

## Section 1: Developing healthy lifestyle activities and programs

As a Healthy Lifestyle Worker you will be promoting healthy lifestyles and encouraging people to make and maintain healthy lifestyle choices. At times, you will need to plan and/or run community events and programs that promote physical activity, healthy eating and responsible drinking of alcohol.

This section provides you with ideas for planning, running and evaluating activities and programs.



## Planning what you will do

As Healthy Lifestyle Workers, each of you will face conditions and circumstances that are unlike anyone else's. For example, some of you will be in organisations that have been very active in promoting healthy lifestyles; others will be in organisations where they have had other priorities. Some organisations may want their Healthy Lifestyle Workers to run lots of healthy lifestyle activities (for example, one-off cooking demonstrations or exercise classes), whereas others may want more sustainable or long-term programs.

### ***What is the difference between activities and programs?***

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In this *Toolkit*, 'activity' refers to single events, such as a community fun run or a walk to collect bush tucker.

'Program' refers to a series of activities that run over a period of time, or a collection of activities with a particular focus. For example, programs may include a walking group that meets once a week for several months, and a healthy eating program (that includes cooking sessions, nutritional advice, and supervised exercise classes), which runs for a number of sessions.

Programs can be simple and not require much planning or organisation; others may be complex and require lots of planning, organisation, and help from others.

## ***What activities or programs should you do?***

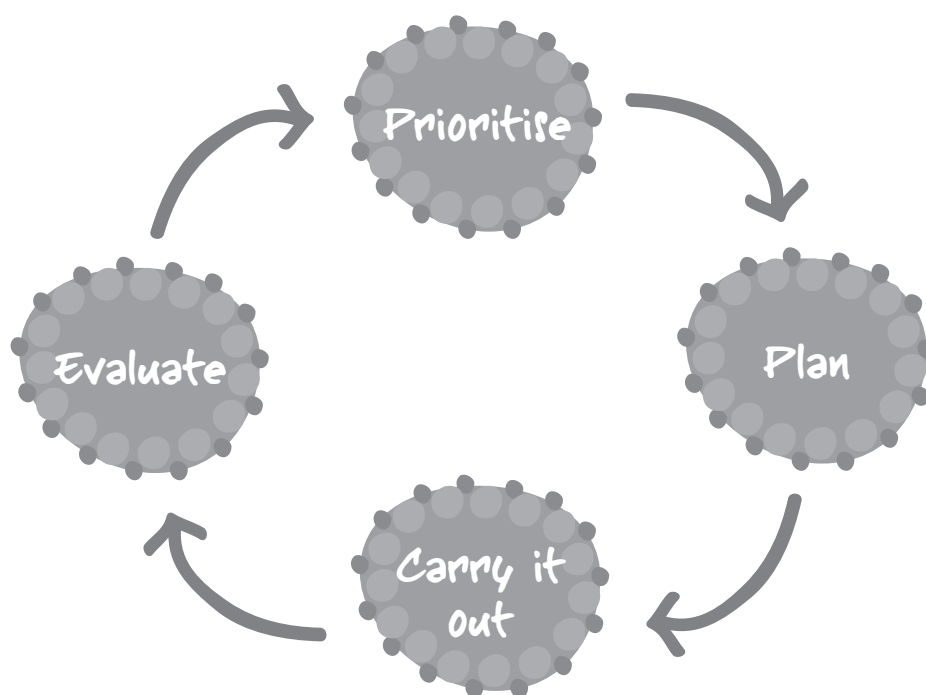
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When you start in the job, your organisation or community may already have ideas about activities and programs they would like you to run. If so, you will need to prioritise with your manager what you can usefully and realistically take on, and then start planning how you will put these priority programs into practice. On the other hand, your organisation or community may leave it up to you to decide what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and where to do it. In this case, you may need to do a needs assessment (or analysis) before you start (see 'Conducting a needs assessment and an environmental scan' Section 4 page 3). For example, a needs assessment could help you identify the chronic disease and health risk factors in your community and the availability of resources to help you tackle them.

Whatever your situation as a Healthy Lifestyle Worker, to run successful activities and programs you need to follow four steps:

- **prioritise** - decide (after consultation) what you think is realistic, achievable and suitable for your community
- **plan** - get ready for the activity/program
- **carry it out** - do it
- **evaluate** - check on its success

For information on developing your own program, refer to 'How to plan, run and evaluate programs' Section 2 page 22.





## Asking the questions

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You will need to ask the following three questions before planning healthy activities or programs with people in your community:

1. What does the community (or target group) want to do?
2. Are there any existing programs they could join?
3. Are there any existing programs that you could adapt to your needs?

### ***What does the community (or target group) want to do?***

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Consulting with the community will give you an idea of what the community wants. (This kind of consulting is one aspect of a 'needs assessment' - see 'Conducting a needs assessment and an environmental scan' Section 4 page 3).

Here are some examples of what the community might want:

- a low-impact exercise group for older women
- an organised, competitive sport for younger people
- healthy meals for children
- nutrition advice for older men who are living with chronic disease
- healthier food and drink options in stores

### ***Are there any existing programs they could join?***

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Before you start a new healthy lifestyle program for a particular group, you should check to see what programs already exist in your area or community (keep an eye out for programs that are culturally appropriate). If there is a suitable one, that's great, but your job is not done yet because many people need help joining a program that already exists. You may need to find out the details of the program and take those interested in joining along to the first session.

Organisations that are likely to run activities include:

- local or community councils - these are usually free or low cost to join
- not-for-profit organisations, such as the National Heart Foundation, Fred Hollows Foundation and the cancer councils in each state and territory
- church groups
- government agencies

To find out about existing programs:

- look in the local paper for program advertisements or announcements (for example, the local footy club is looking for players)
- visit your local council and ask what programs they offer (for example, exercise programs for elderly people)
- look up the not-for-profit organisations on the Internet or phone the local branch to find out what is going on in your area

Some programs may allow you to create your own group and give you all the support you need to get started. One example of this is the Heart Foundation walking program ([www.heartfoundation.org.au/sites/walking/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/sites/walking/Pages/default.aspx)). You can join an existing group if there is one in your area, or you can start up your own with support from the Heart Foundation.

### ***Are there any programs you could adapt to meet your needs?***

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If there are no existing programs, you might be able to adapt one to meet your community's needs. For example, if some mothers want ideas about how to cook healthy meals for their children, there may be a local group that runs a cooking class once a month at the community centre. For a small fee, you may be able to use their kitchen and equipment on a different day, and even make arrangements to employ their cooking demonstrator. You may also need to organise childcare for those mothers who have young children.

