Anangu Ninti Tjuta

Pitjantjatjara: Lots of Intelligent Indigenous people

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Introduction

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Wiltja Secondary College

- Wiltja meaning 'shelter' in Pitjantjatjara

- Formed by a group of Ernabella women in 1970's

- Self governed, state funded body

- Students are of Anangu Indigenous background from remote Australian communities

- Attend Woodville High School and Windsor Gardens Vocational College

Walking in Two Worlds

▶ Indigenous people may continually cross cultures

▶ Negotiating differences in relationships, religions, values and beliefs

▶ Finding 'a balance' of living between the two worlds can be difficult

  ▶ May have negative social, emotional and health consequences if not supported appropriately.

▶ Important that Indigenous youth are supported and guided on their journey of developing an identity within contemporary Australian society.
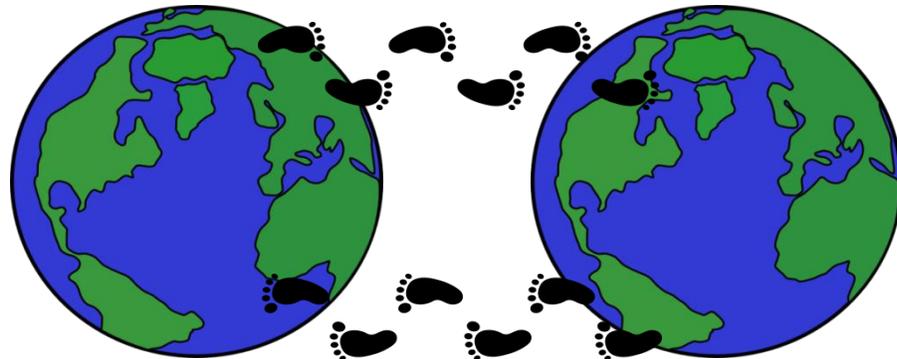
Social determinants of health

World Health Organizations 10 Social Determinants of health

- Social gradient
- Stress
- Early life
- Social exclusion
- Work
- Unemployment
- Social support
- Addiction
- Food
- Transport

**Additional Social Determinants for Indigenous Australian's**

- Racism and marginalisation
- Social class
- Education
- Control over own health
- Employment
- Welfare
- Income
- Incarceration and the justice system
- Housing and infrastructure
- Policy processes
- Family separation
- Kinship systems
- Connection to country
- Reconciliation

To bring about change…

- Primary Health Care Approach, encompassing principles of:
  - **Equity, Social Justice and Empowerment**
- Responsibility for advocacy and action lies within all of us.
- Without addressing these determinants- the state of Indigneous health will remain as 'Third World health in a First World nation'.

Reactionary Biomedical policy making and program spending → Pre-planned, complex, inter-sectorial action
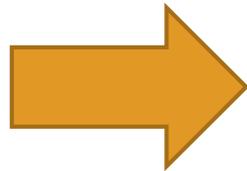
Occupational Therapy

▶ Occupational therapists (OTs) work with individuals and groups throughout the lifespan promoting health and wellbeing through the engagement in meaningful occupations.

▶ By recognising Indigenous people's resilience and protective cultural factors OT's can help to support meaningful engagement in life roles.

