

Reducing harm

- It is best not to use meth.
- If you do use meth, have a trusted family member or friend around and stay in a safe place.
- Don't mix meth with other drugs as this can lead to an overdose.
- Never drive when using meth.
- Drink small amounts of water regularly to replace fluid you lose from sweating.
- Eat lots of healthy food.
- Always have safer sex and always use a condom.
- If injecting meth, always use a clean syringe and injecting gear.
- Never share equipment.**
- If smoking meth, be careful not to burn yourself.
- Make sure you get lots of sleep as rest is very important.
- Take a break from using meth.



Look after your family and friends

- Stay together.
- If someone becomes very fearful or is acting paranoid, keep them calm and **do not leave them alone.**
- If someone experiences any bad effects or passes out make sure you call an ambulance straight away. **Dial triple zero (000).**



If someone has passed out, put them on their left side (recovery position) and make sure they can breathe.

- Dial triple zero (000) for an ambulance**
- Stay with your friend until the ambulance arrives.**



Getting help and information

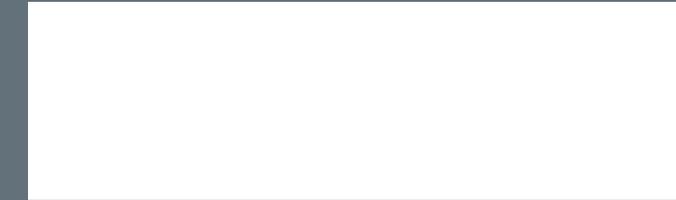


You can become dependent on meth very quickly. The longer you take meth, the more you will need to feel the effect. If you use it regularly and then stop, you will experience withdrawal symptoms.

If you are thinking about changing your meth use, perhaps you could use some help or information. Sometimes people don't get help because they feel shame talking about their drug use. Aboriginal Alcohol and Other Drug Workers, Aboriginal Health Workers or other health professionals are there to help you. They will not put you down. They can help you to stop or reduce your use and support you while you make changes. It may not be easy to reduce your use but your friends and family and other people in your community can also help you by supporting your decision.

For more information and help

Local Contact



Alcohol & Drug Support Line

The Alcohol and Drug Support Line can provide information about culturally secure alcohol and drug services in your area. They are a confidential, 24 hour, statewide telephone counselling, information and referral service for anyone concerned about their own or another person's alcohol or other drug use. Call backs are available.

Phone: 9442 5000 or 1800 198 024 (country callers)
E-mail: alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au
Website: alcoholdrugsupport.mhc.wa.gov.au

Parent & Family Drug Support Line

Confidential, 24 hour, statewide telephone counselling, information and referral service for anyone concerned about a loved one's alcohol or other drug use. Parent callers can speak to a Parent Peer Volunteer with a lived experience of their own son or daughter's alcohol or other drug use. Call backs are available.

Phone: 9442 5050 or 1800 653 203 (country callers)
E-mail: alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au
Website: alcoholdrugsupport.mhc.wa.gov.au

Produced by **Strong Spirit Strong Mind™**
Aboriginal Programs



Government of **Western Australia**
Mental Health Commission

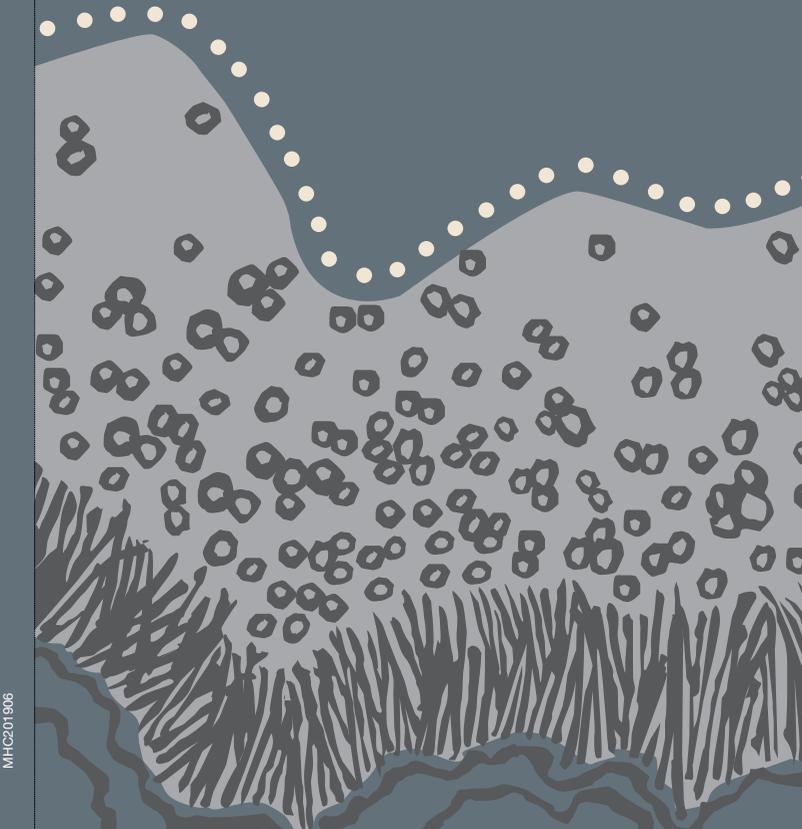
Artist: Barry McGuire (Mullark).
The Aboriginal Inner Spirit Model (Ngarlu Assessment Model) was developed by Joseph 'Nipper' Roe, who belonged to the Karajarri and Yawuru people.
Illustrations: Patrick Bayly, Workspace Design.
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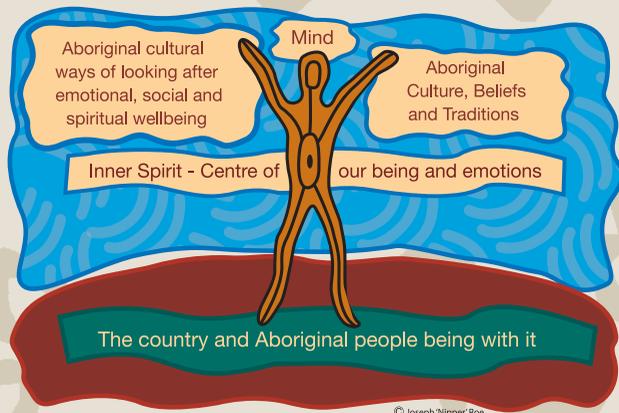
STRONG SPIRIT STRONG MIND

