



Western Sydney
Local Health District



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



Prevention Education & Research Unit

Research and Education Network

Western Sydney Local Health District

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



Prevention Education and Research Unit (PERU)

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PERU Team

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Acknowledgements

We appreciate the financial support from Western Sydney Primary Health Network and the McAlary family for our prevention programs in schools. The school communities and volunteer university students also play a special role in sustaining these programs.

We thank the Blacktown, Hills, and the Mt Druitt Medical Practitioners Associations, NSW Australian Medical Association, for their support.

Special thanks to Professor Mark McLean, Helene Abouyanni and Dalia Younan and the administrative staff of Research and Education Network for their ongoing guidance and support.

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Acronyms

AMA NSW	Australian Medical Association, New South Wales
BMPA	Blacktown Medical Practitioners Association
FMH	Faculty of Medicine and Health
MDMPA	Mount Druitt Medical Practitioners Association
MRFF	Medical Research Future Fund
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
PERU	Prevention Education and Research Unit
REN	Research and Education Network
SALSA	Students As LifeStyle Activists
SERAP	State Education Research Application Process
SPL	SALSA Peer Leaders
Triple A	Adolescent Asthma Action
TSANZ	The Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand
UoW	University of Wollongong
WSLHD	Western Sydney Local Health District

Foreword

The work of PERU with young people in Western Sydney demonstrates to us the power of education and community activism to drive prevention in health. The simple, but brilliant concept of Professor Smita Shah and her team is to empower young people in dealing with and taking control of their health and issues that challenge them. PERU provides a platform for committed and talented young members of the Western Sydney community to make a difference. New and topical programs, such as dealing with e-cigarettes, healthy eating and increasing physical activity, are having impact directly in school communities and beyond. Most importantly, the students are the drivers of actions in a manner that is meaningful to them and their peers. As they tackle problems and develop their own skills the benefits flow beyond the students, to their families and their whole community network. I am very proud of these unique programs, and I congratulate the team on another year of tremendous achievement!



Professor Mark McLean
Executive Director of Research, WSLHD
Conjoint Professor of Medicine,
Western Sydney University
Honorary Professor
Faculty of Medicine and Health
University of Sydney

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Dharug people as the traditional custodians of the land covered by Western Sydney Local Health District upon which our work was conducted, and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



Prevention Education & Research Unit

We are pleased to share with you the ongoing work, achievements and highlights from the Prevention Education and Research Unit in 2022.

Established in 1995, PERU continues to be at the forefront of delivering innovative community and school-based prevention and health leadership programs. We work in partnership with schools, universities and with a range of organisations, including general practitioner associations to deliver evidence-based prevention programs and interventions to improve the health and wellbeing of young people.

Objectives:



Promote health
& wellbeing



Empower
young people



Collaborate
with others



Serve the
community

Our prevention programs are social capacity building in healthy eating and physical activity, asthma, smoking cessation and promoting healthy choices in adolescents in high schools and universities. The programs continue to empower young people to take control of their health whilst gaining leadership, teamwork and communication skills. Our work is supported by strong partnerships with a range of services and organisations.



PERU Team, 2022

Kym Rizzo Liu, Professor Smita Shah OAM and Amelia Galao

2022 at a Glance



The SALSA Program

- 9 schools
- 29 university students trained as educators
- 232 HS students trained as SPLs

Outcomes:

- Improved confidence, teamwork & communication skills



SALSA Youth Voices

- 5 schools
- 45 students

Outcomes:

- 5 School Action Plans
- 6 Water refill stations installed.
- Advocacy, communication & leadership skills



Order of Australia Medal

- Channel 7 filming "Inspiring Youth Voices" with students to promote Professor Smita Shah receiving the Order of Australia Medal
- Professor Shah awarded the medal at the NSW Government House



Unpacking Vaping Poster Competition

- 17 schools
- 69 entries
- 3 Winners
- 5 category winners

Outcomes:

- Students gained skills in critical thinking, technology & advocacy

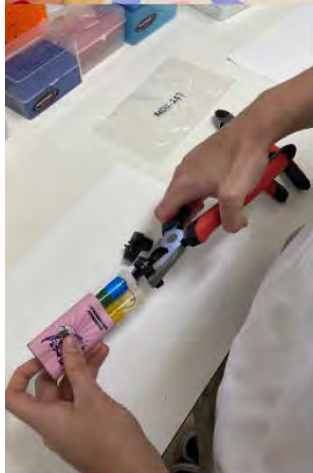
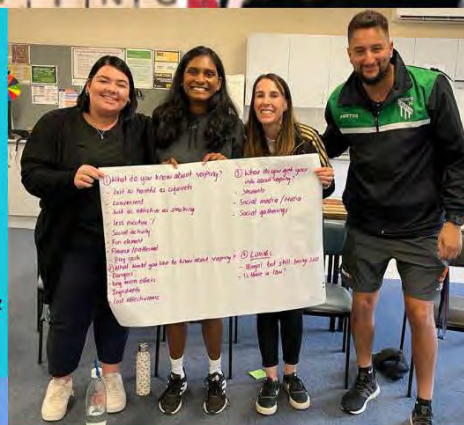