Another example: on the Internet you find that another community has run a successful exercise program for local men. You may be able to get all the details from the organiser, and run the same program in your community.

*Aunty Jean's good health team program* was first developed by the South East Sydney Illawarra Aboriginal Health Service. Other health services in southern New South Wales saw the success of the program and adapted it to suit the needs of their patients. This ensured the program remained relevant and culturally appropriate when used with the new groups. (see Section 3 page 6 for a full description of the Aunty Jean's program)

If there are no programs that you can adapt, you will need to create your own. (For more information on planning, see 'Planning community programs' Section 2 page 22.)

## Barriers and motivating factors for people making healthy lifestyle choices

There are many risk factors that affect whether people develop chronic diseases. Some risk factors cannot be changed (eg family history) and some are difficult to change because they are not always within the control of the individual (such as unemployment, poverty, poor housing). Some risk factors are possible to change, such as poor eating habits and being physically inactive. People can experience barriers and motivators when attempting to change their lifestyles to avoid chronic diseases.

So why do some people with chronic disease, or at risk of chronic disease, make important lifestyle changes and others do not?

There are 'barriers' or influences in people's lives, such as:

- people don't have enough information
- people are stuck in bad habits
- people follow the bad behaviour of their family or friends
- people become addicted to substances such as alcohol and nicotine
- people are stressed (possibly because of social problems, poor housing and low income)
- people do not have access to healthy choices (such as healthy food)
- there is limited community infrastructure such as parks, pathways, lighting, shade etc

Let's look in more detail at why people do or don't make changes to their lifestyles.

### ***Reasons why people want to make dietary changes***

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Some reasons why people are motivated to change their eating habits are:

- they have been newly diagnosed with a chronic disease (such as diabetes or high blood pressure)
- they are overweight and suffering discomfort
- they want to help prevent other family members from developing the same health problems
- they want to live longer for the sake of the family (grandchildren, for example)

### ***Reasons why people do not make dietary changes***

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As mentioned above, some people have barriers that prevent them making changes, such as:

- lack of support from family members
- not being able to cook their own food
- not having a regular place to live
- poor oral health (for example, trouble with teeth and gums)
- not having the money to buy healthy food
- not having access to fresh or healthy foods (especially for people in rural or remote areas)
- not having a place to store food when they buy it
- a preference for the taste of foods they know
- strong family traditions that include eating particular foods
- having easy access to unhealthy foods

### ***Reasons why people want to be physically active***

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Many people enjoy being active and the feeling of wellbeing it gives them. Some reasons why people exercise:

- it is a part of their everyday life - for example, walking the children to school or walking to work
- participating in organised sport is viewed positively, as being done to benefit the family or community
- they want to recover from illness - both for their own sake or for other family members
- they just want to become healthier





### ***Reasons why people do not get involved in physical activity***

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Some people experience difficulties that prevent them from being active such as:

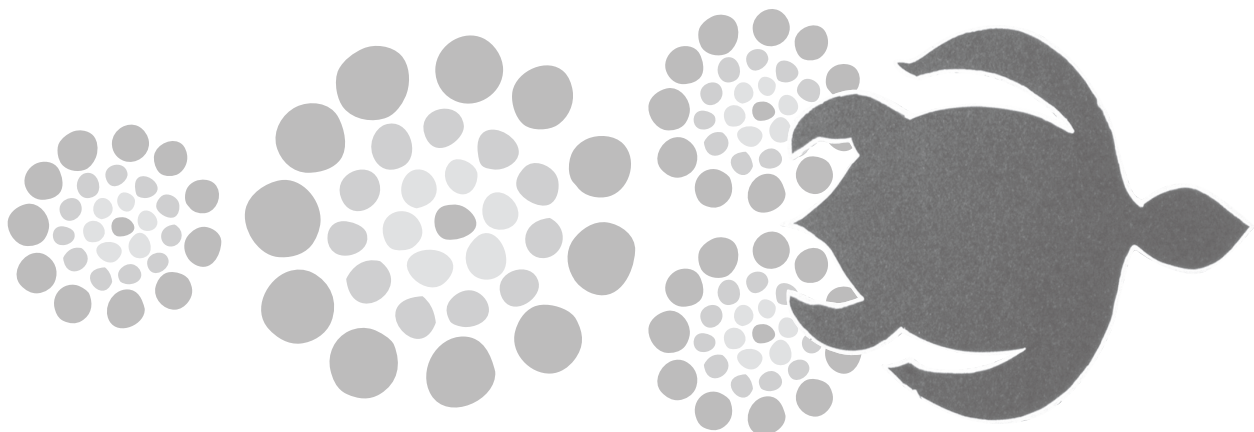
- lack of support from family members - exercising alone for personal benefit may be seen as preventing a person from spending time with family and loved ones
- lack of facilities or a supportive environment (for example, for people living in remote areas)
- cost - people on low incomes may not choose to spend their limited funds on exercise
- lack of access to transport
- do not have the time to spend away from family
- too tired or unwell to engage in activity

### ***Reasons why people give up drinking alcohol or reduce the amount they drink***

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Some people are motivated to give up drinking or to reduce the amount they drink because they:

- have become severely ill
- need to be under the driving limit for alcohol
- need to be fit for work
- don't like the hangover afterwards
- see the problems their drinking is causing
- face pressure from family and friends
- want to reduce their spending



## ***Reasons why people find it hard to give up drinking alcohol or reduce the amount they drink***

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Drinking behaviours can be difficult to change. Some reasons why people find it difficult to give up drinking or to reduce the amount they drink are because they:

- feel alcohol makes it easier for them to socialise
- feel alcohol helps them relax
- like the taste
- like the feeling of being intoxicated
- want to fit in with friends or family
- think alcohol helps them forget problems and reduce stress
- have become addicted to alcohol

## **How to break down the barriers**

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When designing programs or activities it is important to think about how to avoid or lessen the barriers so people will find it easier to make healthy changes. Here are some ideas - with examples - for you to consider:

### ***Target families not individuals***

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The *Wise women* program in Victoria was established to provide a space for Indigenous women to come together to yarn and cook healthy meals for their families. An Indigenous Nutrition Support Worker was involved in the program and the group met fortnightly or monthly. The cooked meals would be taken home by the women to their families for dinner. Children were a main focus of the program and the women learnt about child nutrition and how they could encourage their kids to eat healthy food options.

