



Central Australian
Indigenous Youth
Summit 2001
Ross River

**“Today’s Youth
Tomorrows Leaders.”**



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The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Committee.

The CAIYC arose out of the concern of Congress Senior Management and Cabinet over the high levels of Indigenous Youth suicides in the mid-90's.

A series of meetings were held in April-May 1998 convened by the John Liddle the Director of the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress at the time. Young Indigenous people were involved in those meetings. Large numbers of young people came from schools and other youth orientated organisations. A Steering Committee of Indigenous youth was established in May to co-ordinate events. These meetings culminated in a Youth Forum held at Blatherskite Park in Alice Springs in June 1998.

The CAIYC is open to all local indigenous youth aged between 14 and 25 years. Apart from the Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit, the Committee has also organised dances and has been active in other events.

Any Indigenous Youth, from the Central Australian region interested in becoming actively involved in the Committee, can contact them through the Congress Youth Programme 8952 4484.

History & background

The three day summit, attended by over 300 participants from all around Central Australia was hailed a great success by all those involved. Young Indigenous people demonstrated their commitment to hard work and their ability to frame solutions to the issues confronting them and their communities.

The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit was hosted by the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (CAAC). It was held at the Ross River Campgrounds approximately 80 kms east of Alice Springs from the 25-27th April 2001.

The Summit was co-ordinated under the direction of the Central Australian Indigenous Youth Committee, which consists of local indigenous youth aged between the ages of 14- 25 years.

The Youth Summit came about through recommendations from the Gulkula (Nhulunbuy) Health Summit held in September 2000. Organised by the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance (NT), the Gulkula Health Summit followed the successful Banatjarl (1999) and Ilpurla (2000) Health Summits. The Summits are a forum for Aboriginal people, organisations and communities to discuss their health concerns and examine ways of improving Aboriginal health. At the 2000 Health Summit youth suicide and other youth issues were raised, resulting in delegates acknowledging the need for a series of regional and Territory wide Summits to specifically address youth issues.

The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit provided young people with the opportunity to engage in active discussion to find solutions and strategies to address their needs.

The issues that the Central Australian Indigenous Youth Committee put on the agenda to be discussed at the regional summit included; education, employment, health (including sexual and emotional), juvenile crime, alcohol and substance misuse. The importance of Aboriginal cultural issues were recognised, with the Central Lands Council asked to co-ordinate cultural workshops to be run by key Traditional owners.

Although there had previously been many events staged in Central Australia for Youth they tended to be rather passive “show bag style” events. This Summit demanded the active participation of youth in workshops and discussions and was the first of its kind and scale to be held in Central Australia. It received overwhelming support throughout the community. Funding for the Summit consisted of financial and in-kind contributions from



All workshops broke into separate male and female groups. Congress Alukura staff lead the young women's sexual health workshop.

