



**act
belong
commit**

**Impact
Statement**

2017

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“Volunteering on my own, with friends, my children and family, gives me a sense of belonging. I feel like I’ve helped, and my contribution makes a difference.”

Our Vision

A society that values mental health and where everyone has the opportunity to be mentally healthy.

Our Mission

To enhance population mental health by creating supportive environments that strengthen individual and community resilience.

Our Stories

Jem Plaisted

Jem is very involved in her local ‘Buy Nothing’ group. The project is a social movement that is making waves across the country, using Facebook to reduce waste and increase random acts of kindness.

Searching for a way to increase her belonging within a new area, Jem had a conversation with another parent in the school playground and discovered the initiative, which allows ‘free-cycling’ within communities. She quickly got involved in the local project and uncovered a community of like-minded people keen to make friends.

“It’s made me realise that I’m not as isolated as I thought I was. You meet someone to gift an item, get chatting and realise that you have things in common and you’re actually part of a lovely community.”

As a self-employed photographer, wife and mother to three young children, Jem is a busy person and describes keeping mentally healthy as a ‘balancing act’.

“I’d suggest finding what gives you that ‘buzz’. For me it’s bopping around the house to loud music with my kids, cooking or swimming at the local pool.”

“Happiness is contagious and even



though these are all simple things that you can do to boost yourself I have to remind myself to regularly do them or my mental health suffers.”

Jem also has some advice for people who are looking to get more involved in their community:

“Be brave! Push yourself or tell someone you trust what your goals are and ask them to help you follow through.”

Rita Nita

Rita Nita runs an urban dance company out of King St Arts Centre in Perth. Elan Dance Est is a welcoming, inclusive and vibrant place that welcomes all people to come along and ‘just give it a go’.

Rita describes herself as a naturally shy person, and says that her love of dancing is something that has helped her to come out of her shell.



She is particularly encouraging to those who may be experiencing mental health problems, and says she can personally empathise. Rita believes that dancing can be a way for people to find the light at the end of the tunnel.

“Dancing is a great way to escape from the everyday stress of life, meet like-minded people, listen to music and just be happy.”

Rita’s passion for promoting good mental health has been evident through her involvement with Mental Health Week over the past two years. She has provided dancers to come along to events to run interactive sessions with participants, which always proves popular, getting everyone up and dancing.

“Sometimes it’s scary to be a part of something a bit to the left. The reason I love to dance is because it empowers me to live with confidence.”



Mount Lawley Senior High School Case Study

Mount Lawley Senior High School joined the Mentally Healthy Schools Program in 2014 and were keen to promote and raise awareness of the importance of good mental health to ALL members of the school community, regardless of background, age or ethnicity.

They established a Student Wellbeing Committee to help drive the Act-Belong-Commit message within the school community. Led by students with guidance and support from the Healthy Active Coordinator, the group arranged activities, information stands and promotions, encouraging involvement from all year groups.

The Act-Belong-Commit message was promoted in various forums, both on and offline, and students were presented with Act-Belong-Commit prizes for involvement, volunteering, random acts

of kindness and generally embodying the Act-Belong-Commit principles. Staff were offered similar opportunities to boost their mental health and wellbeing through staff competitions, health newsletters and mental health promotions. They also established a fortnightly "Act-Belong-Commit" Coffee Club as an informal way for parents to get involved with the school through regular catch ups and helping out with events like Year 7 orientation and second-hand uniform sales.

"The resources and support we received has been exceptional and has ensured that this program and the importance of good mental health can be promoted easily and well to the school community. The students have definitely embraced the importance of mental health and the Act-Belong-Commit program."

Suzie Barnes, Healthy Active Coordinator, Mount Lawley Senior High School

What We Do

Act-Belong-Commit is a comprehensive mental health promotion campaign encouraging individuals to take action to protect and promote their own mental wellbeing, as well as encouraging organisations that provide mentally healthy activities to promote participation in those activities.

In essence, Act-Belong-Commit aims to increase individual and community wellbeing by increasing and strengthening connections between community members. This is achieved by encouraging participation in family, community events and organisations, and increasing collaboration between

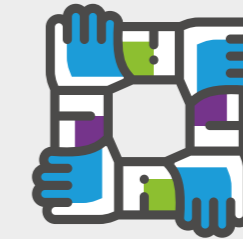
community organisations that offer activities conducive to good mental health and wellbeing.

