



Working together to close the gap



Healthier
Futures
Initiative



Starlight
children's foundation



THE NEED

Australia's Indigenous populations experience a burden of disease at 2.3 times that of the non-Indigenous population¹ with children having some of the highest levels of preventable chronic diseases in the world. Indigenous children are dying from an avoidable health condition at more than 3 times the rate of non-Indigenous children².

Further complicating the issue is that for some Indigenous communities, there remains an intergenerational lack of trust in the health system, resulting in poor healthcare engagement, low clinic attendance, and overall negative healthcare experiences.

Early detection and treatment can help avoid the development of chronic health conditions that have a significant and life-long impact on health, education and employment. Access to healthcare plays a vital role in improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Access, however, is more than just holding clinics. To be effective, access needs to ensure children attend clinics and have a positive healthcare experience when they are there. Without a positive experience, children may leave prematurely, not able to receive the full range of appointments, screens or treatments they require.

THE PROGRAM

Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative is an innovative partnership with clinical health teams who together visit rural and remote Indigenous communities focusing on detection and early treatment of chronic health conditions. Starlight's vital role involves 'Captain Starlight' (professional performers trained to positively engage children in health care settings through music, art, dance, games and storytelling) accompanying clinical teams and creating child-friendly, positive health care experiences.

The partnership not only increases participation in health care and improves clinic efficiency, but also helps create lasting, positive patient treatment experiences that are critical for early detection and lifelong participation.

"The Captain Starlight program not only brings joy to the children attending the paediatric visits but assists the visits to run more efficiently."

The presence of the Captains maintains children waiting for their visit and decreases the temptation to leave as they are entertained."

— Community Physician

¹ AIHW (2016) *Australian Burden of Disease Study Impact and causes of illness and death in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 2011*, page viii

² AIHW (n 1)

The main health needs in communities we visit:

- General child health checks
- Early detection and intervention for chronic health conditions
- Rheumatic Heart Disease
- Rheumatic Fever
- Diabetes
- Kidney disease
- Otitis Media
- Scabies
- Dental care
- Trachoma



“Meeting Captain Starlight in community eases the anxiety and discomfort associated with clinic attendance and can help to develop a better relationship between the child and the healthcare services. The Captain Starlight program also assists in building the capacity of mobile health professional teams by increasing reach and providing support by entertaining the children.”

—Physician, NT

138
Remote
Communities
Visited By
Captain Starlight

235
Days In
*Remote
Communities*

623
Trips Made By
Captain Starlight To
Remote Communities

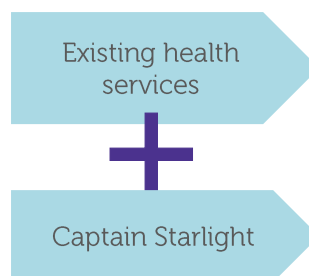


THE IMPACT

Validated success of the program through proven outcomes

Research undertaken by both Starlight³ and an independent study⁴ found that health professionals and partners we work with in remote communities rate the impact of Captain Starlight on children as significant. Evidence-based outcomes of Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children include:

- Increased attendance at clinics (reduce fail to attend rates)
- Early detection of chronic disease
- Parents and children staying longer at clinics
- Easier management of clinics / clinic efficiency
- The creation of a more welcoming environment which is less institutional and more family-centered
- Support of existing health promotion programs
- Opportunities to engage in play, which is critical for healthy child development and wellbeing
- Positive experience with Captain Starlight in community creates a sense of familiarity for children who later visit hospitals where Starlight is present
- Positively changed attitudes and beliefs about health care



Partnerships with clinical teams include:

Community health centres, clinics and regional hospitals supporting health promotion, prevention and early intervention for chronic conditions.

Health programs for prevention and early treatment of disease and chronic health conditions such as hearing loss, rheumatic heart disease, trachoma and malnutrition.

