

22 April 2022

### **Numbulwar Youth Learn Resilience, Confidence and Healthy Risk-Taking through Skateboarding**

This week, the Numbulwar Sport and Recreation participants had the opportunity to attend a Skateboard Workshop that was held each afternoon from 3:30pm at the basketball court.

The idea for the workshop was developed after Council received an extremely generous donation of 200 second hand skateboards, including helmets and safety pad packs, from Murray Turner of Lindsell Hoists in Melbourne, Victoria.

Mr Turner has a strong connection with Numbulwar after visiting the community over 20 years ago through a family connection and spending time working with elders to support community needs and education.

“After visiting Numbulwar, my wife and I set up the Long Journey Partnership, where we encourage kids to go to school every day and if they do, they get to come to Melbourne for two weeks.

“They live with us in our home with an elder and teachers and get involved in the local school and they love it.

“We have also taken fifteen kids from the St John Ambulance Cadets in Melbourne to teach First Aid to kids in Numbulwar and they learnt about bush medicine.

“That, to me, is what it’s all about, kids teaching kids,” said Mr Turner.

A friend of Mr Turner had collected second hand skateboards from various locations along the east coast of Australia and did not know what to do with them.

Mr Turner came up with the idea to have them all shipped up to remote communities in the Top End and utilised his connection with the Numbulwar community to reach out to Council.

“I’m absolutely thrilled that this is all working out and I would really like to thank Roper Gulf Regional Council.

“There’s also lots of people behind the scenes that we’ll never know about who have done little things to help make this workshop happen”.

Council has since been working with Build Up Skateboarding, a local NT organisation that aims to empower young people via skateboarding engagement, to conduct workshops across the Roper Gulf region through Council’s Sport and Recreation program.

Jack Dowden, Founder and Director of Build Up Skateboarding started the company when he saw a gap in the service delivery of his previous role in social work.

“I wanted to put together a program to teach kids self-resilience, confidence and healthy risk-taking in a safe environment through a fun and engaging activity,” Mr Dowden said.

The first workshop has just taken place in Numbulwar, running after school from Tuesday 19 April to Friday 22 April with a “no school, no play” policy to encourage school attendance.

The young locals have learnt all about skateboard maintenance, repairs and safety when riding a skateboard.

The participation from community members grew each day as word spread throughout Numbulwar about the workshop and how much fun the kids were having.

This program has come together through the hard work of Council staff, the generosity of Mr Turner and those who donated skateboards and the dedication of Build Up Skateboarding who went above and beyond for the young people of Numbulwar who participated.

Build Up Skateboarding are locked in to deliver workshops in Borroloola and Robinson River in early June and Council is working to secure more dates in other communities later this year.

Roper Gulf Regional Council Mayor Tony Jack said the program was a great example of teaching our young people new lifelong skills through fun and engaging activities.

“This collaboration between the Council, Build Up Skateboarding and Murray Turner has delivered some brilliant results for all involved,” he said.

“Young people in particular have not only been involved in a fun activity that’s of huge interest to them, they have also learned new lifelong skills and got a great sense of satisfaction from seeing the result of their hard work.

“I’d like to thank Mr Turner who helped this program come to life, and the team from Build Up Skateboarding for their enthusiasm and dedication.

“I would also like to thank the Council staff who helped build the ramps and deliver the workshops in Numbulwar.

“I look forward to seeing this program continue across the region.”

The collaboration with Build Up Skateboarding was made possible through funding and support from the Northern Territory Government’s Department of Health.

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Image description: The participants of the Numbulwar Skateboard Workshop with the Build Up Skateboarding Team.