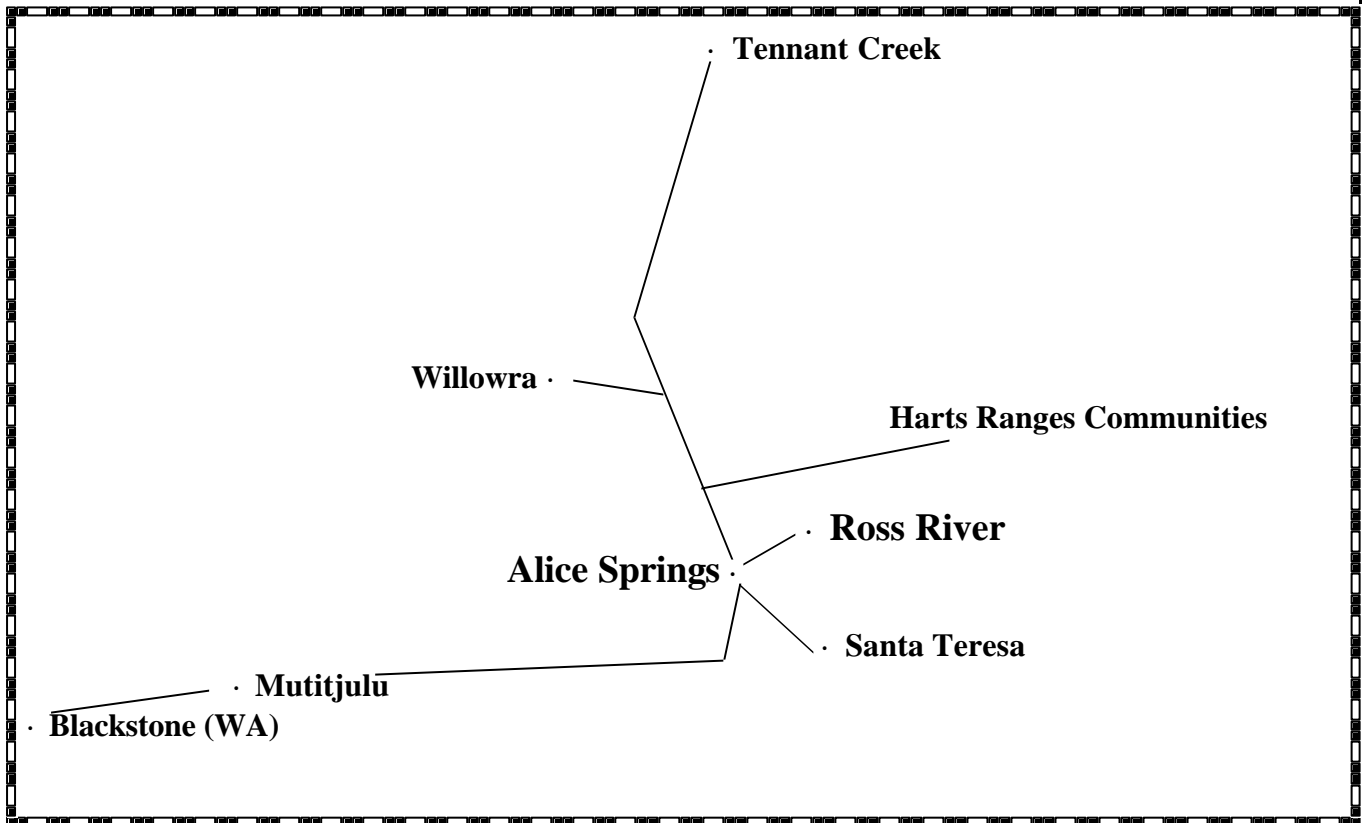
Photo: Katherine Bakos

Aboriginal organisations, with local Alice Springs businesses also strongly supporting the event.

Local rap outfit Central Mob provided a contemporary musical call for Aboriginal rights at the opening concert, which set the stage for the experienced voices of Archie Roach & Ruby Hunter who through their music that night and later in workshops shared their personal stories.

The recommendations from the Summit are included as part of this Report. They now need to be taken up by the community and turned into action.

Where they came from



Remote communities

Participants to the Summit came from all over Central Australia (and beyond). Archie Roach and Ruby Hunter brought a number of young people from the Berri district in SA with them to the Summit. These young people travelled the furthest, however the group from Blackstone in WA also put in some kilometres. Around the centre a big group came from the various communities in the Harts Ranges, thanks to the co-ordination of Joe Clarke and Christine Sharma from the CLC. The group from Willowra also had their work cut out getting there, which included a Congress bus run to Ti Tree to meet them and transport them to and from the Summit. There was a large presence from Tennant Creek through Anyinginyi Congress and the JPET Project. The Mutitjulu Health Services was another of the AMSANT members present. While they didn't have to travel the furthest, the Santa Teresa community members also had to overcome obstacles to get to the Summit.

Alice Springs based organisations

Summit participants attended through the auspices of many organisations including; Aranda House, Anzac High School, Alice Springs High School, Centralian College, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Congress Alukura, the Centre for Appropriate Technology, Gap Youth Centre, the Institute for Aboriginal Development, Irrkerlaynte Learning Centre, Central Lands Council, St Phillips College, Tangentyere Council, Yarrenyty Arltere and Yirara College.



Photo: Misha Cartwright

Some of the Harts Ranges contingent

Opening night

"This Summit came about because youth called for our voice to be heard. We said we didn't want to be told, we wanted to be listened to."

Susan Walker Central Australian Indigenous Youth Committee Summit co-MC.

"The responsibility for what happens here rests with us."

James Braeden Central Australian Indigenous Youth Committee Summit co-MC.



Photo: Misha Cartwright



Photo: Katherine Bakos

"There are a lot of us, so we need to look after each other to show the rest of the world that Aboriginal Youth can look after themselves and know how to set an example to the rest of the community."

Grahame Smith
Summit co-MC.



Photos: Misha Cartwright

"This is an important couple of days, you have some big issues to deal with and to tell the world about your ideas. Go for it."
Beverley Angeles
Summit co-MC.

"Let me assure you that those of us from the older generations are listening to your ideas."

