

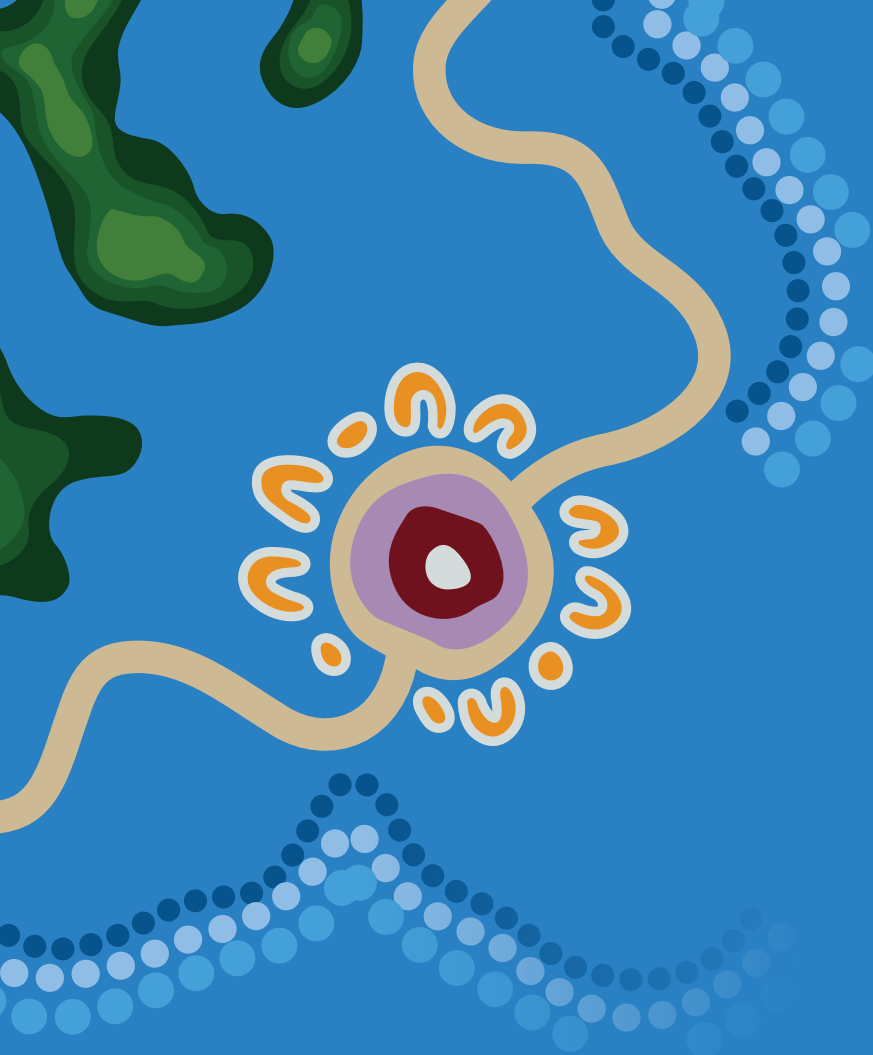


Stolen Generations
Collective Healing Initiatives
Rounds 1–6:
impacts and findings



HealingFoundation

Strong Spirit • Strong Culture • Strong People



June 2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Healing Foundation acknowledges Stolen Generations survivors across Australia, including those who have passed on, for their wisdom and courage in sharing their stories and leading the movement for justice over many decades.

In particular, we thank those Stolen Generations survivors, carers, and organisations who participated in this project and shared their time, wisdom, and knowledge. Your views and experience have informed every aspect of this report.

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Healing Foundation

Strong Spirit • Strong Culture • Strong People

The Healing Foundation is a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation that provides a platform to amplify the voices and lived experience of Stolen Generations survivors and their families.

We work with communities to create a place of safety, providing an environment for Stolen Generations survivors and their families to speak for themselves, tell their own stories, and be in charge of their own healing.

We promote trauma-aware, healing-informed practice to help government, policymakers, and workforces understand their role in intergenerational healing.

By addressing unresolved trauma in First Nations communities – trauma that was caused by colonisation and actions like the forced removal of children – we are walking alongside communities on the path to healing.

We are governed by a First Nations Board and Executive and guided in our work by our Stolen Generations and Youth Reference Groups.

Our work honours our First Nations ancestors to ensure our future generations continue to thrive for the next 60,000 years.

Background



In July 2012, The Healing Foundation announced its first funding initiative specifically for Stolen Generations survivors. The Stolen Generations Initiative was designed to meet the unique healing needs and aspirations of Stolen Generations survivors. At the time the stated aims of the Stolen Generations Initiative were to:

- provide opportunities and support for Stolen Generations survivors, services, and organisations to lead and develop their own solutions to the profound trauma, grief, loss, and suffering experienced by survivors, their families, and communities
- reduce the damaging effects of colonisation and past government policies on Stolen Generations survivors, their families, and communities through the provision of healing responses that are culturally based, strengths-focused, and trauma-aware, healing-informed
- create important opportunities for Stolen Generations survivors to connect with culture and strengthen cultural identity and pride.

