



Aboriginal Healing Framework

Summary Document





Weave Youth & Community Services

Aboriginal Healing Framework

Weave is committed to working in culturally safe and responsive ways and as part of that commitment we have supported our Aboriginal staff group to develop and document our Aboriginal Healing Framework.

This framework guides the ongoing development and implementation of healing-centred practice for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and their communities, with the intention of creating genuine and sustainable healing outcomes.

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Why is Weave implementing an Aboriginal Healing Framework?

Weave acknowledges and stands with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in their ongoing fight against systemic oppression and injustice. We recognise that the social, economic, political, emotional, psychological and physical health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is dependent upon the dismantling of the systems that continue to impact their communities. We recognise our role in supporting this fight, through supporting our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities in their individual and collective healing journeys by providing holistic, trauma-informed and strengths-based practice grounded in and guided by our Aboriginal Healing Framework.

In their ongoing fight, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have demonstrated their inherent resilience and strength, standing strong in the face of great adversity and exercising self-determination to fight for and demand justice. Weave acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' strengths and solutions already lie within their communities, and we will continue walking alongside our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients to support them on their individual and collective healing journeys.

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What is Healing?

‘Healing’ in the context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities refers to the improvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ and communities’ holistic social, economic, political, emotional and physical health and wellbeing. In this sense, healing includes all elements of a person’s individual self as well as their surrounding environments, including their immediate and extended family and kin, their communities, their Country and our nation as a whole.

‘Healing’ is used to acknowledge and respond to the historic and ongoing traumas that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities face, both directly and intergenerationally.

Our Aboriginal Healing Framework is guided by this understanding.



Why do Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples need healing?

Since British invasion in 1788, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been subjected to a series of acts at the hands of Australian Governments that have purposely worked towards controlling, oppressing and assimilating First Nations people.

Many of these acts, including those that resulted in the Stolen Generations, have been intentionally violent and genocidal with the purpose of destroying all elements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' identities, such as their connection to their homelands, communities, families and kin, as well as their spirituality, cultural traditions and lore.

The traumas experienced both directly and intergenerationally by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to perpetuate lower social, economic, political, emotional, psychological and physical health and wellbeing outcomes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia.

Aboriginal Healing Framework Domains

Welcoming Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients into our spaces.

This domain highlights the importance of creating and nurturing culturally safe and responsive spaces across all of Weave's sites and vehicles, as well as ensuring that initial interactions between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and Weave staff and volunteers are culturally responsive, appropriate and healing-centred.

Organisational structure and human resources.

Weave is committed to creating and nurturing an organisational structure that centres and prioritises healing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities. This includes providing opportunities for and encouraging the development of staff and their healing-centred practice to support genuine and sustainable healing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

The promotion and development of a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

Weave acknowledges the additional and unique trauma burden and stressors that our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff carry in comparison to our non-Aboriginal staff. Within this context, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff require extra layers of understanding and support and specific development opportunities to empower them to provide uniquely culturally responsive engagements with clients, as well as tending to their own needs, and those of their families and communities.

Aboriginal Healing Framework Domains

Programs, community development and social change.

Weave is committed to ensuring that our programs continue to evolve to address the individual and collective healing needs of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and their communities. This includes promoting and facilitating community development, advocacy and social change projects to address the socio-political needs of our clients and the broader Aboriginal community where appropriate and necessary. This is to ensure micro and macro support for genuine and sustainable healing outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Community engagements and partnerships.

A holistic, interdisciplinary and collaborative approach is often necessary when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients. Our Aboriginal Healing Framework outlines how we can continue to develop and nurture relationships with other services and key stakeholders within our communities to ensure continuity of care and seamless referrals and encourage increased community engagement for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Direct practice.

Direct practice refers to the direct work of our staff and volunteers with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients. Weave acknowledges the significance of the day-to-day practice that is both practical and therapeutic in nature, and especially the power in the relationships that are born out of this practice. We are committed to ensuring that all staff and volunteers are aware of and fulfilling their responsibilities to practice from a healing-centred perspective in order to support genuine and sustainable healing outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Weave caseworker, Karlie Stewart, has developed our Aboriginal Healing Framework guided by our Aboriginal staff - Daniel Daylight, Regan Mitchell, Lauren Vosota, Lauren Ella-Duncan and Beau Foster and Weave Board Member Jonathon Captain-Webb.



Karlie Stewart is a Wandj Wandj Woman from Yuin Country on the South Coast of New South Wales. She lived in Nowra throughout her childhood and spent time around the Nowra, Wreck Bay and Jerrinja Aboriginal communities with her family.

Since the age of 10, Karlie has lived on Bidjigal land and has strong connections to the La Perouse Aboriginal community. In early 2019, Karlie graduated with an Honours in Social Work from the University of New South Wales and has since worked as a Child, Youth and Family caseworker at Weave Youth and Community Services. She has been part of the Healing Foundation's Interim Youth Advisory Group and is passionate about healing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, particularly from intergenerational trauma as a result of historic and current government interventions.

Karlie has been painting since she was young as a way to connect to her saltwater home on the South Coast. She created the artwork that features in Weave's Aboriginal Healing Framework.