Aboriginal Ways of Reducing Harm
From Alcohol and Other Drugs

Methamphetamines



ABORIGINAL INNER SPIRIT MODEL



Our Inner Spirit is the centre of our being and emotions.

When our spirit feels strong our mind feels strong.

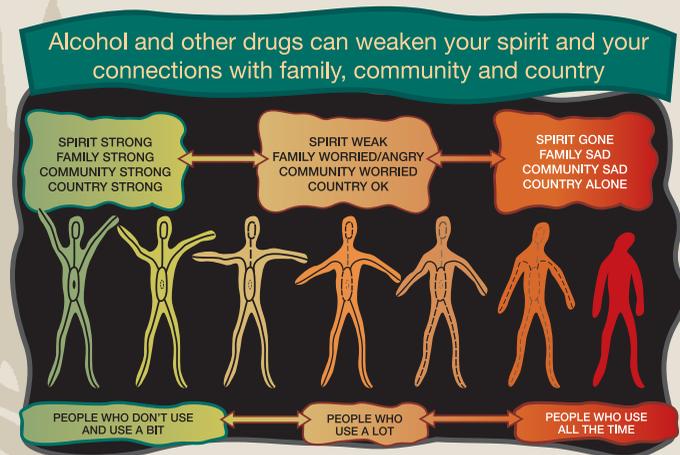
When our spirit feels tangled our mind feels tangled.

Strong Inner Spirit is what keeps people healthy and keeps them connected together.

Strong Inner Spirit keeps our family strong, our community strong and our country alive.

Alcohol and other drugs can weaken your spirit and your connections with family, community and country

Our way of being healthy is to look after ourselves by making good choices, and to care for our family, community and country. Alcohol and other drugs can tangle and weaken our spirit and mind. This can affect our emotional, social, spiritual and physical well-being. This can weaken our connection to family, community and country.



Methamphetamines



What it is

Methamphetamine is an amphetamine-type stimulant. It is commonly known as meth and when it has a crystal-like appearance it is known as ice.

Meth can be swallowed as tablets; snorted through the nose as a powder; injected in liquid form or smoked. Meth affects the way you think, feel and behave.

It also affects your body. Effects can come on straight away or take longer depending on how you have taken it. The effects last from 12 to 24 hours.

Meth costs lots of money and this can put pressure on families and communities.



Short-term effects

If you use meth you may develop some or all of the following problems:

- Feel happy and brave, and you think you are really dead. This can lead you to make poor choices and do things you wouldn't normally do (e.g. have unsafe sex, drive dangerously, break the law).
- You have lots of energy and your heart beats faster and your pupils dilate (get bigger).
- You talk a lot. Some people might think you are talking too much.
- You stop eating because you do not feel hungry and you may get stomach cramps.
- Feel hot and sweaty or hot and cold.
- You may feel worried (anxious), restless, fearful, suspicious or jealous. This could make you aggressive.
- You may see and hear things that aren't there and your thoughts can become muddled up.
- Sleeping is difficult, sometimes people stay awake for days (1-3 days).
- Meth increases your blood pressure and this can cause heart problems or a stroke (a bleed in the brain). If you are experiencing these symptoms, please call 000.
- You can have very bad thoughts or feelings, which can last from a few hours to many weeks. It doesn't matter if you are a first time user or a long term user.

Long-term effects

If you use meth for a long time:

- You may have mood swings, feel sad or mixed up, be worried or become angry with no warning. Your family and friends might be worried about you and scared by the changes in your behaviour. They may start to see you differently.
- You can become unhealthy.
- Get sick very easily because your body is run down.
- You may have strange thoughts and your thinking can become tangled and unclear.
- You may get paranoid (fearful, jealous and suspicious). When someone gets paranoid they may think people are after them. Some people may experience psychosis (seeing or hearing things that aren't there).
- Meth may cause you to have a stroke or a heart attack and this can cause long term health problems or even death. Get medical help and call 000.
- If you stop using meth after a long time, you will feel very uncomfortable or down. These feelings are known as withdrawal and can last for several days but will get better in time.

