

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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**Empowering Kimberley's Future:  
Kimberley Kids in the Kitchen Program**

In the heart of Kununurra, Western Australia, a cultural and culinary revolution is taking place, and it goes by the name of the Kimberley Kids in the Kitchen Program (KKIK).

Set against the breathtaking backdrop of the Kimberley region, this initiative is not just a cooking competition; it's a gateway to a world of opportunities for the young minds of the region.

Scheduled to be relaunched in 2024, KKIK is part of the larger event, Taste of the Kimberley, where young contestants aged 11 to 16 will have the chance to showcase their culinary skills in a cook-off at FEASTival. The prospect of winning great prizes is enticing, but the real value lies in the experiences gained, the connections forged, and the potential for personal and community growth.

Led by Western Australian Food Ambassador Don Hancey and Kimberley hospitality professionals, the judging panel represents a blend of culinary expertise and cultural richness. The competition not only encourages creativity with local ingredients but also serves as a platform to celebrate the unique culinary heritage of the Kimberley region.

KKIK is more than just a cook-off; it's a catalyst for change and progress. The program aims to bridge generational gaps, fostering an environment where stories are shared around the firepit, intertwined with food culture and history. This intergenerational knowledge sharing not only empowers the younger generation to create and test their own dishes but also preserves cultural heritage.

The short-term goal of re-launching Kimberley Kids in the Kitchen (KKIK) in 2024 is a promising step, but the long-term vision is even more ambitious – a Statewide Kids in the Kitchen Competition with regional winners converging for a cook-off in Perth. This expansion will not only bring recognition to WA's regional culinary talents but will also lay the foundations to increase visitation of tourists both local and domestic to experience cultural and culinary tourism and serve as a testament to the program's success.

The KIK initiative opens doors for local kids to explore the hospitality world, potentially partnering with TAFE to provide scholarships and mentoring opportunities. Beyond teaching skills, it emphasises the importance of intergenerational knowledge sharing, ensuring that the younger generation remains connected to their culture and traditions.

One notable aspect is the potential creation of a WA Regional Cookbook, showcasing local recipes and inspiring both locals and tourists. This endeavour could contribute to the region's economy, creating income streams for local communities.

Crucially, KIK aims to identify, train, and mentor local cooks and chefs, creating authentic spokespersons for WA's regional culinary cultural experiences. The program acknowledges the need for a First Nations Culinary Luminary with the respect and guidance of local elders and communities, envisioning a future where the culinary world recognises and celebrates WA's unique contributions.

However, the success of KIK is not just measured in competitions won or cookbooks sold; it's measured in the lives touched, the cultural heritage preserved, and the doors opened for the next generation. This initiative isn't just about creating chefs; it's about nurturing leaders, preserving traditions, strengthening communities and building a sustainable future for regional WA's youth.

As KKIK paves the way for a healthier, more connected future, it stands as a shining example, showcasing the potential that lies within the vibrant communities of regional Australia. Let's inspire the young minds of today to become the culinary leaders of tomorrow.

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**About Kimberley Kids in the Kitchen:**

The initial KKIK was trialled in 2015 as part of the Taste of The Kimberley/Ord Valley Muster. It was filmed by Guru Productions, being aired across WA and showcased on Our State on a Plate, a Western Australian based food tourism destination program concept focused on WA's unique local produce, meeting primary producers and inspiring viewers with amazing recipes. Video link [here](#)