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CLOSE THE GAP

Student Kit

A step-by-step guide to help you run your National Close the Gap Day event in support of closing the gap in Indigenous health inequality

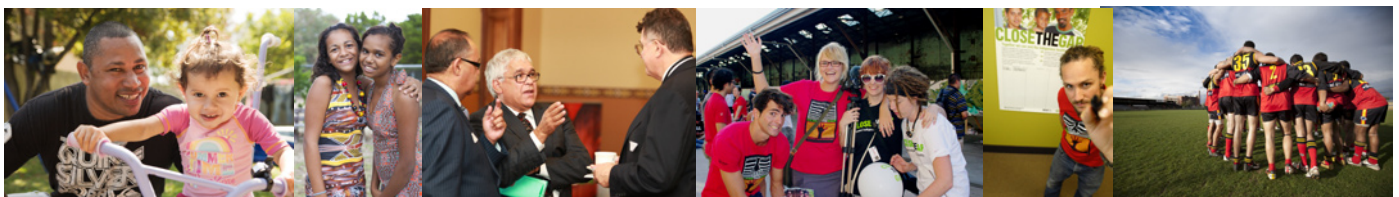


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Photo: Victor Harbour High School, South Australia



Photo: Richard Kendall/Oxfam AUS



Photo: Bonnie Savage/Oxfam AUS



Photo: Nigel Clements/Star News Group

CLOSE THE GAP

What is the Close the Gap campaign about?

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are still dying 10 to 17 years younger than other Australians.

Close the Gap is an **Indigenous-led** campaign which aims to achieve **health equality** between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and non-Indigenous Australians within one generation.

Close the Gap holds the government to account to put into **action** its commitments to close the life expectancy gap.

Over 175,000 Australians have signed the Close the Gap pledge. As the number of supporters grows, so does the pressure on all governments to keep Indigenous health equality at the top of the political agenda.

"The campaign... stemmed from despair and anger at the status quo. That status quo is the ongoing national disgrace of this nation dying up to 20 years younger than other citizens, something that would not be tolerated in other parts of the population"
Dr Tom Calma

"The statistics of infant and perinatal mortality are our babies and children who die in our arms. The statistics of shortened life expectancy are our mothers and fathers, uncles, aunties and Elders who live diminished lives and die before their gifts of knowledge and experience are passed on. We die silently under these statistics." Professor Mick Dodson

What's the story?

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People die on average between 10 and 17 years younger than non-Indigenous Australians

Indigenous babies are between 2-3 times as likely to die before their first birthday as non-Indigenous babies

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians continue to suffer from much higher rates of cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, pneumonia and diabetes, than other Australians.

Many Indigenous urban and remote communities experience poor access to primary health care. Access can involve distance from services, lack of cultural appropriateness or the wrong type of service.

What Progress has been made?

- The appointment of the first **Federal Minister for Indigenous Health**.
- Federal, state and territory governments and oppositions (except Tasmania) signed the Close the Gap **Statement of Intent** (the NT have agreed but are yet to sign it).
- A political agreement to develop a **National Indigenous Health Plan** in partnership with leading Indigenous health organisations.
- The development of a strong and **ongoing partnership with the NRL** which has already run three Close the Gap rounds.
- A growing public movement with huge participation in National Close the Gap Day.
- In February 2008 came the long-awaited **national apology to the Stolen Generations**, although not a result of the Close the Gap campaign, it was a moment in time that re-energised Australians to right the wrongs of our past.
- In 2008, the Australian Government announced a **\$1.6 billion commitment to improve Indigenous health**, the biggest ever injection of new funding for Indigenous health.

What still needs to happen...

- **Address critical issues that also impact on health such as housing, education and self determination*** which contribute to the poor health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
(*Self determination is the ability of people to freely determine their own political, economic, social and cultural development)
- **Work in genuine partnership with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples** and develop a National Action Plan to achieve Indigenous health equality.
- Increase **Indigenous community control and participation** in the design, content and delivery of all policy & health services and issues that affect the health of their communities.

