

YARNS FROM THE CHALLENGE

Stories from the 2015 NSW Knockout Health Challenge



March 2015 Challenge Forum



COMMUNITIES WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE KNOCKOUT HEALTH CHALLENGE 2012 - 2015



**CULTURE
HEALTH
COMMUNITIES**

Our Culture, Your Health,
Strong Communities

The Knockout Health Challenge team acknowledges Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the land of New South Wales

The Knockout Health Challenge (the Challenge) started in 2012 and is a primary prevention program that aims to improve lifestyles by targeting NSW Health priorities of physical activity, healthy eating, overweight and obesity in Aboriginal communities. The Challenge provides support to individuals, families and communities to make healthy choices.

The Challenge is run by NSW Health through a partnership between the Agency for Clinical Innovation and NSW Rugby League.

In 2015 we had 38 teams and over 1200 people compete in the George Rose & Julie Young Challenges which were 12 week weight loss challenges. Teams were competing to have the biggest weight loss percentage, and were encouraged to aim for 3% loss across their team.

As we've visited teams and chatted with team managers, we've heard many stories of how the Challenge has made a positive difference to participants, their families and their community. We asked teams to share these stories to encourage more teams and communities to participate in future challenges.

Planning for the 2016 Knockout Health Challenge has already begun. 2016 will be the 5th year of the Challenge and we hope with your help, to make it the biggest year yet!

To keep up to date with our plans for 2016, please like our facebook page – **www.facebook.com/nswknockoutchallenge**

Thanks to all the 2015 Team Managers, Participants and support crew. We hope you continue being active and eating healthy!



2015 Peak Hill Team

IN 2015, OVER 1200 PEOPLE FROM 38 TEAMS IN 28 COMMUNITIES PARTICIPATED IN THE 2015 KNOCKOUT HEALTH CHALLENGE.

In 2015, the challenge consisted of four major events:

George Rose Challenge – 12 week weight loss challenge held from March to May

Kyle Saunders Challenge – a video challenge where teams create a fitness video

Julie Young Challenge – 12 week weight loss challenge held from June to September

Ronny Gibbs Challenge – for those teams who achieved a team weight loss of 3% or greater

Teams also accumulated participation points throughout the year to determine the winner of the Challenge shield and to reward teams for their great participation.

Winning teams receive grant funds to utilise within their community to promote healthy lifestyles.

Below is a summary of the results from the four challenges held in 2015.



GEORGE ROSE CHALLENGE

33 teams with 904 participants

Participants who lost weight	434	48%
Participants maintained same weight	15	2%
Participants increased weight	120	13%
Participants without final weigh-in forms	335	37%
Weight loss only across all teams	1769.5	4%

Teams		Total Team Weight loss (kg) based on top 20 Participants	Total Weight Loss Percentage % based on top 20 Participants
1st	Eurobodalla Scale Busters (Batemans Bay)	-150.70	-7.55%
2nd	Healthy Black and Deadly (Newcastle)	-126.30	-6.40%
3rd	Dead or Deadly (Nowra)	-112.90	-6.00%



KYLE SAUNDERS VIDEO CHALLENGE

- 9 entries
- 1st place - Wellbeing Warriors (state-wide team)
- 2nd place - Murrin Bridge
- 3rd place tied - Maitland High All Stars and Team Worimi



JULIE YOUNG CHALLENGE

22 teams (5 new) and 565 participants
(40% returning from George Rose Challenge)

Participants who lost weight	244	43%
Participants maintained same weight	15	3%
Participants increased weight	56	10%
Participants without final weigh-in forms	250	44%
Weight loss only across all teams	1026kg	4%

	Teams	Total Team Weight loss (kg) based on top 20 Participants	Total Weight Loss Percentage % based on top 20 Participants
1st	Dead or Deadly (Nowra)	-141.6	-7.34%
2nd	Nguri Wiithiku (Menindee)	-125.6	-6.16%
3rd	Eurobodalla Scale Busters (Batemans Bay)	-106.1	-5.40%

CHALLENGE SHIELD

Dead or Deadly Nowra has won the participation shield.



PARTICIPATION POINTS WINNERS

Teams can accumulate points across the year for a variety of efforts including: facebook posts and their team results.