Remote community 'fly in' paediatric clinics



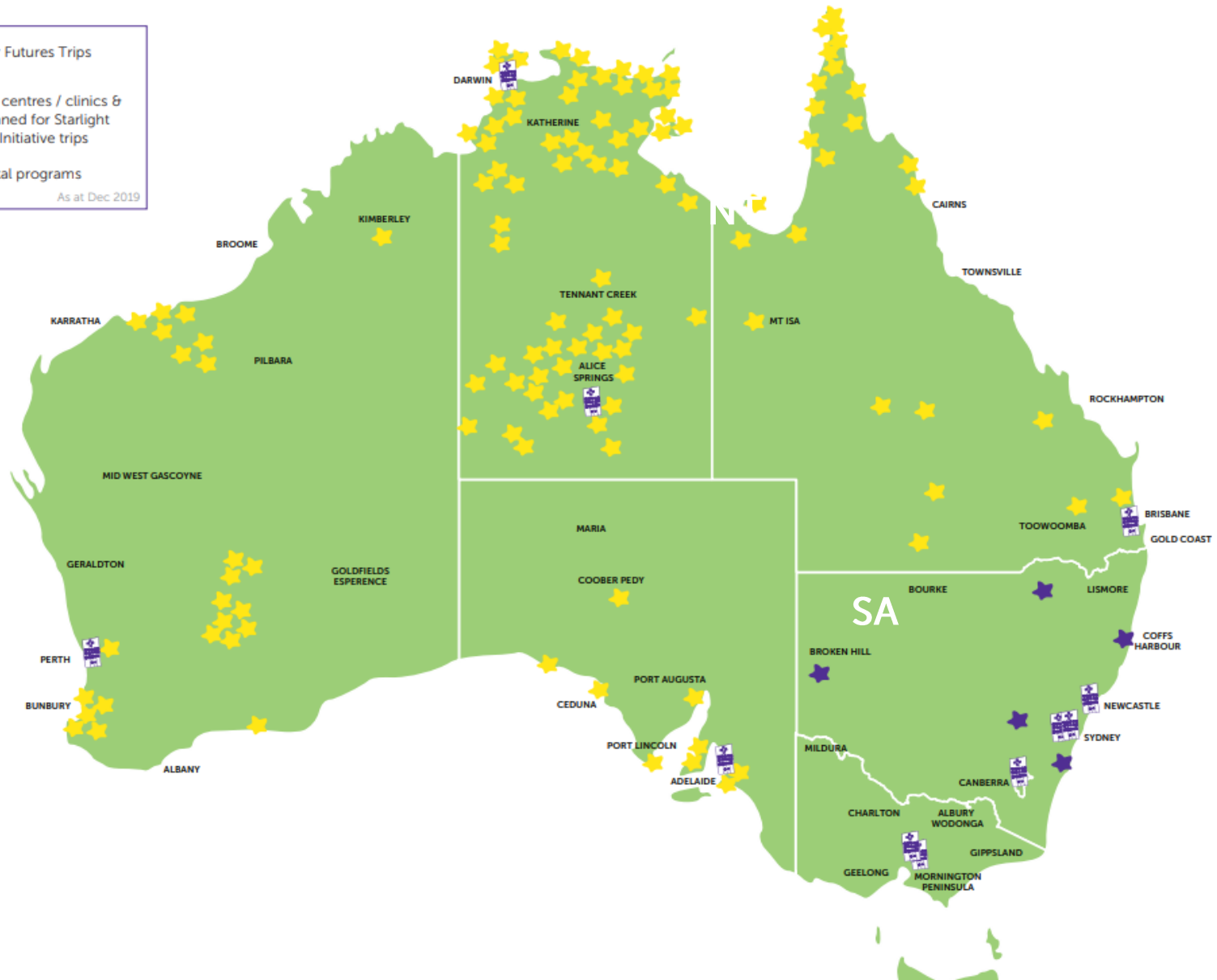
= Increased participation in health care & Improvement in the treatment experience

³ Treadgold C, Dann J, Bowden A. (2018), *Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative: A partnership model supporting health care delivery to Indigenous children and adolescents*. International Journal of Integrated Care

⁴ Harrison N, Walker D. (2008) *Evaluation of the Starlight Children's Foundation's activities in regional and remote communities of the Northern Territory*. Darwin: Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health (now Lowitja Institute)

Healthier Futures Initiative Program Reach

- ★ Starlight Healthier Futures Trips (existing)
 - ★ Hospitals / health centres / clinics & communities planned for Starlight Healthier Futures Initiative trips
 - 🏥 Starlight In-hospital programs
- As at Dec 2019





About Starlight Children's Foundation

Starlight's mission is to brighten the lives of seriously ill & hospitalised children & young people.

Starlight's hospital and community programs are founded on the principles of positive psychology, where factors such as social connection, play, fun and resilience have been shown to play a vital role in wellbeing, both in childhood and for life. Established in 1988 and recognised as an integral part of the Australian paediatric healthcare system, Starlight works in partnership with health professionals as part of the 'total care' of seriously ill children & young people. **In 2013, Starlight commenced the Healthier Futures Initiative, an innovative partnership with clinical teams to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.**

Starlight is the 5th most reputable brand in Australia⁵ and Australia's broadest reaching children's charity. Starlight has a physical presence in every Australian children's hospital and delivered more than 610,000 positive Starlight experiences in 2019.