Unpacking Vaping in Schools Study

- 7 schools
- 162 students
- 133 school staff
- 29 parents/carers

Outcomes:

- Increased awareness & actions in schools



Unpacking e-cigarettes module

- 6 high schools
- >200 students
- Years 7, 8 and 10

Outcomes:

- Students rated the module with a mean score 4/5

E-cigarette testing at UoW

- 153 vapes tested
- Analysing the e-liquid

Outcome:

- Nicotine found in all vapes



Other

- Two participants of the Youth Voices COVID-19 video competition were finalists for a Young Achievers Award
- Participated in the 'Hello Doctor' event organised by Multicultural Health

Supported by the



NSW MINISTRY OF HEALTH
Public Health AWARD
Pandemic Response
2022 FINALISTS



Sonya Clarke



Bridie O'Kelly



Josefine Andrei



Christopher Weekes

Teaching, conferences & presentations

- 7 workshops
- >250 university students
- 3 conferences
- Principal's meeting
- Rotary presentation
- Ministry of Health

Order of Australia Medal

Dr Smita Shah, Director of the Prevention Education and Research Unit (PERU) and Clinical Professor, Faculty of Medicine and Health, University of Sydney was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in June, 2022. The medal was awarded in the General Division for service to community health. The award recognised her dedication, contribution to community health and unwavering work in promoting and advancing health outcomes for people of western Sydney over many decades. Smita has primarily focused on prevention of non-communicable diseases, such as asthma, obesity and respiratory issues, through health leadership programs for high schools and university students. Also, Professor Shah has contributed to community health on the global stage, including as an Associate with the Centre for Managing Chronic Disease, University of Michigan.

Channel 7 Special ‘The Order of Australia’

Professor Shah and her team were honoured to be part of this television special, aired on Channel 7 Monday 10 June 2022.

The filming took place at Rooty Hill High School, which has been a partner school of PERU for over 15 years and played an instrumental role in the co-design of the Students As LifeStyle Activists (SALSA) program and SALSA Youth Voices.



Students sharing their ideas, Rooty Hill HS



Order of Australia Medal Ceremony,
NSW Government House

SALSA Program

The Students As LifeStyle Activists (SALSA) is a peer-led leadership program designed to motivate high school students to increase physical activity and improve diet. Year 10 students are trained to be SALSA Peer Leaders and deliver activities linked to the Stage 4 NSW Personal Development, Health and Physical Education curriculum.

SALSA Educator's Workshop

We held two workshops for 22 university students from the University of Sydney, University of Western Sydney and the Australian Catholic University. The students were from a range of faculties including allied health, education, IT, medicine, pharmacy and public health. The 'Celebrating Volunteerism' event for SALSA Educators was held to say thank you.

Project Outcomes



SALSA Educators Workshop, Westmead Hospital



Celebrating Volunteerism, The University of Sydney

SALSA Peer Leader Workshops

We held nine peer leader workshops in 2022, with 232 Year 10 students trained. The SALSA Program was delivered by the peer leaders to Year 7 or 8 students in eight of the schools.

Project Outcomes



Mentimeter post-workshop feedback



SALSA Peer Leaders, Rouse Hill HS



SALSA Peer Leaders, Colyton HS

SALSA Peer Leader Debrief Sessions

COVID 19 continued to place extra stress on our schools. This resulted in only four schools participating in the SPL debrief session to complete the post questionnaire and to discuss the students experience as SPLs. In other schools the SPLs completed the post questionnaire link and debrief questions via their Google Classroom or MS Teams.

What did you GAIN from being a peer leader?



The screenshot shows a poll with the following response options:

- a sense of leaders communicate with to learn
- going into the peer leader program held much excitement as it was an opportunity to help understand the individuals of that age along with the idea of shaping the healthy mind sets in the younger years.
- It helped me gain more confidence talking in front of people, working together with the group. it was also fun to just work and teach something that we got learnt also
- I was able to understand how to understand how to understand and accomodate
- By being a peer leader I was able to improve the different ways of adapting my teaching and communication strategies to each child and their needs.
- Learning how to interact with younger people since it's a sort of "trend" to hate on those in younger grades
- going into the peer leader program held much excitement as it was an opportunity to help understand the individuals of that age along with the idea of shaping the healthy mind sets in the younger years.
- being a peer leader I gained more communication skills and understanding of how to interact with others in an effective way. I also grew in confidence and learnt more problem solving skills.
- being a peer leader I gained more communication skills and understanding of how to interact with others in an effective way. I also grew in confidence and learnt more problem solving skills.