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Highlights, success stories and food for thought

The statistics about Aboriginal health paint a grim picture, and is an appalling. There are also many positive stories of successful community controlled health projects that have resulted in dramatic improvements to health outcomes in many places across the country.

Case in point! - The *Mums and Babies* program run by a number of Aboriginal Medical Services around Australia has had an impressive uptake and fantastic results, significantly improving health and birth weights of Aboriginal babies. One clinic was able to HALVE the deaths of newborn babies in just 4 years! Is that a good news story, or what?

Why so successful, you ask? Pregnant Aboriginal women and young mothers felt comfortable accessing the service as it removed issues often faced in the mainstream health system, like long wait times and historically unwelcoming hospital and social environments. Go to the links below to see more stories and different perspectives related to closing the gap!

The awesome Aboriginal AFL Football club, The Fitzroy Stars living healthier lives and spreading the word in the community. Check out the video <http://www.oxfam.org.au/blogs/2011/03/fitzroy-stars-helping-to-close-the-gap/> OR <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBNMEEeZaqM&feature=related>

In his apology to the Stolen Generation former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, talked about how important this was to closing the gap. <http://bit.ly/zyCmwu>

What does education, literacy have to do with health and living? Award winning journalist and author will get you thinking for sure <http://bit.ly/zheBq8>

Videos Interviews Speeches Websites

Rugby League legends Hazem El Masri, David Peachey and Dennis Moran take a break from the field to give us their perspective on how important Indigenous health equality is http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O0cH_7MEd0I

This collection of personal short stories from Indigenous doctors and medical students rocks. You will get to hear about the challenges, wins and everything in between <http://bit.ly/AwC7NZ>

For those of you who want to get your teeth really stuck into the progress of the Australian Governments commitments to closing the gap - the Close the Gap Shadow Report is for you! <http://bit.ly/zBGVAH>

Former Gold Coast Titans captain, Preston Campbell talks about his life and determination to help his people Close the Gap. Read the story <http://bit.ly/zO2VwX>

Find out why a real partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is so important. <http://bit.ly/zfSmu>

“He say’s there is an Aboriginal health crisis in Australia. Last year, during a two-month period in the football season, he attended eight funerals.”

Essendon AFL star discusses the personal story behind his commitment to Close the Gap and his determination to bring about change. <http://bit.ly/xpbsMF>

“Only with the support of all Australians will we see real improvements in Indigenous health” Tom Calma, Close the Gap campaign Co-Chair and former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner makes a winner speech <http://bit.ly/yzmEIE>

CLOSE THE GAP

What is National Close the Gap Day?

National Close the Gap Day is a way for all Australians to join together in support of Indigenous health equality and to remind our political leaders of their commitment to close the gap.

So basically it's an awesome day where thousands of people run all sort of creative, fun, big, small, loud, inspiring, awareness-raising events that also pack a powerful political punch!

We also want to make sure that the government works in genuine, meaningful partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to close the gap in life expectancy and health standards. This means, Indigenous people's involvement in all stages of the design and delivery of policies and services that affect their health and the health of their communities. That's the focus of 2012!



Photo: Nigel Clements/Star News Group

What does this mean to you?

Whether you are Indigenous or non-Indigenous, whether you personally face health inequality, your uncle, the people down the road or a drive out of town – health is a basic human right.

It's about standing together with your community, your family, your school and your friends to show your support for achieving Indigenous health equality.



Photo: Matthew Vasilescu/Oxfam Australia

Get your school involved in 2012!

NCTGD is in its 6th year and schools' involvement in 2011 almost TRIPLED the size of the day, making it the BIGGEST NCTGD in history. You and your friends have the power to make it even bigger this year.....

How does running an event on National Close the Gap Day make an IMPACT?

It's all about people power.

