



ANNUAL STORY 2021



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The Program

Nutha Way is an Indigenous youth leadership program from the Law Society of Western Australia, working to build better relationships between young people, their community, the justice system and local police.

The Nutha Way program is about doing things another way – a new and different way that champions the voices of Indigenous young people across WA, and asks for their input on how to solve the big issues they face.

Many of the solutions identified by young people on the Nutha Way program are simple. While they may seem like basic common sense, if these solutions are not provided, issues arise.

The solutions centre around providing meaningful activities for young people to take part in and feel proud of. These activities focus on providing support, respect and recognition to young people, while ensuring that they always have a safe place to go and positive role models for guidance.

Watch the About video at nuthaway.org.au/stories/videos/

“Young fellas have the skills to solve problems in their communities if they are given the chance.”

Nutha Way Indigenous Leader –
Jazmyn Yavu-Kama

Purpose

Nutha Way is about engaging with young people in a meaningful way, garnering their input to identify the issues that they face in their community, and identify solutions they feel would help to solve these issues. Many people talk about co-design, but in practice it is often just a fleeting engagement or one off workshop. Nutha Way has embedded co-design into every aspect of the process over the whole lifecycle of the program. At its core, Nutha Way is a youth led co-design program that centres around young people and their needs.

Nutha Way uses an empowerment model that builds young people’s confidence and strength.

Young people in Coolgardie turn up consistently for the Nutha Way program activities because they know they are valued and listened to, and can see a positive future in the activities and the relationships they are building.

How it Works

The Nutha Way team works with young people to identify the issues that affect them and their community. Once issues have been identified, it is the job of the Nutha Way team to support the group to action solutions. This support can include assisting young people to pitch their ideas in order to receive funding, identifying and providing mentors to guide initiatives, or simply helping them undertake their project or share their story.



Identified Issues and Solutions

Issue	Solution	
A place to go when kids needs a break or there is trouble at home or in the community.	A Nutha Way Youth Hub would provide a place for kids to go, among other benefits. Details on page 20.	
Better connections with community and police	Creating pathways and programs for building strong, positive relationships between police and young people. Details on page 8.	
Needing more things to do around town	Various activities are being facilitated and improved, including skateboarding, basketball programs, and free access to the swimming pool. Details on page 22–27.	
Access to time on Country	On-Country activities with Elders and community members, to share knowledge and skills. This is now a foundational principle of the Nutha Way program. Details on page 18.	

Community Connections with Police

One of the program's initial objectives was to decrease the incidents of negative interaction between police and young people. Through close consultation with kids, we realised that what the community actually needs is increased constructive interaction with police.

Building strong, positive relationships between police and young people facilitates productive and engaged communities. Ultimately, the police are there to help young people, but they can only do this when they have built the social capital to successfully engage with them.

The Coolgardie Police have played a central role throughout the Nutha Way program – supporting it every step of the way both on the ground and remotely. The police have welcomed the Nutha Way team, and have partnered with us to deliver positive outcomes for the town.

We have experienced help from the police in large and small but important ways – they pick the Nutha Way team up off the train and drive us back to Coolgardie, which makes a huge difference after a seven hour train journey. They promote Nutha Way

and distribute flyers to families about the program before we come to town.

The police have also partnered with us to initiate the development of a safe house - kid hub next door to the local police station. The police also run a Wednesday night basketball program for young people in town and have been helping with driving practice in preparation for the older girls to get their licences. They need 50 hours of driving practice so local elder Betty Logan lent a manual car and the police are helping to get their hours up.

Watch the Community Policing video at nuthaway.org.au/stories/videos/



About

Coolgardie

Coolgardie is a small town in Western Australia, 40 minutes from Kalgoorlie. It has a population of approximately 850 people. Although Coolgardie is now known to most Western Australians as a mining ghost town, it was once the third largest town in Western Australia (after Perth and Fremantle). Lack of employment opportunities, intergenerational trauma and distance from the nearest major town has resulted in the challenging social issues faced by some members of the community.

