

QAIHC

Strong ears, strong game!







Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands, waters and skies across this country, and honour their ongoing connection to Country, culture, community and spirit.

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have cared for, protected and sustained these lands since time immemorial, carrying knowledge, strength and responsibility through generations.

We pay our deepest respects to Elders past and present, and acknowledge the next generation of leaders, storytellers and knowledge holders who continue to keep culture strong.

Strong ears, strong game! was written by the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC) to help kids learn why ear checks matter, how to look after their ears, and what to do if their ears feel sore or blocked. Kids can have ear problems even without pain — regular checks help keep them strong for learning and play.

For more Hearing Health Resources visit:

qaihc.com.au/resources/hearing-health

Illustrations by Jade Goodwin.

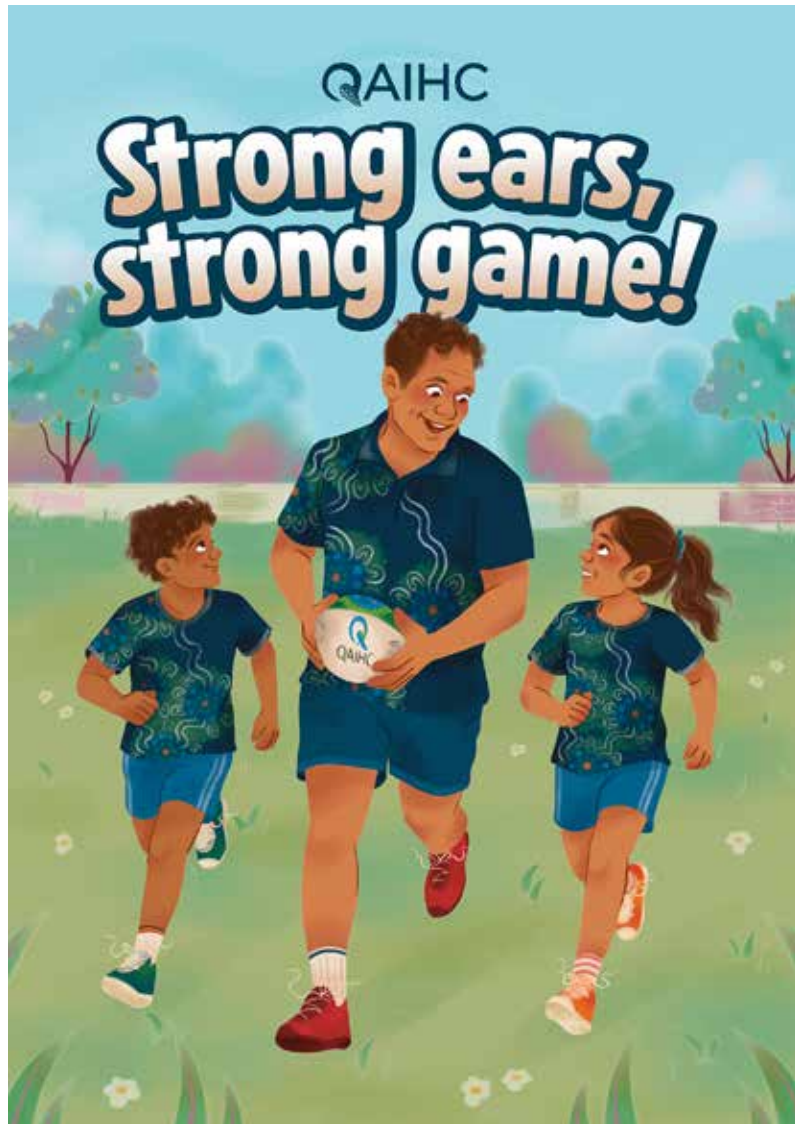
Visit: jadegoodwin.com.au

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Scan the QR code
to watch a short
promotional video
about this resource.





Dedicated to all our Member services.

Mandy and her best friend Matt loved playing footy.
Every weekend, they trained with their friends
at the local field.

They...

