

# WARAWARNI-GU GUMA STATEMENT

## Healing Together in Ngurin Ngarluma

Acknowledgement to Ngurin Ngarluma Cultural Boss Tim Douglas

- We are the First Peoples of this country. We need a new way – **our way** for addressing family violence in our communities; a way that recognises the impact of intergenerational trauma on our people, our families and our communities.
- Our cultural knowledge base is valid. Our kinship and skin group relationships are important. What we have to say is legitimate.
- We have strengths and resources. We are strong and adaptive.
- Our women and men have equally important, but different and complementary roles in our families and communities.
- Our women and girls **and** our men and boys must have a strong voice, a seat at the table, to be the architects of our own lives, our own destinies. This is our fundamental human right.
- “Nothing about our mob, without our mob”. This is not a slogan. This is critical not only for our healing, but for yours as our fellow Australians; this is the starting point for our relationship.
- Our children are important and so is our obligation to make sure we are giving them the best start in life that we can, growing them up strong and healthy in body, mind, spirit and culture; to know and show the respect that is central to our culture, throughout all of their actions.
- When working with us, you must identify **the right people** to engage with. We must include our Cultural Bosses and not just the CEOs and managers of organisations in communities.

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- You enjoy a positive legacy as a result of our dispossession. You have a responsibility to ensure we have a strong voice about our realities and to support our solutions, solutions that come from our cultural knowledge bases. These are our cultural responses; not cultural adaptations, where being “inclusive” seems to mean “assimilation” in practice; or being included at the last minute, or as an after-thought.
- Co-design means taking a “blank page” approach where we set the parameters; we say what’s in the foreground; we say what’s in the background; and all the complexity within (see Linda Smith, 1999).
- We need an open and transparent process about where and how data is collected, and where and how research is conducted; and by whom. This data collection must as a first step, be based on our stories about our realities; this provides the foundations to knowing what needs to be asked, how it needs to be asked, and who should ask the questions.
- We need data sovereignty. Our data must be owned and controlled by us. We need to establish a system where our people have access to our data and our stories; a system where we can see who is using the data and how the data is being used.
- It is not okay to continue to compare us and our data to the data from non-Indigenous people. A more valid way to use our data is to track our progress, to tell the story of our journey over time.

These are our truths – and we want you to accept them.

Finally we want to say that family and sexual violence is not our culture.

Alcohol and other drugs are destroying our cultures, our people, and our future generations.

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These things are causing harm in our families and communities and we put a call out to our leaders across this country, and invite them to stand with us in solidarity against those who are causing this harm.

We invite our men, our brothers, uncles and cultural leaders to stand with us, to come together to work on solutions for us all, our young ones, our men and women together.

We invite our women, to support our men to stand with us, to work with us in healing the tears in the fabric of our physical, spiritual, mental and cultural integrity as the First Peoples of this country.

Lorice Douglas

Phyllis Ricky

Mark Wenitong

Shavaun Wells

Dorinda Cox

Minette Salmon

Wayne Muir

Victoria Hovane

Maria Martin-Pedersen

Marijke Bassani (ANROWS)

Gina Masterton

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