Activities that may be delivered under this funding initiative include:

- structured workshops and programs
- healing gatherings and camps
- day trips to Country and important cultural sites
- documenting survivors' individual or group stories through mediums of poetry, song writing, storytelling, art, or drama, culminating in the production of books, painting, or murals, plays, song collections, or films
- peer support groups and yarnning circles.

Notably, by mid-2020, Australia was in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the very outset of the pandemic, the vulnerability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples was well understood by community leaders and non-Indigenous policymakers and clinicians. Factors that were known to increase the risks associated with infection included an already high burden of chronic disease, longstanding inequity issues related to service provision and access to healthcare (especially for those living in remote and very remote communities), and pervasive social and economic disadvantage in areas such as housing, education, and employment.

Therefore, in the next round of funding under the Stolen Generations Initiative, The Healing Foundation acknowledged that COVID-19 restrictions and measures had (likely) changed the work of Stolen Generations organisations. In acknowledging the challenging times, The Healing Foundation offered financial support to organisations' COVID-19 responses through a locally tailored package of up to \$30,000 (depending on need), with a quick funding turnaround.

The funding opportunity was for a six-month period supporting a tailored and local response to the needs of Stolen Generations organisations responding to COVID-19.

Examples of funded activities include:

- weekly care hampers
- provision of phone data to help people keep in touch
- training for staff in telehealth-related work
- support for wages/increased staff hours.

This funding was provided through Round 5 (in part) and Round 6 of the Stolen Generations Initiative.

This report examines the outcomes and benefits of the first six (6) funding rounds of the Stolen Generations Initiative, which were offered between 2012 and 2020 – recognising that while undertaking this review a further funding round has been initiated.

Across these six funding rounds:

- 42 organisations were supported to deliver an estimated 90+ projects
- more than 8,700 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have participated in these projects
- more than 600 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been employed across the projects
- more than 650 services have been delivered.

The total investment across the six rounds of funding is \$3,757,000.00.¹

This report presents the analysis of data contained in the progress reports and final reports that funded Stolen Generations organisations provided to The Healing Foundation. Such reporting has been a requirement within the funding agreement that each Stolen Generations organisation enters into with The Healing Foundation. Within these reports, organisations provide quantitative and qualitative data, as well as case studies to demonstrate the on-ground community-based evidence. This reporting is structured against reportable outcomes for three National Outcomes Indicators developed ahead of the commencement of the first round of funding. The three national outcome indicators are:

- Stolen Generations survivors have an increased sense of belonging and connection to culture
- Stolen Generations survivors have increased understanding and strength in caring for their loss and grief
- Stolen Generations survivors have increased knowledge and confidence in utilising available support services.

Notably, this report extends the early analysis undertaken in 2015 when The Healing Foundation published *Healing for our Stolen Generations: Sharing Our Stories*. The 2015 report presented key findings from the first 31 healing projects funded through Rounds 1 and 2 of the Stolen Generations Initiative.

The findings in *Healing for our Stolen Generations: Sharing our Stories* provided evidence of four essential elements to create a healing environment for Stolen Generations survivors:

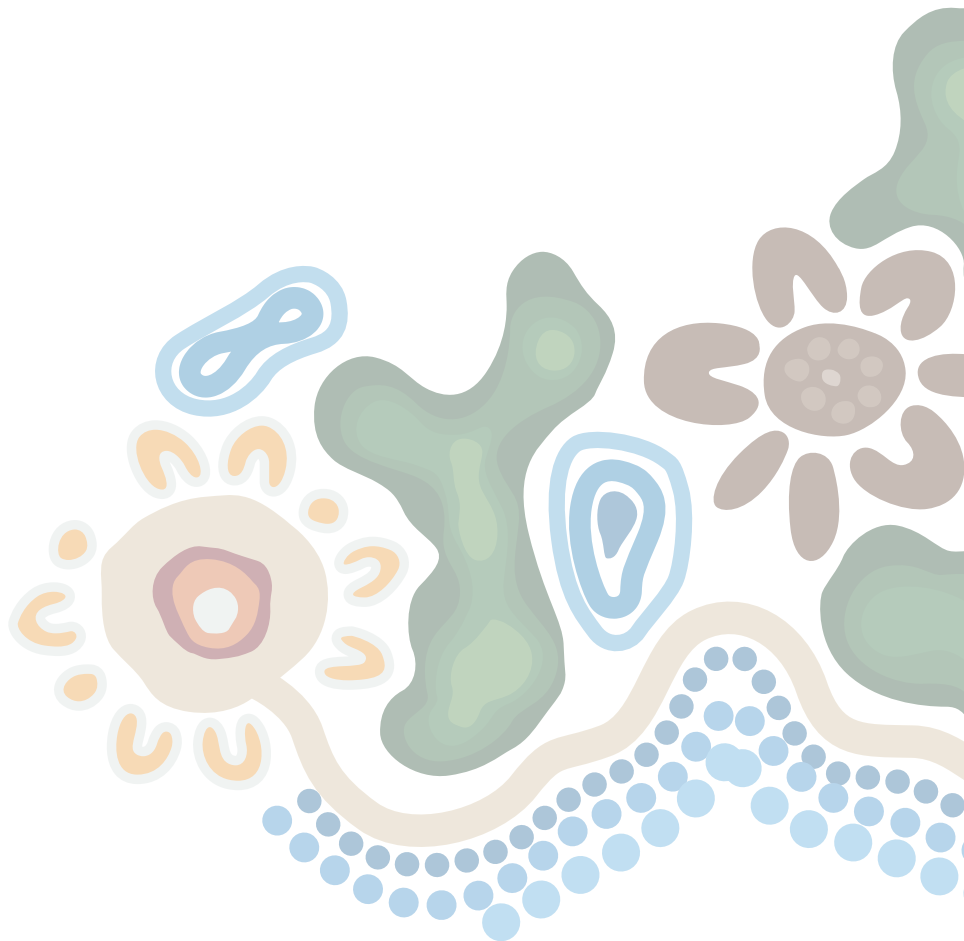
- coming together with other survivors and sharing stories of pain, hope, and renewal
- reconnecting and strengthening culture and cultural identity
- trauma-aware, healing-informed services and responses
- healing solutions led and developed by Stolen Generations survivors.

