



Day 1 – Part 1

The gates opened for AgQuip 2009 in Gunnedah at 9:00 this morning and there is already an incredible number of people who are here! The halls are busy and we are seeing plenty of people pass by and stop for a chat at the Black Dog Institute stand.

Many children are proudly sporting the orange BDI balloons around the wrists or tied to their prams. As these people circulate throughout the site, the bright orange balloons are sure to attract a lot of attention.

Our stand looks fantastic and we are equipped with plenty of information and resources to provide to visitors to AgQuip.

The AgQuip rural field days present a great opportunity to raise awareness of mood disorders and encourage early help seeking behaviours. Also, we are able to let people know about and promote the forthcoming free community education seminars in rural NSW entitled: 'Building personal resilience for life's challenges'.

Day 1 – Part 2

Day 1 has proven beyond the value of the BDI's involvement in rural field days. We have had conversations with well over 50 people, who have not only shared personal stories and experiences, but have also told us that they have stopped by because they are aware of the Black Dog Institute and its work. In addition to this, we have provided information and resources to many others.

The people we have spoken with have commented on how important they believe education and awareness about mood disorders to be and how pleased they are that the BDI has a strong presence in rural communities and links with local services. Community members have eagerly taken information about community education events and have also expressed a real interest in the books and fact sheets published by the Black Dog Institute.

Day 2

It has been a huge morning here at AgQuip. Renowned for being the busiest day of AgQuip, day 2 is living up to its reputation. Already we have seen an incredible number of people at the site and had many people come by the Black Dog Institute stall.

Like yesterday, a lot of people are coming by to collect information. They tell us that they are very aware of the Black Dog Institute and its efforts to improve understanding of mood disorders and improve the lives of people with mood disorders and their families and friends.

This morning we are joined by Anne Joyce from Lifeline North West, and we have been very pleased to talk with a broad range of people: men and women of varying ages, carers and people living with a mood disorder, as well as school students wanting to know more about depression and bipolar disorder.

In addition, a good number of people have mentioned that they will be attending the upcoming Black Dog Institute Community Education night that will be happening in Gunnedah on 26 August 2009.

Again, we are convinced of the importance of the Black Dog Institute's presence here - a common theme of discussion is the need for education, support and services in rural areas.

Day 3

The third and final day of the 2009 AgQuip rural field days has drawn an impressive crowd, and we managed to get caught in a 5km traffic jam this morning as we were driving into the exhibitors' car park! We have noticed that those who attend really make the most of the experience and are interested in a wide range of information and services - there is definitely something for everyone here!

At the Black Dog Institute stall, it has been a busy morning. We prepared 'showbags' containing an assortment of Black Dog Institute fact sheets, as well as newsletters, stickers and bookmarks and these have been enthusiastically taken by people passing by. They have also been a very effective way of engaging in conversation and learning more about the information on mood disorders that they are most interested in.

There is a huge amount of excitement and interest in the forthcoming community education seminars, including the event in Gunnedah next Wednesday, 26th August.