

## Yiriman Youth Justice Diversion Program (YYJDP)

Fitzroy Valley, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC) is the region's peak body that has for 30 years serviced the 30 language groups within the five cultural blocks in northern Western Australia. It also runs a unique diversionary program in the Fitzroy Valley for Indigenous youth at 'medium risk' of adverse court outcomes—the Yiriman Youth Justice Diversion Program.



This new program extends the success of the national award-winning Yiriman Project, which was conceived and developed by elders from Nykina, Mangala, Walmajarri and Karrajarrri seeking to protect young people from self-harm and negative influences. The concerned elders mentored at-risk teenagers and took them 'on Country' where they could reconnect with their culture in a remote and significant landscape.

The Yiriman Youth Diversion Program builds on the original Yiriman approach to reduce criminal or anti-social behaviours with two types of interventions:

- a five-day camel trek accompanied by elders and mentors with support from Kimberley Community Alcohol and Drug Services staff
- a six-week 'caring for country' work readiness program for youth with little or no work experience.

As indicated in its 2016 business plan, KALACC will continue to run both types of activities several times over 2017.

'Our goal is to reduce the rate at which Aboriginal youths in the Kimberley come into contact with the juvenile justice system,' says KALACC spokesperson. 'We want to assist youths to make better life choices and to exit the justice system permanently.'

[kalacc.org.au/youth-projects/yiriman-project](http://kalacc.org.au/youth-projects/yiriman-project)



**Going out bush is beautiful ... young people find themselves when they're out there ... when they are finally out there.**

Elder Annett Kogolo, Yiriman Project 2013

## Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation (CHAC)

Smithton, TASMANIA



'Our corporation runs a range of community and commercial activities for the health and wellbeing of our people,' says corporation director, Kelly Brooks.

The youth prevention and diversion program is one of the most important. It works with 12 to 24-year-olds who are at risk of offending or entering the criminal justice system. Building self-esteem is central. There's also an emphasis on encouraging a return to school, finding employment, and forging positive connections and relationships with other people.

'CHAC [the program] has shaped who I am going to be. CHAC helped me realise what I hide and what I need to do to get where I want to be. They have shown me that I have talents.'

Young person

Everyone that participates in the program, including family friends and community members who often mentor the young people, are well aware of the benefits.

Quotes from the report on the social impact of the program—see [dpmc.gov.au](http://dpmc.gov.au)

[chac.com.au](http://chac.com.au)



Australian Government

Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations

# ORIC Oracle

Corporations working for young people

November 2016



Recent media coverage has shone a light on struggles faced by many young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The latest youth survey\*, a data analysis conducted annually by Mission Australia, reports one in 10 young Indigenous men has a zero level of happiness.

Many are asking, what is the best way to address the disadvantage confronting young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

While we wrestle with this question to find real and lasting solutions, it's heartening to know that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations across Australia are getting on with making positive differences in young lives.

Large or small, not-for-profit or otherwise, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations are invested in young people. They run a mix of programs. Some have set up social clubs—places to meet friends, play music, create art or get involved in sport. Others concentrate on education and job opportunities. Still others are there just to lend support and mentor.

Whatever their approach, these corporations are making real community-led changes in the lives of young people.

This edition of Oracle looks at just a small number of the corporations and the positive work they are doing.

\* National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Report 2016, Mission Australia: [missionaustralia.com.au/what-we-do/research-evaluation/youth-survey](http://missionaustralia.com.au/what-we-do/research-evaluation/youth-survey)

## Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC)

Yuendumu, NORTHERN TERRITORY

'From the moment we first started in 1993 we've been about building the health, strength, confidence and leadership of Warlpiri young people,' says CEO, Matt Davidson. 'Our programs are all about "developing" so they grow up happy, confident in who they are, and stay on a path to a meaningful future.'

The programs have grown out of an overwhelming community response to intervene on a generation that seemed bent on destroying itself through substance abuse. Highly-skilled community action has 'created an environment for healthy change and sustained success'.

The elders took their troubled youth to the sacred and remote Warlpiri country on Mt Theo outstation, about 160 kilometres from town, where they taught them to connect with their culture and country.

WYDAC now runs a variety of youth development programs out of five different sites—Yuendumu, Willowra, Nyirrpri, Lajamanu and Mt Theo Outstation—that go well beyond the initial crisis of petrol sniffing of a decade or so ago.

For any young person who may be battling drug or alcohol addiction, relationship and family violence, suicidal thoughts, neglect, criminal behaviour, depression and sexual health issues, WYDAC will reset them on a pathway of opportunity and health.

It has rehabilitated hundreds of kids from Yuendumu and surrounding communities, with some going on to become leaders in their community.

[wydac.org.au](http://wydac.org.au)



**We tell them, it's your land, the ground is yours ... you're rich, you're not poor ... you've got something significant to hold onto.**

Warlpiri Elder, Ned Hargraves

## NATIONAL INDIGENOUS YOUTH 2017 PARLIAMENT

Come to Canberra and meet Australia's leaders, learn about democracy and have your say in Australia's future.

Applications open late January 2017.

[aec.gov.au/Indigenous](http://aec.gov.au/Indigenous)

## Have you held your AGM?

The deadline for holding your annual general meeting (AGM) was 30 November 2016 (unless you have an exemption from the Registrar).

If you haven't held your AGM and haven't received an exemption from the Registrar contact ORIC immediately.