SPRINTED
CHARGED
TACKLED
WEAVED
DODGED
and ***SCORED!***

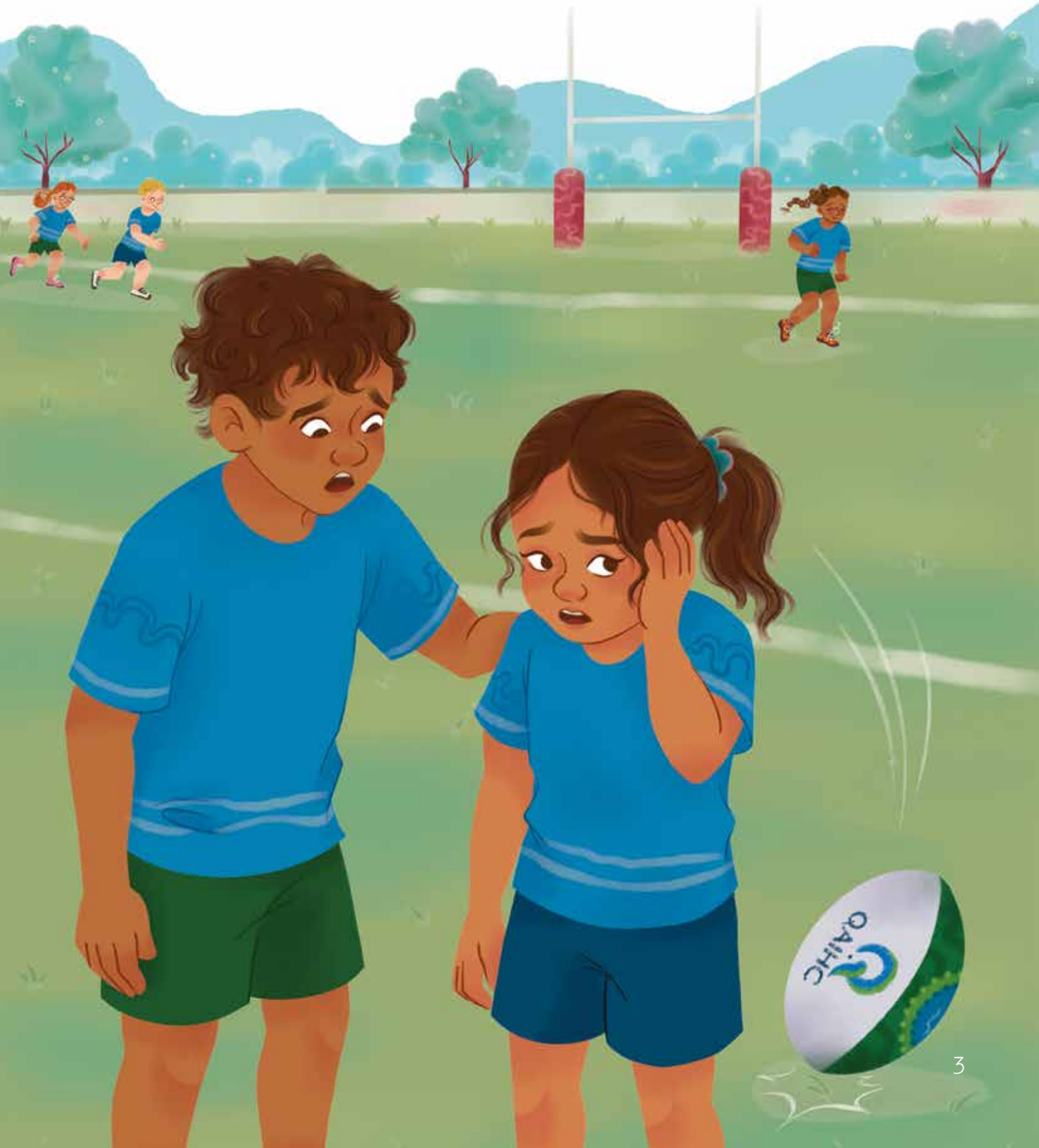


Coach Jamal was strong and kind.
He always made training fun.

Matt and Mandy's biggest dream
was to one day play for the mighty
Maroons, wearing the maroon and
white jersey, and scoring the winning try!



But one sunny morning, something was different. Mandy didn't hear the whistle at training. The ball bounced past her, and she didn't even notice. Matt jogged over. "Mandy, what's wrong?" he asked. She rubbed her ear. "My ear is sore, and everything sounds quiet," she whispered.



Coach Jamal noticed Mandy tugging on her ear, looking worried.

“Hey, little mate, is your ear not feeling good? We can’t play our best when we’re not feeling well,” he said kindly.

“Let’s get your ears checked before training next week. Healthy ears = strong game!”



Mandy was nervous about getting her ears checked. She didn't know what to expect.

Matt went with Mandy and her mum to their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health organisation (ACCHO).

