

## Welcome to the 1st QUARTER

Maree Kerr, General Manager

Since the last newsletter there has been much happening here at Healthy Cities Illawarra and Healthy People Illawarra.

A morning tea was held at our new office for some of our key stakeholders. It was an opportunity to see our new office space and to build on new and existing relationships that are vital to us. With the Lord Mayor Councillor Gordon Bradbery in attendance it gave us an opportunity to thank our partners whilst showcasing the programs we conduct and the impact that Healthy Cities has in the region.

The launch of the Nowra 5x5 on March 4 was a great success. This program aims to increase the level of physical activity people currently undertake. We know that there are many health benefits from regular physical activity but that it also takes time to form a habit. The Nowra 5x5 allows people to walk or run 5kms on a Tuesday evening for 5 consecutive weeks. This is a free community event and on the first week we had 120 people participate.



Two of our current programs, the Healthy Men's program and the Child Friendly by Design 2528 project have secure funding only until June 30. Unfortunately we are still to hear if further funding has been approved by the Government and our program partners. A number of strategies are being considered by the board regarding these programs but we are hoping for a positive outcome very soon.

Our programs are run by our amazing staff. Commencing from the next issue we will dedicate a section in the newsletter that profiles one of our employees and the work that they do. This will give you first hand knowledge of their experience, an insight into the partnerships and collaborations that it takes to conduct these programs at grass-root level.

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# A Message from HCI President

David Fildes, President Healthy Cities Illawarra

When you flick through the pages of this newsletter you will begin to realise what a versatile organisation Healthy Cities Illawarra is. We are currently involved in a variety of projects that take action to improve the health of people living in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. For example, we coordinate a variety of health promoting activities and many local people are experiencing the benefits of regular exercise, healthy eating and various community safety initiatives as a result of this.

The great news is that we have been around for over 25 years and have really made a difference to the lives of many people. Our busy team has delivered many initiatives over the years ranging from resourcing taskforces to influencing a wide range of policy areas including air quality, transport options and child safety. We are also heavily involved in community development in

disadvantaged areas around the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. We have run breakfast programs in schools and are currently promoting school holiday camps where children in Warilla are encouraged to participate in a variety of sports. The camps also have a focus on promoting the benefits of an active lifestyle and healthy eating.

If you have lived in the Illawarra or Shoalhaven for a while it is probable that your life has in some way been 'touched' by Healthy Cities Illawarra. We are a truly local organisation delivering local solutions to local problems. We started off by cleaning up Lake Illawarra in the 1990's and we now work with the local health district to deliver targeted solutions to local health issues. As a result we are heavily involved in health promotion activities focussing on men's health, sexual health and food security.

Since 1990, through the Healthy

Cities Awards, we have recognised over 1,000 individuals and community groups that have made a difference in improving the health and well-being of the local community and environment. These awards are diverse in nature and reflect grass roots community activity which gives something back. I ask you to think about this and reflect about much of the hidden work that Healthy Cities Illawarra has carried out in the 'background' and out of the 'spotlight'.

Our organisation is currently trying to diversify its funding sources to try and ensure its sustainability so that we can serve the people of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven for another 25 years. You can help us by becoming a member of Healthy Cities Illawarra or by making a financial or in-kind donation (see the back page for more information). We are a community-based, non-profit organisation and we need your support.

## Coniston Men's Shed

### REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE!

Recently the Spanish and Latin-American Community Organisation (SALCO) were putting on a film festival and needed some furniture to be both practical and create a bit of atmosphere. The Coniston Men's Shed was approached by SALCO to turn old pallets into interesting pieces of furniture and after much discussion a plan was made to turn them into table counters.

The table counters were both attractive and functional and serviced the need required at the festival.

Since then there has been a lot of positive feedback from attendees at

the festival. The idea of community organisations, such as the Coniston Men's Shed utilising recyclable materials such as pallets to build useful items has led to further discussions. The opportunities and possibilities of suitable materials being liberated from potential landfill is endless. The recyclable items can be re-purposed in the men's sheds to make useful objects for the community, and create a more beautiful and functional place.

It just goes to show that it is sometimes the little things that have the potential to make big differences.

Brian Pember  
Health Promotion Officer  
Men's Health



# Stir it up! UPDATE

It's been a great start to the year for the Stir it up! project. We will be running two rounds of Stir it up! initial training with our project partner TAFE Outreach this year. A new group of volunteers have just started their TAFE training at Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child and Family Centre in Nowra.

