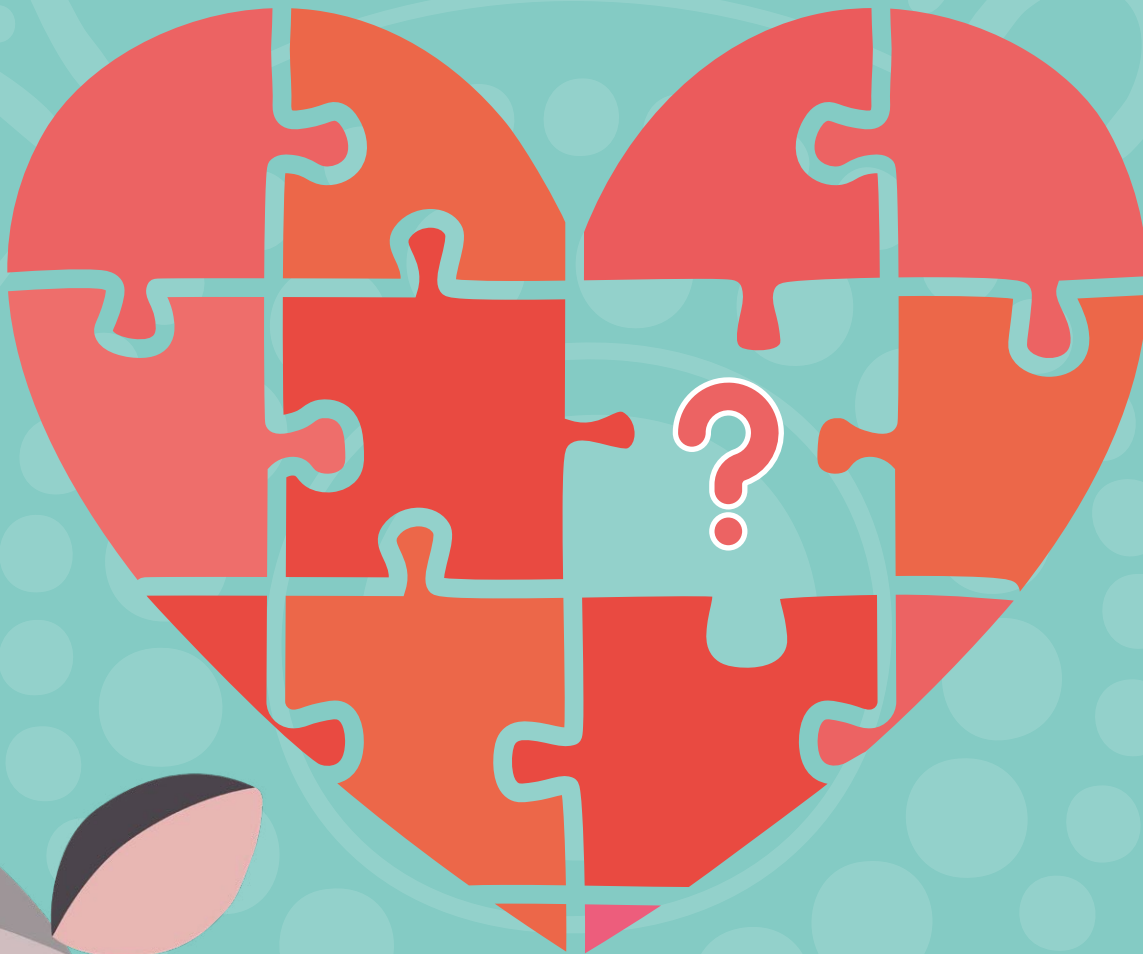


# THE MISSING PIECE STORY



## What's Missing?

THE KIDS RESEARCH INSTITUTE AUSTRALIA  
WESFARMERS CENTRE OF VACCINES & INFECTIOUS DISEASES







# Acknowledgements

We respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal ownership of the land, waters, and sky of Australia in continuity for more than 60,000 years. We sincerely acknowledge the wisdom and experience of the following contributors:

- i) all study participants and their families and caregivers who live on Yawuru and Warrwa lands in the Kimberley region of Western Australia;
- ii) all staff at participating schools, in particular the department, leadership teams, classroom teachers, and professional staff who facilitated regular health checks during class time;
- iii) the nurses and healthcare workers from Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service and Derby Aboriginal Health Service who provided support to weekly active surveillance,
- iv) the laboratory personnel and students who facilitated sample receipt, supportive academic collaborators, and
- v) all volunteers and support staff who helped with surveillance and logistical activities.