¹ These are conservative estimations due to the fact that not all reports for Rounds 5 and 6 were available for inclusion in the review and some reports provided did not use the reporting template and therefore did not report against the National Outcome Indicators.

This report extends the 2015 analysis by examining all the available data from Rounds 1–6 and then undertaking the following analysis:

- identify common and/or longitudinal impacts of the Stolen Generations Initiative
- test the degree to which later funding rounds validate (or not) the findings contained in *Healing for our Stolen Generations: Sharing Our Stories* report
- examine the degree to which findings align with The Healing Foundation’s Theory of Change
- consider how/if the Stolen Generations Initiative mitigates the findings contained in the 2018 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report² that examines outcomes for Stolen Generations survivors (including descendants) across a range of indicators.

Importantly, this report strengthens the evidence base for the positive impacts of healing initiatives over time for Stolen Generations survivors and their families.



² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018), *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Stolen Generations and descendants: numbers, demographic characteristics and selected outcomes*. Cat. no. IHW 195. Canberra: AIHW.

The Stolen Generations

The effects of colonisation on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia have been catastrophic. The histories of colonisation are highly diverse, unfolding at different times and in locally and regionally specific ways. Nevertheless, the common experience for Indigenous peoples is one of devastation caused by introduced disease, frontier violence, dispossession from land and its resources, and the disruption and suppression of traditional cultures.

Added to these factors was the forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. These children have become known as the Stolen Generations.

The practice of removal became a systematic part of assimilation policies adopted by all Australian governments in the 20th century, and while the number of children forcibly removed under this policy is not known, the estimate provided by the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families was that:

... between one in three and one in 10 Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families and communities in the period from approximately 1910 until 1970. In certain regions and in certain periods the figure was undoubtedly much greater than one in 10. In that time not one Indigenous family has escaped the effects of forcible removal... Most families have been affected, in one or more generations, by the forcible removal of one or more children.³

In 2018, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW 2018) provided the detailed analysis of the demographic characteristics and selected outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Stolen Generations survivors and descendants.⁴ This report was then updated (AIHW 2021), with specific reference to Stolen Generations survivors aged 50 and over.⁵ These two reports formed the basis of the findings included in the *Make Healing Happen: it's time to act* report (The Healing Foundation 2021)⁶

Collectively, the AIHW reports and *Make Healing Happen* paints a worrying picture of health issues, disability, and poor economic security factors for Stolen Generations survivors – and all the more as survivors approach their elderly years.

In 2018–19 there were an estimated 33,600 Stolen Generations survivors nationally, with approximately one in five (21%) of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples born before 1972 and still living having been removed from their families. In 2018–19, more than 80% of survivors were aged 50 and over. By 2022, all will be aged at least 50, and eligible for aged care.⁷

Nationally, more than one third (36%) of adult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are descended from older generations who were removed (great/grand/parents, aunties, uncles). This equates to 142,200 descendants nationally in 2018–19, with the number growing over time. In some jurisdictions (Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, and the ACT), between 40% and 60% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults are descended from Stolen Generations survivors.⁸

3 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) (1997a), *Bringing Them Home*. Sydney, Spinney, page 31

4 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018), *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Stolen Generations and descendants: numbers, demographic characteristics and selected outcomes*. Cat. no. IHW 195. Canberra: AIHW.

5 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2021), *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Stolen Generations aged 50 and over: updated analyses for 2018–19*. Cat. no. IHW 257. Canberra: AIHW.

