

play strong, play fair

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PRESS RELEASE

Fairtrade becomes fairer for indigenous youth



Australian based fair trade company Etiko has launched a new brand of Fairtrade sports balls, Jinta Sport, to support programs that help young Indigenous Australians. A percentage from each sale goes to the Mt Theo Program, which helps disadvantaged young people improve their lives with the support of mentors and elders in the Warlpiri region of Central Australia.

Sports ball are often made in developing countries under poor working conditions. These Fairtrade balls guarantee that workers have good labour conditions, no child labour has been used, and money is put back into local communities. A Fairtrade accredited manufacturer in Pakistan makes all the sports balls and the purchase of these balls helps fund preschool programs for kids, health care for families and microcredit programs to help people in the community set up their own enterprises.



Nick Savaidis from Etiko says, "We thought this would be a good way to not only help kids in developing countries, but also to help kids in Australia". Nick worked in the Warlpiri region (northwest of Alice Springs) for four years and now runs a business that sells ethically made products, but he wanted to give something back to the Indigenous communities he had worked in during the early 90's.



The name 'Jinta' is a Warlpiri word that means 'one' and is colloquially used to mean winner. The word is also used in the Warlpiri phrase 'Jinta-kumarrarni', which means coming together, such as playing a game of football or basketball. The name suits because the Warlpiri community use sports to bring the kids together in meaningful activity.



The balls carry the Jinta Sport brand and the Fairtrade certification logo, along with an icon of the thorny devil, a lizard found in Central Australia that looks cute but, according to Nick, 'packs a punch if you step on it'.

Quality is enhanced, not compromised, with these fairly traded balls. Stylishly retro, they use high quality rubber and polyurethane. Many are hand-stitched. They are designed to last the distance, not break at the first sign of rough handling. They do not use PVC, a highly toxic plastic. There are currently four types of balls - Soccer, Aussie Rules, Basketball and Netball - with more balls and other products on the drawing board.

Craig Chester, Operations Manager from Fairtrade ANZ states: "The introduction of the Jinta Sport range is great news. Consumers can purchase Fairtrade Certified Jinta products and invest in better opportunities and livelihoods for those people involved in the manufacture of these high quality sports products overseas. Etiko has also committed, consistent with the use of the Indigenous name for the products, to ensure the sales of Jinta products provides benefits to Indigenous communities here in Australia. We certainly commend Etiko on launching this new range."

A percentage of the money raised from the sales of the balls will be used to fund sports programs for school-aged Warlpiri children, including sports equipment, uniforms and a regular sports carnival. Since 1993, the Mt Theo Program has worked with Warlpiri youth to offer healthy ways to leadership and community through sport and games in this remote Indigenous community located 300km northwest of Alice Springs. Warlpiri local, Lingkili Jampijinpa Watson, states: "Jinta Sport is a good idea to say no to child labour. When they make this equipment overseas we don't want to see children having to work." By purchasing these sports balls, schools and consumers are not only helping Australian kids, but are doing something good for children in other countries too.

Etiko is a company that is dedicated to providing ethical alternatives to mainstream products including sports equipment, footwear, clothing and underwear. Etiko has won many state and national business awards including the 2008 Banksia Environmental Foundation Award for Business Sustainability and the 2013 Fairtrade Product of the Year award. In addition, it was ranked Australia's most ethical brand in the 2013 Australian Fashion Report.

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