

PROJECT FACTS

Meeting Men's Group and Koolin Dorr

Creating a sense of connectedness, forging ties and sharing experiences are all vital and empowering means of fostering both healthy individuals and communities. Maintaining traditions and nurturing shared values grows strong and vibrant communities. And for Indigenous culture, one of the most potent ways to keep the community connected, pass down knowledge and maintain channels of communication is through the age-old tradition of coming together and having a yarn.

In light of this, EastWeb is excited to support 2 innovative and distinct projects that work towards empowering both the community and the individual within it through creating spaces to forge ties and share knowledge.

Meeting Men's Group

The Meeting Men's Group is a project that grew out of the vision of male elders in the Indigenous communities of the northern and western suburbs of Melbourne. These elders approached Broadmeadows UnitingCare for assistance in forming their own group as a place to meet, talk, learn and share food.

The group is seen by the men as a forum to discuss issues important to their lives including drug and alcohol education, adult literacy programmes, health issues and other specific difficulties faced by Indigenous men in the community. It is a safe and confidential space for the men to gather to share knowledge and experiences, and to foster new elders to take on this important role in the future.

EastWeb Fund has provided seed funding to help in the establishment of the group, including paying a small wage to the group's facilitator to establish the group as a working, sustainable entity.

Koolin Dorr

The Koolin Dorr Men's Group has been established by Indigenous drug and alcohol workers in the Dandenong area to provide a once a month 'go bush' trip for Indigenous men. The trips are constantly varying, sometimes involving fishing, and other times involving trips back to the men's traditional lands.

The group facilitates linkages between men, particularly young men with elders, and provides a means for them to reconnect with the land. The project offers an opportunity to foster the cultural and spiritual closeness of Indigenous tradition to the land and positively combats the effects of urbanisation. At the same time, it is a forum to collectively deal with the issues specific to Indigenous men in Dandenong in an informal environment. Though the priority is to involve men experiencing drug and alcohol problems, the group is open to all Indigenous men who want to join in.