610,527
STARLIGHT EXPERIENCES
Created in 2019

**The 5th
MOST
REPUTABLE
BRAND IN AUSTRALIA**
Annual Australian Reputation Index
(RepTrak®)

With every invested
DOLLAR
STARLIGHT RETURNS OVER
\$5.70
in value to the community

*the SROI was updated in 2018 by Starlight and reviewed by PWC

**WE MADE THE AFR BOSS
MOST INNOVATIVE COMPANIES LIST!**
2019
FINANCIAL REVIEW BOSS
MOST INNOVATIVE COMPANIES

⁵ Reputation Institute (2019), *Annual Australian Reputation Index*, RepTrak

Impact Stories in the Northern Territory



Captain Starlight From Community to Hospital

Captain Starlight is always out on special missions across the Top End of Australia and we are always greeted with warm welcomes, big smiles and even bigger voices yelling HELLO STARLIGHT!! It's very cool to be recognised so widely all around Australia...!!

On a recent trip to Nguuiu (Bathurst Island) Captain Starlight met a 13-year-old girl who love singing, telling stories from her community and having her face painted with flowers and butterflies! This girl became very upset and scared when she heard the news that she had to be flown to Royal Darwin Hospital for extra treatment.



When the time was right, Captain Starlight approached the girl and shared with her all the wonderful things about the Captain Starlights and the Starlight Express Room in Darwin, explaining that we can do all the face painting, Mario Kart playing and singing she wants when she arrives at the Royal Darwin Hospital! The girl stopped crying and asked if we could really play Mario Kart all day and the Captain Starlights replied with "Of course! An all day Mario Kart challenge will happen!" The girl left with her dad, Starlight sticker in hand and an even bigger grin on her face.

The next day this girl showed up in the Starlight Express Room beaming with energy and her dad expressed how thankful he was about making her feel excited and welcomed at the Royal Darwin Hospital and in the Starlight Express Room!

A great example about how community recognition works both ways here in Darwin, Captain Starlight always goes the extra mile to make kids from community feel at home just as community members welcome Starlight on their country!!!!

Captain Starlight and The Magnifying Glass



Being a Captain Starlight in the NT means they are constantly blasting down to some really remote communities and meeting some pretty cool kids, who are sometimes a bit unsure and afraid about what the doctors are there for.

A little boy from Numbulwar was waiting at the clinic not to see the doctor but the dentist. Captain Starlight had been playing with really fun magnifying glasses, which was great because most times in community English is a second language and non-verbal interaction has the best effect.

Captain Starlight and the little boy had been pulling funny faces through the magnifying glass, making their eyes and face look really RIDICULOUSLY BIG and hilarious. The little boy was having heaps of fun, but when he was called in to the dentist he became frightened and didn't want to open his mouth for the dentist.

Captain Starlight suggested to the little boy that we look at his mouth through the magnifying glass and after Captain Starlight had shown the boy how funny their mouth looked, with ease the little boy opened his mouth and the dentist was able to have a look. The child's mother, dentist and little boy were all laughing and the atmosphere went from scary to happy and fun. Without Captain Starlight and the magical magnifying glass, the dentist wouldn't have been able to check the child's teeth which had, according to his mother, been causing him a lot of pain!

Captain Starlight Sings in Alice Springs

Captain Starlight visits Alice Springs Paediatric Ward regularly as part of our Healthier Futures Initiative. You can usually hear them through the hallways, singing and playing the Ukele to all the classic hits like Twinkle Twinkle, Old MacDonald, In the Jungle and even more recent hits like Katy Perry's ROAR! Whatever the kids are into!

Captain Starlight's Ukele and singing skills came in handy during a cannula procedure in Emergency on a recent trip to Alice Springs. A nurse approached Captain Starlight for some help, as she had to insert a cannula into a little boy, and she said he was so scared of the procedure that it was very difficult and took a long time to get it done, which of course makes it seem even worse.

Never fear the cannula though, as who knew singing powers can make you forget about literally ANYTHING! The little boy's favourite song was In the Jungle. Captain Starlight and the boy sang this song at the top of their lungs, cracking up laughing during the famous A WEEEEEEEEEE eeee a wimbumbu waaaayyyyyy! The boy was completely engrossed in the song and he forgot all about the cannula going in! The pain and fear of the procedure was avoided because of Captain Starlight and the magical powers of singing! The little boy was happy and the nurse was even happier!

Healthier Futures Photography & Videos



- VIDEO: Earbus & Starlight Case Study - [LINK](#)
- VIDEO: Captain Starlight Recruitment in NT - [LINK](#)