When people from all over Australia make a show of public support for Close the Gap is has seriously awesome results.

When schools, organisations and people all stand together by running hundreds of events across Australia, it sends an extremely LOUD and POWERFUL message to the Australian Government – It tells the government that we do not accept Indigenous health inequality – we care strongly about closing the health and life expectancy gap.

As the number of people participating in National Close the Gap Day grows, so does the pressure on government to keep Indigenous health equality at the top of the political agenda.

By organising an event at your school and by making some noise about it (see media pack pg...), you'll amplify the people power....a powerful force in closing the gap within a generation. Join us!

“It is not credible to suggest that one of the wealthiest nations on earth cannot solve a health crisis affecting less than three per cent of its citizens.” Tom Calma

“It must be a people power movement”
Mick Gooda

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How good is it that last year, **more than 1,800 students took the lead and organised activities at their school?!** Now that you're more familiar with the issues of Indigenous health inequality, whether you have checked out the facts, stories, videos, 2012 Close the Gap video or spoken with your family, or community Elders, it's time to plan your event and activities and have fun at the same time!

Check out the **3things Action Guide** which features the Close the Gap campaign - it rocks AND it'll help you run your event - 3things.org.au/students

Top 10 tips to PLAN your National Close the Gap Day event

- 1 **Know what you want to achieve** – What's the goal of your event? E.g. To raise awareness at your school? To entertain and inform? To get heaps of people to sign the pledge? All of the above?
- 2 **Build a team**– Not only will it be more fun, you'll get more done. Each person gets a job or two – think about getting a non-student (yes friends, I mean a teacher) involved to help out too.
- 3 **Know your audience** – Think about where the audience are coming from – that way you can target your action and message of why closing the gap is relevant and important to them
- 4 **What are you into and pretty good at?** –What do you and your friends love doing? What are you good at? List these and use these to your advantage when planning your event.
- 5 **What activities will you do?** – Check out the '**Activity Ideas**' PowerPoint for some ideas and use your interests and talents to create your own. Decide early so you can prepare what you need.

Tips:

- *Pick one or two things and do them really well. Organising many different things can be hard.*
- *Make each activity Short, Sharp and Shiny. Anything that is too long will bore your audience.*
- *Start with something that will grab peeps attention - Impact at the start for a captive audience.*
- *Keep the best til last – The last thing people remember is what you want them to remember.*
- *If you plan to hold your action outside, have a back up venue/plan just in case it rains.*
- *Get the ok from your school. Get everything approved by your teacher/coordinator.*
- *Whatever activity - make sure you have Close the Gap Pedge sheets printed for peeps to sign.*

- 6 **Make sure its FUN as well as informative** – The best events are the ones where people get to do stuff. Because they've had a good time, they'll remember the issue and sign the pledge!
- 7 **What resources do you need?** Think about what you already have and what will you need to make it all happen. Stuff like - cameras, paint, microphones, props, data projector etc.
- 8 **Get the word out** – If you want people to come – spread the word eg Facebook, text, school newsletter, assemblies, posters, flyers, that electronic board thing in your reception area. Only include info that they need to know – you can fill them in on deets at the event.
- 9 **Get online or in the local paper** – Take heaps of photos, make a video , write a story about your event and upload them Why? Your school is then part of something bigger so you can have a real impact in your community and increasing awareness about closing the gap.
- 10 **Celebrate and reflect on your achievements** – Have a post-event catch-up celebration to high five each other and thank everyone who helped out. Talk about what worked well, and what you would do differently next time. Look back and enjoy your success – you've earned it!

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MAKE SOME NOISE!!!

How do you find out about events like the Big Day Out, Kanye West's latest track or when someone is throwing a party? I don't know about you but I usually find out through Facebook, someone sends me a YouTube link or I see it advertised. The success of your event is influenced of how you get the word out so...MAKE SOME NOISE!!!!

