC.

Being nominated as AbSec's Community Member of the Year.

### What do you like to do when you're not at work?

Relax, spend time with family, and play touch football.

## Want to work with us?

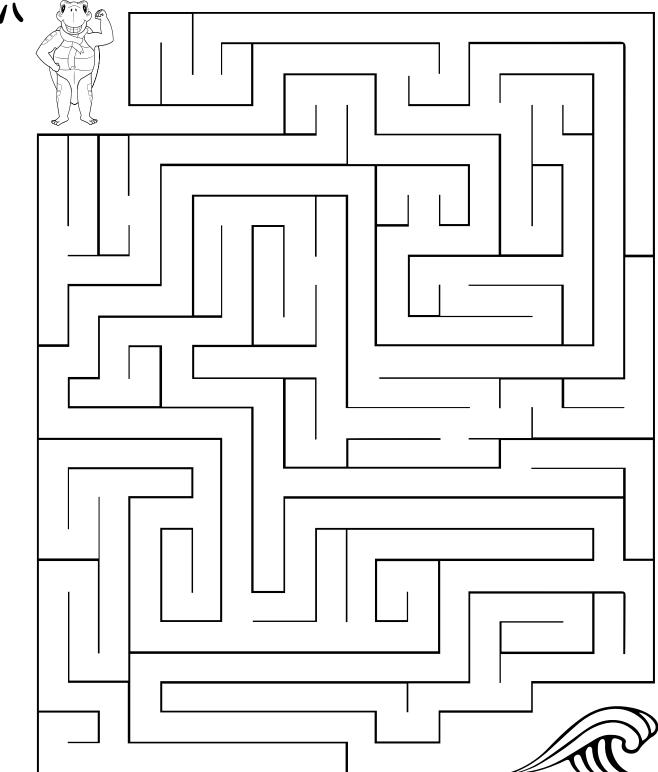
Visit our website for details: **southcoastams.org.au** *or* 

SCAN HERE TO VIEW OUR CURRENT VACANCIES





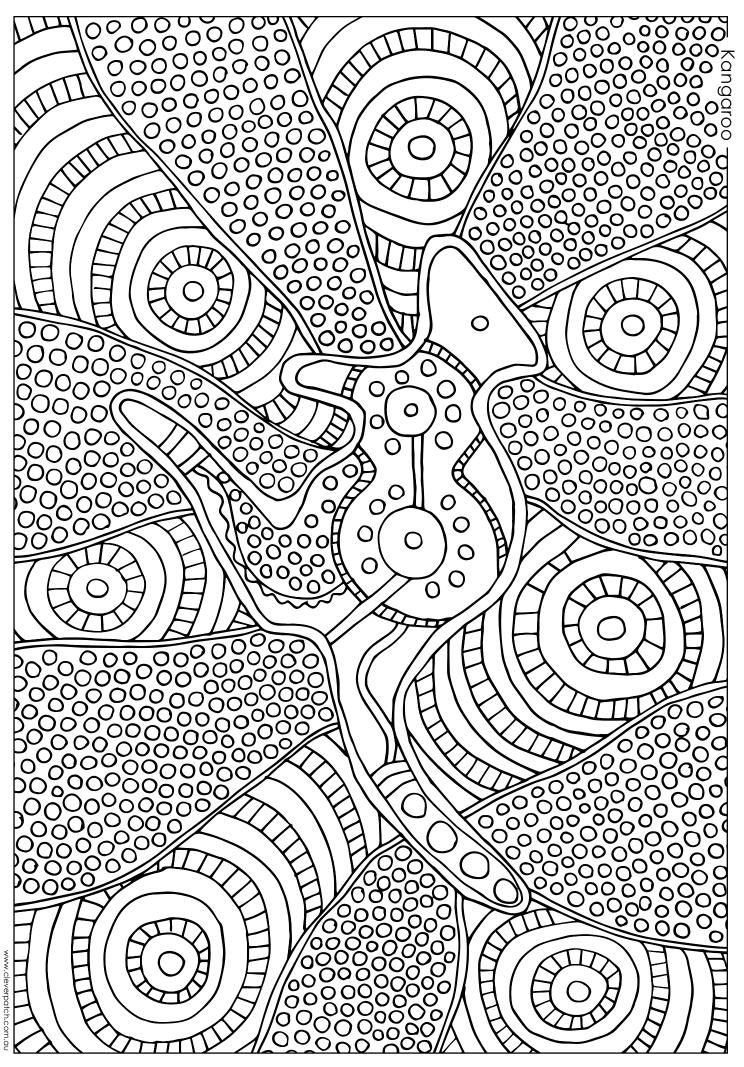
Can you help the turtle find his way back to the ocean?