- 1st place** Wellbeing Warriors
- 2nd place** Bundjalung Burners
- 3rd place** Albury Mixed Salad



RONNY GIBBS CHALLENGE

13 teams (excluding winners of George Rose & Julie Young Challenges) achieved a team weight loss % of 3% or greater for 20 participants:

Toomelah	-4.91%
Western Sydney Wobblers	-4.69%
Albury Mixed Salad	-4.59%
Light as a feather Wagga	-4.25%
Illawarra Titans	-4.00%
Nambucca	-3.99%
Griffith	-3.97%
Bogga Bamba Mirriis	-3.54%
Tweed Goorie Go Getters	-3.47%
Deadly Yinnars (Quirindi)	-3.38%
Indigi Active (Newcastle)	-3.34%
Condo Kilo Killers	-3.31%
Central Coast Challenge Accepted	-3.00%

YARNS FROM THE CHALLENGE

BUNDJALUNG BURNERS FROM CASINO



These ladies (mum and her two daughters) participated in the Challenge for the first time this year.

They said that for them being on the Challenge means:

- Enjoying getting together with your team, exercising and having fun
- Being healthy and changing your lifestyle
- Meeting new people
- Challenging yourself and realising that you're capable of doing a lot more than you think.

Whilst having fun on the Challenge, they've seen some great benefits including:

- Reducing medication for depression
- Having more energy to run around with the kids – “my boy gets puffed before I do”
- Having the kids at training means they are seeing us being active and they learn what a healthy lifestyle is too – “that's great motivation for me to keep going”
- Giving you motivation and the self esteem to change your lifestyle and giving you independence.

“We'll be back in 2016”

BULLINAH BURNERS FROM BALLINA

The Challenge has been a great way to meet new people in the community and better my lifestyle. We come together, have a laugh and a yarn and exercise, encouraging one another.

It's been a great way to motivate me to lose weight after having my kids and try and get control of my blood pressure.

The Challenge has encouraged me to be active and eat healthy for my jarjums. The more you move around, the better you feel, even mentally.

My fitness is definitely improving and I'm watching what I eat, which is hard work as I love my sweets. I'm now able to complete exercises that I couldn't do at the start.

If you're thinking about doing the Challenge – just do it and make that first step. You need to change and do things yourself. If you don't do it, no-one else will do it for you! Set your own goals and bring some people along with you. Being with a group is great to motivate you and keep you going.



TWEED GOORIE GO GETTERS

Since starting on the Challenge my health has improved a lot. I exercise every day, mainly walking and eat healthier. I feel so much stronger in myself. I've lost some weight but many inches from my waist.

It's been great meeting new people and I really look forward to the group sessions.

I urge people to do the Challenge – just do what you can. Take it easy at first and work your way up.

I'll continue doing what I'm doing now after the Challenge has finished as I need to do it for myself.



LISMORE GURGAN BULAHNGGELAH PIONEERS

This is my second year of doing the Challenge. It's great to come together with different people in the community – Aboriginal brothers and sisters and cousins.

Losing weight has improved my breathing and helped my arthritis by keeping mobile and walking more.



The hardest part is watching what I put in my gob. My wife and I are trying to cut back on our 'good' meals.

My advice is to keep at it, be consistent and listen to your trainers and dietitians and support crew.

It's good knowing you have a team behind you and a good team manager leading the way.

We've enjoyed seeing other communities at our events.

WELLBEING WARRIORS

A team of 24 New Horizons staff members and customers raised their hands to take part in the year-long NSW Knockout Health Challenge to make a positive change to their own health and make an impact in the wider community.

First weighing in at over 2.5 tonnes, the team have now jointly shed more than 80 kilograms and cinched more than 90 centimetres off their waistlines. More than the weight loss, though, they've made healthy lifestyle changes and are reporting feeling happier and having more energy.

Wellbeing Warrior Team Captain, New Horizons Coordinator, and proud Wonnarua nation man Thomas Franks said one of the main reasons for taking up the health challenge was so he could be more active with his two young sons.