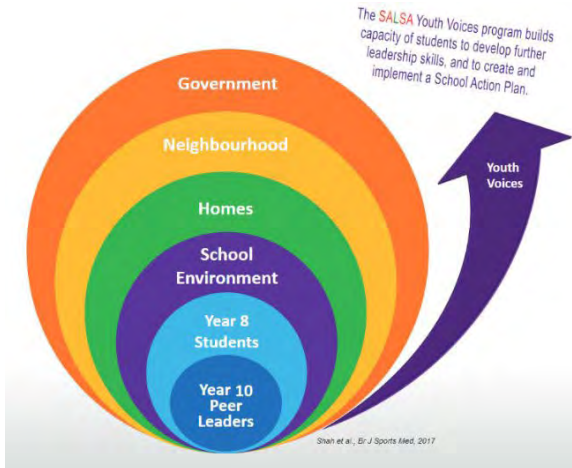
SALSA Peer Leader Feedback



SALSA Peer Leader Debrief Session, Blacktown Girls HS

SALSA Youth Voices

SALSA Youth Voices is an extension of the SALSA program which provides SPLs with an opportunity to create a supportive school environment to increase physical activity and/or healthy eating. It is underpinned by the Socio-Ecological Model and the Positive Youth Development Framework.



The SALSA Program Model


 $+$

 $=$

Potential reach
4,520
students

5 High Schools 45 students

SALSA Youth Voices numbers 2022

SALSA Youth Voices Leadership Workshop

Hosting this event was one of the highlights of the year. We would like to thank the NSW Department of Education for generously allowing the workshop to be held in their building.

SALSA Youth Voices Action Day

Students shared their plans and actions to an audience of health and education professionals. Trophies were awarded to all participating schools for their outstanding contribution. Student plans are generously supported by their schools and the Blacktown, Hills and Mt Druitt Medical Associations.



SALSA Youth Voices Leadership Workshop



SALSA Youth Voices Action Day

Students from four high schools presented their plans at Action Day:

			
Colour Run Fruit Day	Hoops4Hope	Project Gym	Outdoor Gym
Blacktown Girls HS	Rooty Hill HS	Erskine Park HS	Rouse Hill HS

Project Outcomes

Blacktown Girls HS ran the Colour Run Fruit Day and Rooty Hill HS ran Hoops 4 Hope in early December 2022. Both events were a huge success. All other plans are projected to be finished in 2023.



Colour Run Fruit Day, Blacktown Girls HS



Hoops 4 Hope, Rooty Hill HS

The Triple A Program

Adolescent Asthma Action (Triple A) is a proven peer-led education program to improve asthma self-management and prevent the uptake of smoking. Peer education occurs within the school setting and involves senior students delivering the program to younger students. Triple A uses a series of structured lessons to educate younger peers about asthma, asthma management and how to resist peer pressure towards vaping and tobacco smoking. These lessons involve games, activities, videos, and a quiz show.

Triple A Educator's Workshop

The educator workshop was held on 22nd April 2022. Eleven students were trained as educators in a one-day workshop held at the University of Sydney. Students were from a range of faculties including public health, medicine and pharmacy.



Triple A Educators Workshop, The University of Sydney

Unpacking Vaping in Schools Project

In 2021, Principals from high schools across western Sydney reported to PERU a significant increase in the prevalence of student e-cigarette use and concerns for impact of e-cigarette use on their students' health, behavioural and learning outcomes. Following this appeal for help, PERU initiated a community-wide approach which targets both the prevention and cessation of e-cigarette use in adolescents in western Sydney.



Moving Waves through community action

Phase 1: a pilot of the Unpacking Vaping in Schools (UVS) study was held to understand students, school staff and parents' experiences around e-cigarette use. Two committees were established to share and discuss effective prevention and cessation strategies.

Phase 2: the UVS study was expanded to 7 high schools in 2022. These consultation sessions continued to be offered beyond the study as a first step to action. A poster competition was also provided as a platform for student voices to be heard on the issue of e-cigarette use. We partnered with the University of Wollongong to test the e-cigarettes confiscated in our schools.

Phase 3: the focus will be on implementing actions informed by the literature, stakeholder input and data from the UVS study. These interventions aim to upskill and empower the school community to take action against e-cigarette use.

Phase 4: we will work with stakeholders to provide cessation support to young people who are already using e-cigarettes.

Unpacking Vaping Committees

Prevention Group

This committee was initiated to ensure a community approach and the implementation of appropriate strategies in schools.

