



Esperance

Case Study Evaluation Report

Kath Menck (Intervention Officer)

Sonia Commisso (Intervention/Evaluation Officer)

Kylie Ryan (Evaluation Officer)

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3.0 The Act-Belong-Commit Mental Health Promotion Campaign Esperance Case Study

3.1 Overview

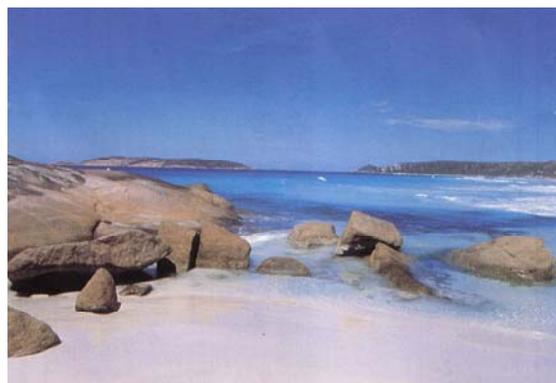
3.1.1 *Esperance demographics and background*

Esperance is located on the southern coast of Western Australia, 721km southeast of Perth (approximately nine hours drive). Esperance is often called the 'Bay of Isles' because several hundred islands, known as the Recherche Archipelago, surround it.

Esperance has a population of approximately 14,000 people with almost equal numbers of male and female residents. Forty-four percent of the population are employed, less than one percent is registered as unemployed, with twenty-four percent also not in the workforce. Esperance is home to a small Indigenous population (approximately one percent). Ninety percent of people living within Esperance are Australian citizens.

Although famous for its pristine beaches, Esperance also boasts a variety of opportunities for people to participate in the local community. From solo pursuits such as hiking, fishing and surfing, to group activities like football, art and theatre, there are a number of ways to engage with Esperance, its people and surrounds.

Recent trends suggested that Esperance was experiencing a downturn in participation rates, especially in formal community group settings. Mentally Healthy WA (Esperance) provided an opportunity to improve this situation. The Mentally Healthy WA Project had the potential at an individual and community level to encourage Esperance residents to protect and maintain their mental health by participating actively in their community. The aim of the Mentally Healthy WA (Esperance) Project was to complement existing activities within the community and to work together to promote organisations and their activities to the wider community. (www.actbelongcommit.org.au)



3.2 Launch of the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign – year one forums

The Act-Belong-Commit Campaign was launched in Esperance at two community forums held during Mental Health Week in October 2005. Service providers, key stakeholders and community members were invited to attend. The forums provided an opportunity for Project Officers to introduce themselves and the Campaign logo and message to the community. Discussion with agency representatives and community members at the forums resulted in the development of an action plan that was used to drive the Campaign during its first year. The forum also aided the development of a local Steering Committee and the identification of partners and key stakeholders.

The objectives, target audiences, potential strategies, results and outcomes of the forums are detailed below:

3.2.1 Objectives

- Raise awareness of the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign
- Create links with community groups
- Develop a reference group for the Campaign
- Introduce the Project and Evaluation officers to the community
- Build community spirit
- Obtain community input (how community members saw the project working within their community).

3.2.2 Target audience

- Community group and club leaders and active community members
- Health and other relevant government agencies workers
- Media
- Other general community members.

3.2.3 Strategies

- Conduct two forum sessions with one session in the evening to reach community members unable to attend during working hours: Morning Forum: Wednesday 26 October 2005, 9.30am; Evening Forum: Wednesday 26 October 2005, 5.30pm
- Develop a flyer/invitation to be distributed by post and email to local agencies and all local clubs and groups
- Develop media releases and advertising for radio and newspaper.

3.2.4 Results

The morning forum was well attended with a total of fifty participants. Community members ranged from health agencies to local churches and other community groups. Councillor Christine Smith launched the Campaign on behalf of the Shire of Esperance followed by a presentation by Dr. Ray James, Project Manager for the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign in Western Australia. Participants generated ideas of how the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign could work in Esperance. A comprehensive list of ideas was generated from the session, which provided useful information and direction for the first year of the project ([Appendix 1](#)). Evaluation forms were distributed to the participants with forty-three completed. The participants indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the forum and the proposed project and a high intention to be involved in project strategies.

