

Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey

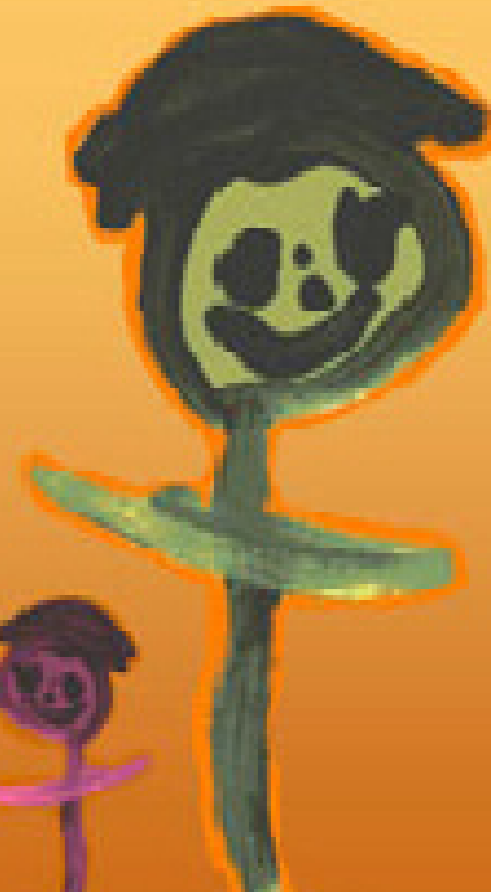


the story

wunan region

in the beginning...

A big survey of non-Aboriginal families was done in 1993. This survey helped to increase health, education and family services for families throughout WA. It was promised that a similar survey would be done for Aboriginal families and their kids. It took a long time to prepare the survey and work with Aboriginal elders and communities.



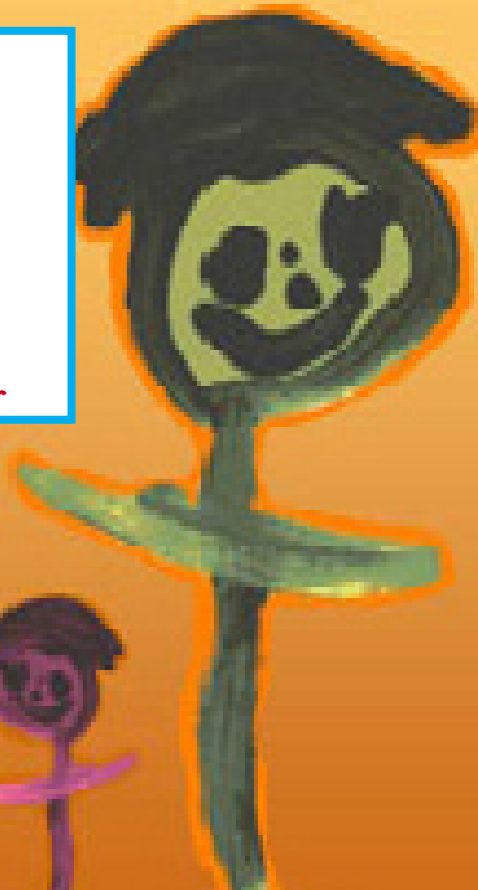
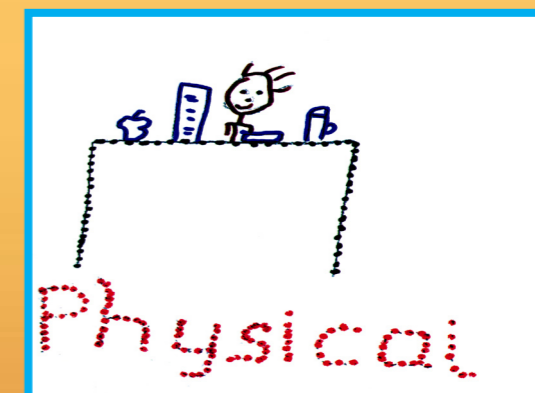
community values...

There are a lot of things that are very important to Aboriginal people and their communities. These are to have strong family involvement, connections and support, positive encouragement of kids at school, good parenting skills, community and peer group support, respect for elders and cultural practice, cultural awareness and trust.



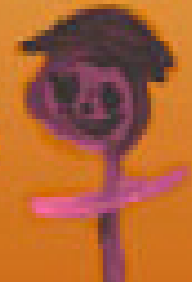
what was the survey?...

