

Long-term effects

Using lots of different drugs over a long period is not good for your inner spirit, your health, and your family. You may have mood swings, lose control or become angry with no warning. Some people might be frightened of you and start to see you as being dangerous or strange.



If you do mix drugs long term, you are more likely to:

- Overdose
- Harm your body and brain
- Become worried, sad and depressed
- Upset your family and community
- Break the law and get caught
- Have accidents, especially car accidents



Reducing harm

- **It's best not to mix drugs.**
- **Injecting drugs is very risky.**
- If you have mixed your drugs, have a trusted family member or friend around and stay in a safe place. Never drive on any drugs.
- Always have safer sex and always use a condom.
- Drug use affects your family and community, not only while you're using, but also when you come down (withdrawals).

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



If you are thinking about changing your alcohol and/or other drug use, you might need 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 or judge you. They can help you to manage your withdrawals, reduce or stop your use and support you while you make changes. This can be a difficult time but your family, friends and other people in your community can also help you.

ABORIGINAL SUPPORT SYSTEM



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

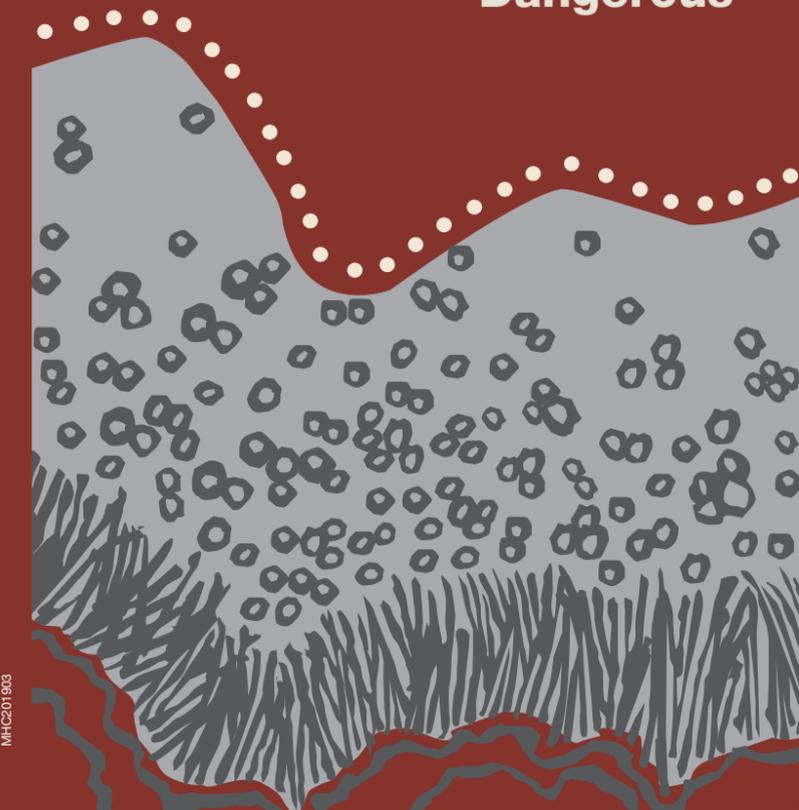
Artist: Barry McGuire (Mullark).
The Aboriginal Inner Spirit Model (Ngarlu Assessment Model) was developed by Joseph 'Nipper' Roe, who belonged to the Karajarri and Yawuru people.
Illustrations: Patrick Bayly, Workspace Design.
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STRONG SPIRIT STRONG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

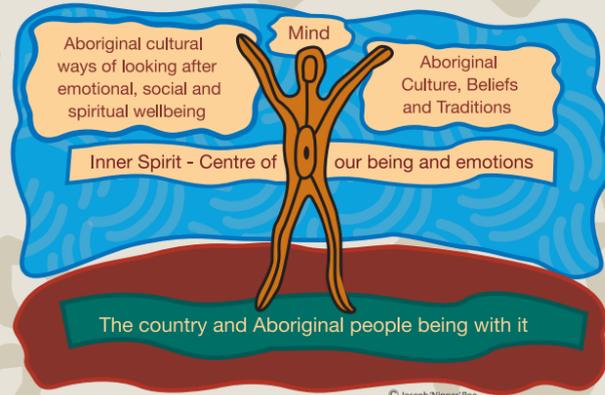
Aboriginal Ways of Reducing Harm
From Alcohol and Other Drugs

Mixing Drugs is Dangerous



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ABORIGINAL INNER SPIRIT MODEL



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

When our spirit feels strong our mind feels strong.

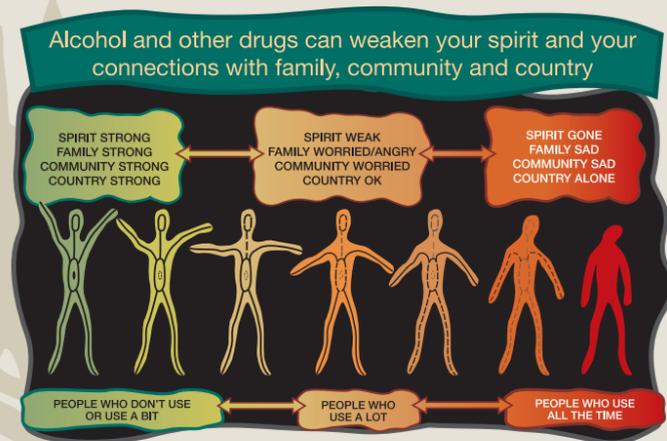
When our spirit feels tangled our mind feels tangled.

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.



Mixing drugs can be dangerous

Mixing drugs is also called polydrug use.

Polydrug use is when you have two or more drugs in your body at the same time. You may be mixing drugs without even knowing it.



Some ways you can have more than one drug in your body at the same time are:

- Using drugs like grog and gunja together.
- Using grog and later on using gunja while the grog is still in your body.
- Mixing speed, gunja and grog together.



Short-term effects

The biggest problem with mixing drugs is the effects are hard to control. This can lead to overdose. To understand how this works, you need to understand how drugs are grouped.

The four main groups of drugs are:

Stimulants (uppers)

These drugs speed you up. They include speed, methamphetamines, caffeine, cigarettes.



Depressants (downers)

These drugs slow you down. They include alcohol, heroin, tranquillisers (Valium, Rohypnol), pain medication with codeine.

Hallucinogens

These drugs can make you see, hear or feel things that aren't there. They include LSD, magic mushrooms, gunja and PCP.



Some drugs belong to two groups.

Gunja is a depressant and a hallucinogen. Ecstasy is a stimulant and a hallucinogen.



Mixing drugs from the same group can increase the effect

Mixing grog with heroin can slow down your heart rate so much that you can stop breathing and die. Mixing speed with ecstasy can make your heart beat faster, you can overheat, become dehydrated and this can even cause death. Mixing grog with gunja can make you really spin out; you may throw up or pass out.



Mixing drugs from different groups can make one drug cover up the effects of the other

If you mix grog and speed you could use dangerous amounts of both drugs without knowing it. This can harm your body and make you very sick.



Money and Work

Spending too much money on alcohol and/or other drugs. Not buying food for the family, not paying the rent or bills. Humbugging your family for money. Lose your job or can't be bothered looking for work. Can't be bothered with finishing school or getting a career.