Ten participants, including service providers and community members, attended the evening forum and generated useful and interesting ideas. The session was held as more of an informal discussion due to the low number of participants. This proved to be quite successful according to the feedback obtained from the evaluations completed by nine of the ten participants.

3.2.5 Outcomes

- Thirteen people expressed interest in joining the reference group
- Eleven wanted their community group or agency to be involved with the Campaign
- Twenty-four wanted to be informed about MHWA via a mailing list.

3.3 Relaunch of the Campaign – year two

The Act-Belong-Commit Campaign was relaunched in November 2006 with another community forum. This event provided an opportunity to celebrate the first year of the Campaign and update the community on the progress of the first twelve months of project intervention. Discussion with service providers, key stakeholders and community members at the forum resulted in the development of an action plan that provided direction for the Campaign during its second year.

The objectives, target audiences, potential strategies, results and outcomes of the forums are detailed below:

3.3.1 Objectives

- Assess awareness of the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign
- Establish new, and build upon existing, links with community groups
- Increase reference group membership for the campaign
- Familiarise the community with the Project and Evaluation officer
- Build community spirit
- Feedback (how community members felt about the Campaign)
- Consultation (where community members saw the Campaign going in the second year).

3.3.2 Target audience

- Community organisations, groups, clubs, members
- Health and other relevant government agencies workers
- Media
- Other general community members
- Existing partners.

3.3.3 Strategies

- Develop a flyer/invitation to be distributed by post and email to local agencies and all local clubs and groups, partners, steering and reference groups
- Develop media releases and advertising for radio and newspaper.

3.3.4 Results

The re-launch of the Campaign in the second year was well attended with a total of thirty-three participants from health agencies, local churches and other community groups. Local Project Officers presented an overview of Campaign achievements during the first year. An interactive session was held; participants were split into groups and asked to generate ideas for the second year of the Campaign. A comprehensive list of ideas was generated from the session which provided useful information for the project and aided in the development of an action plan for the second year of the Campaign ([Appendix 2](#)). The action plan provided Project Officers with guidance and ideas for how to improve implementation of the Campaign in Esperance. The relaunch also served to acknowledge existing partners as well as providing an opportunity to identify and form new partnerships. Evaluation at the forum was completed by twenty-eight of the thirty-three participants. Evaluation indicated participants were highly satisfied with their involvement in the Campaign and had a high intent to be involved with future events.

3.3.5 Outcomes

- Fourteen people indicated that they had been involved with the Campaign throughout the past twelve months
- Twenty-five people indicated that they were familiar with the Act-Belong-Commit logo
- Ten people expressed an interest in becoming involved with the reference group
- Twelve people indicated that they wanted more information concerning the Campaign.

3.4 Staffing

The Act-Belong-Commit Project Officer position in Esperance was divided equally into 0.5 FTE for the Implementation Officer and 0.5 FTE for the Evaluation Officer. 0.5 FTE was funded by Curtin University and the WA Country Health Service (WACHS) funded the other 0.5. The division of positions into two 0.5 FTE's did initially prove to be a barrier for the project in terms of event

attendance and evaluation, especially when the Project Officer who attended the event was not the person evaluating the event. Staff details and changes throughout the Campaign were as follows:

Table 1: Staff details and changes throughout the Campaign

Date	Name	Role (.5 FTE ea)	Funded
October 2005 – September 2006	Kath Menck	Project Officer	WACHS
October 2005 – September 2006	Sonia Commisso	Evaluation Officer	Curtin
September 2006 – January 2007	Sonia Commisso	Project Officer	Curtin
September 2006 – January 2007	Kylie Ryan	Evaluation Officer	WACHS
January 2007 – November 2007	Sonia Commisso	Project Officer	WACHS
February 2007 – November 2007	Kylie Ryan	Evaluation Officer	Curtin

3.5 Steering Committee

Steering Committee members were initially recruited by identifying community or organisation representatives that may have the largest vested interest in the project, and the largest partnership potential.

