



Act-Belong-Commit: building mental health in the Great Southern region of WA

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Great Southern



Healthier country communities through partnerships and innovation

Values Community | Compassion | Quality | Integrity | Justice



‘The more we do things in the community for our own mental health, the stronger the community becomes. The stronger the community we live in, the better for our mental health.’

Prof. Rob Donovan, Founder of Act-Belong-Commit



Rationale

- 1 in 5 Australians experience a mental health problem every year.
- In 2009-2012, 13% of Great Southern adults aged 16+ reported experiencing a diagnosed mental health problem (HWSS).



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Risk and protective factors

Protective factors	Risk factors
Having good networks and social support	No support network, social isolation
Belonging to a group of like-minded people	Excessive use of drugs or alcohol
Having a job (paid or unpaid)	Having no time for self
Being physically healthy	Life crises/trauma
Sense of control over life	Discrimination
Sense (and recognition by others) of achievement	Few opportunities to achieve success in everyday life

Additional issues facing regional communities: isolation, drought, employment, transient population...



Mental health

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Mentally healthy

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Act-Belong-Commit

- Aims to raise awareness of what we all can and should do to protect and strengthen mental health.
- Unique, whole of population approach.



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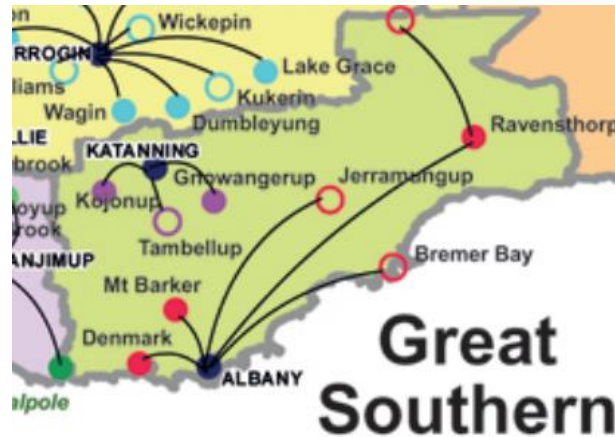
- **Methods:**
 - Social marketing
 - Partnership development
 - Pilbara capacity building project

- **Helps to address wider societal issues**
 - Reduces stigma
 - Builds capacity of community groups
 - Builds community cohesion > flow-on effects e.g. alcohol and drug abuse, crime and delinquency.



Act-Belong-Commit in the Great Southern

- Memorandum of Understanding and dedicated FTE
- 18 formal partners across the region



- Noticing a shift in partnership initiation



Great Southern strategies

- Whole of population promotion:
 - Media
 - Sponsorships
- Targeted promotion:
 - Perinatal mental health
 - Mentally Healthy Schools project
 - Workplaces
 - Assist partners to tailor concepts to their audiences



Great Southern strategies continued

- Capacity building of partners
 - Regional partner newsletter
 - Professional Development opportunities



Value to region

Increased
community
engagement

Reduced social
isolation

Reduction in
associated
mental health
problems

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- Reduced transiency

- Flexible campaign can be tailored to the community
 - Community ownership
 - Local link to state-wide, recognised campaign

- Healthway sponsorships (WA only)
 - Hidden Treasures of the Great Southern Bloom Festival
 - City of Albany Public Program
 - Southern Edge Arts Youth Performing Arts



Value to Local Government

- Public Health Plans
- More than 'roads, rates and rubbish'
- Cuts across departments
- Campaign is well received by the community
- Community plans



‘Where to from here’

- Funding confirmed for Phase V (2017-2019) of Act-Belong-Commit:
 - Continued campaign promotion
 - Continued partnership development
(At State-wide and regional level)



Acknowledgements

- Sarah Graham and Simone Kerrigan (Mentally Healthy WA)



Thank you

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