The Nutha Way project was born out of the need to address a number of issues identified by the local Aboriginal corporation and local elders. The program has brought local elders, police, and community members together to collaborate on projects to support young people in the region.

Judumul

Judumul Aboriginal Corporation is an Aboriginal community organisation in Coolgardie. Judumul comprises members of the local Aboriginal community and prominent senior women who work together to improve the employment, health, education and housing opportunities for their community.

Judumul is collaborating with the Nutha Way program to support three young leaders to develop additional skills and workplace experiences in readiness to take on casual employment roles in the Nutha Way program in 2021.

Betty Logan

Betty Logan is a senior Aboriginal woman who grew up in Coolgardie. She identified that young people in Coolgardie need access to healthy on Country experiences. Betty's objectives for the program have always been very simple – she wants young people in Coolgardie to have the same access to Country that she did as a child.

Betty contacted Catrina Luz Aniere from Millennium Kids, and Millennium Kids has been running the Kids on Country program in Coolgardie since 2014. The Nutha Way program builds off these connections and relationships.



Approach

We have learnt from experience that working in communities means taking the time to listen first and learn from people's experiences. We primarily focus on building strong relationships – nurturing a mutual trust so that the community is confident to work with the program. We go slow and actively listen before any action is determined, ensuring that solutions are always culturally appropriate and youth-led.

The team facilitates a co-design process with communities to ensure that solutions come from within the communities themselves. Working like this, Nutha Way delivers culturally appropriate strategies to increase positive interaction in the community and build better relationships with police.

Skills for Life

Nutha Way follows the Millennium Kids Skills for Life process, with a special focus on six key principles. Skills for Life asks young people to identify solutions to the problems they're experiencing, to research and implement projects at a local level, and to engage with the wider community for lasting and real change.

The Skills for Life process has been acknowledged as intrinsically aligned with UNESCO's Life Skills framework and has proven results in building confidence and resilience in young people.

One of the best testaments to the Skills for Life approach is that the Nutha Way Indigenous Leaders are all alumni of the Millennium Kids program for high school students. Jane Pompey, Brandon Spurling and Jazymn Yavu-Kama returned to be Nutha Way leaders 12 years after having participated in leadership training when they were 16 years old. This cycle of returning to give back and share skills is a testament to the Skills for Life concept. It is also why we have labeled this program a 25 Year+ program, as it is only after 25 years that you will see its full benefits.

A large part of what Nutha Way, Jumdumal, the police and the Coolgardie community achieve is capacity-building the next generation of leaders. Through the Millennium Kids' Skills for Life process, Nutha Way is empowering young people to address issues affecting their communities.





Stepping Up

‘Stepping up’ is a colloquial term used within the Nutha Way project to describe the incidental leadership opportunities embedded in the program. Stepping up to participate in activities like planning camps, cooking dinner, making films, shopping, and talking to the media ensures that the program is youth-led, and that it facilitates active citizenship.

Embedding skills development through every aspect of the program fosters participants’ self confidence and self determination.

Watch the Stepping Up video at nuthaway.org.au/stories/videos/



“When I was growing up, opportunities like these made me start sticking my hand up, something I’ve been doing ever since.”

Nutha Way Indigenous Leader – Brandon Spurling

Principles

Strengths-Based

The strength-based approach focuses on a community or individual's strengths, capacities and assets, and looks for opportunities to support rather than focusing on the problem. It is a philosophy and a way of viewing young people as resourceful and resilient.



Youth-Led

There are a range of programs for Aboriginal people once they reach employment age, but by this time it is often too late for people to become engaged with these programs. Nutha Way works with young people earlier in their lives, to support and listen to them at crucial developmental stages.

The age range of the program is 6–17 years old, with most young people aged under 14. Nutha Way focuses on young people because we know support and encouragement in the early years is the best way to make lasting change.



Co-Design

By working in close consultation with young people, and focusing on their strengths, we can better understand the issues they face. Co-design is a collaborative process that empowers young people and stakeholders to identify problems, seek solutions and then contextualise them for achievable outcomes. This principle is rooted in the belief that the people who see the need for change in their community are those best placed to solve these complex puzzles.