Indigenous Holistic views of health

Social justice, equity, empowerment

Occupational therapy

Community Development setting

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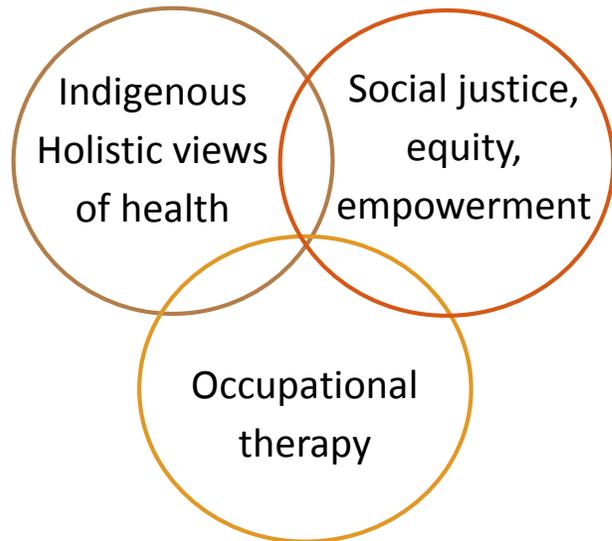
Comprehensive view of health offering an effective approach to addressing broader determinants of health

Community Empowerment Approach

▶ Seeks to empower & support communities, individuals & groups to take greater control over issues that affect health.

▶ Personal development, consciousness-raising and social action.

▶ Both a process and an outcome

▶ Extensive commitment to collaboration and participation

▶ Community are experts of their own lives, and the issues they experience

Our Project

- 9-week project titled 'Anangu Ninti Tjuta'- Pitjantjatjara: Lots of Intelligent Indigenous people

- Project Aim:
  - *To build capacity of male students at Wiltja to take ownership of their health and wellbeing and confidently walk in two worlds.*

- Project Need:
  - *lack of student identity and ownership within the male student building.*

- 500+ hours over 9-weeks attending Wiltja at various times, participating in formal and informal activities.

- Students addressed project need by participating in a 2-day workshop to produce art works to be displayed in male student building

Project Cycle
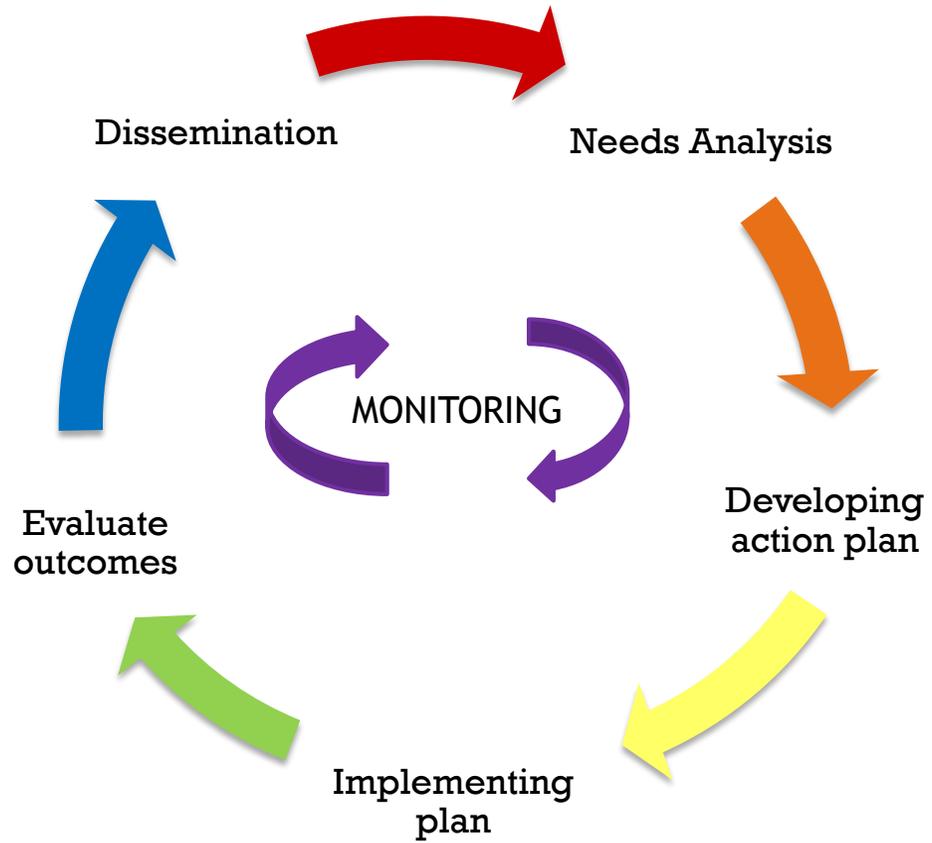
Community Empowerment Approach