We acknowledge the students at St Mary's College who volunteered time, energy and enthusiasm to develop these storybooks, provided feedback on the messages and willingly demonstrated essential aspects of Strep A surveillance.



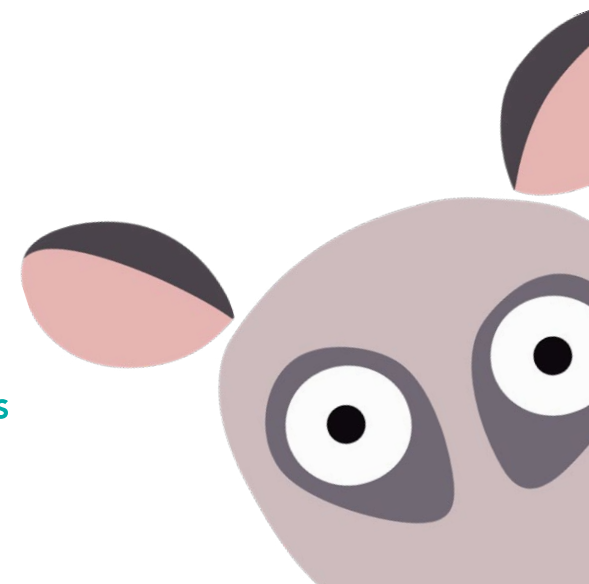


# What's Missing?

THE MISSING PIECE STORY

The  
**KIDS**  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
AUSTRALIA

WESFARMERS  
CENTRE OF VACCINES  
& INFECTIOUS DISEASES





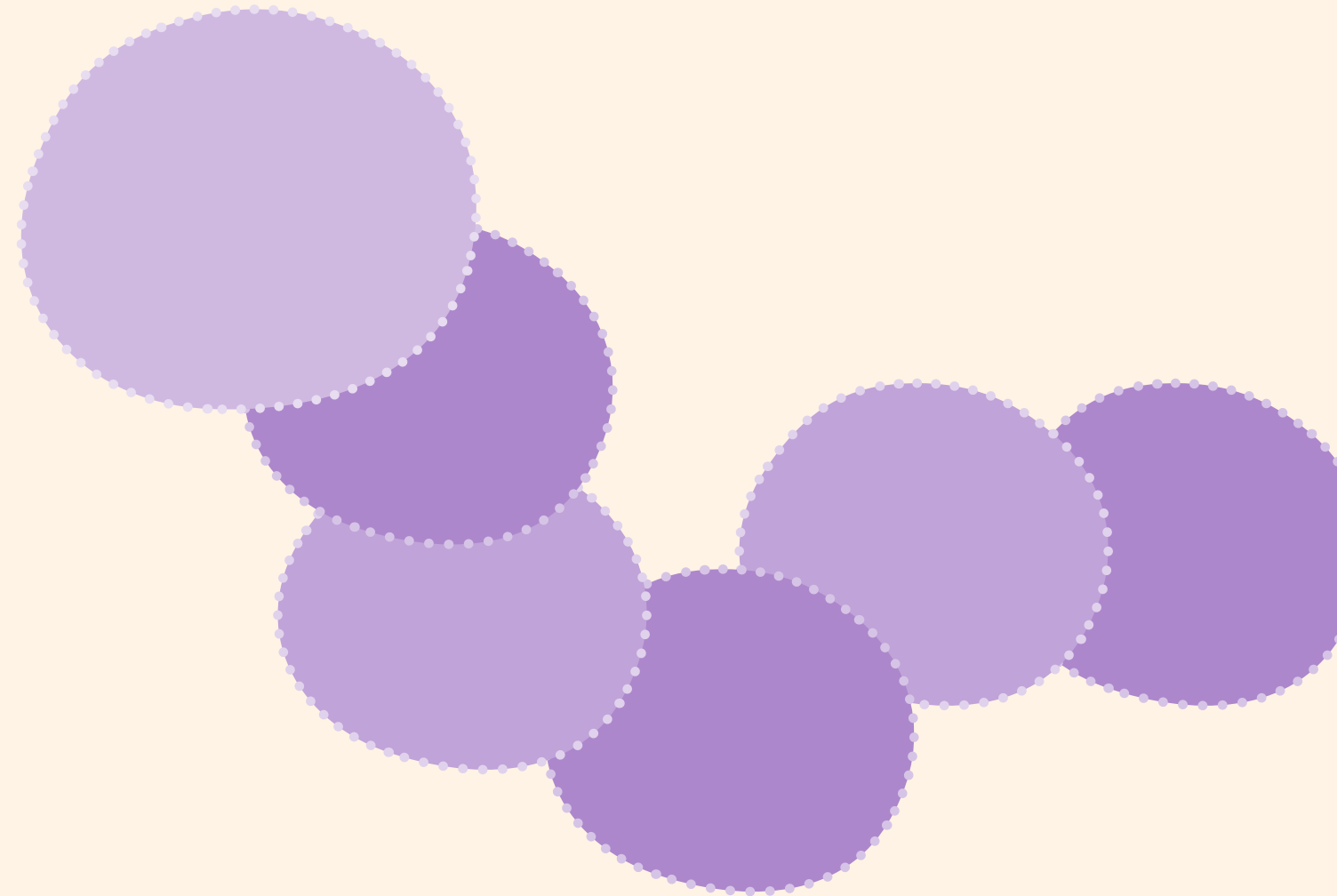
Have you ever had a  
**sore throat?**



Have you ever had a  
**skin sore?**



**Strep A** is a naughty bug that can  
cause sore throats and skin sores.



This bug is so tiny you can't see it,  
but it can make you sick.



Sore throats can make it **hurt** when you eat and drink.

You can have a **fever** where your skin gets really hot.



And you can feel **unwell**.



Skin sores can look like yellow and brown **scabs** or have yellow **pus**. Sometimes they bleed too.

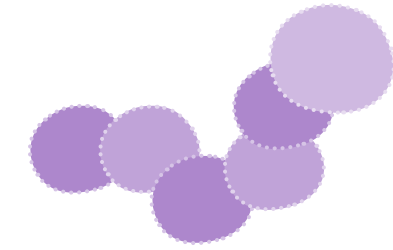
They can also make your skin **itchy**.







It's important to go to the **doctor** if you have a sore throat or a skin sore to stop you from getting sicker and to keep you healthy.



Strep A can make you sicker because it causes:

**ACUTE RHEUMATIC FEVER**  
**RHEUMATIC HEART DISEASE**

How do we say "rheumatic" ?