Active Citizenship

Active citizenship refers to the philosophy that we all have roles and responsibilities in society and towards the environment. This is of particular importance for young Indigenous people, whose cultural and spiritual values are in deep connection with Country. Active citizenship builds a sense of responsibility and resilience, and encourages leadership. It champions the voices of young people in determining their future and the future of their communities.



On Country

The Coolgardie project has been delivered on Country in the Great Western Woodland. Caring for Country is a spiritual as well as an environmental practice. Knowing about and caring for Country means that young people are immersed in nature and engaged in their environment, learning laws through action learning. This facilitates better learning, giving kids a chance to connect to language and family.



Deep Listening

Deep listening describes the processes of focused and respectful listening to build community. It is a way of encouraging people to explore and learn from the heritage of culture, knowledge and understanding. Working in communities means taking the time to listen and build relationships first.



Intergenerational

Connecting with and learning from Elders and Senior Indigenous Leaders is fundamental to the Nutha Way program. Kids regularly report that their favourite part of the program is listening to their Elders' stories and visiting locations that are culturally significant. Incorporating an intergenerational approach to the Nutha Way program is hugely beneficial and ensures that solutions are culturally appropriate and sustainable.



Fun

Above all Nutha Way has to be fun. Kids won't attend and they certainly won't stick around if they don't enjoy themselves.

Things that kids report as being the most fun are "camping, listening to Nanna Betty tell stories, swimming, exploring on Country, having a good feed and eating chocolate."



Nutha Way Youth Hub

One of the issues identified by Nutha Way participants in Coolgardie was the need for a place to go when they needed a break or wanted to get away from complex issues in the community. They wanted a place for young people where positive, culturally appropriate care and healthy activities could be run. Young people and Elders in the community identified the vacant police house alongside the police station as a good base for a Nutha Way Hub that could also be used on any occasion young people needed to take time.

The fact that the Nutha Way kids identified that they wanted the Youth Hub next door to the police station speaks to the police's relationship with young people in the community.

The police have worked with Nutha Way to start the process of securing the house, as it had been flagged for demolition by the police department.

As the concept of a Nutha Way Hub developed, three Nutha Way participants came to Perth to pitch the project at a Millennium Kids event. While in Perth they also discussed the issue with members of parliament, and visited the law faculty at Murdoch University to speak about the challenges in their community.

Nutha Way has also secured a WA Police Crime Prevention Grant to undertake strategic planning required for the Nutha Way Hub project in collaboration with local police and community. We will then work with the team to secure the additional funds required to do the fit out of the house to ensure it is suited for its purpose and staffed appropriately.

Watch the Safe House video at nuthaway.org.au/stories/videos/



Fun and Healthy Things for Young People to Do

Having fun and healthy things to do is critical for all kids and it is especially so in small regional towns. There have been a number of great things happening in Coolgardie that support young people to develop skills, grow in confidence and be active citizens in their community. Chris P, a local parent, noted that things were changing in the town.

Skateboarding

The skatepark in Coolgardie is a meeting place for young people, providing an activity that is healthy and fun. Many of the kids in excel at trick skating and scootering. Even on the hottest days you will see kids flying around the park.

One of the barriers we identified was that some kids did not have skateboards or scooters, so we engaged the help of some community-minded citizens to collect used scooters to address this. Retired grandmother Irene Rapsey used her connections and a 'Buy Nothing' Facebook page to collect scooters and skateboards for the community.

Catrina Luz Aniere, CEO of Millennium Kids won a Heart Foundation 2020 Active Australia Innovation Challenge to facilitate a number

of skateboarding workshops in Coolgardie. In 2021, Coolgardie kids will have access to four skateboarding workshops with Skateboarding WA, and pro skaters will visit their community. We have also approached local Labour MP Kyle McGinn about funding support for the program.

Watch the Skateboarding video at nuthaway.org.au/stories/videos/



Basketball

The Coolgardie basketball program is run in partnership with the local police. On a Wednesday night, young people meet with the police and local coach Daniel Pecina for training. The training session is about skills development and teamwork.