6 The Healing Foundation (2021a), *Make Healing Happen: it's time to act*, Canberra.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.



Compared to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of the same age, Stolen Generations survivors aged 50 and over are more likely to be:⁹

Living in tough economic circumstances

- 1.8 times as likely not to be the owner of a home
- 1.6 times as likely to live in a household that could not raise \$2,000 in an emergency
- 1.5 times as likely to have government payments as their main income source.

Living with ill health and other stressors

- 1.7 times as likely to have experienced discrimination due to being Indigenous
- 1.5 times as likely to have experienced actual or threatened physical violence
- 1.4 times as likely to have a disability as a severe or profound core activity limitation
- 1.4 times as likely to have poor mental health
- 1.3 times as likely to have been diagnosed with a mental health condition.

Living with higher levels of some health risk factors

- 1.7 times as likely to be a current smoker.

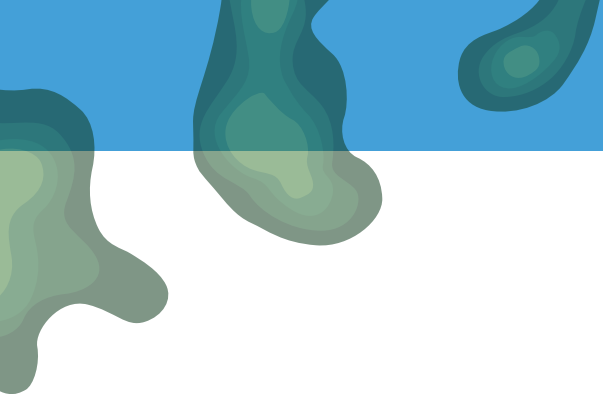
Compared (on an age-standardised basis) with the general non-Indigenous population aged 50 and over, Stolen Generations survivors aged 50 and over are:

- 6.4 times as likely to live in an overcrowded house
- 4.1 times as likely to not be a homeowner
- 3.5 times as likely to be a current smoker
- 3.0 times as likely to have a severe or profound core activity limitation
- 2.7 times as likely to have poor mental health
- 2.3 times as likely to have poor or fair self-assessed health
- 2.2 times as likely to have government payments as main source of income
- 1.9 times as likely to be unemployed (among working age up to 64).

For long-term health conditions, compared to the general non-Indigenous population, Stolen Generations survivors aged 50 and over are:

- 4.6 times as likely to have kidney disease
- 3.1 times as likely to have diabetes
- 3.0 times as likely to have chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- 2.7 times as likely to have heart, stroke, or vascular diseases
- 2.3 times as likely to have asthma.

⁹ Ibid.



Descendants of Stolen Generations survivors also experience significantly poorer wellbeing compared to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Traumatic childhood experiences such as those of Stolen Generations survivors may affect following generations through biological changes in stress responses, and by undermining survivors' ability to parent and love freely without fear.¹⁰

Stolen Generations survivors also find that the consequences of removal create environments of disadvantage for their families, which many struggle to address throughout their lives.

Compared with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults, adult descendants of Stolen Generations survivors are:¹¹

- 2 times as likely to feel discriminated against in the past 12 months
- 2 times as likely not to speak an Indigenous language
- 1.9 times as likely to have experienced actual or threatened physical violence in the past 12 months
- 1.6 times as likely not to have good health (based on a composite health measure)
- 1.5 times as likely to have a problem accessing services in the past 12 months
- 1.5 times as likely to have been arrested in the past five years
- 1.4 times as likely to have a low level of trust in the general community
- 1.4 times as likely to have ever been formally charged by police
- 1.4 times as likely to have poor self-assessed health
- 1.4 times as likely to have a low level of satisfaction with their lives
- 1.3 times as likely to have poor mental health.

The level of disadvantage outlined here should not come as a surprise. Evidence given to national inquiries and royal commissions into forced removal and sexual abuse over the past three decades demonstrates that Stolen Generations survivors suffered terrible childhood trauma, including institutionalisation, neglect, and abuse.

¹⁰ Van Der Kolk, B. (2014), *The Body Keeps the Score: Mind, Brain and Body in the Healing of Trauma*, Penguin, New York

