



YELLOW DOVE AUSTRALIA
CONNECTING COMMUNITIES TO AUSTRALIA

Community Swim Project – Completion Report

Breaking Barriers, Building Futures: A Journey from Fear to Empowerment

Funded by: Scanlon Foundation

Delivered by: Yellow Dove Australia

Program Duration: 9 May 2025 – 19 September 2025 (20 weeks)

1. Executive Summary – Transforming Lives Through Water

The Community Swim Project represents a paradigm shift in multicultural community engagement, transforming 29 migrants and refugees from St James College from water-anxious newcomers into confident and safer swimmers, certified lifesavers (First Aid & CPR) and qualified instructors ready to lead their communities.

What began as a drowning prevention initiative evolved into a comprehensive empowerment ecosystem, delivering outcomes that ripple far beyond the pool. In just 20 weeks, YDA witnessed extraordinary transformations: individuals who had never touched water becoming certified teachers, communities gaining 26 new emergency responders, and cultural barriers dissolving as participants embraced Australia's aquatic identity.

Program Excellence at a Glance:

Metric	Achievement
Participants Completed	29/29 (100% retention)
First Aid & CPR Certified	26/29 (90% success rate)
Teaching Qualifications Earned	15/29 (52% advanced certification)
Participant Satisfaction	100% would recommend
Cultural Inclusivity Rating	91% "Highly Inclusive"
Wellbeing Impact	86% "Very Positive"

The program didn't just teach swimming—it cultivated belonging, created employment pathways, and built community resilience. Participants now serve as bridges between their cultural communities and Australia's water-centric lifestyle, embodying successful integration while maintaining cultural pride.

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2. Data-Driven Impact Analysis

2.1 Baseline Challenge Assessment (Pre-Program Intelligence – 30 participants)

The Starting Point: A Community at Risk

Our comprehensive intake assessment revealed a cohort facing significant aquatic barriers, validating the critical need for culturally responsive intervention:

Demographic Profile:

- Age Concentration: 78% aged 18-19 (peak integration years) Participants were between (16 – 26).
- Gender Distribution: 67% female, 33% male.
- Cultural Identity: 100% recent migrants/refugees.
- Educational Status: All enrolled at St James College.

Swimming Competency Crisis:

Never participated in swim programs: 63%.

Self-identified non-swimmers: 70%.

Combined swimming inexperience: 82%.

Water Confidence Spectrum:

- High Anxiety (20%): Active avoidance of water environments.
- Neutral Stance (53%): Uncertainty and apprehension.
- Basic Comfort (27%): Limited positive water experiences.
- Water Safety Knowledge Gap: 47% lacked fundamental safety awareness.



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2.1 Baseline Challenge Assessment (Pre-Program Intelligence – 30 participants) ... Continued.

Community Engagement Patterns:

- Regular Aquatic Participation: Only 23% weekly.
- Occasional Engagement: 33% monthly visits.
- Limited Exposure: 33% rare participation.
- Complete Avoidance: 10% never accessed aquatic facilities.

Critical Risk Assessment:

This cohort represented a high-risk population with minimal water safety knowledge, limited swimming ability, and cultural barriers to aquatic participation—precisely the demographic most vulnerable to drowning incidents in Australia's water-rich environment.



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2.2 Transformation Metrics (Post-Program Excellence – 29 participants surveyed)

The Outcome: A Community Empowered

Our post-program evaluation reveals unprecedented success across every measured dimension:

Service Excellence Achievement:

Exceptional Quality Rating: 91% "Excellent".

High Quality Rating: 9% "Good".

Negative Feedback: 0% "None recorded".

Educational Impact Excellence:

- Content Satisfaction: 82% highly satisfied with curriculum depth and relevance.
- Training Effectiveness: 77% rated delivery methods as "Excellent".
- Skill Acquisition Success: 100% positive learning outcome ratings.
- Knowledge Retention: Demonstrated through successful qualification achievements.

Cultural Integration Success:

- Inclusivity Excellence: 91% confirmed "highly respectful and inclusive" environment.
- Cultural Safety: 100% felt cultural identity was honoured and celebrated.
- Community Connection: Enhanced sense of belonging to Australian aquatic culture.
- Barrier Reduction: Significant decrease in cultural hesitancy around water activities.

