Healthy places are places that help us make healthy choices

The environments, or places, in which we live, learn, work and play have a significant influence on our health and wellbeing [1, 2]. A supportive environments approach to health focuses on modifying these places to make a healthy choice the easiest and most convenient choice [1, 2].

Healthy Communities Project

- 12 month pilot project (April 2017 to March 2018) with three Cape York communities.
- Facilitated by Apunipima Cape York Health Council and jointly funded by Queensland Government and Northern Queensland Primary Health Network.
- Aimed to engage Aboriginal Shire Councils, community leaders, organisations and community members in creating healthy places, with more water, less sugary drinks and more smoke-free spaces.
- Focus was on development and implementation of community-led actions.
- Included a local social marketing campaign, called “Sugary Drinks Proper No Good – Drinks More Water Youfla”, to raise awareness about the health impacts of sugary drinks.

Key Learnings

- Use a variety of methods to engage council and community, such as local working groups, information sessions, and community-based promotion like newsletters and local radio.
- Councils have a key role to play in creating healthy places.
- Role modelling by community leaders is important.
- Communities recognise the importance of everyone working together to improve health.
- A local social marketing campaign can help raise the profile of a health issue in community, provide opportunities to involve community members including community leaders, and provide a more solid foundation for implementing supportive environment actions.

* Sugary drinks include all non-alcoholic water-based drinks with added sugar, including sugar-sweetened soft drinks, energy drinks, fruit drink, sports drinks, iced teas and cordial.
1. QAHIHC, Making Links for Healthy Places. 2011, Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council.
PROMOTING HEALTHY DRINK CHOICES IN MAPOON

What did project partnerships achieve?

✓ Held meetings with Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council, community leaders, organisations and community members to gain ideas about what could be done in Mapoon to encourage water consumption and reduce sugary drink consumption.
✓ Four chilled water bubblers ordered for installation at key places around community – Sport & Rec Hall, Community Centre, Land & Sea Centre and My Pathway.
✓ Education sessions on healthy drink choices at Western Cape College – Mapoon Campus. School promoted healthy drink choices with two chilled water bubblers, staff role modelling and are considering a new healthy drink reward system for students.
✓ Two short videos produced with community as part of the social marketing campaign, to showcase local water stories and provide education around sugary drinks.
✓ Worked alongside the community store to support changes to encourage healthy drink choices, such as a small water fridge near store entrance and water for sale at cost price.

What did we learn in Mapoon?

• Having chilled water bubblers around community encourages healthy drink choices.
• Providing education in schools about healthy drink choices is valuable, as children are very receptive of health messages.
• Community events provide a good opportunity to encourage healthy choices.
• Development of local videos provides an opportunity to involve community leaders and other community members, including children, in social marketing.

By having [bubblers] easily accessible I think that creates an easier option rather than going to the store and buying a fizzy drink or something, then yeah, they’ll just have a drink of water

We shouldn’t underestimate how much we can teach them and how much we can encourage them to make good choices

[A] healthy message is something that can always be factored in

For further information and resources visit www.apunipima.org.au

Supported by:  
Proudly funded by the Queensland Government