This year the training has been extended to 15 weeks and upgraded to a Certificate II qualification which will be a great outcome for the community members who complete the course. In the Illawarra, we will be commencing the Stir it up! training in Shellharbour at the beginning of May and are currently reviewing applications for this.

As part of our support for project volunteers we run ongoing training sessions twice a term. At a recent workshop our current volunteers had lots of fun catching up with each other and taking part in a "display kit and cooking demo challenge". Our peer-educators and mentors did an awesome job presenting a wide range of creative healthy eating activities including healthy drinks, snacks and breakfasts.

Meantime our existing volunteers have been passing on healthy eating messages in a variety of locations including local schools and playgroups.

If you are an organisation who would like to host a healthy eating activity visit <http://foodfairnessillawarra.org.au/projects-stories/stir-it-up/> to download an Activity Request Form.

## Drink more water!

One of the key messages of Stir it up! is to drink more water. There are a number of ways to promote this message – one being educating community members about the amount of sugar contained in soft drinks which can lead to tooth decay and weight gain.



The Healthy Drinks Display Kit (above) is a useful tool to promote this message and is a great ice breaker at a presentation and usually generates a lot of discussion. Water, plain milk and diluted fruit juice are healthier alternatives to soft drinks.



Stir it up! is coordinated by Illawarra Local Health District Health Promotion Service and Healthy Cities Illawarra.

Jenny Norman,  
Health Promotion Officer  
Community Programs

# The Illawarra Active Transport Taskforce

There are multiple forms of on-road and off-road cycle facilities, each with their advantages and disadvantages. The following are descriptions of the most common types of cycle facilities used.

Across NSW and the Illawarra inconsistencies in standards and regulation of cycle facilities development is causing confusion with cyclist and motorist rights. The IATT is working towards establishing greater consistency in Illawarra cycle facility development to create a safer cycle environment.

## Exclusive off-road cycleway Shared Use Path

This cycle space is off-road, physically separated from motor vehicles and parking spaces, and is often in the form of a shared-path with pedestrians. This is a safe and preferred option for cyclists as they are protected from motorists, however, requires substantial space and cost.



Image sourced: <http://www.smh.com.au>

## Dedicated Bicycle Lanes

An on-road cycle space separated by continuous line markings. This dedicated cycle space is another preferred option for cyclists, especially on busy roads. Cyclists are more protected than cycling in traffic lanes, and motorists can easily pass. Though finding enough space on the road makes it difficult to adopt dedicated bicycle lanes.

## Cycling in Traffic Lanes

This is an unmarked space where cyclists share the road with motorists and is a low-cost option utilising existing road infrastructure. Cyclists have legal rights to share road with motorists as bikes are regarded as vehicles. This option is more suitable to low traffic volume roads as cyclists are often seen as a hazard.



Image Sourced: <http://www.theage.com.au>



Image sourced: <http://www.sydneycyclist.com>

## Cycling in Road Shoulders

A cycle space shared with stationary/parked vehicles, marked by continuous lines or bike symbols on road shoulder. Cyclists are less protected than in dedicated cycle lanes, with the hazard of parked car doors opening in cycling space. Bike riders may also be forced into traffic lanes when such hazards occur.



Smoke Free Illawarra has been making great progress on the community education campaign around smoking in pregnancy.

The smoking rate among all pregnant women in the Shellharbour and Shoalhaven LGA is 15% and 20% respectively compared to the NSW state average of nearly 13% (Health Statistics NSW).

The campaign messages have been designed to inform women who smoke about the health risks of smoking and passive smoking while pregnant. The campaign also provides information about using Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) products such as gum, lozenges or inhaler to 'smooth out the bumps of their quit journey'.

Smoke Free Illawarra has produced campaign displays consisting of life-sized cardboard cut-outs of a pregnant woman and information brochures about using Nicotine Replacement Therapy in pregnancy.

Smoke Free Illawarra hopes that these displays can be utilised by some selected pharmacies and in antenatal clinics across the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

If you are interested in displaying these resources at your service please contact Annie McDonald on Ph.4223 8334 or email: [annie.mcdonald@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:annie.mcdonald@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au)

Evan Gee, Health Promotion Officer  
Community Environment

# Child Friendly by Design (CFbD)

Nikke Gladwin, Health Promotion Officer Child Friendly by Design

## Voices of Children

Utilising the Child Friendly by Design approach to engage with children is ensuring that they have a voice in their own communities and as such, are included in the decision making process on aspects of that community which affect them.

