



KWY Aboriginal Corporation

Submission to DSS Consultation on the Second Action Plan (National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032)

July 2026

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Acknowledgement of Country

KWY acknowledges that we operate on the many different lands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the traditional owners of this country.

We acknowledge and pay respect to our ancestors, the traditional owners that walked and care taken this country for generations since time immemorial.

We acknowledge the great diversity in language, cultures and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We recognise all Aboriginal peoples who have come from their own countries and have made a life on the country and communities in which we operate.

We pay respect to:

Aboriginal Elders both past and present who are our knowledge holders, our teachers, and guides to both country and lore.

We pay respect to Aboriginal children who are our hope for a brighter and stronger future.

We pay respect to those community members who have gone before us and recognise their contribution to our people and community.

We acknowledge the resilience and strengths of families, community, and country. We will draw on these strengths and use culture to protect and heal our children, families, and communities. We believe that strategies and initiatives developed and led by local Aboriginal people are the most appropriate for addressing the current complexities and vulnerabilities that are impacting Aboriginal peoples, families, and communities. We are committed to supporting this work through creating and place for change.

About KWY

Kornar Winmil Yunti (KWY) Aboriginal Corporation is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation established in 2011 in response to Aboriginal Elders calling for Aboriginal-led approaches to health, wellbeing, and family safety. Originally focused on men's behaviour change, KWY has grown to provide holistic support for women, children, families, and communities. Guided by a vision of Aboriginal peoples being culturally strong, empowered, and safe, KWY delivers culturally responsive services that strengthen wellbeing, promote healing, and create lasting intergenerational change.

Our suite of programs focuses on family, domestic, and sexual violence (FDSV), youth work, mental health, kinship and reunification, disability, child development, best practice research and cultural training. KWY acknowledges the strengths, dreams, and aspirations of Aboriginal people in our work towards long-term sustainable change. We support more than 2,737 clients annually through 33 different programs in Metropolitan



Adelaide, Berri, Port Lincoln, Whyalla, Port Augusta, Mount Gambier, and Ceduna. We achieve this through the delivery of evidence-based, culturally grounded programs, and by influencing the development of programs and policy across multiple sectors to improve positive outcomes for Aboriginal people.

Our approaches to programs, services, consultancy and training are grounded in Aboriginal Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing, recognising culture as a fundamental protective factor, and by empowering families and communities to be autonomous decision-makers. These services facilitate social & emotional wellbeing (men's, women's & healing work); child protection; parenting support & education; domestic & family violence support for women; perpetrator intervention & behaviour change; individual & community support, advocacy & liaison & sector capacity building (cultural consulting & training).

Our vision is for Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities to thrive – by being culturally strong, empowered and safe. KWY aims to achieve this by providing culturally driven programs and by influencing State and Federal policy to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities.



Summary of Recommendations

1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations must be meaningfully involved in the design and implementation of the Second Action Plan, to ensure activities reflect and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs, priorities, and Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing.
2. Actions under the Second Action Plan must create more opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led prevention and early intervention programs.
3. The Second Action Plan must include actions aimed at providing training for staff in non-Indigenous organisations to improve cultural responsiveness of service provision.
4. The Second Action Plan must create more opportunities for ACCOs to design and deliver services.
5. The Second Action Plan must prioritise sustainable ongoing government investment and partnerships with ACCOs, rather than short-term competitive grants.
 - 5.1. Funding frameworks must support longer-term engagement with children, young people and families, recognising that relationship building is not separate from service delivery but is itself a core intervention in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healing and prevention work. Funding periods, contract durations and service expectations must enable the development and maintenance of trusted relationships over time.
6. The Second Action Plan must prioritise the co-design of funding arrangements and evaluation frameworks for FDSV programs through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led Commissioning Frameworks that measure long-term outcomes, healing, cultural strengthening and community wellbeing, rather than relying primarily on short-term activity-based indicators.
7. The Second Action Plan must work to ensure that responses to FDSV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families are Aboriginal designed and led, within Aboriginal Community Controlled organisations where possible. Including a focus on child and youth-specific DFSV prevention, healing and recovery programs which recognise children and young people as primary service users and rights-holders.
8. The Second Action Plan must ensure that responses to FDSV include providing holistic, culturally responsive wraparound support to the family.
9. The Second Action Plan must support culturally grounded programs for people who have used violence that focus on providing support and healing by restoring connections to culture, building confidence for the future, guidance and strengthening family connections to break cycles of trauma.



