

## 12. GUIDELINES ON KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

One of the objectives of the research was to identify the key factors for success of the Croc Festival™, and aspects of the events that are transferable to other strategies. The research suggests the following factors are critical in making the Festivals a success.

- Community involvement: It is critical to have wide community involvement and consultations, especially with regards to including a wide range of service providers, to encourage ownership. A supportive community is critical to the success of the Croc Festivals™.
- The Performances: While the activities during the day are extremely valuable to the students, the performances at night are crucial to the success of the Croc Festivals™ for the community. The performances bring the community together and provide an example of students' achievements. The performances are an excellent source of pride for students, schools, parents and the wider community and help to build students' confidence and self-esteem. A professional approach to the performances is also important, as it emphasises their significance.
- Offering a wide variety of interactive activities: Throughout the research teachers and students emphasised the benefits of the engaging, interactive, hands-on learning opportunities offered by the Festival. For messages to be delivered effectively, it is crucial that the strategy offers students a different and fun learning environment.
- Youth and community oriented event: A large part of the success of the Croc Festivals™ can be attributed to the Festival's focus on youth. However, the Festival extends to the rest of the community through such events as the performances and this ultimately extends the breadth of enhancement of social capital.
- Linking the event with school curriculum: Schools in Thursday Island, Moree and Port Augusta have successfully linked literacy and numeracy programs with the Croc Festival™ by holding these programs before and after the Festival, as well as incorporating themes of the Festival (such as those in the "Solid and Deadly" booklet). Other schools had also incorporated enterprise and dance classes into the curriculum as part of the lead-up to the Festival. Schools should be encouraged to set students follow-up projects based on the Croc Festival™ and its messages.
- Providing local and national role models: The presence of both national and local role models was seen as an integral part of the Festival as this is an important motivator for students. Role models also provide real examples of individual achievement on a community level, as well as on a national level.
- Professionalism: The vast majority of participants commented on the professionalism of IFA and their exceptional organisational skills. However, as the Festival grows and becomes 'more slick' it is important not to alienate the community or take their input for granted.

- Having a good venue: It is of vital importance to hold the Festival at a suitable venue that can provide shade, ample toilets, showers, water supply and adequate food arrangements. Several people were critical of a number of these arrangements across the research and this is consistent with previous research.
- Alcohol and smoke-free: It is important that an event focusing on drug and alcohol messages does this through an alcohol and smoke-free forum. This distinguished the Croc Festivals™ from other community based events, and provided a real experience for students of having fun without alcohol or other drugs.