Abby Miles has been a member of the Child Friendly by Design 2528 Project for over a year. She attends the positive activity in the park most weeks.

Abby has also been keen to get involved in the Children's Community Leadership Program as part of the 2528 Project partnership with Warilla North Public School. These sessions have worked towards children having a 'voice' in the program of activities and the long term design of the park space. Long term involvement

builds confidence, community capacity and leadership skills.

This week Abby Miles was supported by her Dad and the school to talk about her experiences and present the feedback from the children's consultation as part of the 2528 Project's Annual Planning Day.

Over 20 adults representing a wide range

of community organisations attended the event with

international visitors from Brazil, Nepal and Beijing also taking part. Abby highlighted some of her favourite moments with the project telling the group that the Art in the Park Project allowed children to capture their ideas and aspirations for the park space. 'The most important thing for me would be a swing in the park. Soon we will be getting a big basket swing.' Abby's pictures, along with other children's work, has been displayed to emphasise just one way in which children's ideas can be collected.



## 2528 Project Getting Sporty In the Park

As part of the 2528 Project's diverse program, a comprehensive assortment of active sessions have been delivered over the past year with the aim of promoting participation in sport in the local area.

Children were consulted on the sporting areas that they would like included in this program. They chose Soccer, Hockey, Cricket and Games (Multi Skills). This term sees the last element of the program being delivered. (This program is funded by NSW Office of Communities Sport and Recreation)

The program aims to introduce new sports through 'have a go' drop in sessions, followed by school holiday day camps where children have access to more intensive coaching to build their skills. The sessions include local sporting clubs promoting themselves so children can pursue their interests long term.

Over 150 children have participated in the sessions not only promoting the specific sports but also active lifestyles and healthy eating.

The current Multi Skills Games sessions are running after school every Tuesday, with a one day holiday camp planned for the next school holidays.

These sessions focus on fun activities that improve children's management of movement-coordination, strength, fitness and special awareness. Research has linked these skills to improved gross motor skills, school readiness and also learning. This is in addition to a reduction in sedentary lifestyles and obesity and the promotion of a range of social skills.

The list is really endless! Amazing what playing a few games outdoors does for children!



# HELP US PREVENT TODDLER DEATHS

## Spread the word about the dangers of BLIND CORDS!

After two toddlers in NSW tragically died within the space of one week from becoming entangled in blind cords, Healthy Cities Illawarra is seeking your help.

We need everyone to spread the word about the dangers posed to young children by blind and curtain cords and let parents and carers know how they can protect their children from this real and common danger present in many homes.

The following resources can be used to raise awareness of the dangers of blind and curtain cords

and let others know how to check the safety of the cords in their homes. These include:

- Basic blind and curtain cord safety information. Brochure available on the ACCC product safety website <http://www.productsafety.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/995161/fromItemId/974977>
- Photographs of safe and unsafe blind cords for use with parents and carers are available for download from the Healthy Cities Illawarra website and Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/healthycitiesillawarra](http://www.facebook.com/healthycitiesillawarra))

As a community, we have been saddened by the deaths of two young children. This creates an opportunity for awareness raising and tapping into the motivation people naturally feel for protecting children and preventing such an incident from potentially happening again.

Thank you for doing whatever you can to help keep children safe – passing on a safety message can make a huge difference and could even save a child's life!

Katherine van Weerdenburg  
Health Promotion Officer  
Children's Health Programs

## HORSLEY'S OUTDOOR KREW (HOK) Starts a new year of fun in Gerringulli Park!



The HCI Horsley's Outdoor Krew program continues to go from strength to strength in 2014, engaging 9-12 year olds in the Horsley area in an outdoor activity program every Thursday afternoon during school terms.

This once weekly program runs in Gerringulli Park Horsley, connecting the children to a play space in their own neighbourhood and focussing on fun, physical activity, healthy eating and friendship. The program is funded by Dapto Leagues Club

via a 2013 ClubGrant.

The program is run by two experienced project officers, Kellie Sale and Daniel Barrett, who engage the children in planning and undertaking the activities each week. Information for parents and registration forms can be found on the Healthy Cities website.

After just one term of operation, the Krew has a committed group of kids turning up each week, but there is room for plenty more to join us!

So, if you know of children aged 9-12 years in the West Dapto area looking for something active to do on Thursday afternoons, get them to come and try Horsley's Outdoor Krew – all are welcome!

