



## **KEY MESSAGES for trachoma prevention**

Clean faces = strong eyes

Trachoma is everyone's business

Trachoma is easy to prevent

'It doesn't matter when you washed your face, if it is dirty, it needs to be washed again'

If your face is dirty - wash it

Kids with dirty faces can spread trachoma

You can wash your face with a small amount of water

Practice good hygiene

Wash face and hands regularly

This information is summarised from the Trachoma Story Kit – a suite of resources for clinics, schools and communities that clearly explain what trachoma is and what people can do to prevent it, in easy to read, user friendly language with colourful and realistic images of contemporary remote Indigenous communities in Australia. [www.iehu.edu.au](http://www.iehu.edu.au)

The Trachoma Story Kit was designed by the Indigenous Eye Health Unit at the University of Melbourne together with the Katherine West Health Board & the Centre for Disease Control (Department of Health and Families NT) 2010

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION WHEN CHATTING TO KIDS ABOUT TRACHOMA**

### **WHAT IS TRACHOMA?**

Trachoma is an eye sickness, caused by a bacteria germ which has been around since the dinosaurs

It is an infection under the eyelid that can cause sore, itchy and sticky eyes in kids and later on, can cause in-turned eye lashes and blindness in adults

Trachoma is more common in young children who live in outback areas

### **HOW DO WE KNOW IF WE HAVE TRACHOMA?**

An Aboriginal Health Worker or nurse can flip your eyelids to see if you have trachoma – it looks like little dots under your eyelid and can make your eyes feel sore and itchy

BUT, sometimes you don't even know you have it. Trachoma doesn't always cause sore eyes or other signs, so its very important for you to have your eyes checked regularly

### **WHAT CAN HAPPEN IF WE DONT GET CHECKED FOR TRACHOMA?**

If kids don't know they have trachoma, they may spread the trachoma germs to others without knowing

AND If trachoma is not treated it can make people go blind when they are older

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF WE HAVE TRACHOMA?**

The Aboriginal Health worker or nurse will give you medicine to treat trachoma

If you or someone in your house has trachoma, then EVERYONE who lives and sleeps in your house needs trachoma medicine

### **WHAT CAN WE DO TO STOP TRACHOMA?**

Clean snot from your nose, and muck from around the eyes

Look in the mirror to check if your face is clean

Wash your face and hands when they are dirty

Have a swim in the pool, waterhole or river

Keep things clean, clear up rubbish

Shoo away flies from your eyes

Wash blankets, clothes, pillows and towels

Teach your little brothers and sisters about keeping a clean face to stop trachoma germs spreading

Parents should encourage kids to have a shower each night