The Western Desert Kidney Health Project
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The Western Desert Kidney Health Project aims to reduce diabetes and kidney disease by 20% in 10 communities by working with the people who live there.

Health
A mobile clinic went to each of the communities, with Aboriginal Researchers, to test people’s blood, urine, height, weight, body mass index (how much fat you have on your body), and blood pressure. The test results were instant and were discussed with each person and followed up if they were not good.

Stories
The mobile clinic and arts truck went to each community. Artists travelled with the team and worked with people to develop their own stories about how to be healthier. At the end of each visit, an event was held to show off the healthy stories created by the community.

Community Development
Once testing was over, our Chief Investigators looked at the results from each community. We held community meetings where we discussed the results. At the meetings we worked with the community to identify issues that were affecting their health. The project played a role in promoting awareness of the issues. We achieved this through advocacy to community and government agencies and by publishing the research findings from all 10 communities.
Why is This Important?
The average life expectancy of Indigenous Australians is approximately 20 years less than non-Indigenous Australians. Major contributing factors in this reduced life expectancy are kidney disease and diabetes. The prevalence of type 2 diabetes in the Australian Indigenous community is 10-30%, this is four times more common than in the non-Indigenous population. This is the fourth highest rate of type 2 diabetes in the world.

In the Goldfields and Western Desert, many people are sick with diabetes and kidney disease so the community thought they would have a go at preventing the problems that cause diabetes and kidney disease.

The Animations
These animations were created during community visits by the Western Desert Kidney Health Project. Each community made their own story about the things they could do to make themselves healthier, happier and help prevent diabetes and kidney disease. We hope you like them. Please tell your friends to visit our website with a mobile phone or on a computer.

westerndesertkidney.org.au
Norseman

Home to the Ngadju People, Norseman lies between Esperance and Coolgardie and is the most southerly community visited by the Project. Each year Norseman people look forward to Quandong fruit, known as Domburies, which are collected and made into a jam. Norseman is also well known as a good place to collect bush medicine. The Ngadju mob frequently travel through the Fraser Range, Balladonia, to Esperance and back around to Norseman. Ngadju people have close family links with the Coonana and Tjuntjuntjara communities.

The Lost Emu

Out in the bush an egg hatches all alone. This little emu has to rely on the help from all the other animals to teach him what to eat and what to drink. Many years later, he is shocked when he discovers his own family on the outskirts of town living a very unhealthy life. He knows he’s gotta do something for his mob. How does this clever little emu help his own family?

See this animation at westerndesertkidney.org.au
Coolgardie

Home of the Maddawonga Galagu people, Coolgardie is famous for its rock holes that provide precious drinking water. Coolgardie is also close to the home of the tjilkarmarta (echidna). It is a significant place for the Anangu Pitjantjatjara or Spinifex people from Coonana and Tjuntjuntjara who believe that many sites in and close to Coolgardie are sacred.

Kurrawang

Kurrawang has special memories for people in the Goldfields as it was where many people grew up. Until the mid seventies it was a mission and an Aboriginal reserve settlement. There are those who still remember walking along the water pipeline to Kalgoorlie on a hot day.

Alfie the Tooth Fairy

As the sun sets Alfie flies off into the night with all the other tooth fairies to collect tiny teeth. But one night Alfie doesn’t return home with all the other tooth fairies. Why has he crashed into a big tree? Is it because he is overweight? Has the sugar made him a little bit blind? How did this happen and why?

See this animation at westerndesertkidney.org.au
Menzies and Morapoi

Menzies and Morapoi are the home of Wongutha people often known as Wongi's. Menzies and Morapoi are old places that used to be a cattle stations. Morapoi is still a station. They have many significant sites like the Seven Sisters Rock Hole. Menzies is the turn off to Lake Ballard which is a tourist attraction with the Antony Gormley statues attracting international visitors. Each of the sculptures are based on Menzies community residents.

Menzies Malleefowl Movie

If you’re a malleefowl wanting to hatch your eggs it’s super important for you to eat the right things. If you’re not careful with your diet during pregnancy diabetes can sneak up on you. Bowerbird decides to offer some good advice so the malleefowl can get ready for her special day. Cutting out junk food from your diet will help keep you nice and strong for your baby malleefowls as well.

See this animation at westerndesertkidney.org.au
Leonora is home to the Koara (Gwa-da) and Wongutha people and is the starting place of Goanna country. The Goanna is considered a highly desired delicacy to eat. Leonora has excellent swimming holes including the Basin and Station Creek where you can collect turtles and other good food.

The Proud Goanna

A big proud Goanna fears nothing. In fact there was one proud Goanna that was even too proud to get checked out by the doctor and too proud to do the right thing in front of his mates. But this Goanna better watch out because if he doesn't listen to good advice and stop over-eating and showing off, he might find himself in some seriously big trouble.