As soon as they walked through the doors, Mandy felt right at home. There were toys, a comfy couch and everyone was friendly. The lady behind the desk gave her a warm smile.

"Hey there bub, you must be Mandy," she said.

"My friend Malakai is an Aboriginal Health Worker — he'll be right out to have a chat with you!"



Malakai, the Aboriginal Health Worker, greeted Mandy and Matt with a fist bump.

“Hey, you mob,” he said. “Good job getting your ears checked early. It keeps your ears strong!”

He then introduced them to a deadly doctor called Shirley.



Dr Shirley used a funny instrument called an otoscope to look inside Mandy’s ear.

“I’m afraid your ear looks a bit grumpy, Mandy!

“We’ll give it some medicine, so it cheers right up. I know you love playing football, so with lots of rest, you’ll be back on the field in no time.”

Malakai showed them a poster about hearing health.

He said it was important to: blow your nose gently, eat healthy food, wash your hands often, keep your ears dry after swimming, and get your ears checked regularly — even if they don’t hurt.

Before they left, he gave them each a special Hearing Health footy!

Blow your nose gently



Eat healthy food

Wash your hands often



**Keep your ears dry
after swimming**

**And get your ears
checked regularly –
even if they don't hurt!**



Mandy rested at home and took her medicine just like Dr Shirley said.



Her mum made her delicious, healthy meals and Mandy made sure her ears were nice and dry after every bathtime.

She missed training and playing footy with her friends, but she needed time to heal.

Her puppy Frankie didn't mind the extra snuggles!



Two weeks later, Mandy's ears felt good again.

They were no longer sore and she could hear better.

She could even hear Frankie barking for dinner!



Mandy returned to the ACCHO. Dr Shirley smiled as she checked Mandy's ears.

"Your ears are looking really healthy now, Mandy.

"We'll keep checking them as you grow, because strong hearing helps us learn, yarn, play and stay connected with family and community."

Mandy felt so good to be back at training. She couldn't stop smiling.