Discussion

Socio-economic Drivers of FDSV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience significantly higher levels of FDSV than other demographics, significantly due to the complex and ongoing socio-economic environment created by colonisation and subsequent state interventions that have been marred by deficit discourse, systemic racism, and cultural assimilation (AHRC, 2020). As outlined in the *Our Ways, Strong Ways, Our Voices – National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family Domestic and Sexual Violence 2026-2036* (Our Ways):

“For decades, we have been telling governments, services and the wider community the same truth: violence against our women and children is a national crisis. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are hospitalised, assaulted, and killed at rates far above those of non-Indigenous women. For too long, that truth has been met with too little action, too little recognition, and too slow a response” (DSS 2026, p13).

It is critical that the occurrence of FDSV within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is viewed within the context of the ongoing trauma caused by colonisation. Colonisation caused the widespread impoverishment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations, disrupted kinship safety systems, and created an intense environment of intergenerational and ongoing trauma at individual, family, community, and national levels – amongst a litany of other negative socio-economic impacts (SNAICC, 2025). As evidenced by the yearly *Closing the Gap* statistics and discussed in SNAICC’s 2025 *Family Matters Report* - the impacts of colonisation have not been mitigated and continue to acutely affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children (SNAICC, 2025).

The ‘pressure cooker’ environment caused by the impacts of colonisation is causal to the occurrence of violence within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities and critically relevant in designing culturally responsive approaches. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the occurrence of violence and the availability of healing systems is impacted by complex multigenerational trauma; disconnection from culture, kinship and country; and the ongoing implementation of unsafe Western approaches that can compound trauma (DSS, 2026). Furthermore, beyond the impacts of colonisation, there is additional intersectional violence faced by women and girls; people with disabilities; and LGBTIQ+ community members, that add to marginalisation and inhibit pathways to healing and wellbeing (AHRC, 2020).



As stated by [REDACTED] in the *Wiyi Yani U Thangani Change Agenda for First Nations Gender Justice* – responses to FDSV need to be “flipping the narrative on its head and speaking to the system as the problem that needs to be fixed rather than [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people]” (AHRC 2024, p7).

Excerpt from: Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women’s Voices): Securing Our Rights, Securing Our Future Report

“As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we live in the knowledge that our peoples governed themselves over tens of thousands of years. We are united in the conviction that colonisation has not broken us.

It is the system that is broken.

Our women, girls and their communities have had enough of being ignored and of taking part in processes that are limited to tweaking fundamentally flawed systems: systems that reflect Australian governments’ continuing focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander assimilation to mainstream values, systems and perspectives.

Women are asking for nothing less than a fundamental change in the way government does business with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and for the transformation of this relationship to be reflected in the design of our governing structures.

It is only through a fundamental shift in the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are represented, respected and empowered in this country that we will see the long-term, systemic change that is needed to close the gap in outcomes for our people” (AHRC, 2020, p92).

Recommendation 1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations must be meaningfully involved in the design and implementation of the Second Action Plan, to ensure activities reflect and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs, priorities, and Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing.

The Importance of Holistic Prevention and Early Intervention Programs

The *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, *Our Ways*, and the *South Australian Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence* all recognise that ending FDSV requires more than crisis responses alone. These frameworks consistently highlight the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led prevention, healing, recovery and cultural connection - acknowledging that healing is a critical part of both recovery and prevention (DSS, 2026).