The A-B-C guidelines for positive mental health provide a simple approach that we can adopt to become more mentally healthy.



Act

Keep active in as many ways as you can – physically, socially, mentally, and culturally.



Belong

Keep connected to friends and family; get involved in groups, join in local community activities and events.



Commit

Take on challenges or causes that provide meaning and purpose in life, commit to an interest or a cause; set goals to aim for; become a volunteer or learn a new skill.



A Message From the Campaign Manager

The Act-Belong-Commit campaign continues to grow in reach and impact through the development of sustainable partnerships between like-minded organisations.

2017 was a big year for the campaign, supporting 214 partners in the promotion of the Act-Belong-Commit message to deliver grassroots strategies to encourage people to 'Act-Belong-Commit' for good mental health. We also welcomed our newest international partner, the Faroe Islands Council for Public Health, who are implementing a tailored version of the Act-Belong-Commit framework across the Faroe Islands archipelago.

Our 2017 evaluation report shows that in just a year approximately 200,000 more Western Australians became aware of the Act-Belong-Commit campaign (up from approximately 1.9 million people in 2016). This figure has more than doubled since the campaign began ten years ago, with the campaigns reach now at 81%.

"200,000 more Western Australians became aware of the Act-Belong-Commit campaign..."

Most importantly, for people who tried something for their own mental health, 94% stated what they did helped their mental health.

We released the Act-Belong-Commit Aboriginal logo and slogan for use state-wide by Aboriginal partner groups wanting to promote social and emotional wellbeing in their communities, and for organisations who sponsor or support events run by Aboriginal groups.

As part of our Aboriginal Program, the Healing Out on Country Project was developed after extensive consultation, identifying the need for a culturally sensitive and collaborative project aimed at building social and emotional wellbeing for families effected by suicide and tragic loss in the town of Roebourne. Family trips enabled parents and carers time away as a family unit, as well as the chance to once again see their children happy. They also provided agencies with opportunities to build relationships with families who would not normally access their services and programs.

Our Youth Connectors program was officially launched by the Hon Andrea Mitchell MLA, Minister for Mental Health and Child Protection in February 2017 with 68 key stakeholders attending. And our Pilbara Capacity Building Program was recognised as a finalist in the Diversity Category of the WA

"We released the Act-Belong-Commit Aboriginal logo for Aboriginal partner groups wanting to promote social and emotional wellbeing."

Mental Health Awards 2017 for its impact in improving mental wellbeing in the Pilbara.

The Mentally Healthy Schools Program has made significant progress in encouraging young people to talk about mental health, in reducing stigma around mental illness, and in increasing staff and student participation in mentally healthy activities.

We also developed a suite of resources for retirees and those transitioning into retirement, encouraging them to boost their mental health and wellbeing through a few simple steps.

In 2017, a new Steering Committee was assembled to provide guidance and expert advice as part of our commitment to working together to promote WA's mental health.

I would like to thank our Principal Partners, Healthway and the Mental Health Commission, and our Partner, Chevron Australia, for their support in 2017. I also acknowledge Curtin

University for continuing to host the Act-Belong-Commit team.

And lastly, thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Campaign in 2017. From funders and supporters, the dedicated team at Mentally Healthy WA, the Act-Belong-Commit Steering Committee through to our campaign partners, Ambassadors and the Western Australian community, your dedication, enthusiasm and hard-work are all helping to make a real difference.

Amberlee Nicholas
Campaign Manager



Our Impact



81%

of Western Australians
are aware of Act-Belong-Commit.



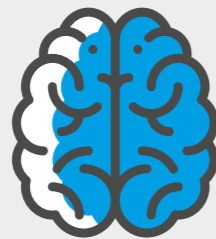
97%

of Western Australians
approve of Act-Belong-Commit.



12%

did something to **improve their mental health**. ie.
kept active, got involved in community, volunteered.



68%

said Act-Belong-Commit
has **reduced stigma**.



70%

believed the campaign
made people **more open**
to mental health.