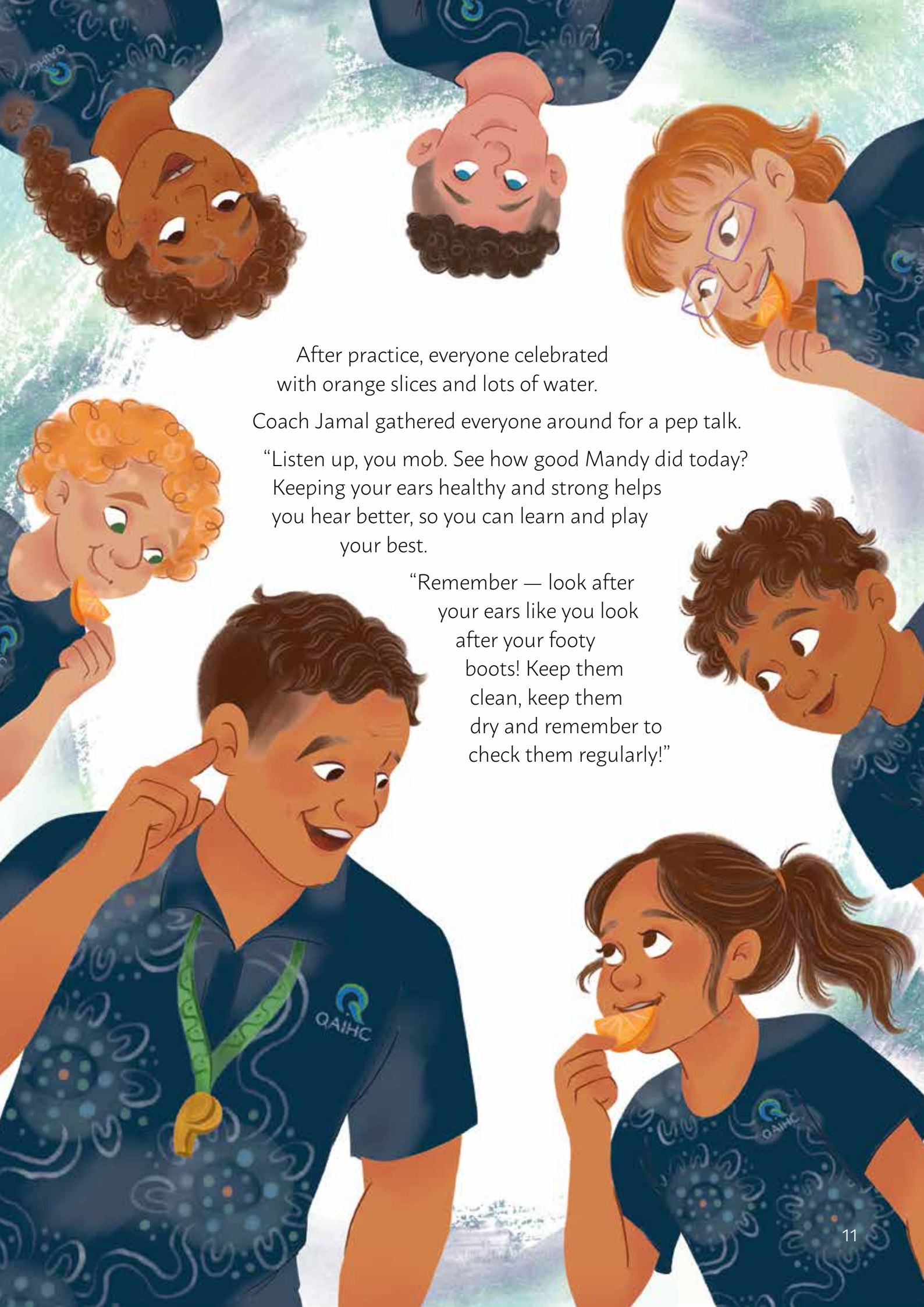


As practice started, Coach Jamal shouted, "Let's go, Mandy!"

Mandy beamed as she heard him loud and clear.

Matt passed the footy to Mandy. She ran to the end of the field and scored! The crowd went wild! Mandy felt amazing!



An illustration of Coach Jamal, a man with dark skin and curly hair, wearing a blue polo shirt with a 'QAIHC' logo and a gold medal around his neck. He is pointing to his ear. Five children, three boys and two girls, are gathered around him, all wearing similar blue shirts with the 'QAIHC' logo. They are all smiling and eating orange slices. The background is a bright, abstract blue and white pattern.

After practice, everyone celebrated with orange slices and lots of water.

Coach Jamal gathered everyone around for a pep talk.

“Listen up, you mob. See how good Mandy did today? Keeping your ears healthy and strong helps you hear better, so you can learn and play your best.

“Remember — look after your ears like you look after your footy boots! Keep them clean, keep them dry and remember to check them regularly!”

Mandy and Matt high-fived under the goal post.
“We’re going to play for the Maroons!” said Matt.
“Yeah,” Mandy smiled, “we sure will mate,
because we care for our ears — and each other.”



Colour in!



Hearing Health Word Search

Find the hidden words. Words can go across, down or diagonally.

G	B	C	N	N	C	H	C	R	N	B	S	D	H	U
U	S	B	S	S	M	C	I	N	I	L	C	B	H	B
H	R	B	I	N	A	E	C	H	E	C	K	J	N	E
E	R	D	S	J	R	V	F	D	S	S	U	G	L	D
A	R	W	S	T	R	O	N	G	G	A	M	E	C	S
L	B	T	G	P	G	N	I	R	A	E	H	V	R	N
T	Y	K	O	S	O	L	J	H	Z	F	W	Y	H	C
H	S	J	Q	P	K	X	O	J	H	C	A	O	C	T
C	D	Q	N	F	Y	K	E	P	N	B	V	C	Y	R
S	Z	K	K	W	L	T	P	S	Z	O	C	C	I	P
W	O	T	I	T	I	S	D	V	C	B	X	W	J	U
S	V	O	J	W	M	V	L	N	A	O	L	F	S	T
Y	T	O	O	F	D	P	B	M	U	G	Y	R	J	E
X	H	M	M	P	C	F	O	O	M	O	A	R	I	E
N	R	I	W	N	L	B	V	M	H	E	S	E	C	F

Words to find:

BINA	COACH	HEARING	OTITIS
CHECK	EARS	HEALTH	SOUND
CLINIC	FOOTY	MOB	STRONG GAME

Yarn about it!

- What happened when Mandy's ear started to hurt?
- Why is it important to tell an adult when your ears feel sore, blocked or funny?
- Who is someone you can yarn to if your ears are hurting?
- How did the clinic or health worker help in the story?
- What is one thing you can do to keep your ears strong and healthy?





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and Islander Health
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