Why? This is a wicked way to get your message out beyond your schoolgrounds and to let the community know that you care about things other than your iPod and are taking action to make a difference. To ensure as many politicians, your friends and the Australian public are reminded that Indigenous health inequality needs to be addressed and impacts our whole Australian community.

Facebook, Youtube and Flickr!!

Make your profile pic the Close the Gap (CTG) logo Do a status update with a link to a CTG video or the website, 'like' the CTG **Facebook page**... We're sure you've heaps more ways to make noise on fb!
Add your video to the CTG **YouTube channel**, upload your photos to **Flickr**, get on the **3things Facebook page** and add your 3things - your pick!

FACEBOOK: Close the Gap - we're the "Community" page

YouTube: www.youtube.com/OxfamAustralia then search 'Close the Gap'

Flickr: Search 'Close the Gap'

Media

Contact your local paper or radio station - your school might have a contact name, if not, get more info on working with the media and download the **Close The Gap DIY Media Kit**

School website & newsletter Spread the word at school - before and after your event. Get in the newsletter, ask the school to add a web banner to the school website, sneak into the morning bulletins, and heaps more that we're sure you'll come up with.

We would love to help you share your event! **Copy and paste the following in an email and send it to closethegap@oxfam.org.au**

1. School name and postcode:
2. Total number of people who attended your event:
3. Number of students involved in organising the activities:
4. Describe your event: *(A sentence or as long as you want!)*
5. Attach at least one photo of the activity at your school* *read below!!!!*
6. Attach the signed Schools Photo Release Form (or print it out and fax it)

SUPER IMPORTANT BIT!!! Make sure you get your teacher to sign the **Schools Photo Release Form** before you post any photos up.

Without it we can't show off your event on the 3things and Oxfam website..it's all about respect and protection, friends.



Please forward completed form to Sharon Settecasse
Post: PO Box 1711 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012
Email to: sharons@oxfam.org.au
Fax: 02 92803426

Agreement on the use of Photographs, Video and Audio

I (name, position) _____

representative of, [insert name of school] _____

agree that images taken by or supplied to Oxfam Australia for _____
[specify event]

fall under our school's parental consent policy and that no further parental consent is required. Any children who do not have signed consent forms will be identified to Oxfam.

We understand these images may be published by Oxfam Australia in any form, including print, audiovisual, websites and email newsletters.

We understand that the copyright is retained by the photographer and/or Oxfam Australia and that the school does not own copyright or have any rights of ownership or other claim over the photographs.

Signed:	Date:
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Name	
Address	
Email	
Phone number	

Oxfam Australia is very grateful for your cooperation.

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National Close the Gap Day Action Plan and Checklist

Key things to do	What you need	Who	By When	On the Internet	I know it's complete because...	Done?
Register for Close the Gap	Internet access and school consent	Janet	Week 3 Term 1	www.oxfam.org.au/act/events/close-the-gap-day/register	I've received a confirmation email	YES!!!
Get a team together	My friends! SRC support, a room to meet in, this kit!	Me to start, Mr Farrell to support	Mid-Feb	Get each other's emails	We have a list of names and have set a meeting date	YES!!!
Do research on Indigenous health inequality	Close the Gap info, speak to an Indigenous Community member in our area, watch 'Close the Gap 2012' video	all of us	The whole time up to the event - and after!	www.oxfam.org.au/close-the-gap	We all feel like we can talk to people about our personal understanding of the issue	YES!!!
Decide on the activities (our interests, skills)	Activities PowerPoint	All of us	By end of Feb	www.oxfam.org.au	We have picked no more than three activities and are planning the details	Yes!
A list of places to spread the word	URLs to the Close the Gap Facebook page, Youtube, phone number of the local paper, radio station contact, school newsletter & website	Paul and Jo to collect - all of us to check out	By mid-March	www.facebook.com/closethegap	Everyone has a list of Close the Gap Facebook and Youtube page, contact details of local paper, radio etc	Yes!!