Needs Analysis
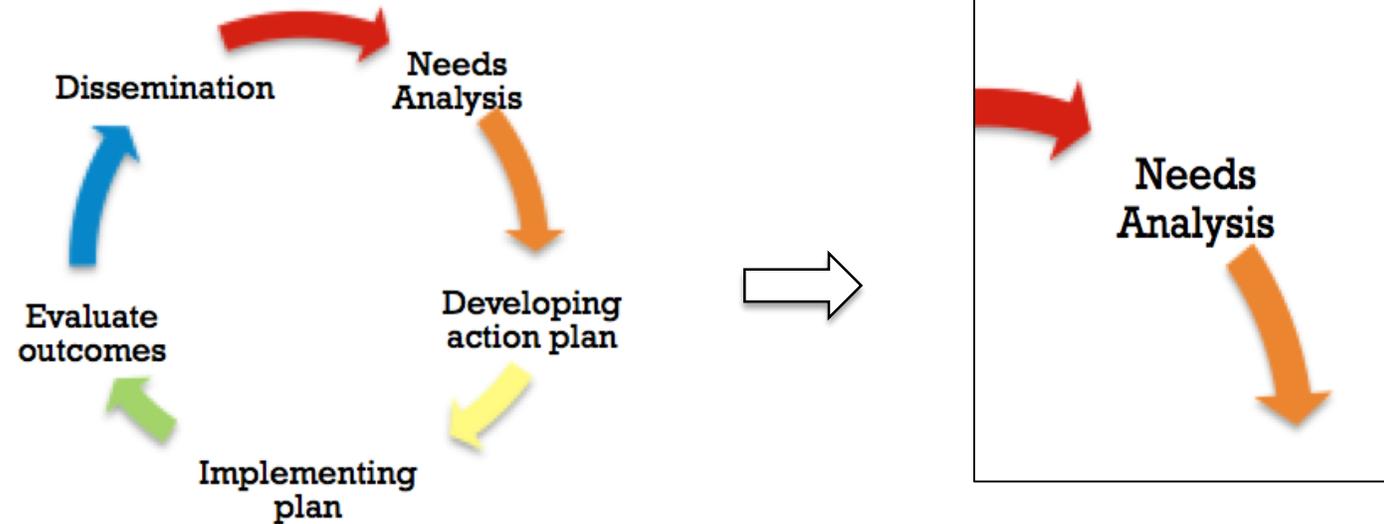
- Project facilitators worked in partnership with male students and Wiltja residential staff to identify and confirm a project need