### ***Encourage participants to bring along other family members***

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A series of cooking courses were run at the Aboriginal Medical Service Western Sydney in partnership with the Western Institute of Technical and Further Education (TAFE). The TAFE nutrition teacher who led the course was an Indigenous woman from the local community. Classes incorporated nutrition education into practical cooking lessons, which aimed to improve the students' cooking skills and the ability to choose healthier food. Class organisers found that participants who had family support for healthy changes were more likely to make those changes, and even more so when family members attended the course together.

### ***Target children so the parents and families can also be involved***

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The idea behind the Healesville community garden in Victoria was to educate local Indigenous children about fruits and vegetables by providing them with the opportunity to grow them. It was also intended that the fruit and vegetable garden could be used as a means for strengthening community ties by providing a place for families and the community to come together, yarn, and hold community events. With local support, a gazebo was built, fruit trees and vegetables were planted, a water tank was installed, and a worm farm and compost patches were established. During the first three years, the garden produced one summer crop each year, including corn, tomatoes, strawberries, beans, and zucchinis.



### ***Consult with the local elders to get advice on the local traditional social structures***

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*Aunty Jean's good health team* program from the Illawarra region in New South Wales relied on a strong supportive relationship between local elders and Aboriginal Health Workers, with up to 15 local elders taking part in the program. The leadership and commitment of the elders to better health for Indigenous people was one of the essential factors in the success of the program.

### ***Consult with the community to find out what programs they want, get them involved in the decision making***

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The *Garden Kai Kai* project was established on Thursday Island following concern among community members and health workers about the high rates of preventable chronic diseases, low self-esteem, limited access to fresh fruit and vegetables, and the loss of aspects of traditional culture in the community. Following many consultations with community members and with Indigenous and non-Indigenous experts, the *Garden Kai Kai* project was formed as a means of addressing the nutritional needs of the community. The project involved establishing a market garden where fresh traditional produce could be grown and distributed to members of the community. Community elders offered advice on the plants to include in the market garden and young people were recruited to plant the seedlings and attend to them as they grew.

### ***Run the programs in a local community space that is welcoming and safe***

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Young people were recruited from an Indigenous wellbeing centre in Queensland to attend a culturally appropriate cooking session. The aim was to increase their knowledge, confidence, and skills in preparing and cooking healthy foods on a budget. It was decided that an interactive cooking session would be most appropriate and would help to engage them from the beginning. The cooking session was held at the centre, which already contained the facilities needed. This helped to create a safe and familiar environment for the young people and may have helped to attract more participants and also enhance learning. The young people who participated were very enthusiastic about the cooking session with the majority rating the session as 'very good' (highest score) on the evaluation form.



### ***Run programs or activities that are culturally appropriate***

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A cooking program was run in several Adelaide schools where children were taught to cook in traditional ways. A local Indigenous woman showed the children how to cook fish in a clay wrap on hot coals. When the fish was ready, the instructor showed the students how to crack the clay off the fish so they could eat it. The students also learnt how to make damper on the coals.

### ***Try and organise educational sessions to be hands-on to give participants the opportunity to ‘experience’, and leave plenty of time for discussion and questions***

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The *Quick meals for Kooris* program from New South Wales is a hands-on cooking program that uses a friendly, informal environment to teach urban Indigenous people how to cook low-cost, healthy meals for the family. The program includes two, three-hour sessions, which begin with a demonstration of the recipe to be cooked. The class breaks into small groups to cook the recipe and then everyone comes together to enjoy the cooked meal. The cooking sessions include discussions on several related topics including: food safety and hygiene; nutrition and health impacts; and how to adapt or choose recipes that suit an individual's cooking skills and available equipment.

### ***Make the activities fun***

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Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation in Dareton, New South Wales organised a camp for clients to learn about diabetes in a fun and relaxing environment. The camp was held over a weekend at what had been shearers' quarters by the Murray River. Two workshops were run on how to manage diabetes and prevent complications. Participants were given assistance in preparing and cooking healthy meals, and were also given a personal training session. The 'work' was balanced with fun activities including fishing and bush walking.

### ***Encourage participants to provide feedback on what they need and be prepared to modify the program***

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The *Cherbourg healthy lifestyles program* in south-east Queensland was created for the women of Cherbourg who wished to improve their health. They requested an exercise program with regular fitness assessments and a circuit class so they could exercise together, but at their own pace. About eight months into the program, the number of people attending the fitness classes started to decline. The women indicated that the church hall was no longer a suitable venue for the classes. A more appropriate, permanent venue was found and participant numbers increased again. Another modification to the program saw the fitness classes changed from lunchtime to the evening at the request of the women involved. The success of the program was confirmed as the number of women attending the fitness classes increased over time, and men also started participating in the program. A third fitness class was added to the program due to demand from participants.

### ***Identify mentors who can provide motivation to community members***

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The Rumbalara Football and Netball Club in Shepparton, Victoria ran nutrition information sessions for their athletes, to teach them how to improve their fitness through improving their eating habits. A mentoring program was included, whereby older players were encouraged to bring a younger player along to the healthy breakfasts. This enabled the older players to pass on their knowledge as well as encourage positive behaviour. It also encouraged the younger players to take part.

### ***Encourage participants to measure their own progress, not to compare themselves with other people***

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The Nguju Health Service project on Bathurst Island in the Top End of the Northern Territory aimed to educate their Health Workers about chronic disease and encourage them to improve their own health. The Health Workers then acted as an example for the community and encouraged change in their clients. Staff members were given screenings (including blood glucose level checks), health checks and pedometers. They were then able to measure their own progress as they learnt to manage their chronic diseases. The project was seen to be a big success among both health workers and the wider community.

***Encourage small, consistent changes in people as this is likely to be more effective than pushing for big changes***

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*Aunty Jean's good health team* program in Shoalhaven, New South Wales involved exercise sessions and educational sessions for community members to help them achieve improvements in their health. Participants were encouraged to have a personal goal at the beginning of the program. One participant's goal was 'To be able to climb the stairs without panting and puffing'.

***Provide regular feedback to participants to keep them informed - by a newsletter or a regular meeting/chat session***

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The *Garden tucker* program in North Queensland was developed to encourage healthy eating among local Indigenous people. Community members had input into the development of the program, which included live demonstrations on home vegetable gardening and activities on healthy eating and cooking. Participants in the program were given a 'tucker box kit' containing a selection of seeds to encourage them to grow their own fruit and vegetables at home. Newsletters and text messages - containing healthy tips, recipe ideas and success stories - were sent to those participating in the program.

***Use role models to encourage healthy behaviours***

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The Jimmy Little Foundation established the *Thumbs up!* program to promote healthy eating among Indigenous children aged 5-16 years. The program uses high profile Indigenous role models, like Jimmy Little (who has diabetes), to deliver health messages to young Indigenous people. The program uses a combination of music and multimedia workshops to encourage young Indigenous people to make healthy food choices and to drink adequate amounts of water.