Robert Ross
Congress President opening speech.

Programme

Wednesday 25th April

- 3.00pm** **Registration**
5.00pm BBQ Dinner
5.30pm **Opening** James Braeden & Susan Walker Central Australian Indigenous Youth Committee
Welcome to country Traditional owners
Official Welcoming/opening CAAC President Robert Ross
Summit Introduction Masters of Ceremonies: Grahame Smith, Beverley Angeles
Evening **Entertainment** Central Mob and Archie Roach & Ruby Hunter

Thursday 26th April

- 7.30am** Breakfast
9.00am Planning session for **CULTURAL WORKSHOP (Friday)**
10.00am Morning Tea
10.30am **Workshop EDUCATION** Keynote speaker Donna Ah Chee CAAC
12.00noon Lunch
1.00pm **Workshop EMPLOYMENT** Keynote speaker Karl Hampton CLC
2.30pm Afternoon Tea
3.00pm **Workshop JUVENILE CRIME** Keynote speaker Stuart O'Connell CAALAS
4.30pm **Social Activity**
5.45pm Dinner
Evening **Disco**

Friday 27th April

- 7.30am** Breakfast
8.30am **Workshop SEXUAL HEALTH** Guest Speakers: Male Group David Nicholls Aboriginal Health Worker CAAC & Paul Ah Chee. Female Group Isabella Tusa Congress Alukura Young Women's Program
10.00am Morning Tea
10.30am **Workshop EMOTIONAL HEALTH** Male Guest Speakers Stephen Meredith, CAAC Female Guest Speakers: Katherine Bakos & Jaunita Conway CAAC
12.00noon Lunch
1.00pm **Workshop ALCOHOL ABUSE** Guest Speakers: Dr John Boffa CAAC
SUBSTANCE ABUSE Doug Walker
2.30pm Afternoon Tea
3.00pm **CULTURE / LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES**: co-ordinated by Gina Smith CLC
5.00pm **PLENARY SESSION**
6.30pm Dinner
Evening **Talent Quest & Jam Session**

Saturday 28th April

- 7.30am** Breakfast
8.30am Participants Leave & Pack-up

The Banner Project



The banner starts out as a blank canvas, worked on at the Congress Social & Emotional Wellbeing Centre. The Yirara Titjikala Band provided the music.

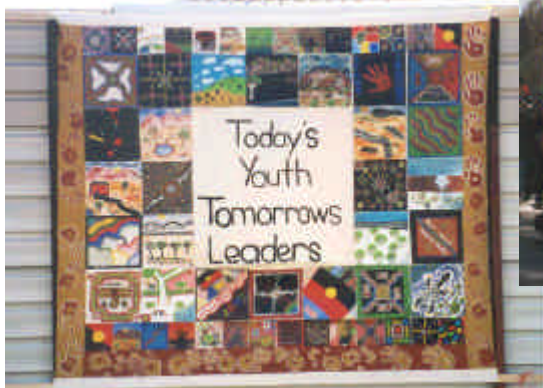


The Banner Project gave young people the opportunity to express their ideas and aspirations.

Although it commenced prior to the Summit, as an activity of the Congress Youth Programme, it developed over the course of the Summit to become a record of the event itself. The theme of the Summit "Today's Youth, Tomorrows Leaders" is embedded in the banner and it stands as a record of these young people's involvement with the event.



The banner is one of the Congress Youth Programme's projects that aim to strengthen young people's self esteem, provide positive outlets for their talents, provide an environment where they can work together on projects of interest and exercise control over their lives



The Banner featured at this years NAIDOC march in Alice Springs

Summit Resolutions

EDUCATION

EDUCATION: OURSELVES

This Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit recognises that there are many pressures we place upon ourselves that restrict our education options. Therefore we call upon Indigenous youth:

- to support each other to stay at school;
- not abuse drugs and alcohol that impede chances of success;
- not fight, tease or bully each other at school; and
- take some degree of responsibility for our own education and future.

EDUCATION: OUR COMMUNITIES

The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit calls upon our community to:

- advocate for Aboriginal cultural studies, languages and history to be incorporated into all school core curriculum;
- work with our community elders to get them to encourage us in our education and to promote to us the importance of education;
- encourage and support young men to stay in the education system to get more educated in the western system; and
- ensure elders and community members make themselves available to be actively involved in our schooling.

EDUCATION: ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROL

The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit supports the proposal for the establishment of Aboriginal Community Controlled Schools at all levels (primary, secondary and university).