The purpose of the prevention committee is:

1. To discuss and share effective strategies to address e-cigarette use in students
2. To inform stakeholders of local initiatives and circumstances around e-cigarettes

Currently the membership of the prevention committee includes: school staff, students, parents, local health districts, GPs, tobacco treatment specialists, academics, respiratory and adolescent specialists, and Ministry of Health who meet monthly via zoom.

Cessation Working Group

The purpose of the cessation committee is:

1. To discuss and share strategies on providing support for adolescents in e-cigarette cessation
2. To inform stakeholders of related university student-led research

Currently the membership of the cessation committee includes GPs, paediatric and adolescent specialists, academics, university students, public health and school staff.



Youth Voices Unpacking Vaping Poster Competition



First place winner



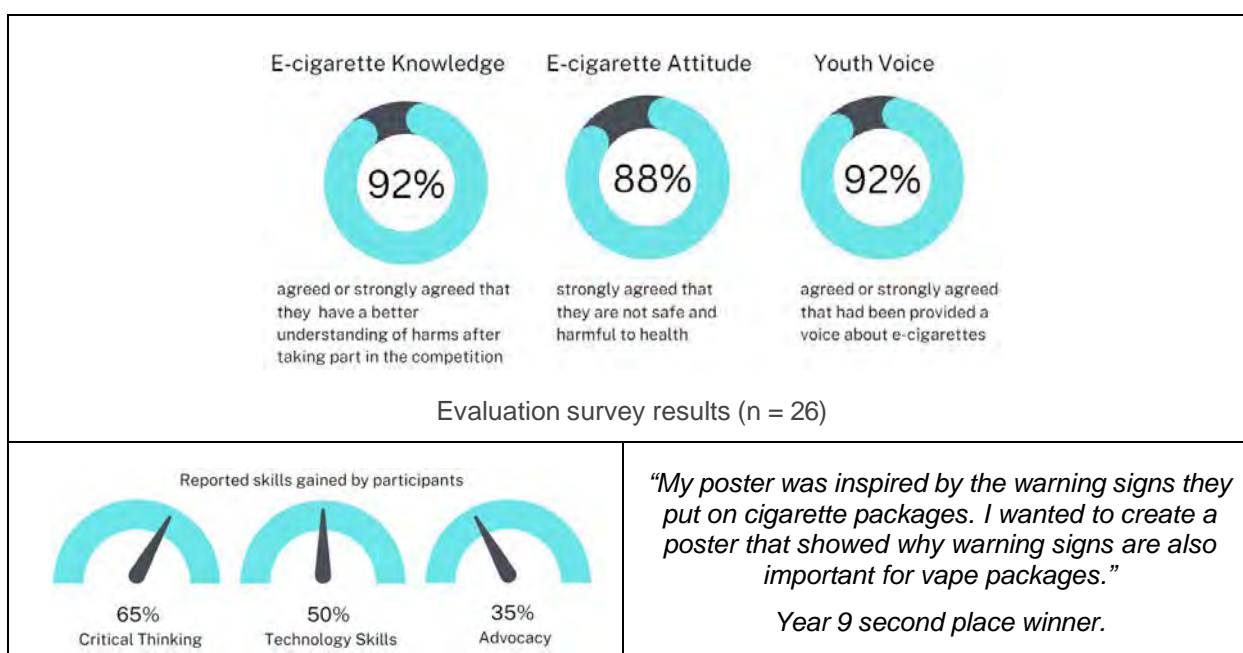
Second place winner



Third place winner

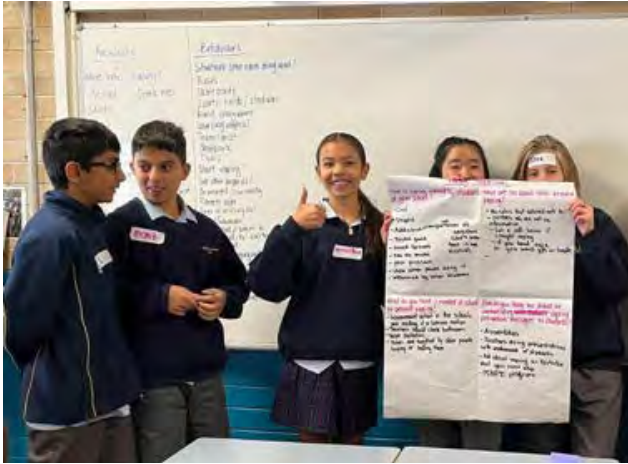
Launched on World No Tobacco Day, in partnership with Population Health, the Youth Voices Unpacking Vaping poster competition was open to high school students in western Sydney. They were invited to submit a poster addressing either the health effects of e-cigarettes, the marketing tricks of the tobacco companies or the harms to the environment. 69 poster entries were received from over 80 high school students across 17 schools. Monetary prizes were awarded to the top 3 posters and for the following categories: Courage, Care, Creativity, Concept and Critical thinking. The top three posters are available on the PERU website.