### ***Provide transport for those who may not otherwise be able to attend***

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The *Aboriginal women's fun and fitness day* event was hosted by the Bankstown Koori Interagency and took place at the Aboriginal Women's Healing House in Picton, New South Wales. The *Fun and fitness day* attracted 77 Indigenous women; a bus was used to transport women from various communities in the south-west Sydney area. The women participated in a range of activities on the day including: egg and spoon race; three legged race; Indigenous games; walking around the pond; massages; tai chi; and laughter exercises. Reports from some of the women who took part in the *Fun and fitness day* suggest they had much fun and learnt about the importance of regular health checks and exercise.

### ***Promote self-respect and cultural pride***

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Ngwala Willumbong (a Melbourne-based alcohol and drug rehabilitation service and outreach support program for Koori men, women and families), in partnership with other organisations, has developed a series of camps for Indigenous young people from the outer metropolitan regions of Melbourne. The camps aim to boost confidence and self esteem by providing participants with an opportunity to learn life skills in a supportive peer oriented environment that upholds traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values and culture.



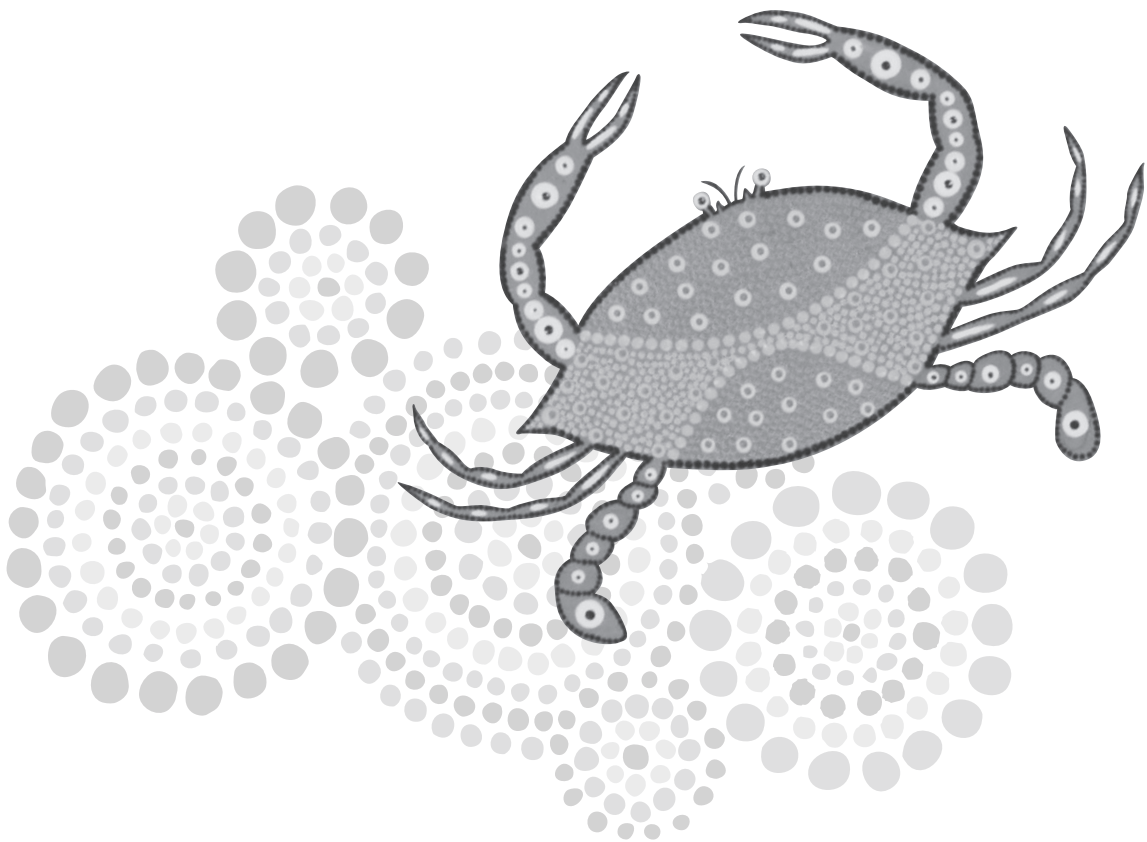
## Ideas for healthy lifestyle activities

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Some of the people you work with in your community will have little interest in or understanding of healthy lifestyles. To spark their interest, you will need to begin with simple activities - for example, organising a gentle walk and a yarn two mornings a week for a group of local women. Or you could organise an appealing activity, such as a demonstration of dancing (preferably one that invites locals to have a go at learning some simple steps, such as line dancing) - with some light refreshment or prizes and giveaways.

Other people may be keen and ready to get seriously involved, yet glad of your help, for example in putting together a local team to join a sporting competition.

Of course, some people will be happy to 'do their own thing', but may still need some help or advice.



## ***Raising people's awareness of healthy lifestyles***

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Here are some ideas of activities you can do to get people interested in becoming more physically active and in changing their eating habits:

- organise a health display at a community event or school, with information on chronic disease, nutrition and physical activity
- organise a 'have a go' sports day at the local community centre, with activities such as exercise to music, a climbing wall, archery, weightlifting, and volleyball
- give away brochures, stickers and posters at the medical centre, community centre or health display
- conduct a 'healthy eating' or 'let's get physical' poster competition for school kids
- run a colouring-in competition for younger kids with prizes of healthy foods
- conduct food and recipe giveaways of fresh fruit, and healthy dips with vegetable dippers
- check on the availability of promotions from local growers' associations (for example, Western Potatoes in Western Australia has 'Bud the spud', who visits schools and gives away potatoes and healthy recipes) (see: <http://feelgoodfood.net.au/news-and-fun/bud-the-spuds-page-2/>)
- run a quiz at community events - with small prizes of attractive nutritious food for correct answers

You may want to consider linking some of your activities with key local, state or national events such as NAIDOC week, Reconciliation week, Closing the gap day, Heart week, or local shows, festivals or expos.

Of course you will need funding support for most of these activities - check to see what is available from your host organisation and/or be prepared to seek sponsorship from local businesses and organisations.

