



● A healthy breakfast was served at the High School.

Healthy approach for young and old

□ By ROS BEADLE

LIVING, eating and thinking healthy has been the theme of the week for the young people and older community members of Tennant Creek.

For the first time, Healthy Bodies/Healthy Minds week has been run in Tennant Creek through the combined efforts of a number of organisations who have visited from throughout Australia.

The team of athletes, artists, photographers, dancers and educators arrived in Tennant Creek full of energy, enthusiasm and the desire to make a difference.

From the moment they arrived in town on Sunday, they've worked to a busy timetable and have enjoyed meeting many interesting people as a result.

The partners in the project are the Australian Literacy and Numeracy and Foundation (ALNF), the Blueearth Institute and Beyond Empathy which are supported by the Coca-Cola Australian (CAA) Foundation and the Athletes as Role Models Tour (ARMTour) which is supported by the National Aboriginal Sports Corporation Australia (NASCA).

Athletes including former rugby league state of origin player, John Doyle, Sydney Flames basketball player, Michelle Musslewaite and Theresa Anderson from Touch Footy Australia introduced themselves to High School students on Monday morning.

As part of a daily after school program they have spent time building on young people's skills at regular sports training such as footy and netball as well as running extra activities with young people at Purkiss Reserve.

There has been a great response from the young people who the sporting role models from the ARMTour have met.

Hopefully their stories can inspire the participants and have an impact on making healthy choices in their lives.

Beyond Empathy is a unique organisation which works with disadvantaged youth. They focus on the promotion of healthy and positive life skills through the arts.

This week they worked with the staff at Julalikari Arts (Pink Palace), the Wilya-Ka Nyinijiki Young Mums Program (Anyinginyi Health), the Alternative Education Program, Centacare, and many other groups.

Activities for the Beyond Empathy team have included filming and photographing programs to ultimately create invaluable resources for the community.

After school there have been popular workshops based on a combination of traditional and contemporary dance at Centacare.

All these processes work towards building the confidence of young people and building on their existing skills. The physical activity coaches at Blueearth have been working with the schools and youth centres doing sports and movement programs.

They have offered the young people more than the usual kick of a footy with activities including pilates and yoga.

Tuesday morning started a little earlier than usual for those who attended the Healthy Bodies/Healthy Minds brekky at the High School.

On offer were healthy options for an energetic start for the most important meal of the day.

Later in the week was the grand opening of the ALNF-CCA foundation's "Share-a-Book" library at Papulu Apparr-Kari (PAK) Language Centre on Thursday morning.

The books for the library were donated by CCA Staff in Sydney and Darwin.

The ANLF has also been hosting numeracy and literacy activities including workshops in Waramungu for the students at the Primary School with the support of PAK staff. The Healthy Bodies/Healthy Minds team ultimately aims to deliver long term benefits to Tennant Creek through the combination of healthy eating, reading and writing programs along with sport, dance, music and film making.

It is hoped that the achievements from this week will develop into a three-year joint initiative. Although few people see 'health' and 'Coca-Cola' going hand in hand, the CCA Foundation assured locals this week it promoted healthy alternatives such as Pump Water, Fruitopia and SPC products including baked beans and fruit salad.

Yvonne McKay from CCA said: "The Foundation has a keen interest in indigenous programs and indigenous health".

She hopes that the week would be the start of a long-term relationship with programs and organisations in Tennant Creek to assist in improving the health and well being of the community. The grand finale for the program will take place at Nyinkka Nyunyu tonight where there will be a chance for the community to come and meet the visiting members of the organisations and witness the achievements made over the past week.