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## **INDIGENOUS YOUTH LAUNCH SMALL BUSINESS TO COUNTER RACISM**

*Centacare students spread messages of reconciliation and hope in the local community*

**Perth, WA:** Aboriginal students participating in the Kadadjiny Bidi (Learning Path) program at Centacare Employment and Training in Armadale have launched ABout Us Mob, a small business that makes t-shirts with positive messages about Indigenous people and culture.

The students came up with the idea after experiencing an incident involving racism while on their break from class. Ann Bonney, a young Kadadjiny Bidi student, explained that they wanted to turn that negative experience into something positive.

"ABout Us Mob is about who we are as Aboriginal people," Ann said. "The reason why it all started up is because we wanted to send positive messages out to non-Aboriginal people in our community and help them understand about how we get treated."

"Through bardip – which means 'story' – we can promote a proud Aboriginal culture and history. We're getting everyone to wear our bardip through our t-shirts and we hope this will spread through the community."

The students have come up with a range of different messages which they print on the t-shirts, including 'Strength through Storytelling' and 'We Stand Together'.

"We also use Aboriginal slang and have a sense of humour about it," said Ann.

Centacare's Kadadjiny Bidi course is being delivered under the Australian Government's Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program. In class, ABout Us Mob is used as a way for the students to develop skills and study towards achieving a qualification.

"We're making t-shirts but we're learning other stuff too, like maths and spelling and organising," Ann said.

Many of the students have expressed heartfelt sentiments about their experiences with the course.

"What's really enjoyable about coming to this course is getting to know a different mob, building friendships, getting the job done and working together," Ann said. "I've got some purpose now; it makes me want to come in every day."

ABout Us Mob has been publicly supported and endorsed by local Labor MP, Janine Freeman.

### **About Centacare Employment and Training:**

Centacare Employment and Training is a not for profit registered training organisation that has been delivering flexible training, education and employment programs to disadvantaged people in the Perth community for over 40 years. Learn more about Centacare and the Kadadjiny Bidi program on our website: [www.centacarewa.com.au](http://www.centacarewa.com.au).

View ABout Us Mob's 'Our Bardip' video: <https://vimeo.com/263127649>

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