## ***Being physically active***

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Here are some activities you can organise for people to be more active:

- walking and yarning in small or large groups (family members and whole communities can join in too)
- walking to collect bush food
- gardening in the community, or at the local school
- swimming and playing water games
- learning about and playing traditional Indigenous games
- joining Heart Foundation walking groups
- joining Heart Foundation 'Jump rope for heart' promotion  
(see: [www.heartfoundation.org.au/sites/jumpropeforheart/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/sites/jumpropeforheart/Pages/default.aspx))
- doing Tai Chi
- doing water aerobics
- organising for supervised fitness or gym sessions
- putting on community fun runs or walks
- dancing - line dancing, discos, traditional dancing, zumba
- cheerleading for the local team
- playing, coaching and/or supporting local teams
- sporting activities that can be done in small groups, such as basketball, football, softball or cricket - you don't need a whole team

## ***Healthy eating***

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Here are some activities you can suggest or organise to promote healthy eating:

- cooking groups where people share favourite recipes and cooking tips
- programs that teach about bush foods and how to prepare or cook them
- talks and demonstrations by a dietitian or nutritionist
- talk to a store manager about stocking or promoting healthy foods
- supermarket or community store 'tours' to discuss healthy food choices, unhealthy foods and reading food labels
- family or community gardens
- a 'biggest loser' competition
- local weight watchers groups, such as those held by the WeightWatchers organisation or similar
- have a healthy eating policy for work and community events

## ***Managing alcohol***

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Here are some ways to raise awareness in the community about alcohol and tackle the problems it causes:

- work with local drinking venues to encourage entertainment such as music and games to reduce the amount of alcohol people drink
- organise alcohol-free community events
- organise a group for parents to provide education and support on alcohol issues for youths
- support the alcohol education program in your local school with appropriate promotional material and guest speakers
- provide information about specialist alcohol services that are available in your community and how people can contact them

## Reducing smoking

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Working in regional teams, you will work along side the Tobacco Action Workers and Regional Tobacco Coordinators in their activities that aim to reduce tobacco smoking in your communities. Your role in encouraging healthy behaviours and enjoyable smoke-free activities will be important in reducing smoking rates.

Here are some activities the regional teams may use to encourage community members to quit or cut down or not take-up smoking:

- developing locally relevant quit-smoking videos, flip charts and brochures
- supporting smoke-free homes and community events
- conducting education sessions about the harm of smoking and support quitting attempts

Please note: The Tobacco Action Workers will use the *Talkin' up good air* manual, produced by the Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Tobacco Control. The DVD is in your *Resource pack* and the manual is available at [www.ceitc.org.au/talkinupgoodair](http://www.ceitc.org.au/talkinupgoodair)



# How to plan, run and evaluate programs

Developing and running a program will need more work than developing and running an activity. This section provides you with ideas and information on developing a community program, from planning and running the program to evaluating it. It includes some templates and worksheets to make your work easier.

## Planning community programs

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Good planning is essential for a successful activity or program. You need to plan ahead and allow plenty of time. Planning your program should come after a needs assessment and/or an environmental scan have/has been done. However, you may not have to do a needs assessment; your host organisation may have already collected this information. A needs assessment will identify the health and lifestyle issues facing the community you are working with and help you consider the types of health promotion projects that best suit the community's circumstances. Following this process you will also need to consider what resources you have to carry out a program, such as how much funding you have, support from the community and help from other agencies.

For a more detailed description of how to do a needs assessment, go to 'Conducting a needs assessment and an environmental scan' Section 4 page 3.

## ***Steps for planning a program***

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There are three steps to follow when planning your own program:

1. Identify the health issue, target group and project goals.
2. Develop a project plan.
3. Organise your project tasks.

### ***Step 1. Identify the health issue, target group and program goals.***

For example, the health issue you have identified might be healthy eating, the target group might be pre-school children, and the goal might be for them to eat at least one piece of fruit and two serves of vegetables on most days of the week.

The following strategies are important in selecting a health issue, target group and goals for your program:

- consult with community members and stakeholders (for example, health services) who know about the health issue and the individuals who are affected by it
- collect information about the health issue, the people affected, and the community. The local medical service and the Australian Bureau of Statistics may provide this information. Include information about previous programs - what worked and lessons learnt
- consider the cultural and social context in which the program will operate
- identify the various factors that affect the health issue, such as people's knowledge and attitudes, their physical environment, economic factors and access to appropriate services
- consider what type of program best meets the needs of the target group
- set realistic goals – don't necessarily include amounts, for example that all participants lose 10kg, as this can put too much pressure on the participants and the program

### **Step 1 checklist**

- ☐ Consult with the community and other concerned people
- ☐ Review relevant data and information
- ☐ Understand the characteristics of the target group
- ☐ Analyse the context in which the program will operate
- ☐ Analyse the needs of the target group
- ☐ Identify factors that contribute to the health issue
- ☐ Select goals for the program



### Planning a diabetes program

To identify the health needs of their community, the *Yambacoona diabetes program* facilitators organised regular community meetings to discuss diabetes and ways of changing eating habits and activity levels. In this way, they were able to tailor the program to meet the needs of people in the community.

### Step 2. Develop a program plan

The next step is to convert your thoughts into a plan of action. This plan will identify the activities that will be undertaken to achieve the program's goals. For example, if you have decided to tackle adult obesity among middle-aged Indigenous people in a regional centre, you could implement a walking program for this group. The program could have the goal of each participant increasing the number of steps they take per week. They can monitor this by wearing a pedometer and keeping a record of the number of steps they walk.

The following strategies are important in drawing up a practical plan for your program:

- provide clear reasons for your program and clear strategies and goals
- select an approach that has been effective with the health issue of concern and is suitable for your target group, geographic location, and resources available
- select program goals that are 'SMART':
  - » **S**pecific
  - » **M**easurable
  - » **A**chievable
  - » **R**elevant
  - » **T**ime specific
- identify the community and supports needed for the program (for example, if you are organising a cooking class for women, find out if any of them have children; if so you may need to organise child care, or run the classes during school term time)
- identify the skills needed by whoever will run the program, including yourself, and if necessary make sure appropriate training is provided (for example, engage nutrition or exercise experts if you can)
- identify the amount of money needed and draw up a working budget, (how/why it will be spent)
- think carefully about the program to ensure it is achievable
- think how you will evaluate the program (See 'Evaluating community programs' Section 2 page 31)

### **Step 2 checklist**

- ☐ A set of reasons and clear goals for the program have been written
- ☐ Program strategies have been selected
- ☐ The roles of the community and others concerned with the program have been explained
- ☐ Existing and previous programs have been reviewed and adapted, if relevant
- ☐ Skills and funding to support the program have been identified
- ☐ Checks have been made that the program as planned is worthwhile, realistic and achievable
- ☐ Evaluation plan has been identified