Project Outcomes



Unpacking Vaping in Schools Study

Continuing on from the successful pilot in 2021, ethics from The University of Sydney and SERAP was obtained for this study in schools. Separate interactive sessions were held for students, staff and parents at each of the seven schools.



Student participants in the Unpacking Vaping in Schools Study

Questions were broadly categorised under four headings: vaping knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, and prevention. The student and teacher sessions involved a combination of interactive activities, small-group brainstorming and opportunities for open discussion. For the zoom parent session, we used a focus group format to allow for in-depth discussion.

Project Outcomes

Aim: to determine, 1) the perceived knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of e-cigarette use in adolescents, and 2) effective e-cigarette prevention strategies for adolescents

Methods

Listening



Activities



Group work



Open forum



Participants



162 students



133 school staff



29 parents/ carers

Schools



Unpacking E-cigarettes module

The module was designed to be interactive and self-paced to increase students' awareness and knowledge of e-cigarette use. The online module can be delivered by teachers within a standard school period and contains three lesson modules regarding e-cigarette basics, health effects of e-cigarettes and alternatives to e-cigarette use. The objectives of the module are:

1. To provide a user friendly, interactive, and engaging module for students
2. To provide students with information about the contents of e-cigarettes, health effects of e-cigarette use, reasons for use and alternatives to use
3. To provide an opportunity for students to learn to say no to e-cigarettes



6 High Schools



>200 students



Stage 4 & 5

Numbers from the pilot



Professor Shah and Plumpton HS students



The module finish screen

Project Outcomes

Student feedback:

- ✓ Senior students recommend the course for junior students
- ✓ High enjoyment with interactive activities, including the quiz show
- ✓ Students reported learning about the contents of e-cigarettes, the harms of e-cigarette use and alternatives to e-cigarette use
- ✓ The median course rating was 4 out of 5, reflecting high satisfaction
- ✓ Students also believed the course should contain less text and more questions to improve student engagement.

Teaching

FMH, The University of Sydney, School of Pharmacy, Pharmacy students

We facilitated 6 x 2hr online Health Promotion workshops via Zoom to The University of Sydney fourth year and Master of Pharmacy Students (n=228). The successful evidence based Triple A program was used as the case example for this workshop.

Project Outcomes



Mentimeter 4th year participant feedback

FMH, The University of Sydney, Western Clinical School, Medical students

- Med 1 Clinical Skills Theme Respiratory Block 2hrs x 6
- Respiratory devices hands on workshop 1hr x 4 (n=60)

PHD, Internship and Work Placement students

- Master of Public Health, UNSW Intern, Chang Sheng Leong, “*Scoping review on university students’ attitudes, perceptions and knowledge of e-cigarettes*”.
- Master of Public Health, USyd work placement, Catriona Lockett, “*Development of a preliminary framework for a school-based program to improve asthma self-management and prevent e-cigarette use in high school students*”.
- Fay Karpouzis, PhD, 2019-ongoing, co-supervisor, Deakin University, Melbourne. “*Promoting food literacy, sustainable and healthy eating in children aged 10-12 years: Implementation and Evaluation of OzHarvest’s school-based FEAST (Food Education and Sustainability Training) Program*”.

Collaborations and Partnerships



COVID-19 Western Sydney GP and Faith-based Leaders' Network

These meetings continued until September. Some of the focus areas included COVID antiviral prescribing, long COVID, COVID vaccine updates for primary care and COVID-19 health pathways. A/Professor Anthony Byrne, respiratory specialist at St Vincent's clinic gave an insightful address about long COVID.

Research Collaborations

- MRFF Bushfire Study, led by Professor McIntyre, the Medical Research Future Fund, is conducting a randomized trial to determine the impact of surgical masks and P2 respirators during bushfire season on adverse respiratory outcomes among adults with lung disease. This research will provide the first clinical efficacy data on mask and respirator use for prevention of smoke-induced exacerbations of asthma and COPD in the world
- MRFF Chronic Respiratory Conditions Grant Opportunity: "Empowering asthma self-management and therapeutic adherence through a comprehensive evidence-based behavioural support program delivered through augmented reality technology"; NHMRC APP2021955; 5-years; \$2,000,000.00
- NHMRC Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies Grant 2022: "Randomised controlled trial to clinically validate a digital quit smoking/vaping intelligent intervention for dental patients"; NHMRC APP2024093; 5-years; \$3,856,193.00

Conferences and Publications

It was a productive year of conferences, reports and publications.