Programs aimed at supporting mental health, healing, healthy relationships and connection to culture are critical to both directly and indirectly supporting survivor safety and wellbeing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have consistently asserted that FDSV has no place in culture, and that trauma needs to be healed before it is transmitted. ACCOs implement holistic support programs that prioritise culture, kinship and connection to Country and acknowledge these elements are protective factors that support healing, identity, accountability and social and emotional wellbeing.

Kinship systems are vital to ensuring accountability and support for those who use violence, while also providing oversight, protection and support for victim-survivors. These systems have been significantly disrupted by colonial practices, particularly through displacement and child removal policies. Programs that restore and expand kinship networks have ongoing preventative value. KWY programs such as Taikurtirna Tirra-Apinthi (Making Families Safer) recognise it is of best interest to keep children in care of their families where safe and works individually with family members to provide culturally responsive, trauma informed assessments, safety plan coordination, therapeutic and practical supports to ensure children remain connected with their family. Furthermore, the Tawata Pari (Finding Families) Project assists the Department of Child Protection (DCP) in connecting Aboriginal children under Guardianship to family, culture and kin, working to decrease the number of children in the care system. This work acknowledges strong kinship systems create a communal environment where networks of visibility and support enable people who are at risk of exposure to FDSV to access help if required.

Likewise, kinship systems create connection, support and accountability surrounding people who may use violence, providing greater opportunity for healing and violence prevention. Kinship is a positively self-perpetuating system, and functions as an antidote to generational trauma.

Recommendation 2: Actions under the Second Action Plan must create more opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led prevention and early intervention programs.

Challenges Faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People when Interacting with Non-Indigenous Systems and Service Providers

Mainstream systems are designed through Western frameworks and institutional assumptions that do not always recognise the intersecting impacts of colonisation, racism, child removal, poverty, housing insecurity, disability and intergenerational trauma on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' experiences of violence (DSS, 2026).



The Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People documented Aboriginal women were often not believed by police when disclosing violence and were frequently misidentified as perpetrators due to the criminalisation of defensive or reactive actions (CACYP, 2024). Cultural understanding and capacity must be built for non-Indigenous services, responders, and government organisations to ensure that the systems intended to be supporting victim-survivors are not inadvertently perpetrating harm.

The sensitive nature of trauma from domestic, family, and sexual violence requires cultural understanding and cultural systemic knowledge to avoid re-traumatisation, disengagement and shame. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and families may disengage from mainstream systems where responses experienced are punitive, culturally unsafe or associated with fears of child removal, negatively impacting access to support and healing (Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People Submission to the SA Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence).

Many non-Indigenous led approaches to preventing and responding to FDSV are not reflective of the impacts of colonisation. This has led to one-size-fits-all approaches that are practically and ontologically harmful and irrelevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Current responses to FDSV by government departments are punitive and risk-averse – and not focussed on family and community healing. Child protection services often necessitate removal of children due to exposure to FDSV without initially offering support to families to address and mitigate the occurrence of violence. Whilst removal due to violence is sometimes needed, removal of children should be a last resort. This type of response:

- Removes children from kinship safety systems and culture
- Reinforces a narrative of family deficit
- Does not address socio-economic drivers of violence
- Exposes children to risk of harm in out-of-home care
- Does not address developmental impacts of exposure to violence
- Decreases the likelihood of both victims and perpetrators seeking support

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victim-survivor experiences inside these systems are fraught with challenges and triggers. The value ACCO's provide in advocacy and bridging the gap between Aboriginal women and colonial systems cannot be overstated.

KWY Kumangka Program

A KWY client, an Aboriginal woman experiencing ongoing abuse, was unable to communicate easily about her complex trauma and DFSV due to language and cultural barriers. She was supported by a Kumangka program practitioner - KWY's women's DFSV program. Due to these barriers and previous experiences of systemic harm the



client was also unable to effectively participate in legal proceedings. The practitioner used art to support the client to unpack and discuss trauma, safety and her narrative around perpetrator behaviour.

With a strong, trusting foundational relationship, the KWY practitioner was able to support the justice process in ways that centred the client's language, trauma history, culture and worldview. A Positive Intervention Order was obtained, acknowledged by the magistrate and lawyers as only achievable through ACCO advocacy. The client also welcomed the practitioner into her kinship, gifting her a skin name, symbolising trust and acceptance.