The Act-Belong-Commit Steering Committee recruited sixteen members in total. The committee played a consultation rather than operational role in the Campaign. Committee members provided feedback and ideas to the local Project Officers which aided in the development of action plans and provided direction for the Campaign. To some degree, this lessened the enthusiasm of Steering Committee members and left a great deal of the workload of the Campaign entirely on the Project Officers with the committee providing little strategic direction. Act-Belong-Commit Project Officers allocated tasks and activities to members and encouraged them to become involved through volunteering their time at Act-Belong-Commit activities. However this was not always possible due to the large commitment of members to other committees and the transient professional population.

Steering Committee turnover was a major challenge throughout the Campaign and often obstructed the development of partnerships. In the first six months of the Campaign three members left the committee and only one new member was recruited. Partnership analysis conducted four months into the Campaign found the committee was generally happy with the way the group worked together, although the committee did highlight the partnership was relatively new and needed to be developed in some areas. Since the inception of the Steering Committee a number of individuals present at the first meeting either resigned from their position or relocated out of Esperance. This combined with difficulties in recruiting new members left the Steering Committee with approximately six regular attendees. Overcoming difficulties associated with the recruitment and retention of Steering Committee members was a focus for Act-Belong-Commit Project Officers during the Campaign. Many opportunities were provided to key stakeholders and community members to become involved with the Steering Committee. The Act-Belong-Commit Project Officers allocated time to attend other meetings and support committees in the community for the purpose of disseminating and obtaining information.

3.5.1 Members at the completion of the pilot phase

- Sonia Commisso – Act-Belong-Commit Intervention Officer
- Kylie Ryan – Act-Belong-Commit Evaluation Officer
- Betty Shirras – Local Area Coordinator, Disability Services Commission
- Bridget Hurst – Regional Coordinator, Australian Sports Commission
- Erica Austen – Manager, Esperance Volunteer Resource Centre
- Deborah Herron – Team Leader, Community Mental Health Esperance
- Shane Liddlelow – Regional Officer, Department of Sport and Recreation
- Renee Short – Rural Youth Program Coordinator, Community Mental Health Esperance

3.5.2 Previous Steering Committee members

- Kath Menck – Act-Belong-Commit Intervention Officer
- Kath Donovan – Esperance District Recreation Association

- Christine Smith – Councillor, Shire of Esperance
- Pat Maslin – Allied Health Manager, Community Health Esperance
- Louise Patterson – Regional Coordinator, Australian Sports Commission
- Robert Riley – Project Officer, Esperance Aboriginal Health Service
- Mark Hooper – Editor, Esperance Express
- Adam Scott – Project Officer, Department of Education
- Lara McIntyre – Field Officer, Department for Community Development

3.6 Partnerships

A diverse range of partnerships was developed in Esperance during the two-year pilot project. Health services, arts societies, sporting clubs, the Esperance Shire and organisations such as the Department of Sport and Recreation and Disabilities Services Commission were just some of the groups that partnered with the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign to host events to promote positive mental wellbeing and encourage people to take active steps to become more mentally healthy. Table 2 provides a complete list of the major organisation and community groups that partnered with Act-Belong-Commit in Esperance.

Table 2: Partnerships developed throughout the Campaign

Organisations and Committee Groups
Esperance Community Health
Esperance Community Mental Health
Esperance Shire
Esperance Library
Esperance Express
Esperance Volunteer Resource Centre
Esperance Youth Coordination Network
Esperance Local Drug Action Group
Esperance Arts Society Inc
Esperance Community Arts
Festival of the Wind
Goldfields Esperance Development Commission
Australian Sports Commission – Active After Schools
Department of Sport and Recreation
Disability Services Commission
School Drug Education and Road Aware
Nulsen Primary School
Office of Crime Prevention
Bay of Isles Community Outreach Inc
Bay of Isles Leisure Centre
ESCARE Family Support, Youth and Financial Counselling Services
Cannery Arts Centre – Youth Arts
Wongutha Caps – Aboriginal Christian School

3.7 Media, marketing and promotion strategies

A variety of strategies were used to promote the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign message, such as sponsorships, merchandise, and branding events, activities and projects. Posters and brochures were displayed and distributed throughout the community and radio interviews and media releases were organised by Project Officers in conjunction with ABC Radio Esperance, Hot FM and the Esperance Express. A very positive relationship was developed with the paper during the Campaign resulting in the feature of local clubs and groups in 'Club of the Month' articles ([Appendix 7](#)). This

coverage was provided free-of-charge by the paper and was very helpful in raising the profile of several groups within the community.

