



Anthony signs his autograph for some young fans.

Fight of His Life

Anthony Mundine flew to the Northern Territory recently to address one of the biggest issues currently facing remote Aboriginal communities.

Anthony Mundine has faced some tough challenges in the ring, but the fight for his people's health is without doubt the biggest challenge of them all.

Anthony has never shied away from speaking out about the health and wellbeing of Indigenous people; it's an issue that he holds very close to his heart.

The champion boxer recently spent three days with the Aboriginal community in Alice Springs, promoting healthy lifestyles and well being, as part of a three day program aimed at cutting the levels of substance abuse in Central Australian communities.

During the trip, Anthony visited children at the Mount Nancy town camp, staff at the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, the Aboriginal communities of Hermannsburg, Papunya and Yuendumu, and inmates at the Alice Springs jail.

The trip was initiated by Bob Liddle, a consultant for Central Petroleum, who recognised Anthony as being the ultimate role model for the Indigenous community.

"He doesn't drink, he doesn't smoke, he lives a highly moral life and he can talk to people about his experiences," Bob told the media.

"He's suffered a lot of racism in sport but he won a world boxing title, and that kind of success in the face of great adversity needs to be told, needs to be instilled in Aboriginal kids in the community."

But Anthony wasn't about to leave his work there. His commitment and passion for the Indigenous community was further highlighted soon after his return to Sydney when he announced his intention of running as an independent in the NSW elections in 2007.

Anthony will reportedly contest the inner-city seat of Marrickville, a seat which covers the inner western suburbs of Newtown, Marrickville, Petersham and Dulwich Hill. He will be following in the footsteps of his uncle Mick Mundine, and cousin Warren Mundine, the president of the Australia Labor Party.

"I want to tell the young people not to drink or smoke, and encourage them to set goals and be motivated

to do their best," Anthony says. "That's what I'm trying to instill in them."

Anthony has always been a politically-minded athlete. Following last years Cronulla riots he was critical of Prime Minister John Howard.

"I believe we have problems within society and racism is one of these problems," he said at the time. "It's a bad disease."

"I believe we've got leaders that are cowards. They are in denial and will not confront the issues and confront the problems that we have with society. And to make comments like the leader (Mr Howard) has said, it's really got me dumbfounded."

Anthony envisions a future where people are not condemned because of their colour or creed. Instead, people should be judged on their deeds and actions. "We can live together," he says. "We can work together, but it's a matter of letting your actions speak louder than your words."



ACTIVITY 1: SKIMMING FOR MAIN IDEAS

Look at the large, bold heading (Fight of His Life), the photographs on the page, the captions above and below the top photograph (Anthony signs his autograph for some young fans; Anthony Mundine flew to the Northern Territory recently to address one of the biggest issues currently facing remote Aboriginal communities), and the first paragraph of the report.

1. What is the “fight of his life” referring to in the heading?

2. How do the photographs and the title link Anthony Mundine’s boxing career to his recent promotion of healthy lifestyles?

3. What is the main purpose of this report?

4. According to this report, what is one of the biggest issues facing remote Aboriginal communities in Australia today?

ACTIVITY 2: SCANNING FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1. What does Anthony Mundine see as one of the greatest challenges facing Indigenous people in Australia?

2. List four places that Anthony Mundine recently spent time promoting healthy lifestyles and talking about health issues.

3. What reasons does Bob Liddle give for recognising Anthony Mundine as being the ultimate role model for the Indigenous community?



4. What values does Anthony Mundine bring to Indigenous communities?

5. Which seat will Anthony reportedly contest in the NSW elections in 2007?

6. What leadership qualities does Anthony have that would make him a good political representative?

ACTIVITY 3: READING ABORIGINAL HEALTH STATISTICS

Chronic diseases, in particular cardiovascular disease, are the biggest single killers of Indigenous people. A comparison of rates of death from the five main groups of chronic diseases over 2000 - 2002 is set out in the table below.

Indigenous people's rates of death from chronic diseases expressed as a multiple of the rates in the non-Indigenous population (2000 - 2002)

| CHRONIC DISEASE GROUP | INDIGENOUS WOMEN | INDIGENOUS MEN |
|--|---|--|
| Cardiovascular diseases (heart diseases, strokes) | 2.2 times the rate of non-Indigenous women | 3.0 times the rate of non-Indigenous men |
| Neoplasms (including cancers) | 1.6 times the rate of non-Indigenous women | 1.3 times the rate of non-Indigenous men |
| Diseases of respiratory system | 3.6 times the rate of non-Indigenous women | 3.9 times the rate of non-Indigenous men |
| Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases (including diabetes) | 10.1 times the rate of non-Indigenous women | 7.3 times the rate of non-Indigenous men |
| Diseases of the digestive system | 3.4 times the rate of non-Indigenous women | 4.6 times the rate of non-Indigenous men |

Source: Human Rights & Equal opportunity Commission

1. Which disease occurs in Indigenous men at 3 times the rate of non-Indigenous men?

2. Which disease occurs in Indigenous women at 10.1 times the rate of non-Indigenous women?

3. At what rates do cancers occur in Indigenous women and men?



ACTIVITY 4: SYNTHESISING INFORMATION

According to the report "Fight of his Life" and the statistics on Aboriginal health, why is it important that role models like Anthony Mundine speak out about health issues affecting the Indigenous community?

Use evidence from quotes and statistics to support your ideas.