Developing an action plan
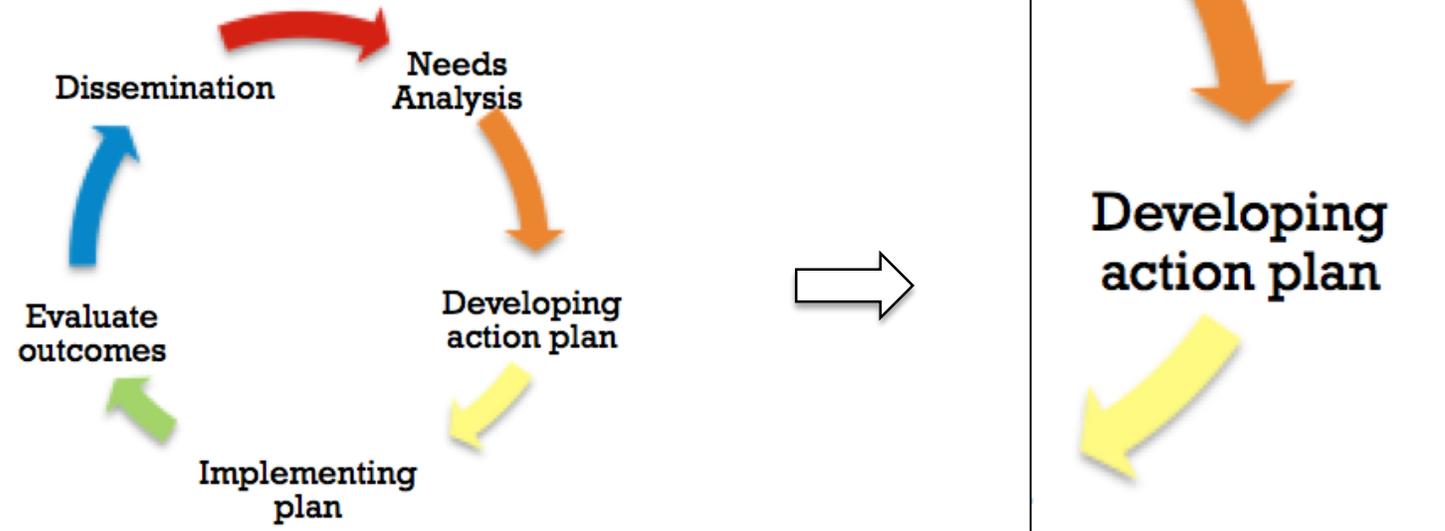
- Project facilitators, male students and Wiltja staff collaboratively developed an action plan to address the project need

Implementation
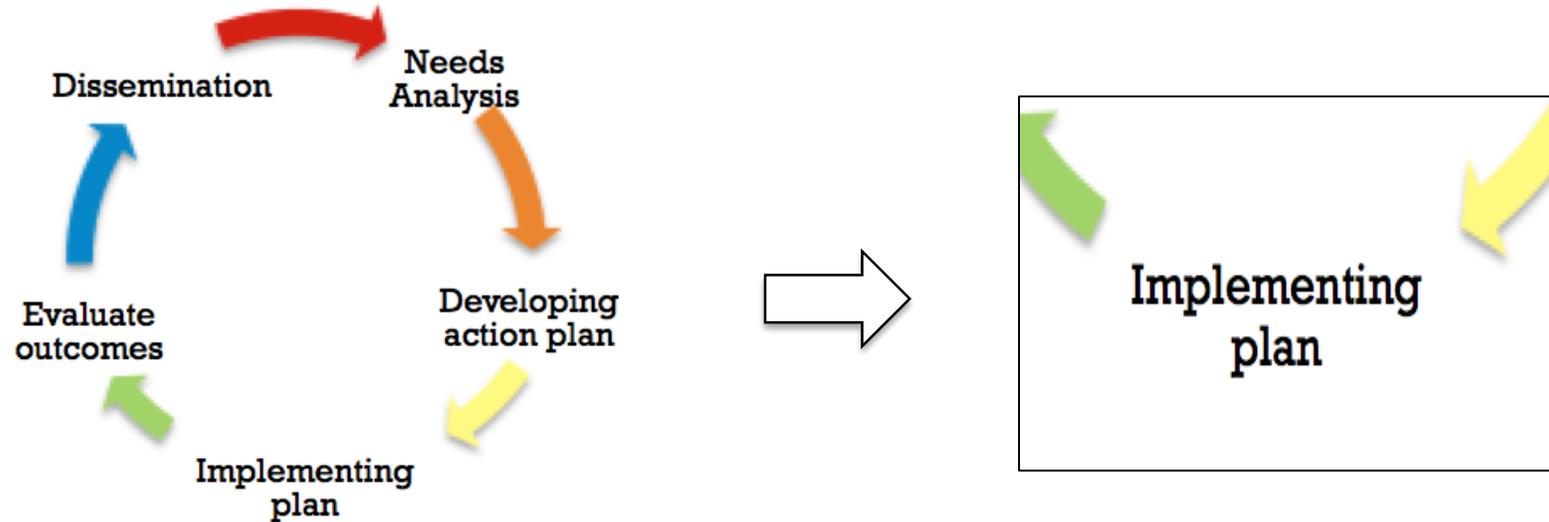
▶ Male students spent weeks brainstorming artwork ideas, and undertook a 2-day workshop with aerosol artist Narisha Cash to produce pieces of art to be displayed in the Wiltja male student building.