Paid advertisements, developed by the Mentally Healthy WA Hub in Perth promoting the Act-Belong-Commit logo and concept were placed in the Esperance Express throughout the Campaign. The paper featured some of these at no cost. A great deal of unpaid media coverage was also obtained during the Campaign with thirty-five news items featuring in the local paper.

Community members, local clubs and groups were 'profiled', promoting the Act-Belong-Commit message in the community by showing how people Acted, Belonged and Committed ([Appendix 8](#)). These profiles were featured on the Act-Belong-Commit website, which offered a variety of other information and links for both the overall Campaign and individual sites. The website was updated regularly via the Hub in Perth and was a useful tool for promoting the Campaign within the region.

Monthly newsletters were created and distributed by Project Officers which provided Campaign updates ([Appendix 9](#)). Act-Belong-Commit featured in numerous newsletters both within the community, such as the Salmon Gums Sloggers, Esperance Volunteer Resource Centre, and Cannery Arts Centre, and the WA Country Health Service newsletter article on the Act-Belong-Commit sponsorship of and participation in the Festival of the Wind.

Emails were an effective tool during the Campaign for disseminating information that helped to raise awareness of the Campaign logo and message. The use of emails allowed for rapid communication between Project Officers and other parties on a range of issues, such as meetings, events, activities and training opportunities. A comprehensive database of key stakeholders and community members was also created and regularly updated by Project Officers in Esperance.

In the second year of the Campaign, advertising was extended and a thirty-second television advertisement developed by the Perth Hub was placed on the GWN Television Network in an effort to further increase the profile of the Campaign. The move from newspaper to television advertising produced a significant change within the community, especially in the younger population with a significant number of locals reporting having 'seen the ads on TV'.

3.8 Summary of results

The Act-Belong-Commit Campaign coordinated and co-branded numerous activities and events during the two-year pilot project. Several different groups from a variety of sectors in the community were engaged in the planning and implementation of events and activities. Act-Belong-Commit assisted to build community capacity through activities that encourage volunteer involvement, support the development of partnerships between agencies and organisations, and encourage community members to take a more pro-active role within the community. Some events throughout the project included Motiv8 Youth Festival, Corporate Bowls, Sportslink Inclusion Training, Dragon Boat Regatta and mental health week activities.

Table 3 lists the activities and events implemented under the Act-Belong-Commit banner from September 2005 to October 2007.

Table 4, 5 and 6 list the co-branded events, the projects and the sponsorships implemented during the Act-Belong-Commit pilot phase in Esperance.

For more detailed information regarding the activities and events held under the Act-Belong-Commit banner in Esperance visit the website www.actbelongcommit.org.au