EDUCATION: NT EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

This Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit calls upon the NT Education Department to:

- develop programmes to employ more Aboriginal teachers;
- make Aboriginal cultural studies a core part of the school curriculum;
- ensure that all schools are fully funded to meet community requirements for space, libraries, computers;
- ensure that all teachers undertake cross – cultural training on an ongoing basis;
- make sure all schools have sport and recreational programmes;
- have Aboriginal languages part of the school curriculum;
- have more Aboriginal support staff, including liaison officers, in schools; and
- support Aboriginal elders and community leaders to have access to schools.



Yirara College students played an active role in the Summit proceedings. Many other secondary education institutions in Alice Springs were represented at the Summit, as well as students from remote communities.

Photo: Katherine Bakos

Summit Resolutions

EDUCATION

EDUCATION: TEACHERS

The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit calls upon all teachers to:

- not bully, put down, verbally or physically abuse Aboriginal students;
- not bring their personal problems to school that then affect students;
- not treat Aboriginal students as being at a lower level in their teaching approach than they would treat non-Aboriginal students;
- recognise that Aboriginal students bring knowledge with them to the classroom;
- encourage Aboriginal parents to be involved in their children's education; and
- undertake cross-cultural education on an ongoing basis.

EDUCATION: SCHOOLS

The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit calls upon schools (Govt, private and independent) to:

- involve Aboriginal culture and language in schools, including having an active role for elders and other high profile Aboriginal community members (sports and other celebrities and well known Aboriginal identities);
- deal effectively with bullying and other forms of abuse (by both students and teachers) by putting into practise policies;
- include Aboriginal curriculum and history in school teaching programmes;
- ensure that: ATAS, Homework Centres, ARRO, Career Officers and other support staff, are all available and meeting Aboriginal community needs;
- not separate Aboriginal family and community members from each other and allow them to mix freely to provide mutual support;
- where supported by the community, provide a common uniform;
- ensure that there is adequate personal support including welfare support and support for young mothers;
- ensure adequate support is given by ALO's to Aboriginal students so they can attend events such as this Youth Summit;
- support ASSPA committees to independently work for Aboriginal concerns; and
- negotiate with Congress for AHW's to visit high schools.



Photo: Katherine Bakos

After each keynote speaker, the Summit participants broke into male and female groups. These groups sometimes then broke into smaller groups to workshop the issues.

Summit Resolutions

EMPLOYMENT & LEGAL ISSUES

EMPLOYMENT:

The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit identifies the following issues as blockages to Indigenous youth from gaining and retaining employment:

- lack of education opportunities;
- lack of training opportunities, particularly in remote areas;
- racism in the work place;
- having family responsibilities that keep you away from work;
- limited range of jobs within the community;
- limited exposure to Aboriginal role models;
- welfare dependency;
- lack of aboriginal owned businesses; and
- that there are many health and social problems that interrupt work.

Therefore we call upon:

- the Government and others to implement our Summit recommendations on Education;
- the Government to support comprehensive training facilities in communities;
- Governments and local industry to support the development of Aboriginal employment programmes in conjunction with the Aboriginal organisations, to create real jobs and break the welfare dependency cycle;
- our community, organisations and the wider community to confront racism in the workplace;
- employers to support flexible working conditions that allow for family and cultural commitments to be fulfilled;
- Government and ATSIC to support the establishment of Aboriginal owned businesses; and
- all of us to support each other and ourselves to achieve our goals and get and keep jobs.

LEGAL: YOUTH RIGHTS

The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit wants young indigenous people to have a better understanding of the Law and their rights by:

- schools providing education about legal issues;
- having Night Patrol and Legal Aide explaining rights so youth can understand them; and
- use of TV, radio and youth workers to explain rights.

Employment options identified during workshop:

Flight Attendants, Doctors, Health Workers, Nurses, Army, Administration, Police Officers, Accountant, Receptionist, Station Worker, Model, Ranger, Service Attendant, Community Council, Teacher, Hair Dresser, Shop Worker, Women's Centre Manager, Tour Guide, Health/ Environment Worker, Child Care Worker, Boiler Maker, BRACS, DJ, Artist, Musician, Electrician, Landscaper, Carpenter, Sports/ Rec Officer, Night Patrol, Truck Driver, Plumber, Teacher, Mechanic.



