

ABM Anglican Board of Mission - Australia **Working for Love, Hope & Justice**

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Building Youth Engagement in Indigenous Communities this Easter

ABM's 2016 Easter Appeal is supporting young people in communities across the top end of Australia.

Youth engagement will be a strong focus for the ABM Reconciliation Program in 2016 as it is clear that more needs to be offered for youth to find identity and purpose.

ABM's Reconciliation Coordinator, Mal MacCallum said, "Youth suicide and self-harm rates across remote communities in Northern Australia are continuing at an alarming rate and we need your support."

The ABM funded program will focus on the remote communities of North Queensland, Torres Strait Islands and the Northern Territory. The initiatives will be implemented through consultation with local churches, NATSIAC and the dioceses.

One initiative that commenced in 2015 to engage younger leaders is changing the way diocesan training is provided. A small team of trainers are sent out to each community. In many NT locations, a small charter plane is the only method of travel and the costs of providing pastoral support and training to the remote churches in the diocese are enormous.

It is hoped that taking the training to each community will not only enable a larger number of people to attend but that it might give younger and emerging leaders the opportunity to participate.

When these plans were shared with Christians in communities from East and South East Arnhem land, the reaction from the younger leaders was very enthusiastic.

Nola and Joy, both from Numbulwar, were thrilled that they would be included. "We really need this," Nola said, "because we are the ones trying to help the kids in the church to know about Jesus."

Mr MacCallum said, "There's a recent report put together by 41 elders in the top end of Australia and it's about the alarming youth suicide and harm rates that have come into play in the last decade."

"The statistics say the youth suicide rate is the highest in the world – that's in our own country and that's a frightening thing. It's something we are oblivious to in many respects, in our own sheltered communities and in our Christian communities too," he said.

"With these statistics emerging, your support is vital to ensure young people are engaged in their community and supported in their needs."

Please give to ABM's Easter Appeal at www.abmission.org.

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High res image in email caption: Lincoln (centre), a young local in Bamaga, North Queensland engaging with elders Monica and Maria. © Michael Begaud/ABM 2014.

The Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) is the national mission agency of the Anglican Church of Australia. For over 160 years ABM has been assisting people all over the world to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, provide health and education services, improve agricultural practices and strengthen the Church.