

Media Release

PUPPETS HEADLINE FASD FILM PREMIERE

17 October 2013: A new film headlined by colourful puppets is raising awareness about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) and building community pride in Tennant Creek.

The short film, *Barkly Fights Back*, created and performed by the people of Barkly will have its first public showing at the up-coming FASD Film Launch and Community Forum on Sunday 20 October at the Tennant Creek Civic Centre.

Film-maker, Biddy O'Loughlin, shot the film in Tennant Creek in July, using Anyinginyi's acclaimed collection of professional quality puppets.

The event is the culmination of two years' work on the Anyinginyi FASD Project, which has developed locally relevant resources and engaged with communities in the Barkly region to raise greater awareness of FASD.

Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation FASD Project Coordinator Adele Gibson, says the puppet project has been incredibly effective both in engaging the people of Barkly, and providing a medium to communicate a sensitive and difficult issue.

"We are enormously proud of the film and excited about its first public screening. The puppets are colourful and appealing characters, and are a wonderful way to reduce stigma, stimulate creativity and facilitate conversations about what is a difficult issue, without associating blame," Ms Gibson said.

Sunday's event marks the beginning of the next phase of the Anyinginyi FASD Project; community ownership of both the issues and the solutions.

A panel of community leaders, including members of Anyinginyi's Board of Directors, Shire President, Barb Shaw, and local member, Gerry McCarthy, will lead the conversation with community members, about FASD, alcohol in the community, and the future.

The Film and Community Forum was funded by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE), one of ten 2013 Good Practice Grants awarded to community organisations throughout Australia to strengthen their capacity to respond to alcohol-related harms.

The grants aims to foster innovation and encourage community organisations to develop new products or systems that can be used by alcohol and other drug agencies throughout Australia.

FARE Chief Executive Michael Thorn says he is pleased to see Tennant Creek developing innovative solutions to a complex and difficult problem.

“I am delighted to see the extent to which the community has engaged and embraced this project. The Barkly community should be justifiably proud to be leading the way in developing unique and effective resources that can better raise awareness of FASD.

Mr Thorn says alcohol harms are extensive and increasing across Australia.

“Alcohol impacts negatively on too many lives. We need to be working together as a community to reduce this harm, and community projects like this help us achieve this goal”, Mr Thorn said.

Sunday’s event kicks off at 3pm, with a performance by local girl band “Lady Beats”.

Media Contacts

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Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) FARE is an independent, charitable organisation working to prevent the harmful use of alcohol in Australia. Since 2001, FARE has invested over \$115 million in research and community projects to minimise the impact of alcohol misuse on Australians. Through its national grants program and commissioned research, FARE has established itself as a leading voice on alcohol and other drugs issues. FARE works with community groups, all levels of government, police, emergency workers, research institutions and the private sector to address alcohol-related problems. For further information visit FARE’s website: www.fare.org.au

Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation (AHAC) is a multi-disciplinary organisation which provides primary health care services to the people of Tennant Creek and the surrounding Barkly region. AHAC’s Health Service Delivery Area stretches north of Tennant Creek to Elliott, across to the East almost to the QLD border and south to Ali Curung, almost 150,000 square kms. <http://anyinginyi.org.au/>