The Bigger Picture

Strategic Plan 2016 - 2019

To extend the reach and strengthen
the impact of the ABC Campaign

Enhanced Programs

Consolidated and refreshed programs,
and the development of new initiatives
that address the needs and aspirations of
diverse and evolving communities

Expanded Reach

Increased engagement and connection
with more jurisdictions, communities
and sub-population groups, and
increased participation in individual and
community activities

Enhance capacity to deliver
effective mental health
promotion by fostering mutually
beneficial relationships

Enriched Partnerships

Enhanced and additional working
relationships with community partners

Investment in our Capacity

Renewed and additional relationships to
secure investment for future growth and to
ensure sustainability

To provide leadership in
evidence-based mental
health promotion

Research and Evaluation

Research that informs and evaluates the
effectiveness of the A-B-C campaign
in achieving its individual, community,
advocacy and societal objectives

Contemporary Promotions and Communications

An evidence-based framework for mental
health promotion via community based
social marketing

To consolidate and build
organisational capability

Strengthened Governance and Leadership

Enhanced direction setting and
decision making

Empowered and Capable People

A diverse team who are passionate about
mental health and have the capacity to
fulfill our vision and mission

Efficient Operations

Quality systems, processes, and
infrastructure are implemented that enable
the provision of consistent and reliable
services to decrease administrative burden
and foster sustainable practices



"I have found my best friends through
volunteering, and I have met some
wonderful people who have also been
great to know professionally."

Photo courtesy of City of Albany

Our Objectives

The objectives for Phase V (2017-2019) of the Act-Belong-Commit campaign include:

1. Maintain (and increase) general community awareness and understanding of things Western Australian's can do to keep mentally healthy.
2. Increase and reinforce participation in individual and community activities that strengthen mental health and reduce vulnerability to mental health disorders in Western Australia.
3. Continue to reduce stigma.
4. Extend and expand the reach of the Act-Belong-Commit message to sub-populations including youth, seniors, people with a disability, lower SES and disadvantaged groups, and develop culturally specific and appropriate versions of the campaign for Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse populations.
5. Increase the number of Act-Belong-Commit partners to 300.
6. Strengthen connections between those dealing with mental health problems in the community and organisations and individuals with the capacity to strengthen positive mental health.
7. Continue to contribute to cohesion in Western Australian communities by fostering partnerships between organisations around a unifying theme of positive mental health.
8. Continue to build capacity in participating organisations to plan, implement, evaluate and fund activities that promote positive mental health.
9. Continue to extend the reach of the campaign to schools, worksites and primary and/or clinical care settings.
10. Expand the capacity to evaluate the campaign's impact and effectiveness, and to conduct research projects to better inform the development of campaign strategies.



Our Programs

Mentally Healthy Schools Program

Bringing mentally healthy schools to life!

The Mentally Healthy Schools Program, developed with support from Chevron Australia, provides a framework to embed the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign within the classroom, school environment and the whole school community in order to boost the mental health and wellbeing of both students and staff and prevent the onset of mental health problems.

You can read the 2018 Mentally Healthy Schools Impact Evaluation Report [here](#).



"Our vision for seeing our school become more mentally healthy is coming to life. We can see our students more aware of their own emotions and mental wellbeing"

- School Chaplain, Clarkson Primary School 2017



585

Teachers trained in Act-Belong-Commit and mental health promotion



86%

of students at follow-up were aware of Act-Belong-Commit (62% at baseline)



92%

of staff at follow-up were aware of Act-Belong-Commit (77% at baseline)

Pilbara Capacity Building Program

Building social and emotional wellbeing in the Pilbara

Our Program Coordinator has worked closely alongside local organisations, community groups, and health services to continue to nurture and create mentally healthy people and communities in Karratha and Onslow.

In partnership with Chevron Australia, the Pilbara Capacity Building Program has created integral programs, community linkages and supported locals to participate in activities good for their mental health and well-being via free community events and activities.

“Mentally Healthy WA provide an opportunity for mums, dads and their children to meet, create networks and establish positive relationships in Onslow. This has proven to be invaluable due to the isolation that can be felt in small communities in regional WA.”

