Yuggera and Turrbal

Yuwi-Yuubera and Wiri
LAGO

Listen & Ask Questions
Indigenous Youth Suicide

Under 18y.o. – 4 times higher than non-Indigenous
Under 14y.o. – 12 times higher than non-Indigenous*

What happened?
- Overview of the suicide cluster

Why?
- Causal factors

What was the effect on community?

How does the community want you to contribute?

*Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian, 2014
What happened?

K  
Female 15y.o.  
29 Nov 07 hanging

JE  
Male 16y.o.  
27 Aug 08 hanging

U  
Male 15y.o.  
30 Aug 08 train

M  
Male 18y.o.  
2 Sept 08 hanging

JJ  
Male 16y.o.  
20 Dec 08 hanging

Cousins

LF  
Male 26y.o.  
mid. 17 (not inc. in cluster)

Joint Coronial Inquest  
Knew each other and did not associate frequently

First Australians
Why?

- **Aim** – a case study of the lived experiences of a First Australian community (n=55)
- **Perceived Causal factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substance abuse</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of housing, inadequate standards of living, homelessness</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family breakdown, poor connections, inadequate parenting</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of culture</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate levels of support services, culturally inappropriate, disconnection between community and services</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of living, gap between Indigenous &amp; non-Indigenous</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disconnection from education</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of activities for youth</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SOCIAL DETERMINANTS IDENTIFIED IN LITERATURE

- FAMILY, COMMUNITY, RACISM, CULTURAL DISLOCATION, DISCRIMINATION
- KNOWLEDGE OF ANCESTRY, INTELLECTUAL CAPACITY, ACCESS TO EDUCATION
- PHYSICAL HEALTH, CONNECTION TO COUNTRY
- TRAUMA (inc. Intergenerational), GRIEF, LOSS

CORONER’S REPORTS

- Single parent family w. 5-7 siblings
- Extended family primary caregivers at times
- Transient lifestyles
- Social disadvantage inc. racism, discrimination
- DOCS involvement
- Youth Justice

- Disengaged from education system
- Lack of opportunity to realise their intellectual potential
- Little knowledge of ancestry

- Volatile substances inc. solvents
- Alcohol

- Alleged rape by another cousin
- Ongoing DOCS engagement

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS’ PERCEIVED CAUSAL FACTORS

- Substance abuse – 27
- Lack of housing, inadequate standards of living, homelessness – 19
- Family breakdown, poor connections, inadequate parenting - 15
- Loss of culture – 14
- Inadequate levels of support services, culturally inappropriate, disconnection between community and services – 12
- Unemployment – 11
- Cost of living, gap between Indigenous & non-Indigenous - 10
- Disconnection from education – 10
- Violence – 9
- Lack of activities for youth – 7
What was the effect on community?

- Grieving on a community and individual level
  - Effect of unresolved grief
- Community musings of what could have been done
- Compounded community grief
- Community spirit – weakened and strengthened

How does the community want you to contribute?
LAGO

Grassroots Champions
How to identify one...*

• Down-to-earth, lead by example, community respect
• See opportunities
• Inspiring
• Drive an initiative
• Empower others

Community Responses

• Community meetings (inc. government departments and service providers)
• 24hr drop-in centre (2wks)
• Cultural camp (3 days)
• The Life Promotion Project research
• C&YMHS improved their engagement with community leaders, more home visits, Advanced Health Worker
Guidelines to Suicide-Proof Youth

• First Australian communities at the helm
  • e.g. initial community engagement, Critical Reference Group & MOU

• Whole-of-community approach – a partnership

• Suicide prevention – integrated into other programs

• Focus on young males

• Services for survivors of suicide (i.e., loved ones in mourning)

• Relationships between services strengthened

• Indigenous identity enhanced in the wider community
LISTEN
ASK
G
RASSROOTS CHAMPIONS
OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITIES