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Reconnecting at-risk Indigenous youth with culture

The Morrison Government is rolling out a new program to support nine Indigenous communities across the country to engage Indigenous young people and help them build stronger connections to their families, Elders and culture.

Stage one of the Indigenous Youth Connection to Culture (IYCC) program will operate in Nhulunbuy, Numbulwar, and Alice Springs in the Northern Territory; Mareeba, Doomadgee and Cherbourg in Queensland; Perth (Gosnells) and Geraldton in Western Australia; and Kempsey in New South Wales, at a combined investment of $3.6 million.

Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP, said the IYCC program has been co-designed with communities to increase activity engagement, improve mental health and reduce the risk of suicide of young Indigenous people by reconnecting them with their traditional culture.

“These activities are community-led and have been developed with the support of specialist facilitators through a robust co-design process," Minister Wyatt said.

“Activities will be squarely aimed at promoting positive relationships and improving the wellbeing of young Indigenous people in remote and regional areas, which in turn will build resilience and reduce anti-social behaviour.

“We’ll achieve this by building stronger connections to culture, families and Elders. It’s about strengthening cultural identity and cultural continuity to foster resilience, self-esteem and pride as protective factors against youth suicide and self-harm.

“This will be done through a range of activities including creating networks and partnerships in the community; culture camps; bush cooking; giving the youth a voice and inclusion on community decisions; mentorship; developing cultural pride and preserving local languages.”

The activities will also will complement broader community plans aimed at building leadership skills and promoting younger voices.

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