### **Step 3. Organise your program tasks**

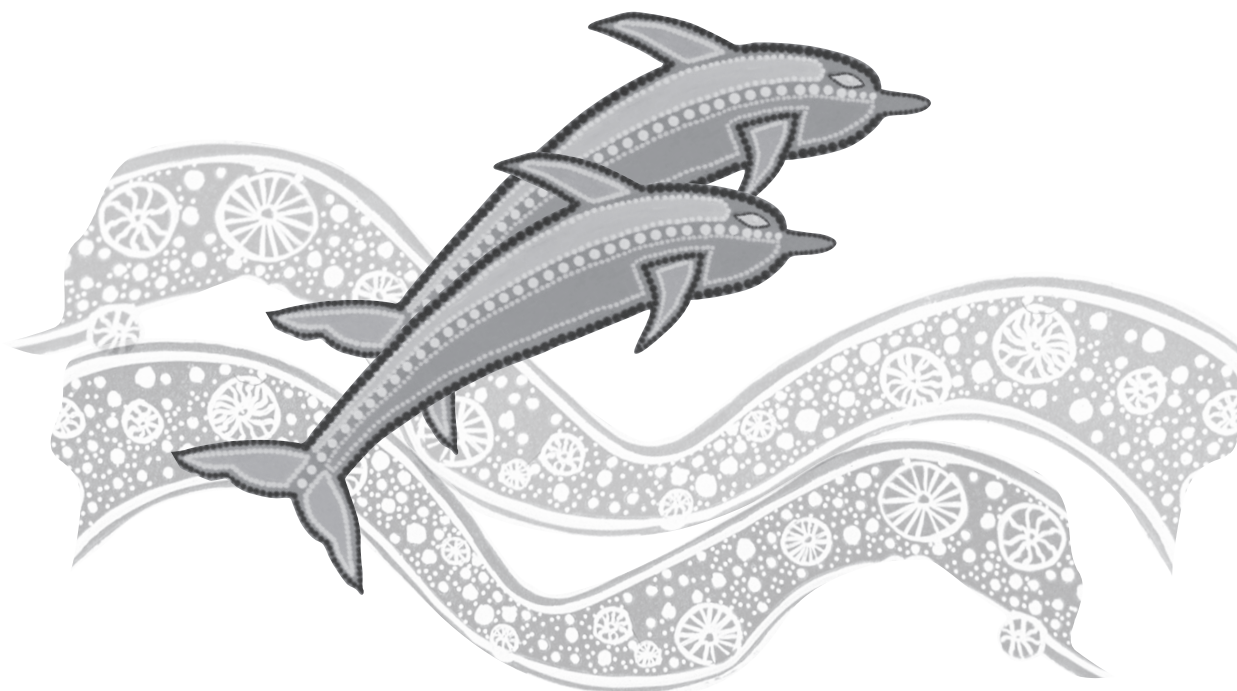
The third and final step involves identifying tasks, and putting these tasks into a timeframe. An example of a task is: develop a strategy for communicating with participants, the community and other key stakeholders. The tasks make up your action plan. For example, if you decide to offer a social walking program for middle-aged Indigenous women, you would need to select appropriate walking trails (as in local parks) and a suitable time (such as Saturday mornings). You would need to recruit participants, and possibly an event leader who is well regarded by the target group, and let participants know when the program is to commence. You will need to talk to participants and the community about what the program involves and the benefits it provides. You could publicise the activity as a way of explaining the program's purpose, getting more participants, and letting the community know about potential benefits.

The following strategies are important in organising the tasks that make up your action plan:

- draw up a task planner that identifies each task, the person responsible and the order in which the tasks have to be completed
- make sure you allow sufficient time to complete each task
- draw up a plan for keeping participants, stakeholders and the wider community informed about the program

### Step 3 checklist

- ☐ Action plan has been designed
- ☐ Tasks have been organised into a logical sequence within a realistic timeframe
- ☐ Roles of the community and key stakeholders in the program have been explained
- ☐ The person responsible for each task has been identified
- ☐ A plan for keeping people informed has been drawn up



## ***Planning sheet***

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A planning sheet can help you and others to organise what needs to be done when running an event or activity. It provides a quick summary, which is useful before, during and after an event or activity, or for future planning.

A planning sheet includes brief points or reminders such as:

- when and where the event or activity will be held
- who will be involved - remember to include their contact details
- details of how the event or activity will be promoted (see Section 4 page 16, 'Getting your message across')
- what type of evaluation will be used (see Section 2 page 31 'Evaluating community programs')
- what items are needed (eg questionnaires and pens) and who will take them
- who will be responsible for cleaning up
- who needs to be thanked.

After the event is a good time to write down some ideas of what could be done better next time.

An example of a planning sheet, which you can use as a base for designing your own, is on the next page.

# Planning Sheet

<b>Name of activity or event:</b>		
<b>Venue and address:</b>		
<b>Time:</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>Finish:</b>
<b>Who is involved and their contact details?</b>		
<b>Other organisations involved:</b>		
<b>Promotion of the event</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> poster <input type="checkbox"/> newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> pamphlet/flyer <input type="checkbox"/> radio <input type="checkbox"/> mail <input type="checkbox"/> email <input type="checkbox"/> meeting	
<b>What items need to be taken to the activity or event?</b>		
<b>Who will take the items?</b>		
<b>Evaluation:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> questionnaire <input type="checkbox"/> interview participants <input type="checkbox"/> count the number of people who attend <input type="checkbox"/> other ideas:	
<b>Who will clean up?</b>		
<b>Who do you need to thank?</b>		
<b>What could you do better next time?</b>		

