



Hoops 4 Wealth helps people learn more about money



Hoops 4 Wealth runs face-to-face in Darwin and Alice Springs. People can join at any time. The program runs for about 4 to 6 weeks. At the end, there is a graduation to celebrate what participants have achieved.

The sessions are relaxed and friendly. People talk together and learn together. They learn how to regulate their feelings and the difference between needs and wants. They talk about making their money last longer, and how to look after themselves, their family and community. Hoops teaches about things like:

- Centrelink
- banks
- superannuation
- tax
- gambling and scams.

There's basketball, food and some fun, which helps people feel safe and welcome.



Hoops 4 Wealth evaluation

Researchers studied the program's development in 2025. This is what they found.

Hoops 4 Wealth listens and supports people to take small steps forward. The program understands that money is connected to feelings, family, culture, health and community. Hoops 4 Wealth knows that many First Nations people have been hurt by being taken from land and culture. Many have been harmed by governments and corporations.

From June to November 2025, there were 40 sessions with 135 people in Darwin and Alice Springs. Most participants were Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander people. They spoke 22 First Nations languages and came from 30 communities. Most lived in community or government housing with big families. Most were on Centrelink, on income management, and had never done a money program before.



After going to Hoops 4 Wealth:

- People said their money lasted longer. They thought more before spending, and they could tell needs from wants.
- People started saving money – for Christmas, for family needs and for future plans. Some people helped others learn to save too.
- People began to set goals, look for work, think about business ideas and think about how they could support their communities.
- People learnt the difference between good and bad humbug. Sharing is important but it's okay to say no sometimes. Looking after yourself isn't greedy – you can do that and still respect family and culture.
- People also learnt about bank accounts, Centrelink, superannuation, tax, gambling and how to spot scams.
- They told us they felt proud of themselves for completing the program, more confident about money, and ready to take small steps forward.

The program works because it's First Nations led. It understands real-life pressures. It doesn't judge or shame people. It celebrates First Nations success. The facilitators are trusted and respected, and learning is done together.

People told us that the program could be developed with sessions just for young people, women and men; more learning about managing money online, business and investing; more videos and audio in First Nations languages; and information that they can look at again later.

The program could also expand to link with jobs and training, work with other support services, and expand into more communities. To do this well, it takes time, trust, long-term funding and community approval.

Why this program matters

Hoops 4 Wealth helps people:

- feel confident
- make better money choices
- stay connected to culture
- build strong futures.

Money programs for First Nations people work best when they are voluntary, respectful and led by First Nations people.

This research was conducted by Dr Dina Bowman, Dr Margaret Kabare and Elaine Nungarrayi Williams from the Brotherhood of St. Laurence. Ethical aspects of the research were approved by both the BSL Human Research Ethics Committee (P0149) and the AIATSIS ethics committee (REC-0515). The artwork is by Elaine Nungarrayi Williams.

**'Not big steps.
Little steps
towards
resilience.'**

**'You mob
should spread out
like branches in
the tree'**