



YOUNG DEADLY FREE: REACH AND UPTAKE OF HEALTH PROMOTION RESOURCES VIA WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

BACKGROUND

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, representing just 3.3% of the total Australian population, are disproportionately affected by sexually transmissible infections (STIs) and blood borne viruses (BBVs): notification rates are 1.6 – 6.6 times greater than the rates reported in the non-Indigenous population (1, 2). Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people living in remote communities are particularly impacted by STIs and some BBVs. This pattern has remained relatively consistent for a considerable period of time.

YOUNG DEADLY FREE

The *Young Deadly Free* project was developed by the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI) in partnership with Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS), Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA), Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia (AHCSA), Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the Northern Territory (AMSANT), and Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC).

The project sought to increase the uptake of STI and BBV testing for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in remote and very remote communities in an effort to combat the high prevalence rates in this population. Involving the participation of more than 20 remote and very remote communities across four jurisdictions (see Figure 1) during 2017–2019, *Young Deadly Free* comprised several components, including the development of a range of STI and BBV health promotion resources.

FIGURE 1: Map of communities participating in the *Young Deadly Free* project



Source: Google Maps

The purpose of the resources was to raise awareness about STIs and BBVs, encourage testing and treatment, and reduce the shame and stigma associated with STIs and BBVs. Resources were developed for three target groups:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (aged 16–29)
- people of influence in the community (e.g., Elders, teachers)
- remote practice clinicians.

Acknowledging the challenge of developing resources as part of a national project with localised relevance across geographically dispersed and culturally diverse communities, the project team engaged in a collaborative process with project consortium members, young people from remote communities, people of influence, and remote practice clinicians. Onsite consultations were conducted across the four jurisdictions alongside surveys and focus testing with members from the three target groups.

In total, over **300** culturally appropriate and relevant resources were produced – many of which featured local community members. The final resources included factsheets, posters, animations, infographics, and videos (videos for social media, longer educational videos, and videos for clinicians).

All resources were housed on the *Young Deadly Free* website (<https://youngdeadlyfree.org.au/>) to enable online access where appropriate and viable, and/or printing for distribution of hard copies. Resources were also promoted on the *Young Deadly Free* Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/youngdeadlyfree/>), Instagram account (@youngdeadlyandfree), via Divas Chat, and YouTube.

An independent evaluation of the uptake and reach of the resources through social media and the *Young Deadly Free* website was conducted. Selected evaluation findings are presented in the following section.

FINDINGS FROM EVALUATION

The following results are for the period 1 July 2017 – 30 June 2019 and are limited to resource access via social media and the *Young Deadly Free* website only. The data provide a conservative estimation of the reach and uptake of the *Young Deadly Free* resources, with the resources also accessible via other means (e.g., Correctional Services TV screenings), particularly in communities where internet connectivity was limited.

Young Deadly Free website activity

- A total of **18,813** users accessed the *Young Deadly Free* website.
- Most people (49.25%) accessed the website through organic search (using a common search engine) or directly (31.32%).
- Most commonly downloaded resources included: factsheets, posters, and infographics (see Figures 2 and 3).

FIGURE 2: Top 10 most commonly downloaded resources on the *Young Deadly Free* website

	Type	Title	Total unique downloads
1	Factsheet	Syphilis	194
2	Factsheet	Sex, young people & the law	171
3	Poster	Young person Saripha	106
4	Poster	Syphilis and pregnancy	117
5	Poster	Syphilis blue spots	107
6	Factsheet	Chlamydia	117
7	Factsheet	Syphilis – the basics	116
8	Infographic	Syphilis 3	109
9	Infographic	Syphilis 2	101
10	Factsheet	Sexting & the law	98



FIGURE 3: 'Syphilis' factsheet and 'Young person Saripha' poster



Facebook activity

- The *Young Deadly Free* Facebook page was liked by **945** people and had **1,016** followers.
- The followers were predominantly females (72%) aged between 25-34 years (34%) and 35-44 years (24%).
- Half of the Facebook likes (49%) were by young people aged under 34 years.
- **723** posts were published on the Facebook page (mainly consisted of images, videos, or links to relevant websites) and reached **363,742** feeds.
- Followers engaged with published posts on the Facebook page a total of **53,160** times (the total number of times posts were shared, reacted to, commented on, or clicked on).
- Videos were most effective in engaging followers of the Facebook page, with videos featuring Crystal Love, the launch of the syphilis TV advert, and superhero stories having the greatest reach and most likes and shares (see Figures 4 and 5).

FIGURE 4: Top 3 posts on Facebook by reach, likes, shares

Type	Title	Reach	Likes	Shares
Video	Crystal Love	27,300	653	213
Video	Superhero stories	22,700	625	218
Video	Syphilis advert	26,700	445	112

FIGURE 5: Image from 'Crystal Love' video



Instagram

- The *Young Deadly Free* Instagram account had a much smaller proportion of followers than Facebook at **239** followers.
- **350** posts were published on Instagram, but the posts had very few shares, ranging from 1-4 shares per post.
- The majority of Instagram followers were females (75%), and over 60% were under the age of 35 years.

Divas Chat

- The ads on Divas Chat resulted in **11,511,181** impressions (reflects the number of times an ad or post was presented to a user).
- The ads led to **14,540** clicks (the number of times a user clicks on the presented ad and is directed to either the *Young Deadly Free* Facebook page or webpage), but the low click through rate, **0.13%**, indicated that the Divas Chat posts were much less effective at engaging young people than the Facebook posts.

YouTube

- The videos received **25,528** views on YouTube, with a total watch time of **353.9** hours.
- Most people (55%) accessed the YouTube videos via external sources: 39.4% of which were from the *Young Deadly Free* website. Examples of other external sources included Facebook, Twitter, and Google search.
- The majority of views were by females (69%), and viewers were commonly aged 35-44 years (59%) and 25-34 years (41%).
- The most viewed videos focused on syphilis (see Figures 6 and 7); these were among the first videos uploaded to YouTube.

FIGURE 6: Top 3 videos viewed on YouTube

	Title	Views
1	Spots: Have you had your syphilis test?	4,774
2	All about syphilis: An educational animation	3,212
3	Get tested early, during, and after pregnancy	2,692

FIGURE 7: Image from 'Spots: Have you had your syphilis test' video



CONCLUSION

- The *Young Deadly Free* project produced a comprehensive library of resources, targeting different populations in remote communities: young people; people of influence (e.g., Elders), and remote practice clinicians.
- The dedicated *Young Deadly Free* website and Facebook page were the most effective platforms for engagement with the resources.
- Factsheets, posters, and infographics were the most frequently downloaded website resources while videos received the greatest reach, likes, and shares on Facebook.
- With the Facebook followers typically female, aged 25-44 years, there is much value in exploring how to better engage males and a younger demographic with sexual health content.
- Nonetheless, the findings highlight the efficacy of using a dedicated website and social media – especially Facebook – in health promotion targeting remote communities, particularly in instances when the content is associated with cultural sensitivities and the population group is geographically dispersed and varied.
- The acceptability of the *Young Deadly Free* resources is attributed to the active engagement of the target groups in the resource development process, which ensured the relevance of the resources to the diverse population group and likely engendered a sense of ownership among those involved.

REFERENCES

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FURTHER INFORMATION

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