The group are preparing to put together a team for the Kalgoorlie Basketball 2021. As a part of the program, the team ran a competition with local kids to design the team logo, and a local business sponsored printing of shirts.

Watch the Basketball video at nuthaway.org.au/stories/videos/



“I love engaging with the kids in the basketball program; building a rapport with them. I love learning what they like about the game... what they like about life.”

Senior Constable – Ben Wilson

Swimming

The swimming pool is a central meeting place for young people in Coolgardie, particularly in summer when temperatures can exceed a scorching 46 degrees. To ensure that all kids had equal access to the pool, the Coolgardie Shire made entry free during summer. As a result of this fantastic initiative, on a hot day most of the kids head to the pool and you can hear the screams of delight all the way down the main street.

During our time in Coolgardie we identified one small barrier to access – kids under the age of 11 required supervision by a parent to use the pool. This meant that many younger kids often hung outside, trying to convince the older kids or adults to take them in. To address this issue, the Shire of Coolgardie and Judumul supported two older girls to receive their bronze medallions, with the vision that they could one day be employed to supervise the younger kids during January 2021.

Bronze medallions achieved, the next step is to complete their Life Saving qualification. In the interim, the shire put on a swimming program for younger kids during the school holidays.



On Country Adventures

A large part of the Nutha Way experience has involved 'On Country Adventures'. We have visited Cave Hill, Burra Rock, Rowles Lagoon, Victoria Rock and The Old Reserve. All of these trips have centred around significant locations of language, culture, laws and sustainability in the Great Western Woodland.

There is a certain kind of magic that happens when you go out on Country – even the kids are calmer. Our adventures have included camping, picnics, swimming in water holes, rock climbing, campfires, making damper, and visiting sites of significance with local Elders. The kids learn about environmental protection laws that impact their areas, and the Nutha Way team undertake a cleanup at each site, reporting to the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions if any of the sites are vandalised.



Creative Expression

We learnt early on that expecting the Coolgardie kids to talk about things didn't always work. Many of the kids are shy, and it takes time to build trust. Some issues are also difficult to talk about. We found that it is sometimes better to provide canvas, paint and pens instead, as some kids find it easier expressing themselves creatively. This process built self-esteem in the participants, and produced powerful work.

To further develop opportunities for creative expression, the Nutha Way team have partnered with the police to propose a mural for the police station and the Kids Support Hub next door. To attract the funds, we are working with the kids to pitch the mural project. Each young person would create a panel for the mural about a story that has been important to them during the Nutha Way program. Some of the kids have already begun work on their panels, and each time we visit Coolgardie they ask when the mural project will start. That the police not only support this project but want to be actively involved and showcase the artwork on their station demonstrates commitment to the young people in the community.



Bush Fire Cadets

Many of the Coolgardie kids have become involved with the Bush Fire Cadets program, run through the Department of Fire and Emergency Services. The program provides opportunities for young people to learn about fire safety and fire equipment, and to develop important life skills through team exercises and leadership challenges.

Cadet training operates once a week during the off season. Being a volunteer is a rewarding experience, and a valuable opportunity for young people to learn about teamwork and use their talents and initiative. Training helps to build a sense of community responsibility and citizenship.

Surfing

When we asked the kids in Coolgardie what they most wanted to do, they always said they wanted to go to the beach. Given that Esperance (the closest beach) is 372 km away, a beach trip took a year of planning. Taking 16 kids on the trip required an overnight stay in Norseman, so we camped out at the Norseman Hotel. The hotel owner, Therese, kindly let us camp in the main dining area, and she even made biscuits for the kids and real coffee for the adults.

Add into a beach trip the opportunity to go surfing and we had seriously over-excited kids. Many kids had never been to the beach, and most had never surfed before. Cat organised Brent Moss, the local surf instructor, to run the lessons. To our amazement and delight, Brent invited Aboriginal Pro Surfer Kenny Dan to assist with the surf lessons.

Nutha Way Indigenous Leader Brenden Ah-Kim recognised Kenny from motivational posters dating to his primary school days over 35 years before. Kenny and Brenden regaled the kids with stories of Kenny's surfing escapades on the pro surfing circuit with Kelly Slater and Taj Burrow.