This survey looked at the health and well being of WA Aboriginal kids, teenagers and their families. This is the first time a survey like this has ever been done. The information will help us to understand what makes our kids to grow up healthy, looked at those individuals and families that did well and what made them to become 'solid' despite hard times.



household survey...

Aboriginal researchers visited households and asked them to take part in the survey. A lot of questions were asked who was living in the house, kid's birth, history of sickness, dental health, schooling, parenting and diet. Carer's of kids were also asked questions about language spoken at home, money support, family stress and experiences and housing conditions.



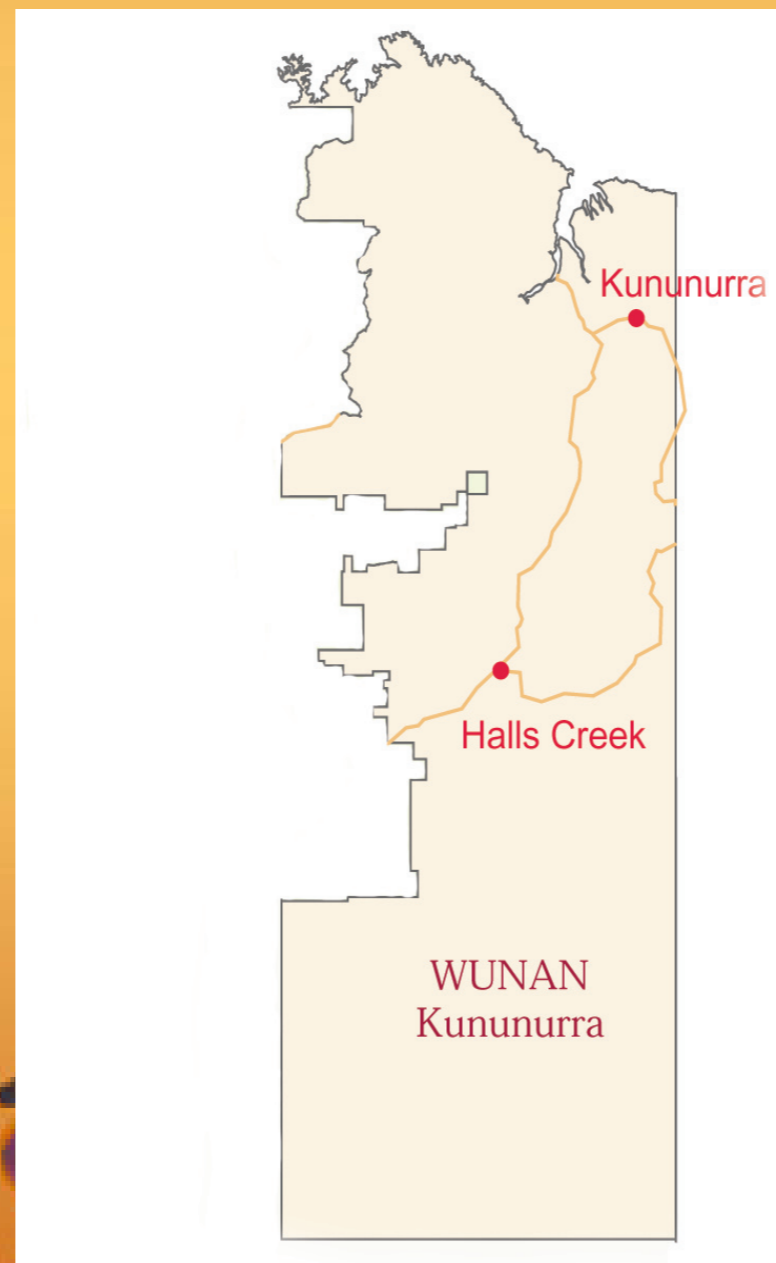
youth survey...

We also got permission from the carer's to ask teenagers to do their own separate questionnaire. Over 1000 teenagers took part in this.