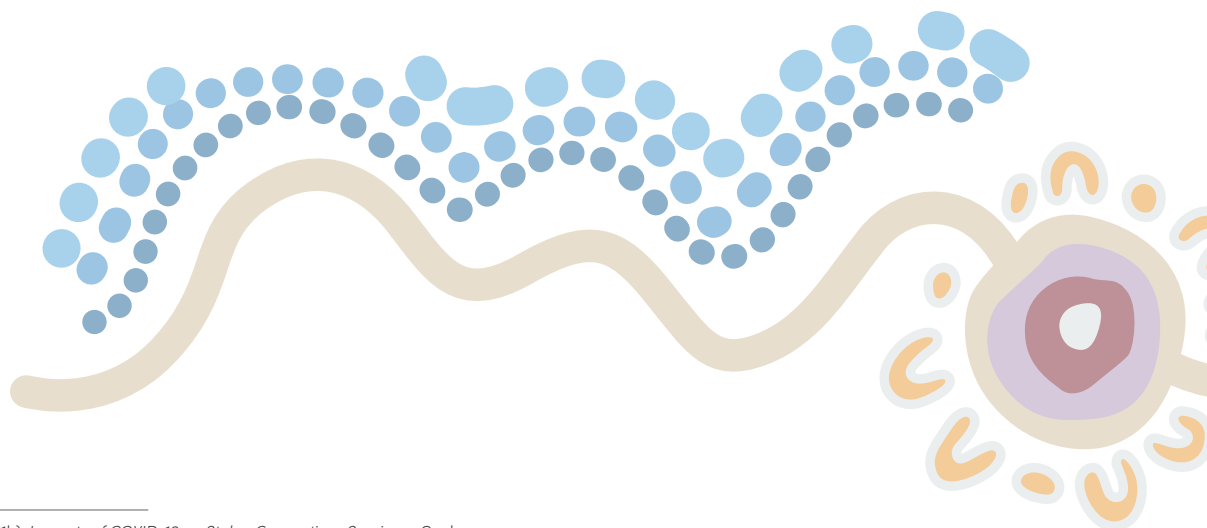
¹¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018), *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Stolen Generations and descendants: numbers, demographic characteristics and selected outcomes*. Cat. no. IHW 195. Canberra: AIHW

Critically, research commissioned by The Healing Foundation found the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions were felt acutely by Stolen Generations survivors. Across 23 social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB) indicators, the research found:¹²

- Stolen Generations survivors had a significantly increased sense of isolation and loneliness, with more than 90 per cent of respondents reporting an increased sense of isolation.
- Just over 80 per cent of respondents had increased feelings of loneliness, with 70 per cent reporting feeling trapped in their own thoughts.
- More than 90 per cent reported feeling disconnected from family, community, and culture, while 77 per cent felt disconnected from Country.
- Just over 66 per cent of Stolen Generations survivors reported a decline in their physical health during COVID-19 and 75 per cent reported a decline in mental health and wellbeing, while 66 per cent reporting a decreased ability to cope with stress.
- Three in four Stolen Generations survivors experienced an increase in family and cultural responsibilities and alongside this, more than 90 per cent experienced stress being placed on important relationships.
- 20 per cent of respondents reported having no support during COVID-19, while 58 per cent reported having some support.
- Finally, 70 per cent of Stolen Generations survivors reported that COVID-19 and the restrictions had negatively impacted their healing journey.

These findings are particularly concerning given the degree to which connection to family, community, culture, and Country enhances health and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and particularly for Stolen Generations survivors and descendants.

This report considers the degree to which the Stolen Generations Initiative supports – over time – healing from trauma (prior to and during COVID-19).



¹² The Healing Foundation (2021b), *Impacts of COVID-19 on Stolen Generations Survivors*, Canberra.

Methodology

Two methods of analysis were employed for this project. First, content analysis of progress and final reports provided by Stolen Generations organisations. Second, in-depth interviews with staff from six Stolen Generations organisations that had received funding across multiple rounds of the Stolen Generations Initiative.

Content analysis is a class of research methods at the intersection of the qualitative and quantitative traditions. It is a research technique used to make replicable and valid inferences by interpreting and coding textual material. By systematically evaluating texts (e.g., documents, oral communication, and graphics), qualitative data can be converted into quantitative data. It allows researchers to recover and examine the nuances of behaviours, perceptions, and trends.

The data collected from funded projects provides information about each project's performance in line with service agreements. Data is also collected on agreed National Indicator Outcomes and associated indicators. This data, together with project case studies, provided a picture of the effectiveness of the collective healing projects and how they contribute to the larger healing agenda for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Content analysis began with a preliminary identification and review of The Healing Foundation grants funding database and all progress reports, final reports and Service Delivery Plans for organisations that had received more than one round of funding.

From information sourced through The Healing Foundations grants database there were:

- 42 organisations funded across the four rounds of the Stolen Generations Initiative
- 20 organisations that received funding in a **single** round only
- 10 organisation that received funding for **two** of the six rounds
- 5 organisations that received funding for **three** of the six rounds
- 4 organisations that received funding for **four** of the six rounds (Cootamundra Girls, Kimberley Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation, Northern Territory Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation, Winagali Marumali)
- 2 organisations that received funding for **five** of the six rounds (Connecting Home and Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation)
- 1 organisation that received funding in all **six** rounds (Link-Up Queensland).

Table 1 provides a summary of the funding rounds according to organisations funded and total organisations per round.