Table 3: Activities and events held throughout the Campaign

Event	Date	Attendance
Family Fun Day – Promotional Stall	11/09/2005	40~50
Youth Advisory Council – Presentation	11/10/2005	8
Community Health Nurses – Presentation	12/10/2005	10
Esperance Ag Show – Promotional Stall	14–15/10/05	250
MHWA A-B-C – Forum / Launch	26/10/2005	60
K–3 Teachers – Presentation	2/11/2005	20
Thank A Volunteer – Promotional Stall	5/12/2005	~50
MHWA Corporate Bowls – Event	4–25/01/2006	130
Australia Day – Promotional Stall	26/01/2006	~50
Stay on Your Feet Community Walk – Event	2/04/2006	30
Youth Forum in Kalgoorlie – Presentation	3/04/2006	25
Probus Club of Esperance – Presentation	10/04/2006	25
Stay on Your Feet – Presentation	2/05/2006	6
Advocacy Workshop and Expo – Promotional Stall	9/05/2006	30
Volunteer Expo – Promotional Stall	18/05/2006	100
Condungup CWA General Meeting – Presentation	12/07/2006	12
Ravensthorpe Showcase WACHS – Promo Stall	10/08/2006	100
10000 Steps Launch – Event	1/09/2006	80
Family Fun Day at Christian Primary School – Promo Stall	10/09/2006	120
Active After Schools Super Session – Presentation	28/09/2006	70
Esperance Ag Show – Promotional Stall	20/10/2006	250
MHWA A-B-C Relaunch – Event	23/11/2006	33
CAMHS Network Meeting – Presentation	7/02/2007	12
Sportslink Inclusion Training Workshop – Event	6/03/2007	22
Sportslink Support Carer Training – Presentation	7/03/2007	6
BHP Family Support Meeting – Presentation	15/03/2007	25
A-B-C Dragon Boat Team Training – Event	23/03/2007	100
A-B-C Dragon Boat Team Racing Day – Event	24/03/2007	500
Community Services Forum – Presentation	27/03/2007	25
Weight Watchers – Presentation	26/04/2007	20
AASC Heart Healthy Morning Tea – Presentation	4/05/2007	80
Volunteer Morning Tea – Presentation	15/05/2007	100
Motiv8 Youth Festival – Event	27/05/2007	200
Interagency Networking Breakfast – Presentation	8/06/2007	25
Active After Schools Fun Day – Presentation	5/07/2007	30
Esperance District Hospital Staff – Presentation	11/07/2007	12
SEPWA Ladies Day Workshop – Presentation	2/08/2007	70
Our Lady Star of the Sea School Drug Education Forum	16/08/2007	50
Esperance Art Society Biennial Art Exhibition	30/08/2007	~100
Cascade Primary School Drug Education Forum	14/09/2007	50
Girl Zone Strong Minds Strong Bodies – Presentation	17/09/2007	7
Esperance Christian Primary School Family Fun Day – Stall	23/09/2007	~400
Mental Health Week Opening Event – Market Day Stall	7/10/2007	~100
Esperance Deep Sea Angling Children’s Fun Fish Day	7/10/2007	200
Indigenous Mental Health Forum	8/10/2007	5
Launch of the Library’s New Youth Area	9/10/2007	0
Stress Less Day Interactive Stall	10/10/2007	50
Esperance Patchwork Club Open Day	11/10/2007	15
Esperance Weight Watchers Club Open Meeting	11/10/2007	20
Esperance Bridge Club Introduction to Bridge Day	12/10/2007	10
Chaplaincy Challenge Bike Ride to Condungup	12–13/10/2007	20
BOICO’s Backyard Closing event for Mental Health Week	13/10/2007	~60
Total		3803

Table 4: Act-Belong-Commit events (branded only)

A-B-C events (branded only)	Date	Attendance
Esperance Children's Festival – Thank A Volunteer	2/04/06	200
Fenwick Cinema Movie/Discussion: Respecting Diversity	2/05/2006	8
Adult Learner's Week – Curtin University	1–8/09/2006	6
Esperance Community Garden Open Day	24/09/2006	50
South East Runners Fun Run	1/10/2006	130
Wire Jewellery Workshops – Have A Go Event	8/10/06	16
Triathlon Club Rego Morning – Have A Go Event	8/10/2006	23
Carpet Bowls – Have A Go Event	8/10/2006	17
SRC Women's Morning Walk – Have A Go Event	10/10/2006	30
Esperance Library Morning Tea – Have A Go Event	11/10/2006	15
Pottery Club Open Day – Have A Go Event	12/10/2006	20
Bridge Club Open Day – Have A Go Event	13/10/2006	10
Table Tennis Fun Day – Have A Go Event	14/10/2006	20
Squash Club Open Day – Have A Go Event	19/10/2006	20
Festival of the Wind	23–24/03/2007	6000
Lake Monjie Picnic and Paint in the Park	23/09/2007	~200
Total		6765

Table 5: Act-Belong-Commit projects implemented during the Campaign

A-B-C Projects	Date	Attendance
10,000 Steps 2006	September–November 06	Approx 100 people participated
Club of the Month	January 06–October 06	7 Clubs
Adult Learner Week–Curtin Esperance	September 06	6 participants
MH Week 2006 – Have a Go Day	October 06	9 Clubs Involved
Inclusive Practices Workshops	March 07	22 participants
Active After Schools Education Sessions	Throughout the year 07	4 education sessions conducted
School Drug Education and Road Aware – School Drug Forums	January 07–December 07	6 Schools Involved
Kidsmatter – Project Support	December 06–ongoing	Nulsen Primary School
Motiv8 Youth Festival	May 2007	200 participants
Photo Voice – Wongutha Caps College	August 07– November 07	20 participants
Indigenous Dance Concert	July 07– November 07	20–30 participants
MH Week 2007	October 07	