Ruby Hunter took an enthusiastic role in workshops.
Photo: Misha Cartwright

Summit Resolutions

LEGAL ISSUES

LEGAL: MANDATORY SENTENCING

The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit calls for the end to Mandatory Sentencing. We support the use of the following measures depending on the crime:

- diversionary programmes (including going out bush, sport programmes and camps);
- community service (including working for old people);
- warnings;
- paying damages for criminal expenses;
- working for the community where the crime was committed; and
- use of traditional law.

LEGAL: RELATIONS BETWEEN POLICE AND INDIGENOUS YOUTH

This Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit wants to see better relations between the police and youth. We believe this could be achieved by:

- Police coming to schools to see that youth are good;
- Police go through cross-cultural programmes and have these programmes reviewed in an ongoing way;
- having ACPO's more involved when non-Aboriginal Police Officers are dealing with Aboriginal Youth;
- having female Police present when female Aboriginal youth are being dealt with;
- there being more Aboriginal women (and male) Police Officers;
- greater communication between Night Patrols and the Police;
- Police run functions for Aboriginal youth; and
- Police to initiate a friendly manner with Aboriginal youth.

LEGAL: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit views domestic violence as a serious issue and calls for:

- more education in the community about Domestic Violence;
- counselling for partners and family;
- control of drunks in the community;
- use of traditional law in dealing with Domestic Violence;
- support for other ways in dealing with frustrations (including anger management, counselling etc.);
- the addressing of the underlying causes of Domestic Violence (including the grog problem); and
- that offenders not be dealt with by jail, but rather through rehabilitation or camps or home detention.



Ross River Homestead Camping-ground was a great venue for the Summit.

Photo: Katherine Bakos

Summit Resolutions

ALCOHOL and DRUGS

ALCOHOL & DRUGS: ALCOHOL RESTRICTIONS

The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit supports the proposed trial of Liquor Restrictions in Alice Springs and calls on communities to work with the NT Liquor Commission to do the following:

- where restrictions exist, implement them properly;
- introduce restrictions that apply to all communities; and
- restrictions need to apply to everybody not just Aboriginal people.

Restrictions need to include things like:

- no cartons only six packs;
- show license as proof of age to buy drinks;
- ban 5 Litre cask wine;
- put prices up;
- grog sales only at certain times;
- only drink in pubs not creeks;
- restricting hours of bottle shops; and
- write purchaser's name against purchases where there is a limit on the number of purchases each individual is allowed.



Many organisations put up displays to promote their services.

Photo: Katherine Bakos

ALCOHOL & DRUGS: TREATMENT OPTIONS

The Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit calls on Aboriginal organisations to work with government to set up more treatment options for Aboriginal people including:

- treatment programmes in town;
- take drinkers, sniffers out bush;
- organise diversionary activities: sports, hunting, swimming, excursions, camping etc.;
- more power for ACPO's;
- more night patrols in the communities;
- more money for programs to teach healthy lifestyles;
- *"Heal hearts first to have healthy feelings"*;
- a place away from everyone when people go to camp and drink, to keep drunks out of communities; and
- alcohol educators go to communities for regular visits.

ALCOHOL & DRUGS: YOUTH ALCOHOL & DRUGS

This Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit believes that the following measures need to be implemented to support youth to understand the impacts of alcohol on their health and lifestyle:

- teach young people about alcohol before they are old enough to purchase, including education in schools;
- take youth to dialysis to show effects of alcohol on health;
- provide extensive, culturally relevant, youth orientated education materials; including in language, that highlight alcohol's impact on lifestyle, injury, health, family and accidents;

Summit Resolutions

ALCOHOL and DRUGS & EMOTIONAL HEALTH

ALCOHOL & DRUGS: *YOUTH ALCOHOL & DRUGS continued*

- provide education about standard drinks;
- give clear and consistent, honest messages about marijuana;
- provide meaningful activities for youth so that they don't become bored (including discos, school socials, talent quests, family nights, -especially for older youth not in Youth Centres);
- stop harassment of youth in public places, as this drives young people towards alcohol and drug misuse to deal with the stress they feel;
- the creation of employment opportunities that have been identified at this Summit;
- hold more Youth Summits out of town;
- explain to youth the destructive link between alcohol employment and education; and
- provide education and information about alcohol restriction: how they work and have worked in the communities where they have been implemented.



All the Summit resolutions were read out at the Plenary Session and endorsed by the Summit.
Photo: Katherine Bakos

EMOTIONAL HEALTH: *YOUTH INPUT TO INDIGENOUS ORGANISATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT*

This Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit calls on Indigenous organisations to support young peoples growth and development and provide opportunities to have input into policy decisions through:

- workshops and forums; and
- the Youth Summit becoming a regular event.