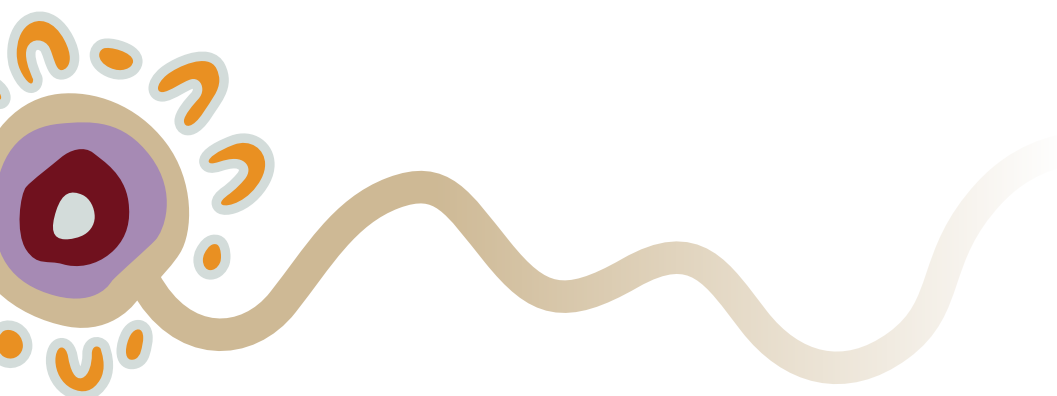


Table 1: Funded organisations by funding round

Organisation	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6
Aboriginal Child and Community Care State Sec	●	●				
Aboriginal Elders and Community Care Services	●					
Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia						●
Aboriginal Sobriety Group	●					
Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service	●			●		
BTH Committee (Western Australia)		●		●	●	
Cherbourg Historical Precinct		●		●	●	
Clarence Valley Aboriginal Healing Centre						●
Connecting Home	●	●	●		●	●
Cootamundra Girls		●	●	●		●
Gurriny Yealamucka	●					
Healing Waters					●	
Hope Community Services					●	
Katherine Region Stolen Generations		●		●		
Katherine Regional Aboriginal Health Services		●				●
Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation		●		●	●	●
Kinchela Boys Home	●	●	●		●	●
Link-Up Central Australian Aboriginal Congress						●
Link-Up New South Wales		●			●	●
Link-Up Queensland	●	●	●	●	●	●
Link-Up South Australia/Nunukuwarrin		●	●			
Link-Up Victoria		●		●		
Catholic Education South Australia (Martin Pascoe)		●		●	●	
NYP Women's Council						●
Northern Territory Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation	●	●			●	●
Nunukuwarrin Yunti of South Australia Inc.						●
Pangula Mannamurna	●					
Relationships Australia		●				
Rumbalara	●			●		
Sister Kate's Home	●				●	●
The Children of the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home Inc.						●
Townsville ATSI Health Service	●					
Tullawon Health	●					
Umoona Tjutagku	●					
VACCA					●	
Western Australia Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation					●	●
Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative	●			●		
Winangali Marumali	●			●	●	●
Woolkabunning Kiaka Inc.					●	●
Yokai					●	
Yorgum Aboriginal Corporation		●		●		●
Yura Yungi Aboriginal Medical Service	●					
Total	18	17	5	13	17	19

● Received funding

The initial review of the reports allowed for organising the substantial volume of data. The quantitative data was aggregated across rounds and specifically against the three National Outcomes (NO) Indicators:

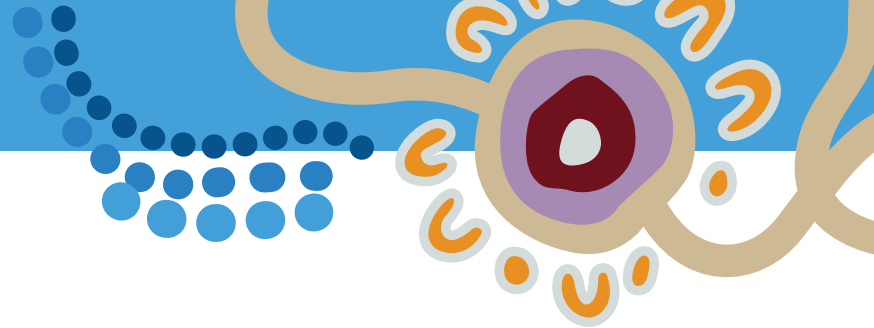
- NO1 – Stolen Generations survivors have an increased sense of belonging and connection to culture.
- NO2 – Stolen Generations survivors have increased understanding and strength in caring for their loss and grief.
- NO3 – Stolen Generations survivors have increased knowledge and confidence in utilising available support services.

From the initial review, progress reports and final reports from organisations (n=22) funded across more than one round were identified. Content analysis of these reports was then undertaken to identify key themes and emerging trends/impacts. These were coded and imported into an excel database for further analysis and specifically to identify change over time. These themes were later triangulated with The Healing Foundation's Theory of Change and the AIHW report (2018).