This case demonstrates the meaningfully successful outcomes that are possible when Aboriginal people are supported through the cultural safety, relational practice and informed advocacy that is provided by ACCOs.

Recommendation 3: The Second Action Plan must include actions aimed providing training for staff in non-Indigenous organisations to improve cultural responsiveness of service provision.

Recommendation 4: The Second Action Plan must create more opportunities for ACCOs to design and deliver services.

Improving Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations are uniquely positioned to design and deliver programs that are responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Effective programs requiring place-based consultation, meaningful co-design and skilled staff to deliver culturally safe programs are best performed by ACCOs.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander approaches are grounded in relationships and trust, however, many government funding and commissioning models remain short-term and transactional, relying on pilot projects, competitive procurement processes and temporary staffing arrangements that make it difficult to build long-term relationships that drive success (DSS, 2026). Effective programs are built over time through ongoing refinement, workforce capability development and responsiveness to community feedback; which in turn gain reach, community trust, impact and sustained growth.

Current funding and reporting frameworks prioritise short-term outputs over long-term outcomes. Measures such as participant numbers, referrals, service contacts and attendance rates are useful indicators of activity, but they fail to adequately capture the outcomes that are most essential to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and wellbeing. Healing from trauma, strengthening cultural identity, rebuilding kinship



systems, restoring trust, increasing community connectedness and improving family functioning are all critical contributors to long-term safety and wellbeing, yet these outcomes are not captured within conventional reporting frameworks.

The continued use of funding and evaluation models that focus primarily on quantitative outputs creates a critical systemic barrier to meaningful and enduring change.

Evaluation frameworks should be co-designed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and include qualitative measures of healing, cultural strengthening, self-determination, community trust and long-term wellbeing alongside quantitative indicators. Critically, this requires sustainable, ongoing relational contracting arrangements between agencies and service providers to enable the creation and implementation of long-term, Aboriginal-led feedback and engagement mechanisms.

Long-term investment allows services to establish trust, strengthen local relationships, increase their impact and continuously improve through accumulated experience and knowledge of what works in practice. To implement meaningful change, government must be investing in partnerships with ACCOs to build capacity, in alignment with Closing the Gap Priority Reform 2 (National Agreement on Closing the Gap – Priority Reform Two: Building the Community-Controlled Sector), rather than short-term competitive grants. This highlights the importance of Closing the Gap Priority Reform 2 and the long-term strengthening of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations through sustained investment and genuine partnerships with government.

KWY Men's Healing Camps

KWY's Men's Healing Camps engage Aboriginal men through a culturally and trauma informed lens to support health and wellbeing through connection to identity, Country and culture, and gaining and sharing knowledge relating to Aboriginal culture, history and identity.

Engaging attendees in cooking traditional food, practicing and learning traditional dances and songs, fishing, tool making and spear and boomerang throwing, whilst also having honest conversations about the impact of trauma, domestic violence, substance abuse, and ways of coping, contributes to long-term healing and breaking cycles of intergenerational trauma through strength-based practice.

KWY's Men's Healing Camps demonstrate the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led healing approaches to programs in increase Aboriginal autonomy, empowerment and confidence in their future. However, meaningful and sustained impact of these programs cannot be achieved through short-term funding cycles.

Research from SNAICC in their Stronger ACCOs, Stronger Families Report has emphasised the need for stable funding agreements as crucial to the success of ACCOs



and improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (SNAICC, 2023). Not only have current funding models reduced the longevity of Aboriginal-led programs but have also limited capacity for ACCOs to establish long-term contracts with staff and fund greater recruitment to support administrative requirements. Current funding models have led to overworked staff, burnout and lesser capacity to deliver support. By investing long-term into ACCOs with greater funding, ACCOs will be supported in staff retention, prevent work over-load, thus improving the quality of service and outcomes for clients.