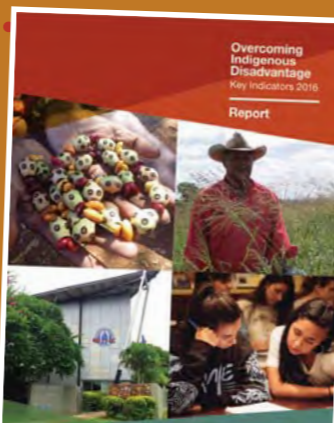


## Toward a better future

The 2016 *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage* report measures wellbeing and offers insight across cultural, social and economic issues, including governance, education, and safe and supportive communities.

This is the seventh report of its kind by the Productivity Commission.

[pc.gov.au/oid2016](http://pc.gov.au/oid2016)



# LIFTING UP YOUNG LIVES

freecall: 1800 622 431  
(not free from mobiles)

email: [info@oric.gov.au](mailto:info@oric.gov.au)

website: [oric.gov.au](http://oric.gov.au)



‘We laugh a lot—we have fun but the serious purpose behind the program is to engage with young Aboriginal boys,’ says Arthur. ‘We want to develop self-discipline and allow them to feel a sense of achievement.’

South Coast Medical Services Aboriginal Corporation

‘I think it’s time for a revolution and it’s got to come from within, not from policy led by governments, but by the people. It’s up to young people to champion change and create their future.’

Pormpur Paanthu Aboriginal Corporation



‘We support young people and their families to do more than just survive.’

Gugan Gulwan Aboriginal Corporation

‘All of my free time is dedicated to the kids. I talk to kids one on one. I would bring them to our home for dinner or a sleep in. This allows them to see how a loving and understanding household functions.’

Case worker, Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation

## South Coast Medical Services Aboriginal Corporation (SCMSAC)

Nowra, NEW SOUTH WALES

Although principally a medical centre, SCMSAC also operates a youth diversionary program in partnership with Juvenile Justice and the Shoalhaven PCYC for Aboriginal boys aged 12–17. It provides mentoring and helps to develop leadership qualities.

Community Safety and Wellbeing Youth Worker, Arthur Scott, and Youth Case Manager, Senior Constable Stephen Wright, facilitate fitness and boxing sessions.

Different Aboriginal mentors visit the group and after a boxing class they may sit down together, talk about life, work out some realistic goals and what they need to do to reach them.

‘These young men could be the next generation of leaders in our community,’ says Arthur.

[southcoastams.org.au](http://southcoastams.org.au)

**Photo:** Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation provides a range of diversionary and development programs for 5–25 year olds that develop a positive sense of self, family leadership and culture. The group pictured above are hunting for honey ants.

Courtesy Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation

## Aboriginal Prisoners and Offenders Support Services Aboriginal Corporation (APOSSAC)

Adelaide, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

One of ORIC’s newest corporations helps Aboriginal people who either find themselves imprisoned or who are newly released into the community. It aims to:

- reduce the incidence of offending
- research the underlying issues that lead to the high incidence of Aboriginal crime and imprisonment and find ways of addressing them
- provide case management services to Aboriginal prisoners and offenders pre- and post-release from incarceration
- establish post-release projects and programs to assist resettlement into the community, address offending behaviour and reduce recidivism rates of Aboriginal people
- raise awareness in the community about issues relating to crime prevention, Aboriginal incarceration and social inclusion.

[aposs.net.au](http://aposs.net.au)

## Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation (GGYAC)

Wanniassa, AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Gugan Gulwan responds to the needs of young people experiencing vulnerability by drawing on the strengths and cultural protective factors in families, communities and organisations. The corporation actively shares its expertise with others and works in partnership to create opportunities for the voices of children and youth to be heard within the community, across the sector and within government.

To do these roles successfully Gugan Gulwan provides a broad range of flexible services such as case management, community engagement, counselling and direct service delivery.

‘We work with the individual and whole family to develop self-confidence, to have power to create a quality of life, and a desire to be involved with things that represent the deepest and best within them.’

Programs include tutoring, music, young men’s and women’s groups, Koori leadership and working within adult and juvenile detention centres to provide responsive, timely and culturally appropriate content.

[gugan-gulwan.com.au](http://gugan-gulwan.com.au)

## Pormpur Paanthu Aboriginal Corporation (PPAC)

Pormpuraaw, QUEENSLAND

The Pormpuraaw community started the corporation in 1991 to provide quality evidence-based services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. Services include child care, homeless and temporary accommodation, preventative education, intervention, crisis and responsive care, domestic and family violence therapies, alcohol and other drug counselling, and advocacy and support for families, young people and children.

‘The Pormpur Paanthu way’ for youth development includes long-term support to help young people take greater control and ownership of their future. It focuses on four key areas:

- holistic health care
- social inclusion activities
- leadership and motivational programs
- education, training and employment.

The activities, education and training are designed to lead to better lifestyle, health and employment pathways; alleviate boredom; give a sense of purpose; and develop life skills to become responsible members of the community.

Young people are encouraged to think about their future and the positive role they can play in their community. The corporation creates a safe space for youth to have conversations about issues confronting them while allowing them to get involved in socially inclusive activities from sports, recreation, dance, art, music, information technology, graphics and videography.

[pormpurpaanthu.com.au](http://pormpurpaanthu.com.au)