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The Pulse

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News WSLHD

Western Sydney students champion active living at Moving Symposium

03 Nov, 2025, 4:10 pm

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Two Rooty Hill High School students are inspiring their peers and community to get active, after taking centre stage at the Western Sydney Moving Symposium recently.

School Captain Makayla Mantua and Sports Captain Khalia Evagelia Daniel represented their school and the Students As LifeStyle Activists (SALSA) program, proudly showcasing the power of youth leadership in promoting healthier lifestyles across Western Sydney.

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Both Makayla and Khalia are 2024 SALSA Peer Leaders—part of an award-winning health promotion initiative led by the Western Sydney Local Health District's (WSLHD) Prevention Education and Research Unit.

The program empowers young people to

influence their peers, families, and communities to make healthier lifestyle choices through education and action.

At the Symposium, the pair presented their SALSA Youth Voices project, "SALSA Youth Games," a creative student-led initiative encouraging schools to embrace movement and wellbeing.

As the only youth speakers at the event, their presentation drew praise from community leaders, educators, and health professionals for its innovation and passion.

"Programs like SALSA are changing the conversation about health in Western Sydney," said Professor Smita Shah OAM, founder and Director of the SALSA program at WSLHD.

"By giving young people the tools, confidence, and platform to lead, we're not just promoting healthy choices — we're nurturing the next generation of community leaders."

Professor Shah said Makayla and Khalia's work reflects the strong partnership between WSLHD, local schools, and the broader community in driving change.

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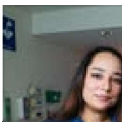
Western Sydney Health

37 minutes ago

Auburn Hospital's Midwifery Group Practice (MGP) has been featured on page 2 in the Sydney Morning Herald. Thank you to journalist Kate Aubusson for sharing this story. Congratulations to everyone at the MGP for what you do day in and day out. [#WSLHD](#) [#AuburnHospital](#)

With Amar by her side, Hamna had a safe place to have her baby

Hamna is a 28-year-old woman who is currently pregnant with her second child. She is a member of the Auburn Hospital's Midwifery Group Practice (MGP) and is currently receiving care from the MGP. She is a member of the MGP and is currently receiving care from the MGP.



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Featured Video

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“ Western Sydney is full of bright, motivated students who want to make a difference.

Celebrating WSLHD Nurses and Midwives - the heart of healthcare

“When we empower them, they become powerful advocates for active, connected, and healthier communities,” Professor Shah said.

The Western Sydney Moving Symposium celebrated local initiatives promoting physical activity and wellbeing.

Makayla and Khalia’s message resonated strongly: collaboration between the health and education sectors is key to building environments where young people — and their families — can thrive.

Their leadership sets the tone for the next generation, as the 2025 SALSA Youth Voices team prepares to lead community events like the upcoming Pacific Cup.

“The future is in good hands,” said Symposium convenor David Burns, commending the students for their initiative and leadership.

Managed by WSLHD’s Prevention Education and Research Unit, the SALSA program continues to empower students across Western Sydney to lead with purpose, develop lifelong health skills, and inspire others to live active, balanced lives.

To learn more about the SALSA program, visit WSLHD’s SALSA webpage.

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