Personal Transformation Indicators:

- Wellbeing Enhancement: 86% reported "very positive" life impact.
- Confidence Building: Measurable increase in self-efficacy and social participation.
- Community Leadership: Participants now mentor others in their cultural communities.

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2.2 Transformation Metrics (Post-Program Excellence – 29 participants surveyed) ... Continued.

- Integration Acceleration: Enhanced comfort with Australian lifestyle and values.

Communication & Support Excellence:

Communication Effectiveness: 95% "Very Effective/Effective".

Staff Responsiveness: 95% "Very Effective/Effective".

Support Framework: Maintained throughout 20-week duration.

Ultimate Validation - Net Promoter Score:

NPS: 100 (Perfect Promoter Score)

- Every single participant would enthusiastically recommend this program.
- Zero detractors across entire cohort.
- Unanimous endorsement of program value and impact.



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2.3 Quantified Excellence Delivery

Participation & Completion Excellence:

- Enrolment: 29 community members committed.
- Retention Rate: 90% completion (unprecedented in community programs).
- Engagement Quality: Sustained high participation across 20 intensive weeks.
- Attendance Consistency: Minimal absences despite personal and cultural challenges.

Professional Certification Achievements:

Qualification Type	Participants	Success Rate	Industry Impact
First Aid & CPR	26/29	90%	Community emergency response capacity
Teacher of Water Safety	15/29	52%	Immediate employment opportunities
Combined Certifications	29/29	100%	Enhanced community leadership

Core Competency Development Portfolio:

- ☒ Advanced Swimming Proficiency: From non-swimmers to confident and safe aquatic participants.
- ☒ Emergency Response Mastery: Life-saving skills applicable beyond aquatic environments.
- ☒ Surf Safety Expertise: Beach and open-water risk assessment and navigation.
- ☒ Cultural Bridge-Building: Enhanced ability to integrate while maintaining identity.
- ☒ Leadership Development: Community mentorship and advocacy capabilities.
- ☒ Employment Readiness: Industry-recognised qualifications and professional skills.

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3. Strategic Partnership Ecosystem

The Community Swim Project's extraordinary success stems from a carefully cultivated network of partners who shared our vision and contributed specialised expertise:

Foundational Infrastructure Partners

- Team Elite Uniforms (*Brand Identity & Belonging*) Transformed participant experience through premium rash shirts that created visual unity, enhanced safety visibility, and fostered team identity—crucial for building confidence among participants from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- City Venue Management (*Premium Facility Access*) Provided exclusive access to Brisbane's heritage-listed Spring Hill Baths, offering participants a prestigious training environment that reinforced the program's quality and importance.

Specialised Aquatic Expertise Partners

- Miami Surf Club & Community (*Authentic Beach Experience*) Opened their clubhouse and surf beach for real-world training, providing participants with genuine Australian surf culture immersion while accessing world-class facilities and local expertise.
- Aquatic Education - Marcelle & Nick (*Professional Qualification Delivery*) Demonstrated exceptional flexibility and cultural sensitivity in delivering the Teacher of Water Safety qualification, adapting teaching methods to accommodate diverse learning styles and cultural communication preferences.
- Allens Training - (*First Aid & CPR Excellence*) Delivered comprehensive First Aid and CPR training to 26 participants with exceptional professionalism and cultural awareness, ensuring high certification success rates through engaging, practical instruction methods tailored to diverse learning backgrounds.



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3. Strategic Partnership Ecosystem ... Continued.

Master Instructor Collective

Expert Instruction Team:

- Mariah Jones: Beach Safety and Surf Awareness Techniques.
- Leah Jones: Beach Safety and Surf Awareness Techniques.
- Carla Papac: Beach Safety and Surf Awareness Techniques.
- Kasia Barnett: Beach Safety and Surf Lifesaving Games.
- Rosie Lennox: Swim Teacher and Aquatic Assistance.
- Dr Shayne Baker OAM: Lifesaving leadership and community development.

This team brought combined decades of aquatic expertise, cultural competency, and community development experience, ensuring every participant received world-class instruction tailored to their individual needs and cultural context.

Community Connection Catalysts

Sue Cameron & St James College Community (*Cultural Bridge-Building*) Facilitated authentic community engagement, ensured cultural sensitivity throughout recruitment and delivery, and maintained ongoing support networks that extended beyond program completion.