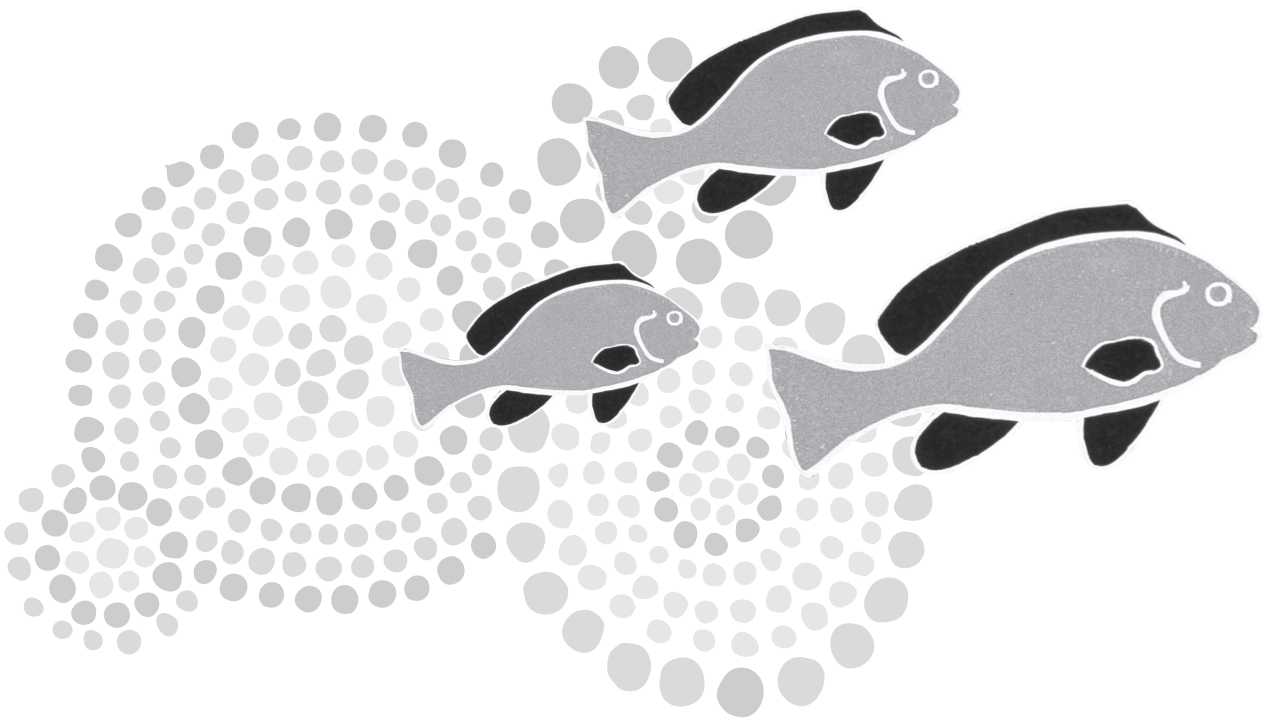
## Carrying out community programs

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After planning your program, your plans will be put into action in the implementation stage.

Here are some likely actions:

- promote your activity or program - for example, by using posters, local radio, local newspaper and newsletters. (See 'Getting your message across' Section 4 page 16)
- find out how many people are likely to attend, and ask people to register their interest and contact details
- ensure that the place where you are holding the activity or program is suitable for the number of people and the type of activity, for example, that there is access to toilet facilities, disability access and parking. If outdoors you may require power, water and a marquee
- organise the items/resources needed
- ensure that organisers, presenters and helpers of the activity or program are available and have a back-up plan in case any of them are away
- be prepared to change plans if need be
- carry out an evaluation of your activity or program in terms of the goals you set



### **Oenpelli *Healthy for life* program**

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The Oenpelli community came together with Kakadu Health Services and NT Department of Health and Community Services to launch the *Healthy for life* program. The key focus of the Oenpelli program was to educate the community on the importance of good overall health (Healthy inside, Healthy outside, Healthy upstairs, Healthy environment).

The launch for the program had great participation from both the community and all the key stakeholders and centred around a family BBQ at the youth centre with activities for all the family, such as:

- *Healthy for life* poster competition for school children
- basketball and football games
- line dancing exhibition from the 'Groovy Grans'
- concert by the community band
- healthy food BBQ (meat provided by the Oenpelli abattoir)
- health display and expo with information on health promotion, male health, chronic disease and mental health
- children's face painting

Staff did a marvellous job in planning and facilitating the launch, resulting in a packed house and lots of smiles on the evening.

As part of the evaluation process you will want to get feedback from your co-workers, participants and community members (see 'Evaluating community programs' Section 2 page 31).



## Evaluating community programs

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Evaluation in simple terms is asking the question 'Did the event (or program) get results?'. Evaluating is important because it allows you to check: the progress of your programs; who has benefitted; and what should be done differently next time. Some people are put off by evaluation, but it does not have to be complicated, or take a lot of time.

### ***Why do an evaluation?***

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Evaluation provides you with the evidence of what has worked in your program and what hasn't. It also provides information on: any changes that were made and the reasons; and the results that were achieved. From this evidence you can make decisions about what to do in the future. You will have to make choices about how you do the evaluation and how much you evaluate.

A starting point is to make clear the purpose (main reason) for your program. By the end of the program you should strive to answer the following questions:

1. has the program reached the right people? If not, why not?
2. was it run as planned? If not, why not?
3. did it achieve its purpose? If not, why not?

### ***Different types of evaluation***

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The type of evaluation you do will depend on the questions you want to ask. You must also be prepared to adapt your evaluation to your audience as some methods will not be appropriate for some groups.

#### ***Evaluation - using the right type***

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A program to promote nutrition and physical activity was run in northern Victoria. When the program facilitators attempted to evaluate the program they found that using a questionnaire was mostly unsuccessful, largely because it was viewed as too personal and one-sided. A more culturally appropriate method of feedback and evaluation was then decided upon - conversation at a social gathering.

The different types of evaluation are:

### ***Process evaluation***

Process evaluation focuses on how the activity or program is being run, and whether it meets the needs of the participants. For example, in an evaluation of an exercise program for teenagers, you might ask them if the exercise or sport they are doing is what they want to continue doing.

### ***Impact evaluation***

Impact evaluation is used to measure what your activity or program is achieving in the short term. For example you could count the number of steps people took in a walking program every week.

### ***Outcome evaluation***

Outcome evaluation is measuring what you have achieved over a longer period of time. For example you could measure the reduction of chronic diseases in a community. As a Healthy Lifestyle Worker you will probably not be able to do an outcome evaluation because these are long term results that are typically measured by professional evaluators.

The different methods of evaluation are:

### ***Qualitative evaluation***

Qualitative evaluation involves gathering people's thoughts and feelings about an activity or program. You can ask questions that enable people to tell you, in their own words, whether they liked an activity or program and whether they thought it useful.

