

*Aboriginal
Mothers
&
Daughters
Gathering
Program*



**CENTRAL WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTRE
BATHURST NSW**



CO-FACILITATOR & COLLABORATOR

PROGRAM AUTHOR

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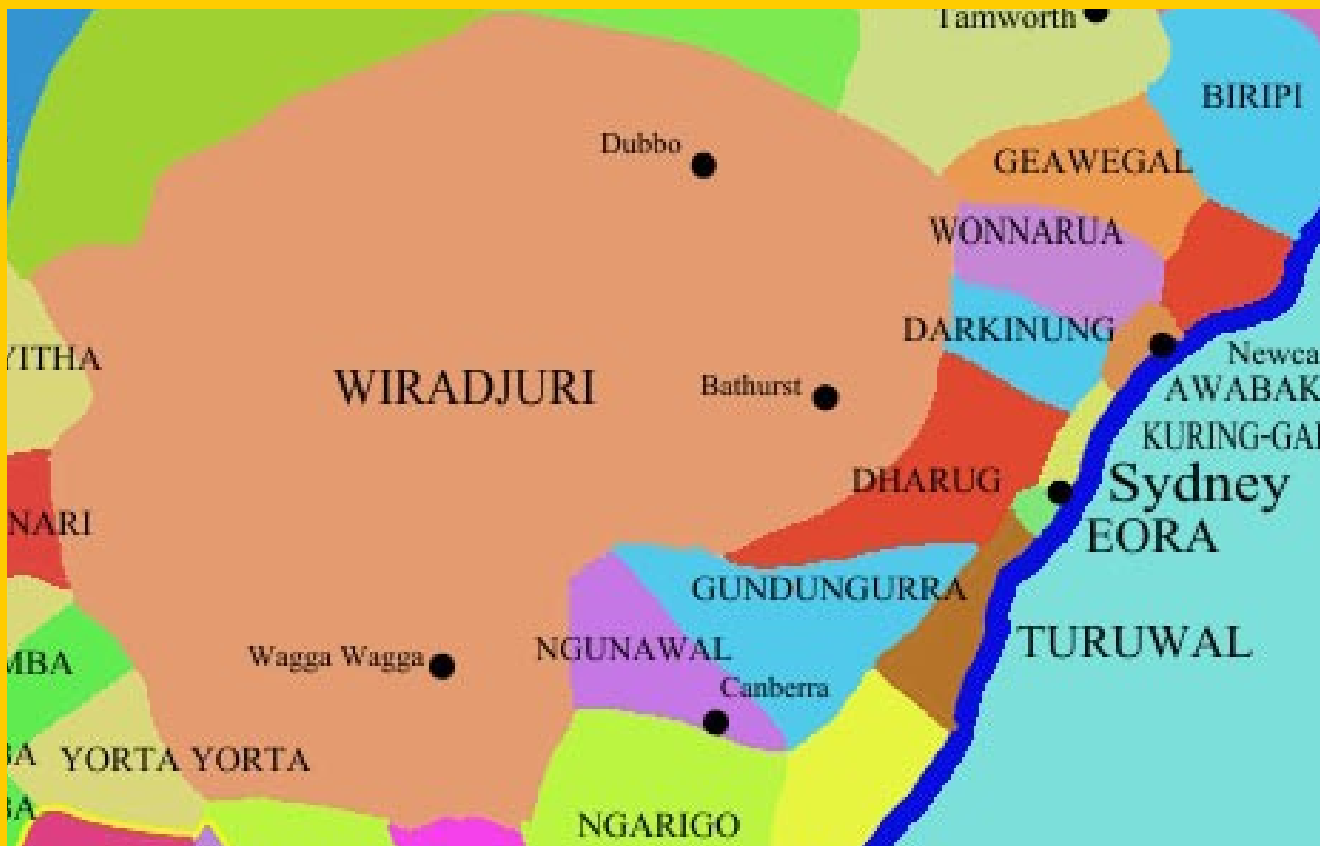
Greater Western Area Health

Central West Women's
Health Centre

BATHURST NSW

- Rural town 4 hrs west of Sydney CBD
- Population 37,000





- Aboriginal population 1,269
- Traditional owners Wiradjuri people



- **Male prison in the town & large numbers of other Aboriginal language groups from all over NSW come to be near inmates; creates some tensions**
- **Most live in Kelso suburb, housing commission, high unemployment, high school dropout rate, high AOD problems, no AMS, male Health worker only**