Table 6: Act-Belong-Commit sponsorships received in Esperance during the Campaign

Sponsorships	Date	Total
Tru Blu Photography Project – Cannery Arts Centre	01/02/2006 – 30/05/2006	1
Youth Arts Development Program 2006 – Esperance Community Arts	01/01/2006 – 01/01/2006	1
Youth Arts Development Program 2007 – Esperance Community Arts	01/01/2007 – 01/01/2007	1
Festival of the Wind 2007	23/03/2007 – 30/05/2007	1
Esperance Art Society Biennial Art Exhibition	26/08/2007 – 09/09/2007	1
Total		5

3.9 Evaluation

The Act-Belong-Commit Campaign has undergone rigorous evaluation. Evaluation Officers monitored all events, activities, programs, projects, sponsorships, partnerships and media to determine the effectiveness of the Campaign strategies. In the first year, evaluation focused on recognition of the logo and awareness of the message and the second year focus shifted more to sustainability of the Campaign and understanding of the message.

The Campaign launch enabled evaluation of awareness and understanding of the community about mental health and how to look after it. The relaunch of the Campaign allowed for comparisons to be made as to whether or not awareness and understanding of mental health had increased during the first year of the Campaign. This information was obtained via discussion with those in attendance at the forums and the use of feedback forms.

Feedback was obtained throughout the two years from community organisations and members who were involved in the planning and implementation of Act-Belong-Commit partnered events and activities, such as Have-A-Go days during Mental Health Weeks 2006/07. This involved discussions at meetings and the use of evaluation forms that were developed by project officers. (See [Appendix 10](#) for examples of feedback).

The Steering Committee was evaluated on a regular basis via the use of the Vic Health Partnership Analysis tool. The Partnership Tool was distributed to Steering Committee members at various stages throughout the Campaign. This feedback provided an indication of the relationship between the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign and key stakeholders as represented on the Steering Committee in February 2006 ([Appendix 3](#)), December 2006 ([Appendix 4](#)) and October 2007 ([Appendix 5](#)). Key stakeholders were also interviewed at six monthly intervals during the Campaign using an evaluation questionnaire. This information was useful in determining the success of the Campaign in terms of the perceptions of partners as to how they valued their partnership with Act-Belong-Commit.

Project Officers prepared monthly reports and extensive reports at six monthly intervals throughout the Campaign providing insight into the Campaign strategies, the successes and the challenges. As well as collecting and collating all the data and reports from the individual sites, the Perth Hub has conducted evaluation of the Campaign throughout the two years. This has included three major telephone surveys during the Campaign period to collect quantitative data that related to recall of the Act-Belong-Commit message and the reach of the message within the population. These telephone surveys allowed for comparison message awareness and reach at different stages of the Campaign and differences in these comparisons between the sites.

Project Officers recorded details of advertisements, meetings, events and activities, projects, and other ways in which information was disseminated in a presentation and media log. A media file and an event file were also kept with copies of printed materials, such as adverts, photos, flyers, event evaluations etc. ([Appendix 6](#)).

3.10 Challenges and successes

The initial challenge of the Campaign was differentiating the terms 'mental illness' and 'mental health'. Mental health and mental illness were used interchangeably in the community and most people had no understanding about looking after one's mental health. Most of the first year of the Campaign was spent educating the community about mental health and differentiating this term from the notion of mental illness. This created an understanding that everyone has mental health and we all need to look after it.

Staffing changes of the Act-Belong-Commit Project Officer positions had a minor impact on the continuity and consistency of the Campaign, as it is inevitable that different people will do things in different ways. This problem was overcome through greater communication between the Implementation and Evaluation Officers and more flexibility within the roles. For example if the Implementation Officer attended an event that the Evaluation Officer was not present at, then the Implementation Officer would evaluate the event. This meant ultimately each officer took on both roles of implementation and evaluation depending on the circumstances of their involvement in a particular event or activity.

