14th January 2020

To our FASD Supporters

Re **WA Rotary “Make FASD HIstroy” Program report for the period April 2019 until December 2019**

In April 2019 we had a very successful Rotary Vocational Training Team visit from various places in Alaska. They shared their knowledge and provided training to many groups in Perth, Kalgoorlie and Leonora. Their training including meeting with the Aboriginal Refence group, the PATCHES Paediatrics team, the team at Telethon Kids Institute (TKI) - FASD is an area where TKI is a Centre of Excellence in Australia. They presented at the District 9455 conference where Professor Carol Bowers (TKI) was a keynote speaker

For details see <https://rotaryosbornepark.org.au/Stories/fasd-clinic-in-operation>

Please find attached the report from PATCHES Paediatrics (our partner who is providing specialist medical assessments). There have been neatly 50 % of the children assessed who have a diagnosis of FASD. Another 3 children need to be assessed further to confirm this diagnosis. This validates the project and shows that FASD is a significant problem in this community.

PATCHES staff have introduced community information sessions and will be doing more therapy programs in 2020. They have continued with training for the teachers and the families. Initial training for the Police, teachers and community groups was completed by the specialist team visiting from Alaska in April this year

Sandra Evans (health worker) who was providing community liaison and education unfortunaley resigned in November. A replacement health worker has been found and has commences in February 2020. She will be available to do the program support 2 days per week.

 Bruce Dufty (Chair of the Rotary Aboriginal Refence Group; a Rotarian from the Western Endeavour Club and a member of the WA Make FASD History Program Planning Committee), has travelled to Leonora six times in 2019 to undertake the project planning and community development aspects for us. He is planning to complete a further 7 to 8 visits in 2020/2021.

Bruce has had an impact in a number of areas such as:

* Consulting with Aboriginal elders and other local service providers.
* Liaising with Paediatricians in the Goldfields, supporting health promotion projects (e.g. around preventing trachoma), liaising with potential project partners in Leonora and collaborating with other community support groups re supporting the FASD Program.
* Collaborating with qualified “Relationship and Sexual Health Trainers” in the provisions of “Relationships and safe sex programs” and “Social relationships and Social Wellbeing programs”.
* Encouraging the community to use a debit-card system that limits purchasing powers in respect to alcohol and drugs. He has been impressed by a hotelier voluntarily implementing a 9pm curfew for take-away liquor. Many families receiving a social security income report now report that they have sufficient money for food to support their families.
* Negotiating with local people re the establishment of a Leonora Aboriginal Community Group that aims to strengthening community members so that they are able to make positive decisions for themselves and their families (i.e. building values, confidence and personal skills through training and supervised practice so that they can take responsible actions).
* In collaboration with PATCHES, Local Service Providers, the District High School and families he is assisting them to access supports so that local people can apply for early intervention funding of children identified as having FASD (more than half of those assessed to date), including those identified with other serious disabilities (e.g. intellectual disability, hearing loss, autism, and ADHD).
* The local Youth Centre and Sporting Groups are run by two outstanding Aboriginal people. Collaboration and appropriate encouragement are resulting in them developing positive and culturally-tailored programs, simultaneously appropriate to both Indigenous and non-indigenous children and youth. The PATCHES Neuro-Psychologist was an expert “hip-hop” dancer. The youth group participants have responded well to her after-hours tuition. The Youth group are now employing a second local worker to do the hip-hop dancing program and to support other youth centre activities.
* The Bicycles for Humanity Program established by the Rotary Club of Bay View-Claremont has become an independent organisation that works with the school to provide refurbished bicycles to school students. A condition of this program is that each student has to undertake a course in bicycle maintenance so that the students are able to maintain and repair their own bicycles at the conclusion of their participation in the program. In other setting this program has increased school attendance and involvement in group community activities.
* A preventative component of the FASD program involves the development and tailoring short educational films for school students and their families. Local people are being encouraged to participate and take part in the making of the films.
* An Aboriginal Indigenous Education Officer at the local school has commenced teaching a relevant language and taking her classes on indigenous and non-indigenous students out on “on-country” excursions. Her leaderships is being emulated by at least 25% of the Indigenous population in the town.
* Service providers have been encouraged to employ additional local Aboriginal workers. There has been a 25% increase in employed indigenous workers over the last twelve months. In addition, one is undertaking full-time a degree and two have completed certificate level training for their role in the town.

In 2020/21 PATCHES Paediatrics will provide 7 more clinics in Leonora. They are exploring the possibility of running at least two Therapy Clinic focused on Early intervention as the number of identified students with FASD grows.

A you can see from this report there has been considerable community development to assist the Leonora community to develop healthy relationships and a healthy lifestyle. All of these strategies will ultimately assist in the long-term prevention of FASD as well support those who have the condition to integrate and have an improved lifestyle.

We thank all of our sponsors for their financial contributions and we will continue to provide reports every 6 months until the completion of this project.

Yours sincerely,

Louise Hancock

Chairperson

Rotary WA “Making FASD History Project”