



KEEP OUR WAYS STRONG (KOWS) YOUTH FEEDBACK REPORT

**“Your voices are strong.
Your ideas are leading the way.”**



“Your voices are strong. Your ideas are leading the way.”

Why We’re Sharing This

At the KOWS Inter-School Event, students from **Yipirinya School**, **Yirara College**, and **St Joseph’s Catholic Flexible School** came together to talk about what makes them strong, what keeps them safe, and what needs to change in our communities.

The event was supported by the incredible energy and guidance of **Blak Doll Sport & Fitness Mob**, **Hoops4Health**, **P1 Wrestling** and Justin Colley (Principal of Yipirinya School) who all helped create fun, safe spaces for students to be active, build confidence, and learn from strong Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal role models.

This report brings together **your voices** — the things you said matter most — and the actions we’ll work on together to make them happen.

1. Culture Makes Us Strong

"Going bush makes me feel strong."

"We should celebrate culture more — in schools and community."

"Speak language. Keep ceremony. Keep tradition alive."

You said:

Culture, language, and learning on Country help you feel proud, connected, and safe.

Ideas to Work on Together:

- Run **Culture Camps** and "Learning on Country" days each term.
- Hold a **Culture Week** at each school — planned and led by students.
- Invite Elders and nannas to share stories, songs, and language.
- Create a **KOWS mural or video** celebrating your culture and identity.

2. Safety and Respect

“We need to be safe and feel safe.”

“It’s scary walking around at night.”

“We need places to go and people to talk to.”

You said:

You want safer spaces — at home, in town, and at night — where you can relax, have fun, and be with friends.

Ideas to Work on Together:

- Co-design a **Youth Safety Plan** — by young people, for young people.
 - Set up **Youth Safety Circles** to keep talking about what’s working.
 - Talk with services about a **Safe Night Space** where you can hang out safely.
 - Share your voices through posters or short videos about **respect and safety**.
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3. Sport, Confidence & Role Models

“Sport makes us happy.”

“A leader can’t be shamed.”

“We need more role models — people who care.”

You said:

Sport gives you confidence, keeps you out of trouble, and builds teamwork and pride.

Ideas to Work on Together:

- Keep growing the **Inter-School Sports Challenge**.
 - Bring in **local mentors** - Blak Dolls, Hoops4Health, Arrernte Boxing, and P1 Wrestling.
 - Run **“Lead Without Shame” workshops** for confidence and leadership.
 - Invite famous athletes and community heroes to talk with you.
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4. Education, Work & Future Dreams

“Go to school, stay at school, and go back to help your community.”

“We want more apprenticeships and ranger programs.”

“I want to join Norforce — be on Country and work.”

You said:

You want more learning that connects to real life, culture, and jobs in community.

Ideas to Work on Together:

- Create **Career-on-Country taster programs** with rangers and trades.
- Work with **training providers (like NAEN)** for apprenticeships and jobs.
- Set up a **Youth Advisory Group** to help shape school programs.
- Celebrate your successes through a **“Future Pathways Showcase.”**

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5. Family, Love & Healing

"Family is important."

"We need more love and less fighting."

"Adults need to listen better."

"Nanna helped me get back on track."

You said:

Family means strength, but home life can be hard. You want families and services to listen and work together.

Ideas to Work on Together:

- Hold **Family Yarning Circles** in each school.
 - Create **Community Healing Days** with art, sport, and storytelling.
 - Share your voices with families through short films or posters.
 - Invite families to be part of your projects and events.
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6. Youth Voice & Leadership

“Listen to youth — our voice matters.”
“This is deadly how we are getting to talk now.”
“We can step up and lead.”

You said:

You want real say in decisions and projects that affect your lives — not just to be asked, but to *lead*

Ideas to Work on Together:

- Form a **KOWS Youth Leadership Council** — one student from each school.
 - Create **student-led working groups** for Culture, Safety, and Sport.
 - Have students speak at meetings with KOWS, schools, and funders.
 - Support youth leaders to plan the next **Inter-School Gathering**.
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What Happens Next

This feedback shows how powerful your ideas are. You've told us what matters most — now we'll work with you to make it happen.

Over the next few months, we'll:

- Share this report with your schools, Elders, and community leaders.
- Start planning the next Inter-School gathering (Term 1, 2026).
- Begin setting up youth-led working groups to take the lead on these ideas.

Your voices are shaping what KOWS does next. You are the leaders. You are the change.

Keep Our Ways Strong

Yirara College | Yipirinya School | St Joseph's Catholic Flexible School **Together, we listen, learn, and lead.**
