



ACFF ANZ CHAPTER COMMUNITY GRANTS

2020

TITLE: Safe water must be free for every Australian child.

RECIPIENT/S: Dr Kylie Gwynne

ORGANISATION: Macquarie University

DISCUSSION: Water quality in many remote Australian communities is often poor and this is compounded by the high cost of bottled water compared to sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs), thus increasing the risk of tooth decay in children. Data from remote communities showed 12% of children didn't drink tap water regularly, 5% believed it was unhealthy and 64% regularly drank SSBs. Following installation of water fountains, 84% of children drank water daily and only 33% regularly drank SSBs.

We have mapped Australian communities without water fountains and initiated advocacy for the provision of free and filtered water. This project is raising awareness about the importance of free, palatable and refrigerated water supply for every Australian child.

The campaign and advocacy co-designed and implemented through this project may lead to Australian Government funding for water fountains in every remote community and access for every Australian child.

The provision of water fountains will support a number of health goals including reducing obesity, chronic disease and consumption of sugar. We will install new water fountains in six NSW communities as a focus of the campaign by pooling funds from the ACFF, the Poche Centre and Rotary.

Discussions with communities, delayed by COVID, are now underway. We also expect to hold a Key Thinkers Workshop to further cement the outcomes of the campaign and to progress advocacy for Australian Government funding.