**ROO - MAT - ICK**

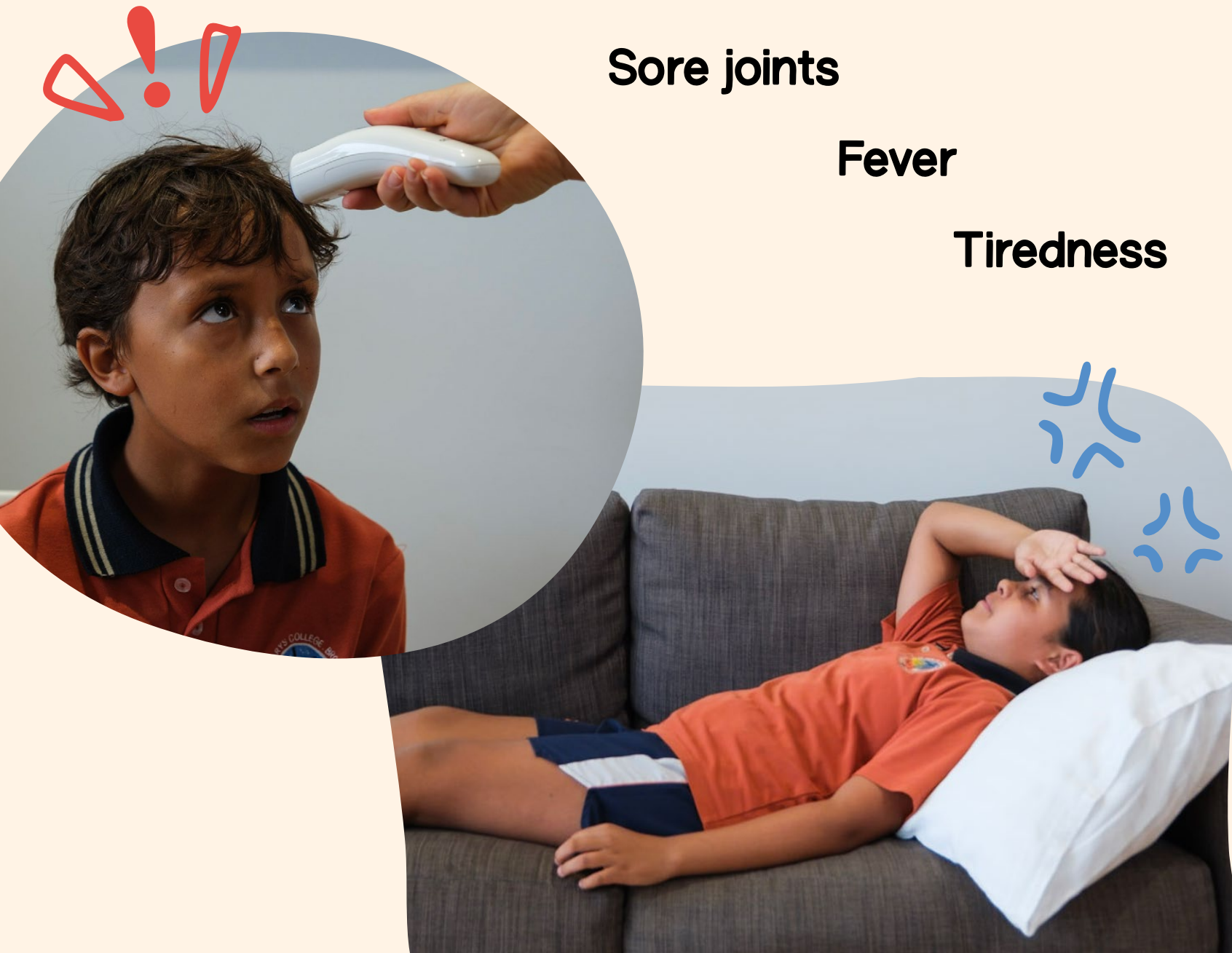
# ACUTE RHEUMATIC FEVER

can make you sick in different ways.

Sore joints

Fever

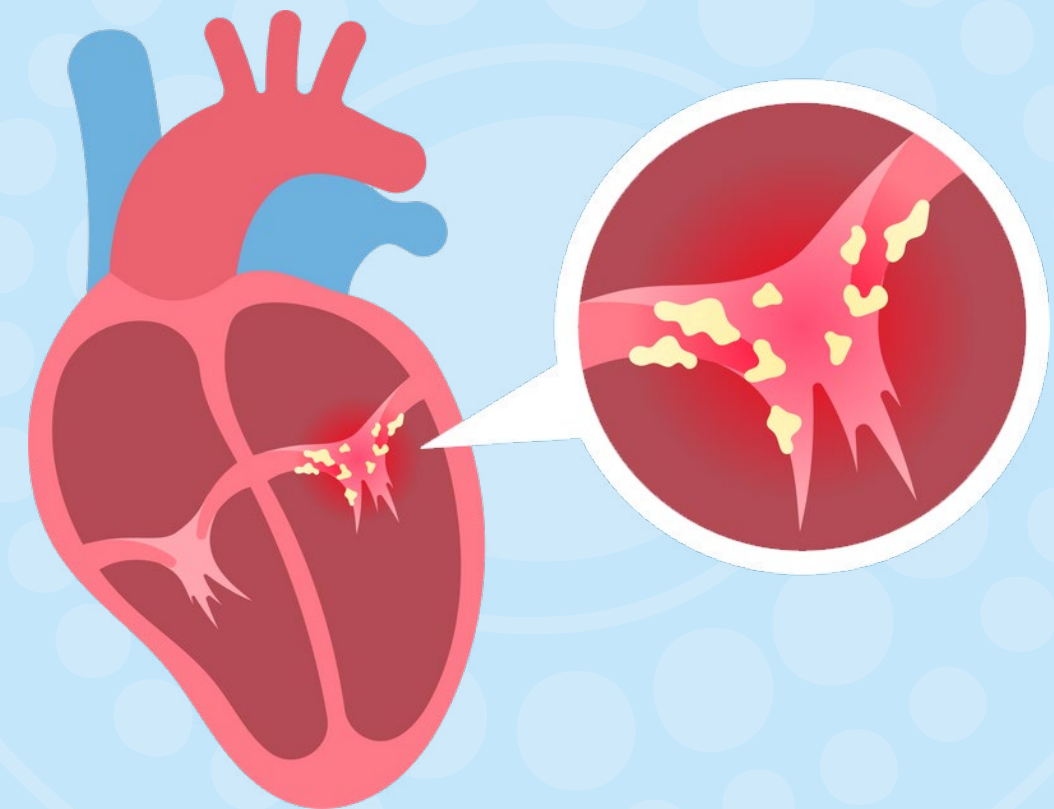
Tiredness



Rheumatic Fever can cause

## RHEUMATIC HEART DISEASE

which hurts your heart



This can make people really sick because their heart is hurt for a long time and needs to be fixed.