# Kindness cards



Dear:	Dear:
Thank you for:	Thank you for:
From:	From:
Dear:	Dear:
Thank you for:	Thank you for:
From:	From:
Dear:	Dear:
Thank you for:	Thank you for:



#### Art word search



**ARTIST CARVING** DOTPAINTING **OCHRF STORY** 

**ARTWORK CAVES DREAMING ROCKART SYMBOLS** 

My favourite song right now is ....

**BARK** CONTEMPORARY **HANDSTENCIL** SITES **TRADITIONAL** 



Name: Ava Age: 4

#### Meet Ava...

- Q: What's your favourite thing to do?
- A: Go to the pool & the park
- Q: If you had one super power, what would it be?
- Be Mrs Invincible
- Q: What do you want to be when you grow up?
- A: A Doctor
- Q: What is your favourite food?
- A: Chicken nuggets & pasta

#### **Joke Corner**

Q: Why can't you give Elsa from Frozen a balloon?

A: Because she will "let it go"



# Aboriginal Child Mentoring Program

School based mentoring and support



The primary purpose of this collaborative in-school program is to provide a place for creative expression, to support Aboriginal children in their emotional day-to-day well-being and to assist in building cultural identity, positive self-esteem, resilience and personal empowerment. We also aim to increase engagement in school participation and attendance. The program utilises Mentoring and Art/Play-based Therapies, with children working alongside their Aboriginal Mentor and Child Therapist in a range of activities. The benefits of this therapeutic interaction, advocacy and mediation support also extends to the families, carers and wider community.

#### **Mentoring**

- Mentor Aboriginal children
- Increase & support cultural identity and pride
- Develop self-awareness for positive life choices
- Increase safety and resilience
- Develop and maintain trusting relationships
- Support and guidance for challenging behaviours

#### **Education**

- Remain engaged with education
- Provide cultural art and craft activities
- Cultural and community protocols
- Provide cultural workshops and events
- Increase school attendance and engagement

#### Advocacy

- Advocacy for students & parents
- Advocacy for children & families
- Referral to service providers
- **Building relationships**
- Consultation with community elders
- **Crisis intervention**

#### **Individualised Therapeutic sessions**

- Appropriately trained staff
- Art, Clay & Child Play Therapy
- Culture-based nature craft
- Interactive activities to express feelings and support

For more information contact The Health & Wellbeing team







intake@southcoastams.org.au

www.southcoastams.org.au

follow us: @scmsac ICN 182



Ay Family



### Way's you can

## CONTACT OUR TEAM

## Interested in becoming a member?



With our ever-growing services, the best way to stay informed about goals, strategic plans, up-coming events and NSW services, is by becoming

a member. If you are over 18, reside in the areas between Helensburgh, NSW and the Victorian border (South Coast, NSW) and are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, you are eligible to become a member. Scan this QR code to find out more, or visit our website.

## Confirmation of Aboriginality



The Confirmation of Aboriginality certificate acknowledges that you are known to your community as an Aboriginal person.

Your Aboriginal confirmation form can be asked of you when applying for Indigenous specific services or programs. To apply for Confirmation of Aboriginality through SCMSAC, or to find out more about the process, scan this QR code or visit our website.

#### Give us Feedback



If you'd like to give us feedback on services and programs you've experienced, or would like to suggest an idea, we'd love to hear from you. Scan

this QR code to be taken to our feedback page, or visit our website.

## Update your details



Do you need to update your details with us? Members, clients and carers are encouraged to contact us to ensure we have the latest

contact details for you. Scan this QR code to update your details online, or visit our website.





- 1800 215 099 or:
- (02) 4448 0200
- admin@southcoastams.org.au
- www.southcoastams.org.au

"To us, health is about so much more than simply not being sick. It's about getting a balance between physical, mental, emotional, cultural & spiritual health. Health & healing are interwoven, which means that one can't be separated from the other."

Dr Tamara Maclean - Aboriginal Doctor

SCAN HERE TO SAVE CONTACT DETAILS

South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation

- **1800 215 099 or:**
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