Evaluation
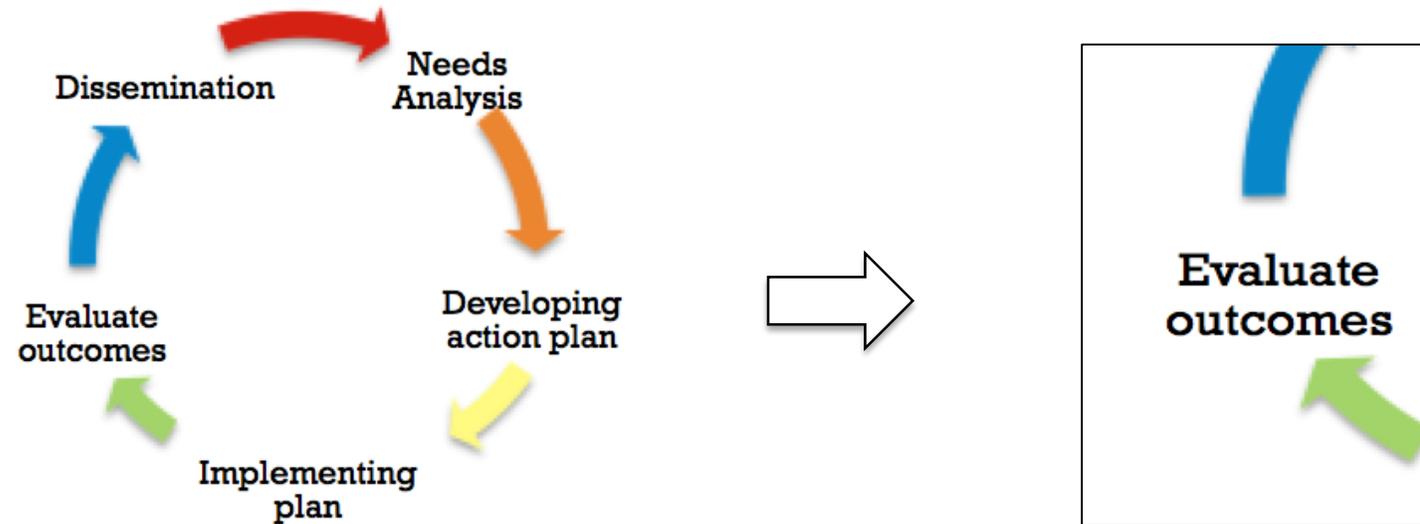
- Evaluation was ongoing throughout the project by both the male students and project facilitators.

- Students were video recorded talking about their reflections on the project as a whole as a final evaluation activity.