Transition of staff in other services presented challenges for the Campaign. The transient nature of the professional community had an impact on the Act-Belong-Commit Steering Committee with the loss of over half its members through staff changes. The Steering Committee did, however, continue to function with a small group of dedicated members continuing to provide strategic direction for the Campaign. Project Officers in Esperance also managed to gain direction for the Campaign by disseminating and obtaining information through their involvement with a number of local committees and organisations.

Challenges associated with the promotion of the Campaign during the first year included the fact that advertising was in the form of newspaper with no television advertising. The addition of television advertising within the second year of the Campaign resulted in a noticeable increase in recognition of the logo and Campaign awareness, particularly amongst children and youth.

Activities, events, presentations, media releases and advertisements all continued to be used during the second year of the Campaign as a means of increasing recognition of the Act-Belong-Commit logo and Campaign awareness and understanding. Television advertising during the second year of the Campaign significantly increased logo recognition and Campaign awareness with many community members mentioning that they had seen the ads on TV.

Staffing changes at the local community newspaper, the Esperance Express presented another challenge for the Campaign media coverage. New staff created changes in the newspaper's format and content. Mentally Healthy WA's regular spot for 'Club of the Month', which was featured in the first year of the Campaign was removed after a new editor was looking to have more control over the paper's coverage. Project Officers, however, continued to liaise with the newspaper by regularly sending media releases, event notification and promotional stories and successfully managed to procure the support of both reporters and the editor for the Campaign once again.

Another challenge was the inability to accurately predict the numbers of people who may turn up for an activity or event. A number of factors may have influenced this, such as:

- Activities and events not being RSVP or people RSVP'ing and then not attending
- Conflict with other activities and events
- Weather
- Failure to promote sufficiently.

Evaluation helped to determine to some extent what did and did not work in terms of why people came to some events and not to others. Care was taken in setting event dates to reduce clashes with other local activities. Local knowledge proved to be invaluable, as locals knew of other 'outlying' events that may not feature on the community calendar but could negatively impact on attendance at a proposed event.

Some of the project financial in-kind arrangements created challenges and confusion between the Mentally Healthy WA Hub at Curtin University of Technology, the WA Country Health Service and the Project Officers as a result of unclear communication. There were some issues surrounding the allocation of desk space and a computer for the Curtin-funded Officer. Problems such as this could perhaps have been avoided with the establishment of a clearer memorandum of understanding prior to the implementation of the Campaign. The lack of funding in terms of a petty cash budget from which Project Officers could operate also proved frustrating at times as this restricted the ability of the Project Officers to access merchandise or fund local events and activities.

The Campaign in Esperance enjoyed a great deal of success in terms of the valuable partnerships developed, sponsorships obtained, good media relations, and recognition and awareness of the Campaign logo in the community. A significant contributing factor to this success was the great work done through the Curtin Administration, particularly Jennifer Ambridge.

Overall, the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign appears to have been a success in Esperance. There is high awareness among the local population of the logo and the message. Project Officers no longer have to work tirelessly at establishing relationships within the community as community members, agencies and organisations actively seek them out. The Campaign has definitely been well received by the majority of the local population and with ongoing commitment to continuation of the Campaign it should continue to bring about positive changes in mental health and wellbeing.

3.11 Lessons learned

Project Officers experienced many learning curves through implementing the pilot phase of the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign in the Esperance community, and, as with all pilot projects, the lessons learned will be essential to the success of the future of the Campaign. The following are some examples of what has been learned:

- Involvement in a range of community committees and groups is beneficial for creating partnerships and networking within the community.
- Two years is only the beginning of this Campaign. We have just started to see the community really adopt the Act-Belong-Commit message.
- Regional communities have difficulty retaining staff. This has affected some of the Campaign partnerships. Additionally active community members often leave town which also affects community organisation capacity to deliver events and activities.
- It is important to maintain the Campaign momentum, constantly reminding community members of the Campaign message.
- It is very important to take time to lay strong foundations for the Campaign within the community, as this initial hard work will pay off in terms of higher community recognition and collaboration with agencies.
- An essential ingredient for a successful Campaign is the development and maintenance of effective partnerships. Partnerships allowed the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign in Esperance to have a widespread reach and ensured strong foundations within the community.
- Events and projects need to have commitment, support and be driven by the community in order for them to be successful; for without the community driving these events and projects they are less effective.
- Healthway sponsorships have been very effective in diffusing the Act-Belong-Commit message within the community. The Act-Belong-Commit health message attached to Healthway sponsored activities has been extremely effective in increasing recognition of both the Act-Belong-Commit logo and message within Esperance.