The Stronger ACCOs, Stronger Families Report suggested in response to current funding models, that commissioning must be Aboriginal led, allowing ACCOs and community to be included in decision making at every level of the funding process. By allowing community needs to inform funding models, and a shift from short project grant approaches to long-term ACCO designed models, funding can be productively spent on addressing community needs. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led Commissioning Frameworks provide a mechanism for the design of funding arrangements that are sustainable, fit-for-purpose, and reflective of the needs and priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led Commissioning enables a place-based approach to the development of funding arrangements, by ensuring that families and communities can engage in the co-design of investment into services based on their needs and priorities (AbSec, 2021). Building effective prevention and healing responses requires long-term investment, workforce development, community trust and ongoing refinement. Governments must strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations through ongoing investment and genuine partnerships that support enduring, community-led solutions.

Recommendation 5: The Second Action Plan must prioritise sustainable ongoing government investment and partnerships with ACCOs, rather than short-term competitive grants.

Recommendation 6: The Second Action Plan must prioritise the co-design of funding arrangements and evaluation frameworks for FDSV programs through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led Commissioning Frameworks that measure long-term outcomes, healing, cultural strengthening and community wellbeing, rather than relying primarily on short-term activity-based indicators.

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People



Children carry the future and sit at the heart of Aboriginal culture; they are the greatest responsibility and strongest hope for the future. Yet too often, children and young people experience family violence and sexual assault directly, whether as victim-survivors or as witnesses within their homes and communities. The impacts of this trauma are ongoing and far reaching, creating developmental disruption, disengagement from education, and a corresponding increased risk of state intervention in their lives through child protection and youth justice processes (DSS, 2026). Young people who experience or witness violence are also at increased risk of using violence in their own relationships and families later in life, reinforcing intergenerational cycles of harm. Children and young people are often treated as secondary victims, with support responses focused primarily on the non-offending parent. They require dedicated healing and recovery responses in their own right, rather than being treated as passive beneficiaries of adult-focused interventions.

KWY offers targeted interventions to young people at risk of using violence, all of the young people in this program have trauma stemming, at least in part, from DFSV, and many are under Guardianship of the Minister. KWY's "Wuinparrinhi" program is designed and funded through the Office for Women and uses a group work model to support young people aged from 14-18. One of the Aboriginal practitioners on this program identified that a case management model was needed alongside Wuinparrinhi to address the varying complex needs of participants. This recognition led to the Office for Women funding an Aboriginal lead and designed program called Tuwila Yara, which facilitates intensive case management for up to 6 months for 12-18 year olds. The impact of this program has been profound; through leveraging the wisdom inherent in kinship systems, the practitioners work with young men to support and expand their networks, identifying positive role models, and creating safe spaces to discuss trauma, culture and healing.

"Numerous people have noticed a change in him since you have been working with him in your program... I have known that an Indigenous mentor in his life may be the only chance of a more positive outlook for him, and I couldn't have asked for a more connected, motivated and dedicated person. I'm sure culture is the key for connection for him and to have a real sense of who he is and thank you for working on this with him." – Parent of Participant

These programs reflect a child rights-based approach by recognising children and young people as rights holders, rather than simply as dependants of adult victim-survivors. Through culturally grounded mentoring, healing and case management, these programs support young people to utilise the healing elements culture and strengthen their identity, connection to culture, family and community. In doing so, they uphold the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to live free from violence, maintain and strengthen their culture, participate in their communities, and



determine their own identity in accordance with their culture, traditions and kinship systems.

Programs like Wuinparrinthe and Tuwila Yara have strong cultural frameworks informing the program theory, however, effective approaches must be built not only around an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of working but be funded in accordance with these principals too. A key challenge across many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs is the limited duration of service delivery. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship systems are known to be a deeply protective and healing part of culture. Kinship is made up of enduring, stable and predictable relationships, where each person within the kinship system holds responsibilities to those around them. Where kinship systems have been degraded through colonisation, particularly for young people who have experienced or witness DFSV, services and the providers within them can often hold important roles with young people's kinship networks.