Conferences and Presentations

1. *'Involve Me and I'll Understand': The Need for Innovative Ways to Engage Young People in a Pandemic*, TSANZ ASM, March-April 2022 [virtual]
2. *Unpacking Vaping in high schools: an exploratory study* TSANZ ASM March-April 2022 [virtual]
3. *Does an Online Q&A Session address the COVID-19 Concerns of Students* TSANZ ASM March-April 2022 [virtual]
4. *Engaging high school students during a pandemic: digitalisation of the SALSA program*. Allied Health Research Symposium, poster presentation
5. *Engaging High School Students During a Pandemic* Westmead Hospital Week 2022 [virtual]. Poster presentation
6. *Youth Voices: Making a Difference to the School Environment* Westmead Hospital Week 2022 [virtual]. Poster presentation
7. *Unpacking Vaping in Schools*, Western Sydney Principals Network, July, oral presentation
8. *Unpacking Vaping in Schools*, Rotary presentation September
9. *Unpacking Vaping in Schools Study presentation*, E-cigarettes and Young People, Ministry of Health, 7th November
10. *Unpacking Vaping in Schools Study oral presentation*, TSANZ NSW conference, 4th November

Publications

Reports

1. Prevention Education and Research Unit, 2021
2. Research and Education Network Report, 2021
3. Year in review 2021-2022 WSLHD

Publications under Review

Shah, SS, Rizzo Liu, K, Lockett, CL, Sainsbury, E "Youth Voices creating healthy eating and physically active environments in schools" (under review with Health Education Journal).

Media Articles and other

1. "Youth voice delivers water refill stations in western Sydney schools" [The Pulse, 11 April 2022](#)
2. "Youth voice delivers water refill stations" [Nepean News, April 2022](#)
3. "Fostering Youth Voice for the Delivery of COVID-19 Information" [Insight+ Medical Journal of Australia, 30 May 2022](#)
4. "Western Sydney students to voice concerns about vaping this World No Tobacco Day" [The Pulse, 30 May 2022](#)
5. "Unpacking Vaping in Schools" The NSW Doctor, [NSW Australian Medical Association, May/ June 2022](#)
6. Queen's Birthday honours 2022: Dr Smita Shah OAM, [The Order of Australia - YouTube](#)
7. "I got my zeal for community work from my Gandhian father" [SBS Hindi Podcast, 14 June 2022](#)
8. "Some students want to rebel and think vaping is cool and tastes good, research finds" [ABC Western Sydney, 29 June 2022](#)
9. "Western Sydney researchers uncover truths on vaping in schools to help protect youth" [The Pulse, 8 July 2022](#)
10. "Inspiring Adolescents Towards Better Health Practices" India Link, July 2022
[..\Media\2022\India\Inspiring Adolescents.png](#)
11. "Winners announced for anti-vaping competition with western Sydney students submitting innovative and influential artwork" [The Pulse, 10 August 2022](#)
12. Professor Shah OAM mention, WSLHD Executive, 15 September 2022
13. "Inspiring western Sydney high school students to lead and develop health actions in their schools". [The Pulse, 20 September 2022](#)
14. "Unpacking Vaping in Schools", WSLHD School-Link Newsletter, Term 4 2022 [NSW Health Department\School-Link Newsletter Term 4 2022.pdf](#)
15. "Our voices were heard: western Sydney students share big plans to inspire physical activity at their schools during SALSA Youth Voices event" [The Pulse, 6 December 2022](#)
16. "A big first step: Western Sydney Local Health District's expo introduces students to vital healthcare services" [The Pulse, 6 December 2022](#)

Community Health | Featured News

Youth voice delivers water refill stations in western Sydney schools

11 APR 2022, 1:42 PM



Western Sydney high school students are enjoying a healthier drink option and reducing their environment footprint thanks to a partnership between Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD), schools and local doctors.

Generous donations by the Mount Druitt and Hills doctors' associations, with additional funding from each high school, allowed for the purchase, delivery, and installation of water refill stations in Chifley College Mount Druitt Campus, and Colyton, Erskine Park, Model Farms, Nepean Creative and Performing Arts, and Plumpton high schools.

The initiative was the brainchild of local high school students who participated in WSLHD's peer-led health leadership program Students As Lifestyle Activists (SALSA) and Youth Voices, delivered by the Prevention Education and Research Unit (PERU).

Nepean Creative and Performing Arts high school prefect Kazia Murphy, a former SALSA peer leader, explained the students needed a new option after bubblers were closed due to the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

PERU has run the program in western Sydney high schools for over 15 years, reaching more than 21,000 students in that time with the support of the Western Sydney Primary Health Network (WentWest).

“

The cool water is extremely beneficial in summertime as we do get very hot days and it is hard to keep cool during physical education lessons,” Kazia said.

Erskine Park High School principal Brenda Quayle added: “Our schools used student voice to determine a key need for students to have access to cold drinking water for their health and wellbeing, recognising that students should never have to pay for access to fresh water.”

The new water refill stations not only encourage students to choose water as a healthy beverage but also decrease the purchase of bottled water.