*"You don't only get to meet new friends, but you get to eat new things and play new games!"*

*(Kaide 10yrs)*

Katherine van Weerdenburg  
Health Promotion Officer  
Children's Health Programs



# A Success

The launch of the Nowra 5x5 was held on March 4, 2014 at Paringa Park. We were blessed with fantastic weather as 120 participants took to the 5 km pre-determined course running along the River foreshore. The aim of the Nowra 5x5 is to encourage people to participate in regular physical activity and to build community wellbeing.

There was much interest in the event which is being conducted over 5 weeks with people of all standards participating. Whilst the program is aiming to increase the level of physical activity in people who currently do no or very little walking, we saw an array of walkers and runners along the course. The

beauty of this program is that it caters for all age groups and this helps bring the community closer together. Already participants are asking “how many times a year will you be holding this event”? This is a positive step and shows that the community are looking for events that not only include physical activity but also build the capacity of the community.

With a pro-active and dedicated committee, the second week saw an additional 56 registrations, so getting the word out there about the event is having a real impact. At the end of the 5 weeks it is hoped that participants will continue to walk regularly and now that they are

familiar with the course, they can continue to this route.

Our thanks to all our sponsors, with a special mention to Nowra Farmers Market who have supplied fresh fruit for participants at the finish line each week.



## Harping on...

**‘Awesome speakers. Truly inspirational stories. Totally unexpected. Brilliant’.**

The above quote is from recent feedback on ‘The Talk’ hosted by Healthy Cities Illawarra and the HIV and Related Projects Unit at the Nan Tien Temple in Wollongong on the 18 February.

Providing up-to-date information and training tips on sex education and health promotion, sexuality,

HIV and STI’s, ‘The Talk’ grows in strength and reputation each year.

Delegates included health promotion officers, Aboriginal health educators, community workers, youth workers and nurses. At the event I presented a brief history of sex and sexuality. Scott Lockhart presented on HIV in the Australian context, staff from the Illawarra Shoalhaven Sexual Health Service presented on STI’s and we again welcomed a Positive Life (NSW) HIV positive speaker.

A highlight of this year’s event was guest speaker Dr Kath Albury who presented on her research into young people’s everyday practices

of mobile media use and sexual self-representation (more commonly referred to as sexting).

A relevant and current topic at the moment, particularly for the youth workers and educators attending, the presentation provided some thought-provoking perspectives, many questions and some very interesting and engaged debate.

‘The Talk’ next travels to the Coolangatta Estate (Nowra) on June the 17th and the Milton /Ulladulla Ex Servos Club on September the 9th.

Nadia Sneyd Miller,  
Health Promotion Officer  
Sexual Health

# 3 ways you can make a difference?

**1 Become a member of Healthy Cities Illawarra.** We have 2 types of membership one for the individual and the other for an organisation.

Membership fees vary from \$11 (gst incl) for a pensioner/ senior and \$22 (gst incl) for an individual. Organisations have a separate pricing scale depending on the type of organisation and staff numbers. Membership costs start from \$44 (gst incl).

**2 Make a financial donation.** Healthy Cities Illawarra (HCI) is a charitable organisation that promotes community health and wellbeing. Current activities include: Environmental Health, Community Building, Healthy Urban Design, Healthy Ageing, Child Safety. HCI currently **does not** have DGR (Donor Gift Recipient) Status, but is pursuing it.

Healthy People Illawarra (HPI) is a charitable organisation that deals with the prevention of specific diseases. Current priorities include: Community Nutrition, Physical Activity, Sexual Health and HIV/ AIDS Prevention, Tobacco Control and Mental Health and Wellbeing. HPI **does** have DGR Status.

To make a donation goto <http://www.givenow.com.au/healthypeopleillawarra>

**3 Provide in-kind support/ donation.** Individuals and organisations can provide in-kind support in many forms, for example: building materials for a men's shed project, waivering of venue hire fees for workshops, supply trees/ plants or art supplies for our CFbD 2528 Project, provide food for our Stir it up! volunteers to run a healthy eating activity in the community.

For more information please call us on 02 4283 8111 or email [admin@healthyillawarra.org.au](mailto:admin@healthyillawarra.org.au)

HCI is a community-based, non-profit organisation that is a part of a worldwide movement initiated by the World Health Organisation. We are committed to continued improvement of the health, environment and quality of life of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven community.

Your support helps us create a network of people and organisations who share these common goals.

## For weekly updates *JOIN US* on *SOCIAL E-MEDIA*



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