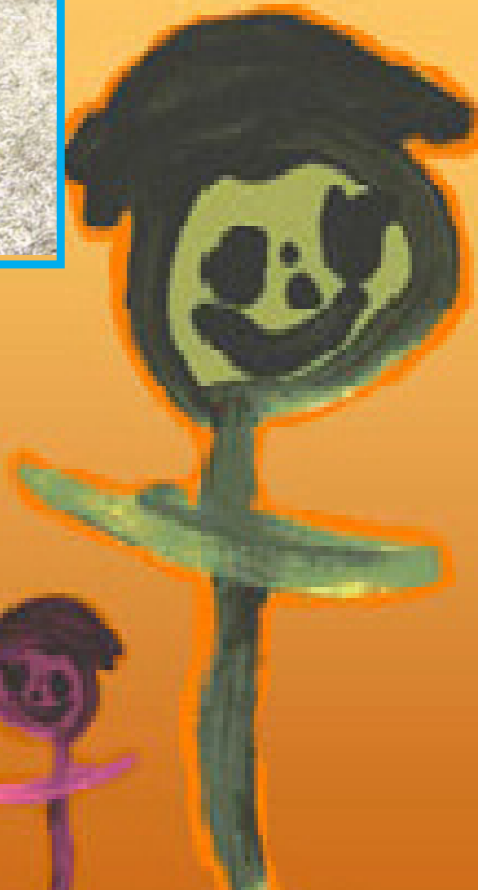
about the Wunan region...

The Wunan region extends from Kununurra in the north to Halls Creek and its surrounding communities in the south. Kununurra, Wyndham and Halls Creek are the major towns in the region.



population...

- ~ About 66,000 Aboriginal people live in WA
- ~ Nearly half of the Aboriginal people living in WA are under 18
- ~ In the Wunan region there are over 2,500 Aboriginal kids and teenagers



family & culture...

In your region:

- ~ Almost all Aboriginal kids and teenagers were being looked after by Aboriginal carers. This is more than the rest of the state.
- ~ A quarter of the kids were living in a home where some of the carers or grandparents had been taken away from their family and country.
- ~ Language was spoken by half of the Aboriginal carers.



family & culture...

In your region:

- ~ Only a small number of the kids could also speak an Aboriginal language, although this is higher than the rest of the state.
- ~ Aboriginal parents and families are more involved in different sorts of cultural activities than the rest of the state. There include going to Aboriginal festivals, being involved with a local Aboriginal organisation and going to funerals.

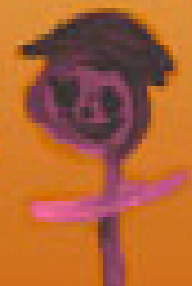
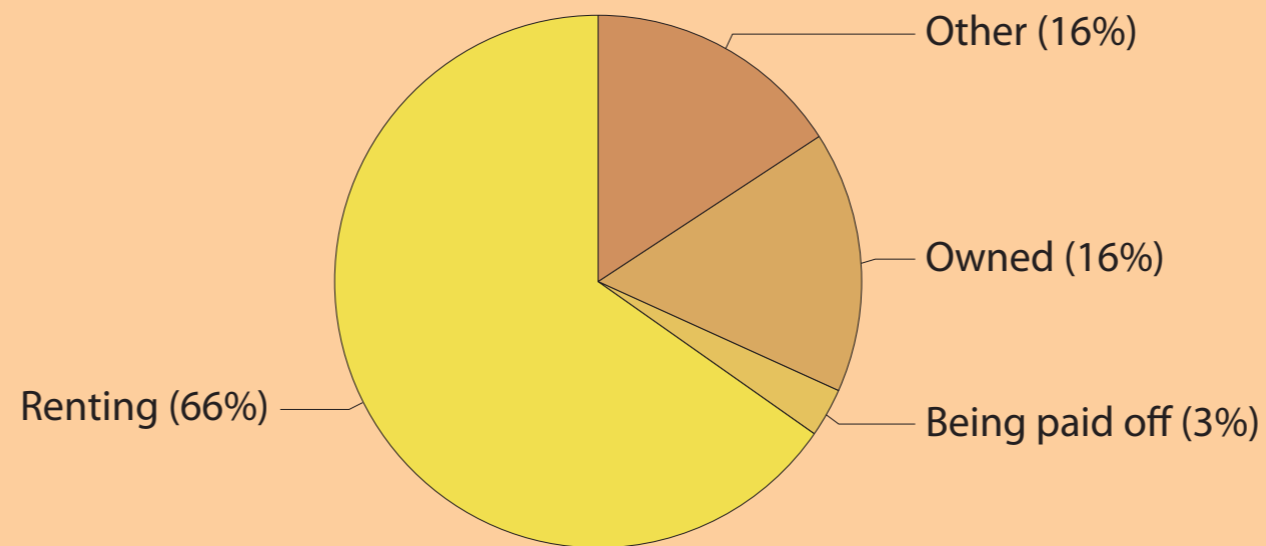


housing....