Rebecca Dawes, Onslow Play Group



‘Racing’- “Playing with friends, making fun, no matter who is the winner, the important thing is togetherness.” – *Ema Novita Hasan, 18 and Over Winner – Karratha.*

“The PhotoVoice competition provided me with an opportunity to further develop my own photography skills whilst meeting likeminded people; however, I found that by introducing my son to the PhotoVoice competition and workshops, I was able to watch his confidence and interest in photography grow. The only problem I have now is that I think he is taking better photos than me!”

- Anthony Veder, 2017



‘Rodeo Riot’- “Being involved in the Onslow Rodeo showed my commitment to the community and allowed me to contribute to mental health.” – *Kaiden Matera, 18 and Over Winner – Onslow.*

Aboriginal Program

Standing Strong Together

Act-Belong-Commit, in partnership with Chevron Australia, has been working closely with Elders, community leaders, organisations and members of the Roebourne community to build the social and emotional wellbeing in Aboriginal communities. Through the development of a culturally appropriate Act-Belong-Commit framework with an emphasis on interactions with family, involvement in community activities, and connecting to country and culture.

Overall, stakeholders, community leaders and community members agree that the program has increased people’s awareness of the need to be proactive about their social and emotional wellbeing, has led

to greater collaboration between groups and organisations in the town, and has resulted in many individuals taking action to enhance their own wellbeing as well as that of their families and the general community.

We acknowledge the support of the Elders, community and agencies for taking the journey with us to develop this program, and for allowing other Aboriginal communities around WA the opportunity to use the Aboriginal Act-Belong logo and Standing Strong Together branding

The Aboriginal Program was judged a Finalist in the WA Community Services Awards for outstanding commitment to collaborative place-based services or solutions.



“Act-Belong-Commit in Roebourne means ways you can become strong in body, mind and spirit.”
Key stakeholder interviewee, Roebourne 2017

Healing Out On Country Project

Bringing strength and healing to families impacted by suicide

For such a small town, Roebourne has a high level of suicide and tragic losses in the community. The Healing Out on Country Project brings strength and healing to families impacted by suicide, by facilitating family trips ‘Out on Country’ and the opportunity for people to be away from their everyday problems, and to have time out to connect and heal. These trips also provide agencies with the opportunity to develop relationships with families who would not normally access their services and programs.

“We’ve ... all had our fair share of loss and with us as a group helping other people in the community we’re all coming together and all helping heal each other and that. I think this Out on Country is really good, it has healed some families and get them through. It also helped them to speak about it. Sometimes round the fire and that, some of the ladies, we had old Tootsie started talking about her daughter, and that. And it brought out the things they hadn’t said before, the feelings they had bottled up. Come out, you know, come out to a lot of people around whoever was there. Everybody gets touched by it, we all sit there and we all feel that hurt too, you know. Later on we all just gather round and give each other hugs and comfort one another and we’re there for each other all the time”.

You can learn more about the [Healing Out on Country Project in The West Australian Indigenous Storybook: The Pilbara Edition](#).



Youth Connectors

A connector is a friend.

Seeking to engage and connect young people between the ages of 16 and 25 with a passion for mental health and wellbeing our goal is to upskill 'Connectors' in the Act-Belong-Commit way of life for good mental health so they can assist and encourage their peers to participate or get involved in mentally healthy activities

whilst helping to increase resilience amongst youth in both regional and metro areas of WA. Since launching in 2017, 33 workshops have been held across metro and regional areas and 286 passionate young people have been trained to be champions for their community.



"Since the workshop I have utilised skills provided to me by encouraging young people in town get connected with other youth, get actively involved in the community and helped increased their feeling of belonging."

*Workshop Participant, November 2017
(Youth Connectors Workshop)*



Act-Belong-Commit Ambassador Program

Act-Belong-Commit is proud to have the support of a passionate team of volunteer Ambassadors who give their time and expertise to help promote the Act-Belong-Commit message and help raise awareness about mental health. In 2017 we welcomed two new Act-Belong-Commit Ambassadors:

Michelle Cowan is an accomplished High Performance Coach, a mother of two, mentor and role model

Lara Filocamo is a young community champion who, after experiencing struggles in early life, has gone on to become an emergency department nurse, professional athlete, writer and public speaker.

Our Community

Working with the community to create a mentally healthy WA.

