



MULTICULTURAL YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING PROJECT

SUMMARY OF LEARNING AND OUTCOMES FROM THE EMBRACE PROJECT IN DARWIN.

Melaleuca Australia has been working in partnership with The **Embrace** Multicultural Mental Health Project (Embrace), led by **Mental Health Australia** (MHA) and funded by the Department of Health from September 2022 up to October 2023.

Embrace aims to promote mental health awareness, build community capacity and resilience, and decrease stigma. Melaleuca Australia is one of four organisations nationally to receive a grant from Embrace, with a project focusing on multicultural youth in Darwin.

PROJECT AIM

To engage with the culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) youth communities to identify mental health issues and develop and implement solutions/initiatives to address these concerns.

Melaleuca Australia is a specialist organisation that supports humanitarian entrants, migrants and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds of all ages, settling in the Northern Territory of Australia.

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Multicultural young people, parents, caregivers, support services, community leaders and Melaleuca staff engaged in conversation about the strengths of multicultural young people, the issues they experience, and ideas for solutions!

PROJECT PARTNERS





PROJECT WORKING GROUP

We formed an evolving working group with local CALD youth, support services, and community leaders and organisations, and MHA/Embrace staff. Over time this group has included

- **15 multicultural young people**
- **2 Melaleuca Australia counsellors**
- **2 Melaleuca Australia Learning & Development Team members.**
- **6 stakeholders** (including headspace Darwin, NTG Office of Youth Affairs – Social Inclusion Team, City of Darwin – Youth Engagement Officers, and Useful Projects - Evaluation Consultant).

LEARNING FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

In April we held a **Multicultural Youth Wellbeing Day**

Bringing together 22 CALD young people with staff from headspace Darwin and Melaleuca Australia to enjoy games, sports, food, socialising and to start the discussion about wellbeing and mental health



LEARNING FROM RESEARCH

Research from across the country told us that CALD young people can experience a lot of stress, pressure and isolation. Racism, discrimination and a lack of mainstream understanding can have a big impact. There is also stigma around mental health and getting support. Resources need to be developed by young CALD people for young CALD people!

YOUNG CALD PEOPLE IN DARWIN WERE EXPERIENCING.....

Isolation and lack of belonging. Breakdowns in communication with parents/caregivers. Racism and discrimination. Pressure and stress around school, work and caring responsibilities. Transport problems and a lack of role models.

YOUNG CALD PEOPLE IN DARWIN WANTED.....

- Safe spaces for young people, with supportive role models and no judgement.
- Education in schools and workplaces about cultural differences and experiences of young CALD people.
- Celebration of cultures through events in mainstream settings.
- Podcasts and other platforms to share experiences.
- Community forums and intergenerational conversations.
- More understanding and support from schools, parents, community, religious leaders and youth services.
- More activities for CALD young people, with better transport.



CO-DESIGN WORKSHOPS

From May 2023, young people worked in 2 groups to develop resources.

One group included young people who have arrived in Australia in the last 5 years and the other group > 5 years.

Food, transport and fun activities were key parts of each workshop.

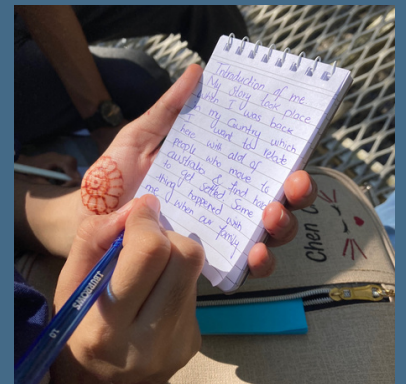


SHARING STORIES: VIDEO AND PODCAST RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

After reflecting on CALD youth feedback, local and national research, and the views of families, community and service providers, young people decided that **podcasts** and **videos** would be great formats for sharing information and experiences about mental health and wellbeing.

Young people wanted to share their stories, and create resources that can support other multicultural young people, as well as informing educators and support services.

Together young people brainstormed ideas about the important information, messages and topics they wanted to share. Over five months they learned about the format, structure and content of podcasts and videos through creating their own!



REFLECTIONS FROM YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE WORKSHOPS

- *“Talking to more people means you can share and learn things.”*
- *“Educating is important. We want to share our stories”.*
- *“Young people really need someone to understand and walk with them”.*
- *“With better communication, you can then get more support”.*

*“IT WILL BE FOR FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE BY
YOUNG PEOPLE”.*

Youth participant at co-design workshop



STAFF REFLECTIONS

- Young people are competent, capable and will always surprise us with their capacity when given the belief, trust, and opportunity to do so.
- It is important to have a secure/stable organisational base and values aligned team for this type of community development project.
- Co-design means being open to change, uncertainty and dynamic processes.
- The developmental evaluation process helps to keep track of processes, decisions and learning in real-time.

OTHER OUTCOMES

- Through ongoing conversations with stakeholders and feeding back project learnings in real time, we were able to build relationships, and increase awareness of the strengths and needs of CALD young people in Darwin. We were able to hold the space for stakeholders to reflect on gaps in services and programs.
- Young people increased their leadership skills, and gained confidence to put their hands up for other opportunities they reported they would not have prior to the project.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE LEARNED

Young people involved in the working group told us they learned more about what mental health and wellbeing means, what impacts it, and why mental health and wellbeing are important.

“Being strong in your mind”.

“How you think, feel and what you do”.

“It’s about feeling comfortable”.

What to do if you feel your mental health is not good.

“Learning to share and discuss things with others, and with people who are more experienced about mental health”.

“Play guitar, cooking, talking to someone older than me who can understand what I might be feeling. They are all good things to do”.

“Communicating is the key. Talk to someone, you will feel more relaxed”.

“When you do things together you can help each other be stronger”.

AWESOME RESOURCES!

4 VIDEOS

5 EPISODE PODCAST

LOCAL IMPACTS

The project process has been the catalyst for the following initiatives:

- City of Darwin: CALD young people special interest group. Youth Advisory Committee- youth mental health resources.
- CALD Youth Hub - Melaleuca Australia: Thursday afternoons activities.
- Northern Territory Government (NTG): Youth Round Table youth mental health podcast project.
- NTG Youth Parliament – two participants from the the Embrace Project Working Party presented a Bill on Anti racism in Parliament.

FOR MORE INFO..

Contact the Director of Learning & Development at Melaleuca Australia:

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You can also access our full evaluation [‘Prezi’ presentation by following this link](#)