The Program is:

- a puberty and sex education program for young Aboriginal girls aged 11- 13 and their mothers
- a forum for dialogue;
 - between mothers & daughters
 - between facilitators & Aboriginal women & girls



The Program is:



- **Run in the community**
at the girls' primary school after normal school hours

3.30 – 6.30 pm 2 sessions = 6 hours in total



- Free of charge

- Childcare for younger siblings



- Art / craft activity with Aboriginal theme



- **Gift showbag**



- **Certificate of attendance**



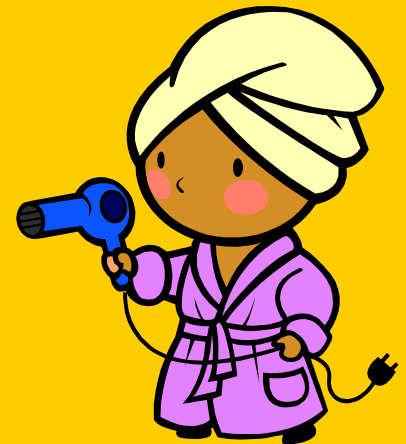


- **Transport can be arranged**
- **Fosters collaborations / partnerships between health & education agencies**
- **Utilises an Education Assistant**



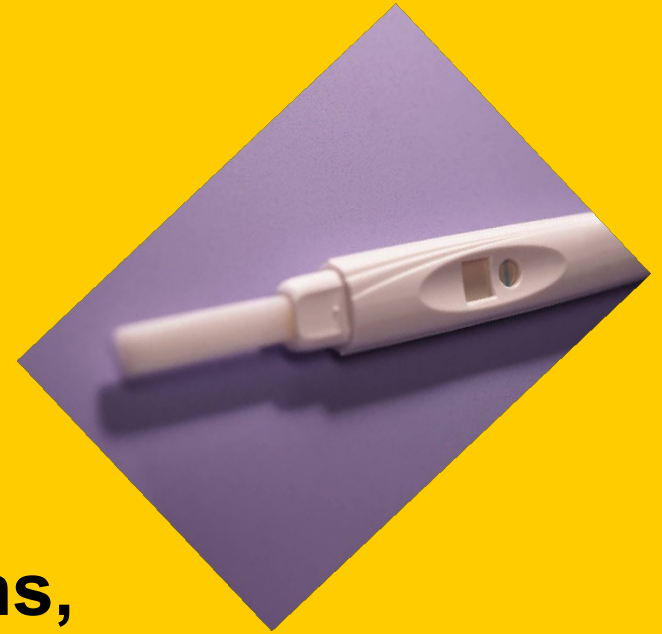
Topics covered;

- **Physical, emotional mental changes of puberty and adolescence for boys and girls**
- **Management of menstruation & personal hygiene**



Basic information on;

- fertility, pregnancy & birth
- sexually transmitted infections, contraception
- ‘women’s health’ screening – paps smears breast checks





- **Self esteem & a healthy body image**
- **Staying safe & protective behaviours**
- **Communication between mothers & daughters**





- **What services exist in the local community (in health & welfare) especially those that are culturally 'safe'**



Program Rationale – the ‘why’

- **Local Aboriginal women requested ‘help’ with their daughters**



Behaviours often beginning very early (12-14 years)

- issues of truancy, suspensions, early school dropout**
- loss of parental control**
- ‘at risk’ behaviours;**
- early sexual activity,**
- STI’s, pregnancy,**
- alcohol & drug use, self harm.**

- **Increase contact and foster relationships with local Aboriginal women and girls**
- **Learn more about our local Aboriginal women & culture – beliefs, opinions & hopes**
- **Desire to work in partnerships / collaborations**



- **Respond to international , national and local directives to provide sensitive & targeted primary health care, health promotion initiatives, & sex education programs**