Finally, representatives from six funded organisations that had received funding across 3 or more funding rounds were interviewed. Interviews were held with the Chief Executive Officer and/or Program Managers (plus any additional staff identified by the organisation). The objective of the interviews was to:

- test the degree to which the findings from the meta-analysis were aligned with those experienced 'on the ground'
- identify any additional impacts that had not been captured in the meta-analysis but are salient at the organisational and/or family and community levels
- examine the degree to which any early impacts have been sustainable.

Findings



At already noted, the analysis provided in this report extends the findings from *Healing for our Stolen Generations: Sharing Our Stories* (2015), which pointed to the emergence of four essential elements to create a healing environment.

- *Coming together with other survivors and sharing stories of pain, hope, and renewal:* Stolen Generations survivors provide a community of care for each other and a support system that cannot be replicated by any other professional means. Sharing their own stories and bearing witness to others' stories in a supportive environment helps participants to reduce their sense of isolation and increase their strength.
- *Reconnecting and strengthening culture and cultural identity:* reconnecting with cultural values, knowledge systems, and practices and restoring a sense of pride in one's cultural identity is a critical factor for healing. The inclusion of traditional arts, crafts, music, dance, and song as ways to connect brought great joy and pride to participants, as did being on Country and connecting with land and significant sites.
- *Trauma-aware, healing-informed services and responses:* increasing knowledge about trauma and its impacts enabled project workers to provide trauma-aware, healing-informed responses and helped Stolen Generations survivors and their families to better understand their healing needs. This allows participants to better manage their trauma and grief in more positive ways. Engagement with medical and counselling services, drug and alcohol programs, traditional healers and Link-Up services all increased.
- *Healing solutions led and developed by Stolen Generations survivors:* Stolen Generations services and organisations worked directly with Stolen Generations survivors to restore self-determination and aid participants in their recovery from trauma. Activities ranged from forums and gatherings to strengthening organisations that represent former residents of institutions.¹³

In reporting across six rounds, the data begins to provide greater emphasis on these four elements. The emergence of longer-term impacts point to, perhaps, different funding and policy priorities in the future.

Table 2 summarises the performance reporting data collated across the projects between January 2013 and December 2021.

Table 2: Stolen Generations Initiative outputs

Indicator	Total
Number of projects	90+
Number of participants	8700+
Employment	600+
Services delivered	650+

It is important to note that in the data there is no way of knowing what percentage of the total number of participants (8,700+) across the projects are unique cases. That is, with 22 organisations funded more than once it is expected that a percentage of the total participant numbers includes a single participant attending multiple funded projects with the same organisation across multiple funding rounds.

¹³ The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation (2015), *Healing for our Stolen Generations: Sharing our Stories – Executive Summary*, Canberra.

During the interviews undertaken with organisations, staff confirmed how projects supported individual Stolen Generations survivors' journeys of healing through ongoing support over multiple years and multiple projects. It is these stories that provide examples of the long-term impacts of the Stolen Generations Initiative. Though no organisation is formally documenting progress over time for individuals, there are many stories of Stolen Generations survivors who became stronger and more connected and then became advocates for themselves and others.

In analysing reports from those organisations that had been funded in more than one funding round, healing for Stolen Generations survivors occurred – primarily – through the following activities and projects:

- healing gatherings, camps, and workshop
- men's and women's gatherings and camps/peer support groups
- (re)connection to Country and culture through cultural activities such as art, music, song and dance, language, and ceremony
- support for Elders to document their stories and assist them to transfer their knowledge and wisdom
- documentation of individual and community stories and storytelling through art, poetry, song, writing, and drama
- reunions with families for those forcibly removed and those from institutions and missions
- empowering Stolen Generations survivors to develop and lead their own healing solutions in their communities and organisations
- material support for Stolen Generations survivors during the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions and other government-sanctioned public health measures.

These are aligned with those reported in *Healing for our Stolen Generations: Sharing our Stories*, however in later funding rounds, there is a much stronger emphasis on empowerment and support for organisations to increase their advocacy activities, embedding good organisational governance practices and Stolen Generations survivors leading their own healing solutions individually and within organisations.

Reporting against the National Outcome Indicators

In undertaking the analysis informing this report, and attempting to identify any longitudinal outcomes/impacts, it was important to consider reporting against the three National Outcome Indicators. Accordingly, reported data was imported from each organisations' reports by funding round and National Outcome Indicator. The data was then coded and key themes identified. The aim of the analysis was to detect any changes that had occurred over time for each National Outcome Indicator.

Table 3 summarises the national outcomes data collated and aggregated across projects over the six (6) funding rounds. It should be noted that the reported percentage is an output from the funding database for Rounds 1–4 and calculated directly from the progress reports for Rounds 5 and 6.

However, this data needs further interpretation as the percentages are based on each project self-reporting (at six-month intervals) on a scale of 1–10 the degree to which Stolen Generations survivors who participated in the activities:

1. were satisfied with the project they participated in
2. have an increased sense of belonging and connection to culture (NO1)
3. can better manage and care for their loss and grief in constructive ways (NO2)
4. have increased their use of support services (NO3).