“It’s a health and environmental win for the school community,” said Dr Kean-Seng Lim, president of the Mt Druitt Medical Practitioners Association.



Kazia Murphy, Year 12 Prefect and ex-SALSA Peer Leader at Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School.



PERU director Professor Smita Shah thanked the local general practitioners for their generosity, as well as Brenda Quayle for negotiating and coordinating the purchase and delivery of water refill stations.

“It is heartening to see our empowerment strategy of youth voice being actioned and supported by health and education,” Professor Shah said.

“This is a great example of the collective effort of the community towards prevention of chronic health diseases and equity, despite the challenges of COVID-19.”



Students at Erskine Park High School also get in on the action.



SALSA is an award-winning program designed to motivate students to increase physical activity and improve diet by empowering participants to be health advocates among their peers.

Inspiring western Sydney high school students to lead and develop health actions in their schools

20 Sep. 2022, 11:28 am



Students from five western Sydney high schools: Blacktown Girls, Erskine Park, Malek Fahd Islamic College, Rooty Hill and Rouse Hill, united in the name of health and leadership on Friday, 9 September 2022 at the award-winning Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD) Students as Lifestyle Activists (SALSA) program's Youth Voices Leadership workshop.

Students engaged in interactive games and activities, including a AFL session run by Omar Elrayes from the Greater Western Sydney Giants and were inspired by former Australian cricketer Gavin Robertson who spoke about how appreciation for success only comes by embracing failures along the way.

SALSA Youth Voices is an extension of the SALSA program and aims to build the leadership and advocacy skills of SALSA Peer Leaders to empower them to design a health promoting action that addresses healthy eating or increased physical activity in their school community. The program uses a strength-based approach and aims to further build leadership, communication and teamwork skills in students.

SALSA co-founder Clinical Professor Smita Shah said the students have the solutions and agency to make a difference in their school communities.

“The students know the issues and have the capacity to add to a supportive school environment to increase healthy eating and physical activity,” said Smita.

“The student plans which identified barriers to eating healthy, including junk food promotions, show innovation, from revamping a school gym to increase accessibility for all students to running a breakfast for champions initiative.

“One student on the day commented that “junk food is more accessible in western Sydney than healthy foods and are made to look so good and appealing with games such as Monopoly”.

The workshop was run by Prevention Education and Research Unit (PERU), supported and hosted by the NSW Department of Education's Student and Experience team and included collaboration with The University of Sydney, high schools, the GWS Giants, Western Sydney Primary Health Network, and the Mount Druitt, Blacktown and Hills Medical Practitioners Associations.

Step two is SALSA Youth Voices Action Day, where students present either their implemented actions or their plans in further detail.

Further information about the SALSA program can be found on the SALSA website. To read more about the SALSA Youth Voices Leadership workshop program, [click here](#).

ENGAGING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS DURING A PANDEMIC: DIGITALISATION OF THE SALSA PROGRAM

Sainsbury E¹, Hardy, LL^{1,2}, Rizzo Liu K¹, Callaghan, N³, Shah S^{1,2}

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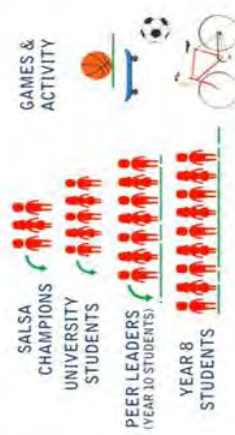
³ Department of Education, Sydney, NSW



Health
Western Sydney
Local Health District

1. Introduction

The Students As Lifestyle Activists (SALSA)¹ program is a peer-led leadership program for high school students.



The training of SALSA Peer Leaders is through a face-to-face (F2F) workshop. In 2020, due to COVID-19, the training was delivered online, in partnership with the NSW Department of Education (DoE).

Aim: To evaluate the efficacy, fidelity and acceptability of the online SALSA peer leader workshop (SPLW).

2. Methods

- Online program piloted with 2 western Sydney high schools (n = 41 peer leaders).
- Online workshops delivered via Zoom by PERU & DoE staff.

ONLINE PLATFORMS:



Google classroom Microsoft Teams

DIGITAL RESOURCES:



3. Results /outcomes

- Approx. 90% of students reported that the online lessons were good.
- Over one-third liked all the lesson activities.
- Interactive games such as SALSA Kahoot and Luchbox Lotto were particularly well-received.
- 22 peer leaders went on to successfully deliver the program to Year 8 students.

What is 1 thing you gained from the workshop?