"Before, when I got home from work I'd sit on the lounge and watch cartoons with my two little boys," Thomas said, adding, "Now I go outside and play games with them. Being able to have fun with them motivates me to keep going. Jet skiing, snorkelling, swimming, spear fishing, camping, getting outside and just playing with my boys are becoming another passion again."

Unlike other teams taking part in the challenge this year, the Wellbeing Warriors are spread out across the state, making staying motivated as a team an added challenge. To help combat that, New Horizons got behind the Wellbeing Warriors to sponsor a team meet-up in Newcastle.

The team used the day to get to know each other, train together and make their health promotion video as part of the Kyle Saunders Challenge – which they won!

"We want people to watch our Wellbeing Warrior video, see our commitment and achievements, and realise that if we can do this, so can they," Thomas added.

"Before team members put their hand up to take part, some staff from Tamworth for example hadn't met or spoken with staff on the Central Coast," New Horizons Community Engagement Manager, Kim Gracey said, "Now we're seeing really strong relationships being formed amongst Indigenous team members across such vast regions."



As an organisation focused on enhancing the wellbeing of our customers, it's great to have this state-wide initiative in place to also put the spotlight on the health and wellbeing of our team."

To support each other through their weight loss and health journey as they took on the George Rose, Kyle Saunders and Julie Young challenges, the Wellbeing Warriors also set up their own Facebook group to share healthy food ideas, fitness tips, and words of encouragement.

The challenge has been a positive experience for the team, including Wellbeing Warrior and New Horizons Support Worker Allison Johnson, who has been sharing her new-found passion for health with others.

"Sometimes it can be more convenient to get fast food being on the road all the time, but now I'm making sure I'm picking more healthy options," Allison said, adding "It's not only been good for us as a team, but we've also been able to pass that knowledge onto our customers as they see us eating healthy and drinking water. I've actually seen more customers wanting to get out more and start walking."



DEAD OR DEADLY NOWRA

This team is based at Waminda South Coast Aboriginal Women's Health and Welfare Corporation.

This is our second year on the Challenge and this year we've had great results coming 3rd in the George Rose Challenge and winning the Julie Young Challenge. We learnt a lot in our first year and we're lucky to have a great program at Waminda supporting our Challenge team.

We've seen some great changes in our community; people are talking more about eating healthy and there's more connection and openness. It's great to have a team and community supporting and helping you to reach your goals. It's hard to exercise by yourself so it's good to have the group around you.

People are looking healthier and feeling happier. It definitely can help improve your self-esteem and helps you push your boundaries. When I first started the challenge, I didn't think I could do the exercises, but 12 weeks later, I can pretty much do everything. Now that I've started, there is no stopping.



We've received really useful education on healthy lifestyles. A few have stopped smoking and the food plan from our dietitian has been great.

Our families are seeing the improvements too. They are eating healthier foods and are keen to get active. They actually ask to go exercising.

If you're thinking about joining in 2016 our advice is to just do it. Do things at your own pace and you'll be amazed at the results. It is empowering, with positive impacts on things like stress and self-esteem.

TIPS FROM OUR CHALLENGE TEAM MANAGERS:

Thinking about joining in 2016? Here are some tips:

- Select people that are ready to change and improve their health.
- Get help! Find support from your local AMS, Primary Health Network, Local Health District or other providers – they can point you in the right direction for trainers and dietitians.
- It is hard work keeping a team motivated over a period of time. Try and share the load with other team members or support crew.
- Keep on top of the paperwork – participants need their registration form signed by a doctor or registered nurse. Weigh-ins can be done by any health professional/worker.
- Try and engage local providers to help with training facilities and nutrition advice.
- Teams generally find exercising the easy part – changing your eating habits is the hard part.
- Try and get your local media onboard to showcase your team's work.
- Many teams have set up their own facebook page to post info and tips and keep people motivated.
- Some managers set up a group text message to send out regular messages.
- Some teams have tried to get local sponsorship (fruit & vege boxes, gym passes etc) to use as rewards and incentives throughout the challenge.
- Look to previous participants who have lost weight and changed their lifestyle to mentor and support participants.
- It's all about losing weight sensibly and keeping it off.
- Encourage your team to join the Get Healthy Service for their own free health coach.



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