It often takes months to build these relationships, but once established, it is where the most impactful work, healing and progress is made. In many instances, program KPI's and contractual obligations require cases to be closed after short periods, often after just 3-6 months of working with clients, where relationships are still in their formative stages or during critical phases of transformational work. KPI's that are based on numerical standards, rather than outcomes based and responsive to the cultural needs and timelines of service users are a critical cog that must be shifted to attain deeply meaningful work in the space of DFSV prevention and healing, both for children and families.

Recommendation 7: The Second Action Plan must work to ensure that responses to FDSV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families are Aboriginal designed and led, within Aboriginal Community Controlled organisations where possible. Including a focus on child and youth-specific DFSV prevention, healing and recovery programs which recognise children and young people as primary service users and rights-holders.

Recommendation 8: The Second Action Plan must ensure that responses to FDSV include providing holistic, culturally responsive wraparound support to the family.

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who have used Violence

In recognising healing as a critical component of prevention, the Our Ways Report highlights that men and boys are part of the solution. Men and boys are affected by family violence, sexual assault, stigma and shame, and programs must support accountability, healing and social and emotional wellbeing to provide effective prevention and early intervention. Effective prevention requires recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and boys may be victim-survivors, witnesses to violence, and individuals carrying their own experiences of trauma, grief and loss.



KWY Stronger Safer Family Outreach ¹

An Aboriginal family was referred to KWY's Stronger Safer Family Outreach program due to domestic violence and substance misuse concerns. The program uses a multidisciplinary team to walk alongside families, offering holistic, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed support.

Both Mum and Dad were supported by a men's and a women's worker, which culturally aligns with respecting men's and women's business, and a child and youth practitioner supported the children's wellbeing and voice. Within the family Dad was using violence and we used the Men's Behavioural Analysis (MBA) Tool to guide safety planning, hold him to account and support him through behaviour change approaches. KWY worked with the father to connect him with AOD services, allowing him to make informed choices and a referral to the KWY My Journey behaviour change program was accepted. Mum was provided outreach both in home and at a community space and assessed using the Women's Safety Analysis Tool which supported work on emotional wellbeing, confidence building and education on the cycle of violence.

The child and youth practitioner liaised with the school to help strengthen their relationship with the parents and the child and provided 1:1 therapeutic support to the children, with the support of the school's Aboriginal Community Education Officer, to strengthen cultural identity and knowledge. As a result, the children re-engaged with their education and attendance significantly improved.

KWY also used other tools such as a genogram and eco map to understand kinship, cultural connections, and existing supports, which also helped identify service gaps and over servicing.

The feedback from the family was that they felt safe working with an ACCO who genuinely listened and supported their family to thrive again.

Dad said, 'I now have the tools to manage my frustrations and understand how my behaviour was affecting my partner and children'. Mum said, 'my home is a happy home again and I am now studying a Diploma of Community Services to help my community'.

Programs such as the Stronger Safer Families Outreach and KWY's Men's Healing Camps utilise the principals of kinship to create culturally safe spaces for Aboriginal men to acknowledge and work through trauma, move through healing, set goals and identify where they may need additional support.

¹ As included in Our Ways, Strong Ways, Our Voices National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence 2026-2036, (DSS, 2026, p38).
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These programs leverage the knowledge and resilience embedded in culture, kinship and connection to Country to create healing environments. Addressing trauma, strengthening social connections, creating safe yarning spaces, and rebuilding cultural connection are preventative interventions that reduce the conditions that can contribute to future violence. This healing in turn supports the safety and wellbeing of women, children and families by disrupting cycles of intergenerational trauma that can contribute to ongoing domestic, family and sexual violence.

Despite growing recognition that healing is a critical component of prevention, there remains limited culturally grounded programs supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and boys as victim-survivors, people at risk of using violence, or individuals seeking to heal from trauma before harm occurs (DSS, 2026).

Recommendation 9: The Second Action Plan must support culturally grounded programs for people who have used violence that focus on providing support and healing by restoring connections to culture, building confidence for the future, guidance and strengthening family connections to break cycles of trauma.



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