Fig 1. Post-workshop feedback via Mentimeter

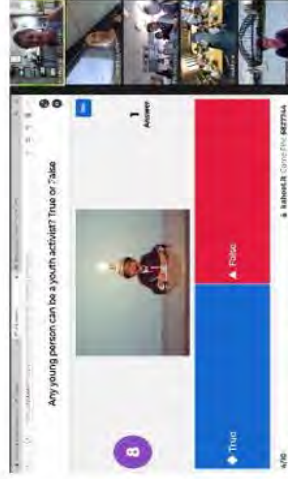


Fig 2. Online quiz run with students via Kahoot

- All program components were delivered. Minor IT issues impacted adherence to allocated time.
- 100% of peer leaders appeared to be interested and engaged throughout the workshop; however, engagement dropped off among some students towards the end.

4. Conclusion

Online delivery is a viable option for the SALSA program. There was high engagement and acceptability from the students, and all essential elements of the workshop were completed. While F2F remains the preferred delivery mode, the digitalisation of the SPLW will allow it to reach regional high schools in NSW.

5. References

1. Shah, S, et al. The Students as Lifestyle Activists (SALSA) program. *British Journal of Sports Medicine* 2017; 51: 1445-1446.
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6. Contact details

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🌐 <https://salsa-triple-a.sydney.edu.au/>

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Youth Voices: Making a Difference to the School Environment

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Introduction

Students As LifeStyle Activists (SALSA)



SALSA is an award-winning peer-led leadership program designed to motivate students to improve diet and increase physical activity.

SALSA Youth Voices (SYV)



SYV is an extension of the SALSA program in high schools. It provides an opportunity for high school students to have an active role in creating a supportive school environment for healthy eating and physical activity. YV provides a platform for students to share their 'voice'.

Project Aim

The aim of the project was to:

1. Provide students an opportunity to build on their leadership skills
2. Enable them to develop and implement an action in their school to increase physical activity and improve diet.

Methods

1. SYV Leadership Workshop



Term 3, 2020

One-day online workshop that includes, games and activities

Students identify key issues in their school environment that limit their ability to eat healthy food, drink water and be physically active. They plan an action.

2. SYV Action Day



Term 1, 2021

Platform to present School Action Plan to an audience of health and education leaders and stakeholders

Results

Leadership Workshop

5 High Schools



SALSA Peer Leaders (n=55)

Leadership Day Questionnaire (n = 37)



Students reported that the action day template was useful

Action Plans

- Painting new handball courts
- Replacing uneven sporting grounds
- Installing water refill stations

Action Day

3 High Schools



SALSA Peer Leaders (n=9)

Action Day Questionnaire (n = 6)

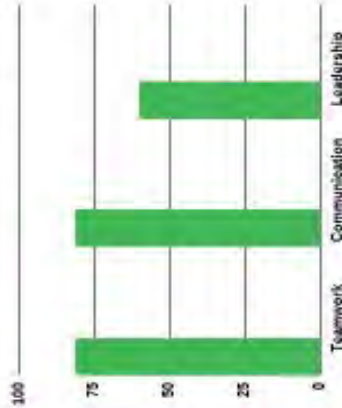


Fig 1. Skills gained by participants post-Leadership Workshop



Nepaan CAPA HS SALSA Peer Leaders & teacher



Erskine Park HS SALSA Peer Leaders, teacher & principal

Summary & Conclusions

"The program provides me with confidence when it comes to advocating for our school action plan"

- SYV uses a strengths-based approach to enhance the leadership skills of students and empower them to actively engage the school community in healthy eating and physical activity
- Providing students with leadership opportunities and student voice can create supportive environments in schools

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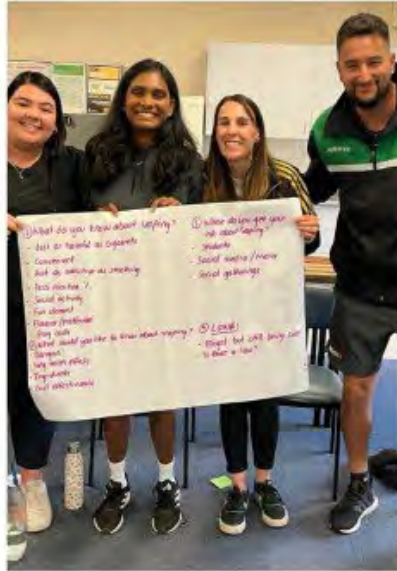
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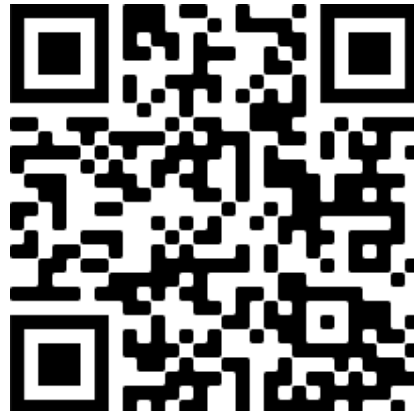


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