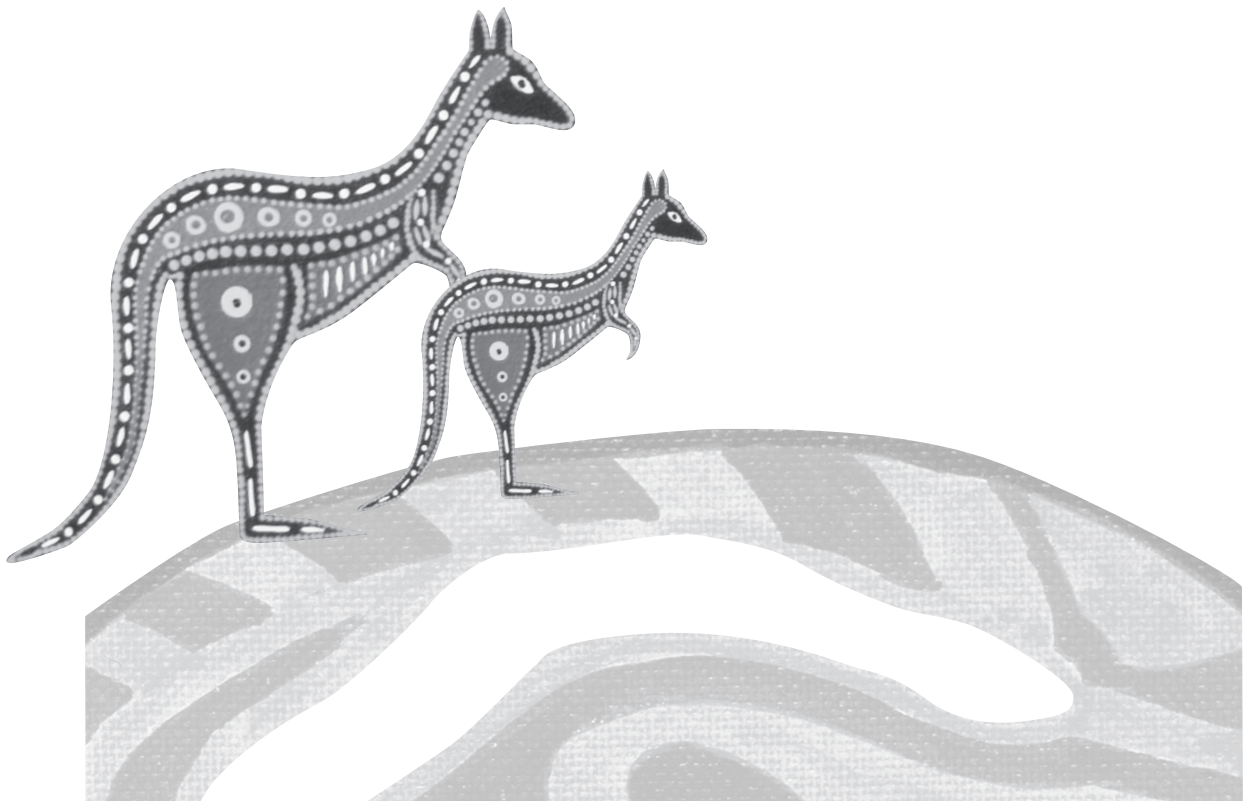
### ***Quantitative evaluation***

Quantitative evaluation involves gathering information that can be counted. For example, you could count how many people attended a fitness program, or how many times a week the people in the program exercised.

### ***Evaluation - an example***

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The *Workplace Indigenous physical activity project* (WIPA) in Queensland introduced a workplace staff physical activity challenge. Participants were asked to complete three questionnaires; one before the program commenced, one at the end of the program, and another three months after the program finished. The findings showed that prior to commencement most staff did not meet the National Physical Activity guidelines. The end-of-program questionnaire showed that more staff members were meeting the National Physical Activity guidelines and that this activity had continued after the program finished.



The following is a simple step by step guide on how you can build evaluation into your program plan.

### ***A guide to evaluation***

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**1: Plan the program** - what do you want to achieve, who do you want to involve, what will you do, and how will you do it?



**2: Plan an evaluation** - decide and consult about what you will measure, identify key questions, identify cultural sensitivities, identify good processes, and allocate necessary resources.



**3: Design the evaluation** - decide on the methods you will use to collect the information you want, such as counting how many attended a community program on exercise, giving out a short questionnaire, asking what people thought of the program, and (after perhaps a month) whether those who attended are exercising more?



**4: Collect and record your information** - do this systematically to get a true picture of what your program achieved.



**5: Analyse your information** - see if the program achieved what you intended, or whether there were any unexpected outcomes. Identify the lessons learnt.



**6: Provide feedback on your findings** - let the people involved in the program, such as the community, your organisation and the participants know about what was achieved. This could be a community presentation, a formal written report, or a series of meetings with the people involved to tell them about what you found.

Do not expect your program to run or achieve its goals exactly as it was intended. All programs are a learning experience for you and those involved. Monitoring your results throughout the program will help you keep track of progress, identify when important changes occur, and make it easier at the end of the program to summarise what was achieved. Answering the following questions may help you keep your evaluation on track while the program is running:

- what do the early results mean in terms of what you are trying to achieve?
- should you be changing the way you are doing things?
- how do you keep the positive changes you are achieving with your program?
- are you doing things in the best possible way?
- are you talking to the right people about the progress of your activity or program?

When you have finished your program, you will need to think about the following:

- how did the program go, did you make a difference?
- how can you share the information about what has been achieved?
- what is the next step?

#### ***Practical evaluation tips***

- Keep it simple - think about what you need to measure; focus on a few key features so the evaluation does not become too difficult.
- Make it relevant - think about the parts of the program you choose to measure, and ask if they address your purpose?
- Think about evaluation from the beginning - remember to build in evaluation from the start of your program so you can monitor progress.
- Look at how similar programs have been evaluated - can you learn from what others have done?
- Promote your findings - everyone likes a good news story. Local media are often interested in community programs. Newsletters are good ways of promoting your program to the community. Think about making a presentation to the community.

#### ***Evaluation sheet***

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You may want to give participants an evaluation sheet. An example of an evaluation sheet follows:



# Healthy, Deadly and Strong event

Please let us know what you think

Event title: ..... Date: ...../...../.....

How would you rate the event?

Excellent   Very good   Undecided   OK   Not good  
☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

Did you learn anything new or important that encourages you to be Healthy, Deadly and Strong?

☐ Yes   ☐ Undecided   ☐ No

If you answered 'Yes' what did you learn?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Do you think you need to make changes to your lifestyle for you to be Healthy, Deadly and Strong?

☐ Yes   ☐ Undecided   ☐ No

If you do plan to make changes (to be Healthy, Deadly and Strong), what will they be?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Do you have any comments about the event venue, facilities, seating etc

.....  
.....  
.....

How did you hear about this event?

☐ Poster   ☐ Newspaper  
☐ Radio   ☐ Mail  
☐ Email   ☐ A friend

Other: .....

Do you have any other comments to help us to do it better next time?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Thank you

## Planning for the future

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When you have completed a cycle of planning, implementation and evaluation you will then need to decide if you will carry out a similar program in the future. Write down any lessons learnt so that if you do repeat the program you can improve on it next time around.