Our Partners

Partnerships are at the core of Act-Belong-Commit

Act-Belong-Commit builds sustainable and meaningful partnerships between like-minded organisations who share a vision for a more mentally healthy WA. Together we raise awareness and encourage participation in activities that promote good mental health, strengthen individual resilience, reduce stigma associated with mental illness, and build more mentally healthy communities in WA.

In 2017, Act-Belong-Commit supported 214 partners to deliver Act-Belong-Commit strategies to their communities by utilising our messaging and resources to encourage people to participate in the mentally healthy activities.

Healthway Sponsorships

Raising awareness through sponsorships

In 2017, Healthway assigned the Act-Belong-Commit health message to 107 arts, sports and community event sponsorships. Some of these are:

- Western Australia Youth Theatre Company
- Denmark Arts
- Theatre Kimberley
- North Midlands Project Inc
- Tura New Music
- Sailability WA Inc
- Mandurah Performing Arts Centre
- International Art Space
- DADAA

By promoting the Act-Belong-Commit mentally healthy message, these sponsorships raised awareness through:

- Increased participation in mentally healthy activities
- Building partnerships between community groups and health services
- Developing interactive and innovative resources to educate the community on mental health and wellbeing
- Building the capacity of community groups to promote healthy behaviours and empowered them to provide healthy environments



31

Government & Health Services



36

State-wide organisations



111

Groups & Clubs



6

Organisations Outside WA



52

Schools

Our Events

Educating and empowering people

The goal of every Act-Belong-Commit branded event is to educate and empower people to take action for their own mental health.

In 2017, we reached out to the WA community with:



2741

Events & Projects



898

Presentations



552

Information Stands



147

Workshops &
Training Seminars



1705

Media Placements
(online/print/radio)

Our Resources

Resources are one of the ways we engage with individuals

Mentally Healthy WA continues to develop new and innovative resources, finding new ways to engage with the community in meaningful and motivating ways.

Our partners use Act-Belong-Commit [educational resources](#), [merchandise](#), [signage](#) and [interactive materials](#) to communicate the mentally healthy message with their community.

Throughout my first depressive episode, I found that there was an overwhelming amount of information available about depression and bipolar, but nothing that was comprehensive or accessible enough for my depressed and anxious mind to make use of. I felt lost and didn't know where to start. A friend gave me a few resources from Act-Belong-Commit which provided practical and bite-sized tactics linked to a simple yet powerful philosophy that really resonated with me. It was an important catalyst in my recovery journey and the message still helps me stay on track.

*Email from a member of the public,
March 2017*



Research and Innovation

Making an impact on the world stage

Sharing the journey of WA's evidence based mental health promotion campaign, the Act-Belong-Commit team delivered six presentations at the World Congress on Public Health.

Act-Belong-Commit goes global, welcoming the Faroe Islands as another international partner.

Our International partners' published four papers in International Journals, continuing to add to the growing evidence base for the effectiveness of Act-Belong-Commit.

Research published in the international Drug and Alcohol Dependence journal indicate that keeping active, having supportive social networks and engaging in meaningful enjoyable activities not only enhance wellbeing but also protect against using alcohol or other substances to cope with stressors in life.

Santini et al. 'The association between indicators and problem drinking among older Irish adults: Findings from a prospective analysis of the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA)' Drug and Alcohol Dependence. 180 (2017) 323–331.



Our Team

Act-Belong-Commit Team

Amberlee Nicholas, Campaign Manager

Caroline Jackson Pearce, Project Manager

Simone Kerrigan, Partnerships Manager

Lesley Murray, Aboriginal Project Manager

Sarah Graham, Health Promotion Coordinator

Jennie Ferraro, Liaison and Support Officer

Phoebe Joyce, Schools Coordinator

Shelley Heelan, Pilbara Coordinator

Darci Miller, Youth Connectors Officer

Chloe Townsend, Health Promotion Assistant

Julia Anwar-McHenry, Evaluation Officer

Our Steering Committee

Professor Rob Donovan, University of Western Australia

Dr Jo Clarkson, Healthway

Lynette Dimer, Heart Foundation

Sandra Cronin, Worklink Occupational Health & Rehabilitation Service

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Funding



Support