See this animation at westerndesertkidney.org.au
Laverton

Often referred to as LA, Laverton is home to the Wongutha people. LA has excellent hunting grounds for emu, kangaroo and has many significant sacred sites. An annual carnival is held in the main street and at a local swimming hole known as "the Boats". Laverton is regularly visited by people from the Ngaanytjarra Lands and people from Alice Springs in the Central Desert. It is considered a central location in the Northern Goldfields.

Sparks the Stallion

In the land of Sturt’s peas, wild horses and rocky breakaways there’s an old story about a secret treasure, a gold deposit. A stockman, so madly obsessed about finding it, suffers dehydration right near a rock hole! Lucky for him, he encounters Sparks the wild stallion. Sparks is based on a real horse who raced at the Laverton Races. When he eats good food and drinks plenty of water he can run as fast as the wind. Find out how Sparks becomes one of the most popular stallions ever.

See this animation at westerndesertkidney.org.au
Mount Margaret

Mount Margaret was originally a mission home for Aboriginal people in the Goldfields. While it has a sad history, many people are extremely fond of Mt Margaret and prefer to remember happy times. The Missionaries handed Mt Margaret back to the people of the Goldfields in the seventies. People often travel to Mt Margaret for festive events.

The Restless Roo

In Mount Margaret there is a joey that has her own double bed, sips coffee and is driven in a car to go prospecting. Whenever she sees another kangaroo she gets a fright and hops straight back into the car. This kangaroo doesn’t know how to relax. Stress is a big contributing factor when it comes to diabetes and kidney disease. Find out how our restless roo finds a way to stress less on a journey to find the Healing Pool at the salt lake.

See this animation at westerndesertkidney.org.au
Mulga Queen

People from Mulga Queen returned to their homeland where their ancestors lived to restart this community for the benefit of the next generation. Mulga Queen is considered a great place to learn the ways of your land and the ways of the old people.

The Top Dog

Kangaroo dogs are an important part of life in Mulga Queen. The fittest kangaroo dog around is the Top Dog. He takes down big roos to get some of that healthy lean kangaroo meat, which is high in omega-3. After stealing ice-creams, chips and chewing on greasy chops all day long, can he get back in to shape again to reclaim his title of Top Dog?

See this animation at westerndesertkidney.org.au
Coonana

Coonana is the home of the Anangu Pitiyantjatjara or Spinifex People and have a close cultural connection with the people of Tjuntjuntjara. Some of the people were moved off country after the Maralinga Nuclear testing went to Cunderlee and then later moved to Coonana in the early eighties.

Spotty’s Game

In the land of tadpoles and rock holes water is pretty important. After it rains and all the humans go inside, the frogs come out to play hockey on the oval. When Spotty’s little froggy kidneys stop working properly, it’s up to his family to teach him his heritage so he can learn more about the water that his little body needs to soak up.

See this animation at westerndesertkidney.org.au
Tjuntjuntjara

The heartland of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara or Spinifex people, Tjuntjuntjara is considered a spiritual and cultural sanctuary. It is one of the most isolated communities on mainland Australia. Tjuntjuntjara possesses its own unique desert beauty and has a very strong cultural tradition. People in Coonana and Tjuntjuntjara also have connections with people in Coolgardie and Norseman.

Little Kipara

Little Kipara, the bush turkey always dreamed of flying. He would saddle up on to the back of his mother with his brothers and she would fly them all around. To be strong enough to fly, the little bush turkey knows he must look after himself by eating healthy food and drinking water. Against all odds he continues to do the right thing so that one day he might achieve his goal.

See this animation at westerndesertkidney.org.au
Thank you!

Thanks to the community.
The Western Desert Kidney Health Project team wish to thank the communities of Coolgardie, Kurrawang, Norseman, Coonana, Tjuntjuntjara, Menzies, Morapoi, Leonora, Laverton, Mt Margaret and Mulga Queen who have taken part in the project. Without you it would not be a success. To see your community's animations you can visit the project website at westerndesertkidney.org.au

Thanks to our delivery partners
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Animation Artists in Residence: Annie Aiton, Steven Aiton, Peter Keelan and Samuel Stokes.
Artist in Residence: Poppy van Oorde-Grainger.
Writers: Alison Dimer, Naomii Schultz.
Narrators: Catherine Howard, Sandra Evans, Jeffrey Wicker, Annette Stokes, Stacey Miller, Marjorie Bonney, Victor Willis, Vanessa Thomas, Megan Bates.
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Thanks to our Do Tank
We are in debt to a small team of senior leaders who provided strategic advice to make this project possible.
Eating plenty of fruit and vegies contributes to good health, helps maintain a healthy weight and protects against a number of diseases, including diabetes and kidney disease. Most Australians eat only half the amount of fruit and vegies recommended for good health. Adults need to eat at least two serves of fruit and five serves of vegies each day. The amount children need depends on their age.

You can find out more about your daily fruit and vegie requirements at gofor2and5.com.au

Look there to see some fun ways to find out more about food... Enjoy!
The Western Desert Kidney Health Project

A partnership between the people of the Western Desert and the following supporters:

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