



# Media Release

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## **Popular basketball carnival raises awareness of mental health issues**

Long after the final goal was scored at the successful Isiah Kearing Memorial Cup at Cockburn ARC on December 28, the basketball competition's mental health awareness message will resonate with participants and spectators.

The one-day carnival, supported by the City of Cockburn with a grant for court hire fees for the 2018 event, has been held at Cockburn ARC for the past two years and attracts the tight-knit Aboriginal basketball community.

It has been an annual event since 2014, organised by Shannon Kearing to honour his 20-year-old son.

The event is regarded as an important way to raise awareness of mental health issues such as depression and suicide prevention in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community.

Shannon's motto for the 2018 event was 'Let's not face anything alone, anymore'.

"We lost Isiah to suicide in 2013. Isiah was strong young cultural teacher who loved teaching culture through workshops and cultural dancing," Shannon said.

"People would seek him out for his wisdom and guidance to help with their problems.

"After we lost him, we didn't want his name to be forgotten nor did I want what he did in our community to be forgotten.

"For the past five and a half years we've held a basketball carnival in his name to bring about awareness of depression and suicide prevention."

The 2018 carnival attracted 24 men's and women's teams, a marked increase on the first year's event which hosted eight men's teams.

The City also hosted a mental health awareness stall at the carnival, providing free



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information to help support people with depression and suicide prevention in the community.

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