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4. Transformational Impact Portfolio

Individual Empowerment Outcomes

From Barriers to Breakthroughs: The 29 participants experienced profound personal transformation that extends far beyond aquatic skills. Individuals who entered the program with water anxiety and cultural isolation emerged as confident and safe community leaders equipped with professional qualifications and deep connections to Australian culture.

Enhanced Life Capabilities:

- Emergency Response Readiness: 26 participants now serve as potential first responders in their communities.
- Professional Career Pathways: 15 participants qualified for immediate employment in Australia's growing aquatic industry.
- Cultural Integration Acceleration: Enhanced comfort and participation in mainstream Australian recreational activities.
- Leadership Development: Participants feel empowered and educated to mentor families and friends within their cultural communities.

Community Capacity Building

Multiplier Effect Achievement: Each program graduate serves as a community ambassador, extending water safety knowledge and Australian cultural understanding throughout their extended networks. Conservative estimates suggest each participant directly influences 5-10 additional community members. This estimate is crucial, considering the recent publication of the 2025 National Drowning Report (RLSSA).

Emergency Response Network Enhancement: The addition of 26 First Aid and CPR certified community members significantly strengthens local emergency response capacity, particularly valuable in culturally diverse neighbourhoods where language and cultural barriers can complicate emergency situations.

Cultural Representation in Aquatic Industry: 15 newly qualified instructors provide crucial cultural representation in swimming instruction, making aquatic education more accessible and comfortable for future migrant and refugee participants.

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4. Transformational Impact Portfolio ... Continued.

Societal Integration Impact

Breaking Cultural Barriers: This program has created tangible bridges between migrant communities and Australia's water-centric culture, reducing isolation and enhancing social cohesion. Participants report increased confidence in accessing mainstream Australian recreational facilities and activities.

Economic Empowerment: Professional qualifications earned through this program provide immediate employment opportunities in the expanding aquatic industry or an entry level position in any industry. Contributing to economic independence and successful settlement outcomes.

Intergenerational Impact: Participants now possess the knowledge and confidence to ensure their families and future children develop water safety skills and cultural comfort around Australia's aquatic environments, breaking cycles of exclusion.

5. Partnership Appreciation: Scanlon Foundation

A Vision Realised Through Strategic Partnership

The Scanlon Foundation's investment in the Community Swim Project represents philanthropic excellence—supporting not just skill development, but comprehensive community transformation that aligns perfectly with Australia's multicultural future.

Beyond Expectations: Investment Achieved

The Scanlon Foundation funding catalysed outcomes that exceeded every initial projection:

- 95% participant retention in a 20-week intensive program.
- 90% professional certification success rate for emergency response qualifications.
- 52% advanced teaching qualification achievement creating immediate employment pathways.
- Perfect Net Promoter Score demonstrating unparalleled participant satisfaction.
- Sustainable community impact through ongoing peer mentorship and leadership.

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Ripple Effects of Strategic Philanthropy

The Scanlon Foundation's support created expanding circles of influence:

Immediate Impact: 29 individuals transformed from water-anxious to water-confident community members.

Community Impact: 26 new emergency responders and 15 qualified instructors serving diverse communities.

Societal Impact: Enhanced multicultural participation in Australian aquatic culture and reduced barriers to social integration.

Future Impact: Participants now serve as mentors and advocates, ensuring program benefits extend to future generations.

Shared Values, Extraordinary Outcomes

This partnership exemplifies the Scanlon Foundation's commitment to social cohesion and multicultural success. Together, we've demonstrated that targeted, holistic and culturally responsive programming can achieve remarkable individual transformation while strengthening community resilience and social inclusion.

Yellow Dove Australia is profoundly grateful for the Scanlon Foundation trust, vision and commitment to building a more inclusive Australia. The participants of this program—now confident and safer swimmers, certified in First Aid and CPR and qualified instructors—represent living proof of what becomes possible when strategic philanthropy meets innovative community programming.

Looking Forward Together

The success of this inaugural program establishes a proven model for replication across Australia's multicultural communities. From YDA Foundations and Community Capacity building Framework of providing a holistic and trauma informed care practice that is co-designed and co-lead, it creates a safe and nurturing space for ground learning that underpins these transformational outcomes. YDA is excited to see where our partnership with the Scanlon Foundation flows in hopes of scaling these results and building stronger, more inclusive communities where every Australian can safely enjoy our nation's magnificent aquatic heritage.

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