In your region:

- ~ Only a small number of families said that they owned their own homes.
- ~ An even smaller number said that they were paying off their home.
- ~ Only a small number of families were living in Community Housing.
- ~ Most families are renting.

HOUSING CIRCUMSTANCE IN KUNUNURRA ATSC REGION

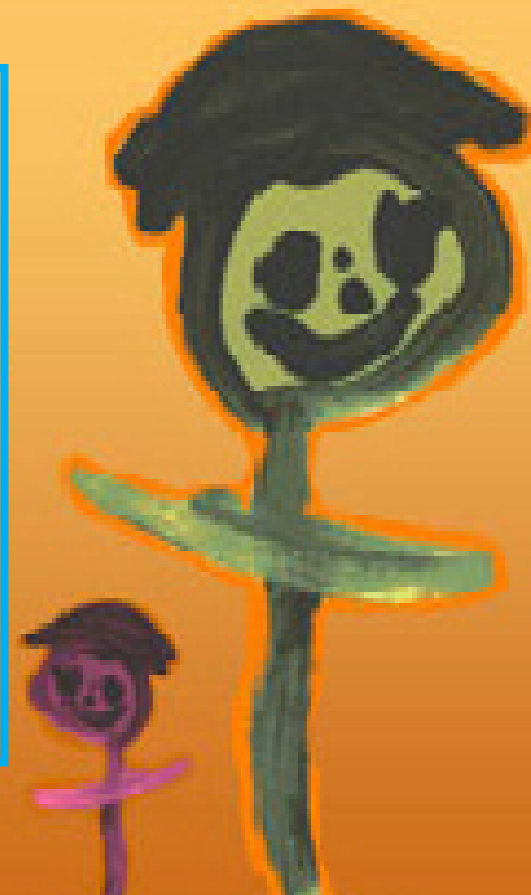
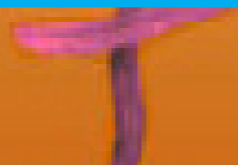
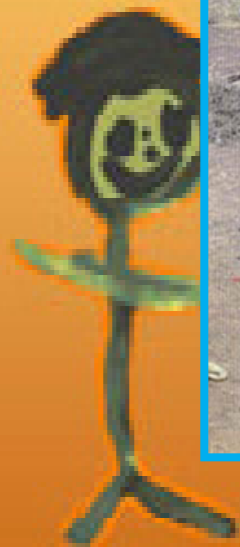


children at birth...

In your region:

- ~ A third of Aboriginal babies were born to teenage mothers (19 years and younger)
- ~ About half of babies were being breastfed for more than a year
- ~ A third of the mum's smoked when they were pregnant
- ~ About a quarter of the mum's drank when they were pregnant

Smoking and drinking when your pregnant is not good for baby. Cigarettes and alcohol can cause baby to be born smaller.



physical health...

In your region:

- ~ There was a lot of Aboriginal kids that had chest and skin infections more than once
- ~ Only a small number of Aboriginal kids have asthma. This is less than Aboriginal kids in the Perth region
- ~ More Aboriginal kids have runny ears than in the Perth region



physical health...

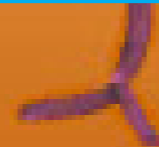
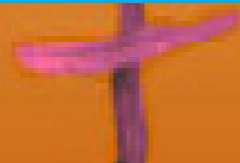
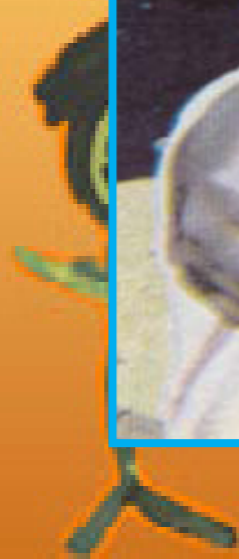
In your region:

- ~ A small number of Aboriginal kids have teeth problems. Some kids have had tooth fillings and teeth removed
- ~ To help kids grow up strong and healthy they must eat vegetables and fruit and drink lots of water and milk. In your region kids were eating good fruit and drinking enough water and milk but not enough vegetables



what now...

We have been very happy with how the survey went. We have now looked at some of the information and told you some of the results. The information that has been collected is very important. This is a good time to use these results to work together with you, your community and organisations to help make sure your kids get to grow up healthy and strong.



for further info...

More results are available for you to look at. Please talk to your community organisation to contact the survey team at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research.

Telephone: 08 9489 7777

or

Email: waachs@ichr.uwa.edu.au

