

the Butterfly effect



Our Pilot Success

The first ever **Women's Spirit Project** pilot program has been delivered and celebrated.

Across 15 months the pilot project's achievements have been numerous and outstanding, with many firsts for the community and the state. They include:

- ✓ Delivered a 20 week fitness, health and wellbeing program from November 2018 to June 2019
- ✓ Engaged 30 women
- ✓ Recruited 17 vulnerable women from Frankston and surrounding communities who participated in the 20 week program
- ✓ Attracted 13 local women as mentors and working group members who contributed 120 days/900 hours to help execute the project.
- ✓ Supported the women to build a range of protective factors in their life: increased connectedness, self- esteem, physical self-perception and resilience.

In addition to this we raised in excess of \$160,000 through in-kind and financial sponsorship including:

- ✓ \$50k Victorian Government Pick My Project grant
- ✓ \$58,000 from local businesses
- ✓ \$52,000 from Monash Uni towards the Evaluation.

But the greatest achievement belongs to the 24 women who completed the challenging 67km trek from Frankston to Cape Schanck.

Moving forward the Women's Spirit Project looks to the next stage – developing a sustainable model that supports a greater number of women in Victoria who are doing it tough, to find their voice and their way.

The whole team want to thank all those that supported the program and hope those relationships continue as the Women's Spirit Project transforms – from the chrysalis of an idea in 2018 to a beautiful butterfly that can spread its wings and fly.

Documentary & Evaluation Event

The Women's Spirit Project invites you to attend the documentary and evaluation launch of "Our Story So Far" - showcasing the success of this transformational program for the women from Frankston and surrounding communities.

Hear the stories of participants, mentors and working group members and listen to the results of the Monash University Evaluation, at McClelland Sculpture Park and Gallery, 390 McClelland Drive, Langwarrin. Limited space, registration essential. **RSVP:** majellafrenchwsp@gmail.com

'OUR STORY SO FAR'

7.00 PM, WED OCT 9, 2019

**McCLELLAND SCULPTURE
PARK & GALLERY**

RSVP

majellafrenchwsp@gmail.com

Twenty-four participants and a four day, 67km trek - "that they all made it to the end is proof of the power of the programme." **Juanita Sanger** - Pilot Program Director



The Trek

Twenty-four participants, mentors and working group members participated in the **Women's Spirit Project** trek completing a 67km, 4-day, 3-night course through Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula.

The group began walking on Thursday, May 2, from Overport Park in Frankston South - cheered on by project sponsors, as well as family and friends. They walked around 20km each day through wind, rain and sunshine, completing the trek on Sunday morning at the Cape Schanck Lighthouse.

At the finish line they were greeted by a didgeridoo performance by Lionel Lauch from Living Culture and the team from **Nairm Marr Djambana** (the Frankston Gathering Place) who provided a celebratory morning tea.

Women's Spirit Project participant Simone said she was thrilled to complete the trek. "I feel like I can accomplish anything," she said, minutes after finishing the trek.

See more inspirational photos from the trek on the final page.

Celebration Event

On Sunday, June 2, the tribe of women that made up the **Women's Spirit Project** pilot program were recognised for completing the inaugural **Women's Spirit Project**.

More than 200 people attended the event at Derinya Primary School in Frankston South including State Member for Frankston Paul Edbrooke, Federal Member for Dunkley Peta Murphy, representatives from many of the Project's sponsors and family and friends of the Project's graduates, mentors and working group.

Celebration photography by Zorica Meyer.



"Now, having completed the program, I have found a connectedness from within. I have gained courage strength and growth." **Kim Taylor** - Participant



Kim Taylor Participant

I applied for the **Women's Spirit Project** to benefit ME, my physical and mental health. I wanted to engage with others with similar struggles and learn to be a better me.

Now, having completed the program, I have found a connectedness from within. I gained courage, strength and growth. I now exercise every week and aim to do this rain, hail or shine. Without any doubt this assists with my mental and physical health. There were times when I struggled, when I believed there was no way I could walk up Oliver's Hill but throughout I was encouraged, supported, cared for and told: "You can do this." And I did.



Juanita Sanger

Pilot Program Director

B.Ed in Physical Education & Health with focusing on Exercise Physiology, Nutrition and Physical Education for the disabled.

In my early days of teaching adolescent girls, I believed in creating a culture of connection and positivity and coupling

it with fitness activities. So I was so excited to be involved in this program as it provided solution-based opportunities for women feeling disconnected and unhealthy.

Already we are seeing the program's positive effect, with many of the women now rating physical fitness as a major priority to improve their emotional wellbeing and taking on some fantastic personal challenges like entering back into the workforce, public speaking and becoming involved in community programs.

I am looking forward to the next 12 months as we consolidate our structure and secure the future of the Women's Spirit Project, so that we can impact hundreds more lives!



Louise Allwright

Mentor

B of Sc (hons) Psychology and Advanced Diploma of Coaching.

I was attracted to the Project because I'd noticed a gap in the system between case management services and programs

outside the sector that give women the opportunity to come together to support each other and focus on well-being and personal growth.

I initially came on board as a mentor, but what really surprised me was how the women would show up every week, even though they often had conflicting priorities. And that even though we had different roles, it was a mutually supportive space where we could all bring our true selves, where we would all have a go, and celebrate each other's achievements and strengths. Because of this, we all benefitted.





For more information visit - www.womensspiritproject.org

The Women's Spirit Project - Sponsors 2019



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