Kenny represented Australia no less than five times, and has won the Barbados World Cup, the Tahitian Cup, and was part of the winning team that took out the World Indigenous Title in France.

While we all knew the kids would love surfing, we didn't expect that it would be such a hit, or that they would be such natural talents. Most kids boasted that they didn't think they were going to be as good as they were.

Watch the Surfing video at nuthaway.org.au/stories/videos/



Skill Building: Education, Training & Employment Pathways

Providing education, training and employment pathways for young people is critical to the success of the Coolgardie community. Employment and financial independence are some of the most important drivers of self determination as young people move into adult life. We know that people with a job have better life outcomes in general – they have a longer life expectancy, better health and wellbeing, and more housing options.

The flow-on effect of not having employment is far reaching for individuals, families, and the wider economy. Employment is crucial to addressing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in all areas of disadvantage. While the Nutha Way program is starting to facilitate positive education, employment and training opportunities – especially for the older members of the group – it is clear that one year is not enough time to make systemic change in this area. We have, however, begun the process of connecting kids to mentors and training programs.

Indigenous Mental Health First Aid

As the mental health and wellbeing of Nutha Way participants became a topic of conversation, a culturally appropriate mental health training course was identified as an opportunity to upskill. The Nutha Way team and three of the older participants from Coolgardie attended the two-day Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid Training course, facilitated by Rosalie Kickett.

During the workshop, the girls from Coolgardie and the Indigenous leadership team worked on a mural that illustrates aspects of mental health. The final artwork depicts their understanding and experiences of anxiety, depression, suicide, psychosis, alcohol and community care. On completion of the course the girls receive a Certificate 4 in Indigenous Mental Health First Aid.

Mentors

One of the girls on the program identified that she would like to be a teacher, so Cat connected her with the Goldfields Teach for Australia coordinator, Jackie McGregor. Jackie has joined most Nutha Way adventures, and she has also provided mentorship and organised work experience at the local primary school.

The work experience and mentorship has gone two ways, as Jacquie has also been bringing Teach for Australia students out on Country with the kids to provide these teachers with experience teaching in the country.



Films, Photography & Podcasting

One of the key goals of the Nutha Way program has been creating a series of short films. We used filmmaking as a tool for skill-building, storytelling and to make change. By sharing positive stories about what the kids were working on in Nutha Way, we were able to build partnerships, facilitate conversations through all levels of community and government, as well as showcase the great work being done. We discovered that the best way to do this was to hand the camera over to the kids – the more we did this, the more comfortable they were to tell their stories. The kids especially enjoyed the process of interviewing people like the local police sergeant and Elders. We discovered that involving young people at every stage of the project builds skills and confidence, and creates organic and safe spaces for them to step up and share their story.

Photography and podcasting were also features of the Nutha Way program series. When we went out on Country, cameras and iPads were provided so kids could record their experiences. Podcasting was also a hit. Young people were given podcasting equipment and opportunities

to talk about their experiences, and identify issues and challenges that they thought should be addressed. The Indigenous Leadership Team helped build confidence in the young participants by role modelling their experiences and the skills they had to develop to overcome the challenges they encountered.

Learning to Drive

Without support, it is almost impossible for young people in Coolgardie to get their drivers' license, as the driver training program is 45km away. So when three young people talked about needing to get their licences, Nutha Way stepped up to support the process. This involved getting information from the local police about the driving licence process, helping the young people attain ID, driving them to Kalgoorlie to apply for learner's permits and supporting their driver training. A partnership has been developed with local police and community organisation Life Without Barriers to register three girls in a driver training program. This has been facilitated by Indigenous Leadership Coordinator Jazmyn Yavu-Kama, who has provided support for collation of ID, completing paperwork and learning the rules of the road.



School Based Activities

There are good things happening at the local schools in the area. During our time in Coolgardie we have begun building a relationship with the local primary school and community groups. We attended the end of year Christmas concert and have met with the school principal to discuss opportunities for collaboration.