But there are still some missing pieces.  
**Scientists** don't know everything about what  
causes Rheumatic Heart Disease.

They need **help** from communities like ours  
to help find out the missing pieces.





Scientists and our community have come together to create  
**The Missing Piece Study** to find out...

- ? If there is Strep A in our community;
- ? How much Strep A there is;
- ? If Strep A is causing sore throats and skin sores.



But they need our help!

# HOW?

By looking at people when they are...

sick

and

healthy





They look at our...

Throats



Skin



Blood



All of these things will help them learn more about Strep A so we can keep our community **healthy**.



A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE COMMUNITIES OF  
ST MARY'S COLLEGE, BROOME AND HOLY ROSARY SCHOOL, DERBY  
FOR THEIR HELP IN CREATING THESE BOOKS.



## THE ARTWORK

The artwork throughout this storybook, by Nyikina-Yawuru artist Kelli Savietto, is a tribute to the Missing Piece Story.

The possum, known for its adaptability and protective care of young ones, embodies the resilience and nurturing spirit at the heart of this work. Its tail displays The Kids First Nations 'Community' pattern, representing collaborative research efforts, while its chest bears the 'Forest' pattern of countless leaves and grass blades, each symbolising a child this research aims to protect.

The main illustration (right) depicts the research journey unfolding across the ancient landscapes of Yawuru (Broome) and Warrwa (Derby) in the Kimberley. Country is celebrated through imagery of land, waters, and sky, while traditional patterns weave throughout, embodying the enduring bonds of community connection.

A winding road travels from north to south, mapping the significant journey of samples collected from children's throats, skin, blood, and schools as they make their way to Boorloo (Perth). Along this road, possum tracks mark the presence of every person contributing to this vital Strep A research—from study participants and their families to educators, health professionals, laboratory teams, and dedicated volunteers.

Above all, the sun radiates hope and determination across the scene, illuminating the path toward positive outcomes and the promise of healthier futures for Aboriginal youth.

The puzzle piece artwork (back cover) completes the narrative, representing the discovery of 'the missing piece' itself—where patterns symbolise the careful gathering and analysis of data by scientists working toward a breakthrough discovery.





# Contributors

We acknowledge the photography by Michael from Jalaru Photography, the production by Clements + Co Studio and the graphic design and illustrations by Kelli Savietto.

**CLEMENTS&CO**  
*studio*



**kelli savietto**

These storybooks were conceived by Missing Piece Surveillance study team, namely Dr Janessa Pickering and Professor Asha Bowen. We acknowledge the following contributors who developed, curated and assisted in the publication of story books including the entire Missing Piece Surveillance study team, the Kimberley Kulunga team (Liam Bedford and Slade Sibosado), Cassandra Fernando, Dr Ann Grand, Dr Heather Bray, Rebecca Dalton, Bonnie Hyatt, Bernadette Wong and Tammy Gibbs.

We acknowledge parents and community members who reviewed and developed the story books including Epsy Devanbu, Sharon Swaney and Courtney King.

We acknowledge the partnership of Catholic Education Western Australia and funding support for storybook development from the Wesfarmers Centre of Vaccines & Infectious Diseases, The Honourable Julie Bishop Illuminate Award and the Department of Health Western Australian Child Research Funding (2023).

**Citation:** Janessa Pickering, Cassandra Fernando, Ann Grand, Heather Bray, Rebecca Dalton, Liam Bedford, Bonnie Hyatt, Bernadette Wong, Tammy Gibbs, August Mikucki, Lisa Wiese, Jessica Hillas, Kelli Savietto, Asha Bowen on behalf of the Missing Piece Surveillance Study Team.  
**Story Book #1: What's Missing?** (2025). Broome, Australia.







# STORYBOOK #1 OF THREE

This is book 1 of 3 in a series of books that tells stories about sore throats and skin sores in the Kimberley, Western Australia. In the Missing Piece Surveillance Study, school students in Broome and Derby helped scientists work out lots of new things about Strep A, a nasty bug that causes infections and can damage the heart. In this book, students and scientists explain how the study was performed, and what information was collected.

Pssstt, read books 2 and 3 to find out how they did the study and what they found!

## IN THIS SERIES

What's Missing  
Looking for the Missing Pieces  
What We Found