The following are some examples of what has been learned in regards to hosting Act-Belong-Commit events in Esperance:

- Contingency plans for the weather (tent or marquee) are crucial as the weather is often unpredictable
- Advertising is imperative to get people to events. Promotion should be distributed as widely as possible (mail-outs, newsletters, flyers, emails etc) as just advertising in the local paper is not enough
- It is extremely important to partner with other agencies and groups that are willing to put in the work
- It is important to develop a risk assessment of the venue/area before the event
- It is beneficial to have a major drawcard i.e. entertainment, free rides, free BBQ/food
- Events should be free of charge so that they are accessible for all community members
- Efforts should be made to make events accessible to all members of the community (i.e. the provision of transport for those members of the community who do not have access to a vehicle).

3.12 Recommendations

'Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do.' Bruce Lee.

The Act-Belong-Commit Campaign in Esperance was successful in changing community perception of mental health to be more positive, and help people understand how they can take care of their own mental health. Initial efforts focussed on separating the notion of 'mental illness' and 'mental health' and although this has taken the majority of the pilot's time we feel the community now understands the positive mental health concept.

The Act-Belong-Commit Campaign has presented a number of challenges and successes. The following recommendations may help the success of the Campaign's future:

- Sites should be allocated a petty cash budget to use for purchasing specific merchandise, catering for events, supporting small projects and events within the community as well as being able to reach the outlying areas within our regions. More often than not regional health service sites cover a large area that can only be serviced with additional funding and resources.
- A clearer memorandum of understanding between partnering agencies such as WA Country Health Service and the Mentally Healthy WA Hub at Curtin University for each site—in terms of equipment, media requirements, funding for travel and other project related expenditures.
- Greater involvement between local service managers/team leaders with the Hub and updates on Campaign progress. Regular contact between the Mentally Healthy WA Hub, and local service managers, would create a better working environment and understanding for both parties involved.
- Focus should be on building partnerships that are sustainable and produce opportunities for the community to get involved in community activities.

It is hoped the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign maintains momentum post-pilot, and continues to provide opportunities for people to look after their mental health—through maintaining the partnerships that have been developed, as well as building new and diverse partnerships. Lessons learned can be applied from the different experiences in each pilot site to assist in organising and supporting further community capacity-building in locations that have expressed an interest in taking on the Act-Belong-Commit message. The Act-Belong-Commit Project Officers in Esperance recommend the Campaign continue to develop, especially in terms of the wonderful partnerships that have been established within the community so far.

3.13 Sustainability

During the second year of intervention, the following strategies were implemented to ensure sustainability:

- Taking the Campaign out to outlying communities within the region, not limiting the Campaign to the Esperance town site
- Further involvement with local schools and curriculum—getting the schools talking about mental health, wellbeing and resilience
- Continual exposure of the Act-Belong-Commit logo in the community through branding of local events and activities
- Consolidating partnerships—encouraging other agencies to recognise how they can link up and promote the Campaign's messages
- Building collaboration—facilitate partnerships between other agencies that otherwise would not have thought to work together
- Healthway sponsorships—attach the Act-Belong-Commit health message to a number of Healthway sponsorships within the community. This has been done by supporting and encouraging local groups to apply for Healthway funding.

3.14 Conclusion

Overall, the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign has enjoyed great success in the Esperance community. Local agencies, groups and community members have shown an improvement in their understanding of mental health and how to be mentally healthy during the two years of the pilot phase. Much of the success of the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign in Esperance can be attributed to effective collaboration with local agencies and community groups, which has resulted in the development of positive partnerships and encouraged different groups to work together. The Act-Belong-Commit Project Officers believe a great deal of groundwork has been done during the two-year pilot phase of this Campaign and solid foundations now exist on which to build even greater momentum for the project post-pilot.

3.15 References

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