Work Experience Opportunities

As a part of the Nutha Way's mentorship initiative, one of the girls participated in work experience. This was organised by Teach for Australia Goldfields coordinator, Jackie McGregor. Jackie is also supporting Jaz through her placement, and with ongoing pathways to pursue a career in education.



Millennium Kids' Green Lab

Green Lab is a citizen science and action program designed by young people to increase, preserve and manage tree canopy in their local area. Green Lab is a Millennium Kids initiative that is being run throughout the state through schools, city councils and community groups.

We have met with the Coolgardie Primary School principal about embedding the Green Lab project in the school. Running a Green Lab project in the school will also provide additional opportunities to collaborate with the Coolgardie kids on positive outcomes for the community.



Teach for Australia

Teach For Australia is committed to educational equity for young people across Australia and is working towards this by recruiting, training and developing leaders in education through their award-winning Leadership Development Program. Teach for Australia Coordinator Jackie Drake has been supporting the Nutha Way program by attending our On Country adventures, facilitating work experience opportunities for young people on the program and by bringing Teach for Australia's Associate teachers to volunteer and participate in the program.





Impact Measurement

University 2 Community has been commissioned to undertake the Impact Assessment of the Nutha Way program. They use impact assessment tools to understand and communicate the impact of innovative social change programs.

The team's approach involves capturing field-trip artefacts (such as videos, photos and trip manifestos), qualitative 'vignettes' of change, and sociometric analysis approaches to assess the impact of Nutha Way.

Our Impact

- **Inductive**
The theory is derived from the data
- **Iterative**
The theory is always open to change and is in constant dialogue
- **Situated**
We recognise our embeddedness in the program as well as the oppressive structures which create the problems we are trying to solve, and;
- **Phenomenological**
We seek to understand the impact of the program from the perspective of the participants.

The Theory of Change framework and our first major report can be view at:
nuthaway.org.au/impact/



Looking Ahead

We have discovered so much during the Nutha Way project so far, and we hope that some of this learning will not only inform the project as it expands and grows over the next 25 years but also assist other projects and similar ventures.

One of our most significant takeaways is to go slowly. Working in communities, you cannot undervalue the importance of listening first and building relationships.

This is an organic process that takes time. We are only at the beginning of our journey with Coolgardie and will be working hard over the next year to secure the funding to continue the good work that has been started.

Nutha Way Coolgardie will recommence in March 2021 and will run throughout the year. We are looking forward to working with young people in the Goldfields region to grow and expand the Nutha Way project.

How to Help

To build capacity in our Nutha Way programs, we have received and value donations of equipment, clothes, scooters, skateboards and money from donors and charities.

We are also seeking donations from the community to fund ad hoc activities that the kids want to do. Our current funding does not allow us to cover the fun activities kids value so greatly. This fund would be used to cover things such as surfing lessons when we go to Esperance, tickets to Adventure World when the kids come down to Perth to pitch and present reports to their stakeholders, train tickets to Perth for important events, and formal clothing for visits to Parliament House. Any donations would be gratefully appreciated, as they allow us to reward the kids for the great work they are doing.



Funders

The Nutha Way Program is funded by the Criminal Property Confiscation Grants Program and Lottery West. The current Nutha Way funding will support a two-year program in Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie.

The project has attracted some additional funding for specific projects in the same period. This funding includes the Heart Foundation funding for a skateboarding project in town and the WA Police funding for strategic planning with police for the Safe House through the Crime Prevention Grant.

Our plan for this project is to attract funding to ensure it is a 25 Year+ project that aims to make a systemic intergenerational difference.

Funded by



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Thank You

We are grateful for the support and generosity of our sponsors and supporters. Without them, we would not exist. We would also particularly like to thank our funders for taking a risk on this project – we understand that it is out of the box. We knew from the outset that complex issues needed a different approach, and we are grateful to the funders of this project for trusting us to try a Nutha Way (another way).

Finally, to the local businesses, organisations and individuals who have assisted us in the last year, and who have made our work on the ground easier more rewarding – thank you.

A project of



Partners





For more information visit nuthaway.org.au