

Australia's Performing Arts

WE ALL PLAY A PART

CASE STUDY



Musica Viva and Sweet Tonic

The performing arts plays a part in building inclusive communities across Australia. In 2006, Musica Viva, with assistance from the Australia Council for the Arts, established an innovative project to promote community involvement and a healthier lifestyle amongst older Australians through music.

'Sweet Tonic'- *Music for Life* was established as a community and health pilot project in partnership with the Campbelltown Arts centre in South-West Sydney. The project sought to demonstrate how participation in musical activities has health and wellbeing benefits that are real and quantifiable and that musical and creative activity can assist in building stronger communities.

The workshop program, delivered by Linda Marr, a vocalist in groups including Blindman's Holiday, Zingari Voci and Keklik Aile, encouraged creative expression. Participants with little to no musical background worked together as an ensemble to practice, compose and perform in their community.

One participant, Beth, said of the project: 'I had no social contact before; basically I never got out of the house. Week to week the workshops were something to get up for, they really made a difference in my life. I live alone and I had no contact with anyone other than family. I'm a lot more motivated now to get out and do other things.'

'Sweet Tonic' was successful in building a more inclusive community for senior Australians through creative expression, impacting positively on self-esteem, depression, loneliness and general health of its participants. Participants and their doctors saw older Australians transformed through the creative expression of music. The project enhanced the physical and mental health of the participants and built a greater connectedness between the community and older residents of the region.

Nurturing Talent • Participation & Enjoyment • Building Stronger Communities • National Pride



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