

The 'art' of mental health and wellbeing

Date: 23 June 2010

Tomorrow, members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and multicultural communities will come together, in the name of art, to showcase their talents to other communities, Government departments and Community Workers.

Being held at Relationships Australia (SA)'s Hindmarsh office at 11am and launched by Judith Cross, CEO of Relationships Australia (SA), the daylong event will demonstrate art in a range of formats from dancing, painting and song writing to embroidery, digital story-telling, photography and film making.

ArtThink is a dedicated program to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural communities discuss and respond to mental health issues through art. The program teaches participants the skills they need for identifying people in distress and how to speak about emotional and mental health issues in a way which is positive and engaging.

The [ArtThink website](#) will also be launched at the event to assist in promoting the artistic work of each community group. Each web page contains varied imagery and interpretations about mental health and seeking help. The ArtThink website will become a valuable gallery for the Program and aims to stimulate interesting and diverse ways for teaching communities about mental health.

Attendees at the launch will include Aboriginal Elders; Katrina Power (who will be leading the Welcome to Country), Aunty Kaylene and Aunty Dawn. Other attendees include Kira Kudinoff, Deputy SA State Manager for the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and numerous community groups who have been participating in the Program.

Quotes

"Mental health issues affect 1 in 5 five Australians and it not only affects the person with the mental health issue, but their family, friends and community. This arts-based program has been found to engage a diverse range of community members and enhance connectedness, belonging and social capital" **Judith Cross, CEO.**

"Being artistic requires openness, imagination and persistence, whilst speaking out and publicising a positive view of mental health also requires leadership and courage. This program not only acts as a vehicle for developing understanding and awareness of mental health issues within families but also begins to create relationships for positive responses to identify risk and/or crisis situations" **Judith Cross, CEO.**

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