Dissemination
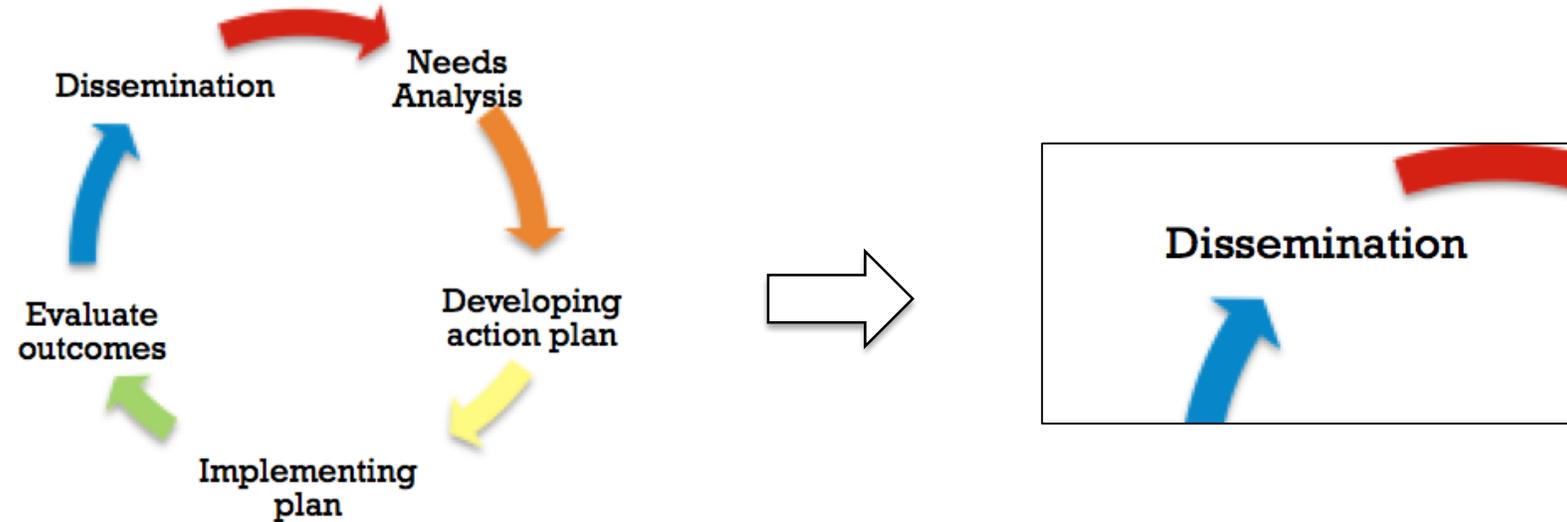
- Findings were dispersed to relevant project stakeholders
- Strengthened relationships between University of South Australia and Wiltja Residential Program through presenting at their end of year graduation

Key findings

- Importance of building rapport
- Project facilitation
- Using meaningful occupations to support participation
- Walking in our own two worlds

Importance of building rapport with students

- ▶ A non-agenda approach was used to interact with students in the early stages
- ▶ Enabling networks based on trust, respect and reciprocity to be built
- ▶ Allowing students to feel comfortable to unpack present issues

Project Facilitation

▶ Finding a 'just-right' balance when directing project focused activities

▶ Future activities had more direction and support from project facilitators

▶ The ideas and issues presented to students need to be 'winnable, simple and specific'

▶ Categorizing information into themes and potential project avenues allowed students to confidently discuss, validate and identify a common need

▶ A pivotal turning point as students began to develop a ability to effect change

  ▶ Increase in student embracement

  ▶ Students become active and productive with project activities

▶ Importance of continual consultation to ensure the reflective of the communities needs.

Using meaningful occupation to support participation

- ▶ Meaningfulness drives motivation

- ▶ Through engagement in meaningful occupations students gained confidence in their own abilities to advocate and act for change

- ▶ Developing a number of transferrable skills that can further support students to confidently 'walk in two worlds'

Walking in our own two worlds

▶ Some difficulties in recapturing the fullness of our own cultural identities as Indigenous women

▶ Our own cultural identity is continuing to develop

▶ Exposure to various experiences, people and places are stepping stones to assisting us to walk more confidently in our 'Indigenous Worlds'

Summary

- Placement at Wiltja provided us with opportunity to grow on both a personal and professional level

- Understanding the importance of having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers providing culturally safe health care to their own people

- With more Indigenous specific placement opportunities, more students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous would be able to increase their cultural awareness and sensitivity to practice.

Thank You!

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