

Resource 4:

Sharing Life Together – How to start your own group

**A Resource Kit for Aboriginal
& Torres Strait Islander Christian Women**

NATSIEC WOMEN'S NETWORK: INDIGENOUS WOMEN WEAVING

A Resource Kit for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Christian Women

INTRODUCTION

The Aboriginal and Islander Commission's Five Year Plan, the 1st National Ecumenical Women's Gathering (Women's Business Conference) 1995, and the AIC's 1998 Gathering of Indigenous Women in the Church, all identified a need for stronger networks between Indigenous women and women's groups in the church. Such networks were identified as important for the purposes of resource sharing, support and combining strengths in the pursuit of common goals.

We are aiming to build a network of church-based Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander women throughout Australia. This network will be a living, growing network of women's groups and projects, enabling women to share knowledge, experiences and support. Women and their communities will be linked across denominations and distances. The network is open to all Indigenous Christian women throughout Australia.

With this in mind, this resource kit has been created to support women in their work by presenting information on the important aspects of running projects and raising money for your group. This resource kit will be an ongoing resource as we aim to support women in the different work they are doing.

I encourage you to use this resource and share it with others you know who are working in their communities or who would like to start a project but are not sure where to start.

I pray that this kit will be of great value to your work.

Graeme Mundine
Executive Secretary
National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission

Sharing Life Together: How to start your own group

Sharing experiences and supporting one another is something that women do well. This information sheet is designed to help you think about what you need to start up your own group in your local community. If you are interested in making changes in your community, forming a group is a great way of getting things done. Starting a group, even if it starts as a yarnning circle or a prayer group, will allow you to share the load and develop your projects.

What you need:

- **A shared interest** – cooking, floral arranging, art, yarnning circles, exercise classes, a prayer group or a bible study group. Choose something that you enjoy doing.
- **A place to meet** – the local church hall, your local community centre, someone's house.
- **A set time** to meet each week.
- **A teacher to teach the group** – find someone with the skills you need from your local community (i.e. local chef or florist or gym) or from within the group itself. Allowing women within the group to share their skills is a great way of building confidence and self-esteem.
- **Tools / implements / supplies** – use the tips in 'Resource 6: Fundraising Information' to obtain the materials you need (e.g. you could advertise in your local paper asking for in-kind donations*). If necessary approach your church and ask them to donate to your group.
- **Invite women from different churches / denominations to join your group.** Different view points and experience can be beneficial.

Once the group is more settled, you can start organising events such as Mums and Daughters weekends, exercise classes or weekend retreats!

* In-kind donations are donations of goods / materials or services rather than money.

Acknowledgements

NATSIEC would like to acknowledge the following:

Steering Committee who gave advice & worked to produce this kit: Cassandra Ambrym, Joan Hendriks, Elsie Heiss, Marceil Lawrence, Lurleen Blackman & Denise Webb

NATSIEC Indigenous Women's Resource Kit

Resource 1: Grants Information
Resource 2: Fundraising Information
Resource 3: Course Information
Resource 4: Sharing Life Together: How to start your own group
Resource 5: Organisations offering subsidised / free computers
Resource 6: Important Links & Addresses

Available as hardcopy booklets

For more information, or to order copies of this Kit, please contact Jen O'Hanlon
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