EMOTIONAL HEALTH: *INDIGENOUS ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT*

This Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit calls upon the community and Indigenous organisations to provide opportunities for the development of young people's self-esteem and confidence through the provision of:

- a wide range of activities – painting, hunting, story telling etc.;
- sporting activities; and
- social activities.

Summit Resolutions

EMOTIONAL HEALTH & SEXUAL HEALTH

EMOTIONAL HEALTH: COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR YOUTH

This Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit calls upon our community to recognise that young people place great value on families for their emotional well being and seek your:

- support;
- encouragement; and
- belief in us.

EMOTIONAL HEALTH: CULTURE

This Central Australian Indigenous Youth Summit calls upon our community, Indigenous organisations and Government to recognise the importance that keeping culture strong has on young people's emotional health, through supporting and encouraging activities, programmes and projects that strengthen culture such as:

- country visiting trips to sites of significance— i.e. Sacred sites, burial grounds and birthplaces;
- exchange cultural values and traditions with tribal groups both nationally and internationally; and
- more Language courses at educational institutions (need to cover all languages – not just local or more common languages.)



Photo: Misha Cartwright

SEXUAL HEALTH: WOMENS

Why are women having unsafe sex?

- So they can get pregnant;
- Some men don't want to use condoms;
- Some women are too shame to make men use condoms;
- No education on what the implications of having unsafe sex could mean to them;
- Under the influence of alcohol and other drugs;
- Don't have condoms at the time; and
- They really like the guy and want to make him happy.

What do we as women need to be safe from STI's and unwanted pregnancy?

- Easy access to condoms;
- More education about contraceptives;
- More Education and STI's; and
- The right man.

Summit Resolutions

SEXUAL HEALTH

SEXUAL HEALTH: *WOMENS* continued

What do we want men to do for us?

- Carry & use condoms;
- Get checkups;
- Talk more about sexual health issues amongst the m-selves;
- More men's education programmes;
- Men should have one partner at a time;
- Don't sleep around;
- Men shouldn't force women to have sex;
- More support for men;
- Not to get drunk and look for sex;
- Men to be educated about their bodies; and
- Men should see condoms as something that will save their life, instead of joking about them.



What do we want Congress, Alukura and our clinics to be doing?

Photo Misha Cartwright

- Provide more educational videos;
- More educational resources on sexual health;
- Make the environment at clinics more comfortable;
- Helping ladies learn (make aware of STI's);
- Educating both women and young girls about their sexual health;
- Provide videos which are in different languages and simple English;
- More pictures, tables and diagrams to be used in educational materials;
- Aboriginal Health Workers to go around to communities and organisations and talk about sexual health issues, to raise awareness for both males and females;
- Condoms should be available around town camps, public toilets and not sitting on the front desks at organisations but in places more discreet; and
- More community based Health Workers and Centres.



Photo Misha Cartwright

SEXUAL HEALTH: *MALE*

There were no formal recommendations from the male workshop, rather it concentrated on education and information sharing.

Sponsors

On behalf of the Indigenous Youth Committee and the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress staff involved with the Summit- we would like to extend our thanks and appreciation towards all our sponsors for their kind donations and valuable assistance throughout this event.

Major Financial Sponsors

Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Cabinet
Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Staff Fighting Fund
Congress Alukura
Anyinginyi Congress Aboriginal Corporation
Yeperenye Shopping Centre
Mutitjulu Health Service
Central Australian Remote Health Training Unit
Imparja Television
Chief Minister's Office of Youth Affairs
Nganampa Health

In-kind Sponsors

CAAMA (sound equipment & technician and prizes)
Imparja (advertising)
Institute for Aboriginal Development (transport)
Central Land Council (logistical support)
Corporate Express (stationary)
Tangentyere Council (drinks)
DESART (prizes)
Norforce (transport)
Bradshaw Primary School (marquee)
Alice Springs High School (marquee)
Bushfire Council (marquee)
McDonalds (prizes)
Leaping Lizard Gallery (prizes)
Alice Springs Pharmacy (prizes)
Dymocks Booksellers (prizes)
Prime Cut Meats (food)
Beaurepaires (marquee)

Other Financial Sponsors

Normanby Mines
NEATA Glass
Bizcom

Images & clippings



The Summit proved to be a popular all ages venue.



Construction of the marquees was a hands on affair.



The registration desk staff processed 300 participants, and still smiled.



Photos Katherine Bakos



Land Rights News

ABC news

ATSIIC NT News