**International directives: WHO Alma-Ata 1978
Ottawa Charter 1986**

**National directives: Australian Govt: 'Health for All by 2000'
'Closing the Gap' 2009**



**Couldn't find another program like it
that was;**

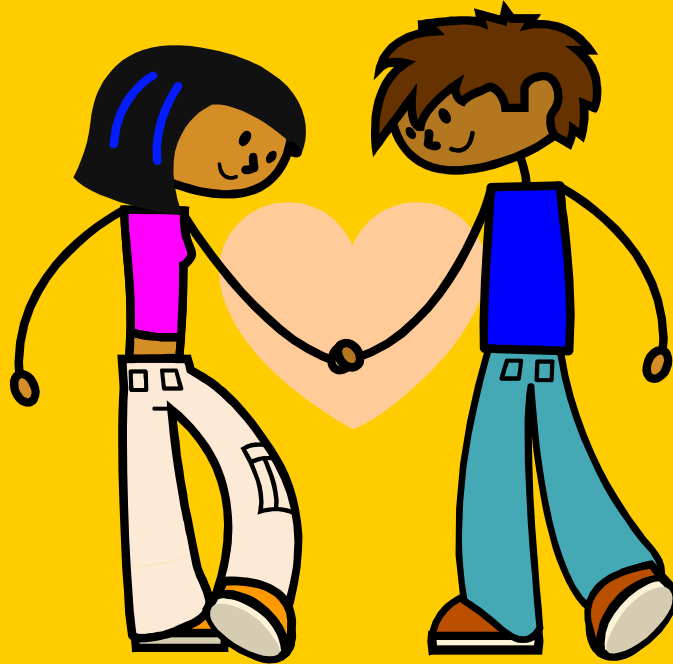
- **Inclusive of a parent**
- **Just for females**
- **Affordable**
- **Of short duration**



Objectives - for participants

- 1. Provision of a convenient, friendly, culturally respectful learning space for mothers & daughters to discuss & reflect on 'women's business' issues**
- 2. Promotion of health & welfare services & access, especially cervical & other health screening**





3. Provision of information & behavioural ‘modelling’ of skills for self efficacy in lifestyle & sexual health decision-making & ‘informed choice’.



Objectives - for facilitator/s

1. To increase individual sexual health literacy & decision-making of indigenous women & girls



2. To provide information that will promote the uptake of women's health screening



Objectives - for facilitator/s

3. To engage in a respectful 'two-way learning'

with Aboriginal women to learn more about local culture, beliefs & the needs of women & girls in the area



Program process – the ‘how’

Contact was made with a local school that had;

- an Aboriginal student cohort large enough to attract a minimum of 6 mother / daughter pairs**
- an Aboriginal Education Assistant (AEA) or an Aboriginal woman known & trusted by the mothers / girls, to act as a group support person**



IMPORTANT

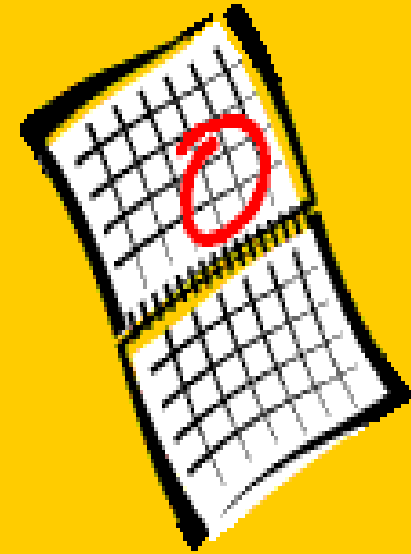
- Suitable facilities – use of rooms, equipment, kitchen facilities, eating area & toilets



- **At a meeting with the Principal & AEA/s**
 - **explain the program**
 - **take & show advertising materials**
 - **ascertain what the school can provide towards the program**
 - **negotiate & organise to pay for a childcarer & the AEA's time for assisting with the program**



When the minimum number of interested participants are recruited;



- set a date,**
- get enrolment forms completed & consents signed**

- go the venue at least once before starting the program to check all is in readiness, check OH&S issues are OK,**



check with AEA on food requirements

- on the day before the program,
collect all required materials, food,
equipment, ready to take to the venue**



On the days the program is to be run;

- take all the required materials, food, & equipment to the venue & 'set up'**
- orientate the child carer to the childcare area/ toilets / break & supper time & settle the smaller children into care**
- welcome the program participants & commence the program**



- **clean up the areas used at the end of each program day**
- **escort or provide transport to those needing it to go home**
- **negotiate with the school to have someone 'lock up' afterwards**
- **evaluate the program with the funding body by an internal review of the program & facilitator's**
- **evaluate the program with the Aboriginal stakeholders/ community consultants for cultural competence and client satisfaction annually.**





Some of the girls who've done the program





Permission was given by the mothers and daughters to take and use their photographs and show their final artwork in promoting the program.







**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME &
ATTENTION**





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BATHURST NSW**