Table 3: Database reporting for client satisfaction and National Outcome Indicators

National Outcome Indicators	R1 and 2	R3	R4	R5	R6	Average
Client satisfaction	86%	52%	71%	87%	90%	77%
NO1 – Increased sense of belonging and connection to culture	77%	71%	73%	88%	92%	80%
NO2 – Can now better manage and care for their loss and grief in constructive ways	72%	75%	71%	77%	84%	76%
NO3 – Increased use of support services	68%	69%	71%	74%	79%	72%

Accordingly, over the period of analysis, the following can be reported:

- participants were '*very satisfied*' (average of 7.7 on the 10-point scale) with the project they participated in
- participants were moving towards '*considerable*' increased sense of belonging and connection to their culture (average of 8.0 on a 10-point scale)
- participants were moving from '*some improvement*' to '*lots*' of improvement, in terms of being better able to manage and care for their loss and grief in constructive ways (average of 7.6 on a 10-point scale)
- participants were moving towards '*greatly*' increased confidence to use support services (average of 7.2 on a 10-point scale).

.....

Data suggests there have been increasing levels of satisfaction with projects over time, and across all indicators Rounds 5 and 6 demonstrate significant increases from Rounds 1 to 4. This suggests the supports offered during COVID-19, increased sense of belonging and connection to culture, ability to better manage and care for loss and grief and led to increased use of support services, beyond those offered in Rounds 1–4 (as good as they were).

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National Outcome Indicator 1: Increased sense of belonging and connection

For organisations that have been funded across multiple years, there is a common trend that these organisations score higher than the aggregated average for all organisations on this National Outcome Indicator (8+ versus 7 on the 10-point scale). Further, when organisations are funded for multiple rounds there is increased likelihood for the score to improve overtime.

Many of these organisations are working (primarily though not exclusively) with the same cohort of Stolen Generations survivors (e.g., Kinchela Boys, Cootamundra Girls) across funding rounds. Therefore, the data suggests that the longer an organisation commits and works with Stolen Generations survivors through the activities supported by the Stolen Generations Initiative funding, the greater the increase in participants' sense of belonging and connection to culture over time. This in turn increases the healing process.

In the first instance, belonging and connection increases by simply being with other Stolen Generations survivors. The Stolen Generations Initiative brings survivors together and reduces isolation – noting isolation is increasingly prevalent for Stolen Generations survivors and known to have a negative effect of individual health and wellbeing.

For those organisations funded across multiple rounds, four key themes emerged in the data. In the context of grief and trauma, these themes are interconnected and shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Impacts of the Stolen Generations Initiative for multi-year funded organisations



'Connection' is a strong theme in the reports received from the 18 organisations funded in Round 1. Increased connection to self, Country and others are all evident in the data. In providing a safe environment, connection and belonging mean Stolen Generations survivors are able to share their stories – in many cases for the first time.

Through creative expression (a focus of many of the early projects) participants were able to document and share painful and traumatic past experiences and begin a process of understanding how these experiences had/have impacted on their present – in their behaviours and decision-making.

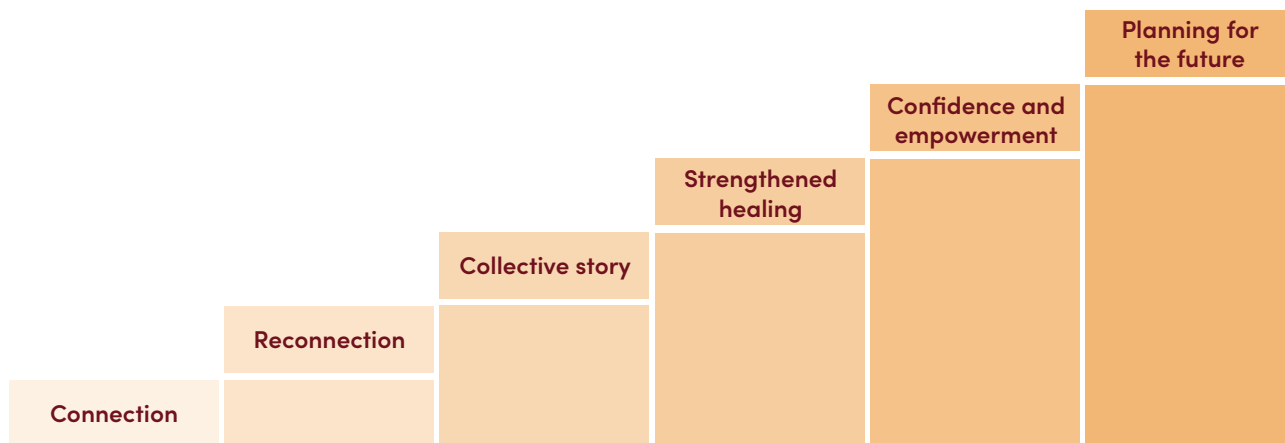
In a sense of increased hope for the future, there is evidence in the data of participants thinking about how they might speak out and advocate and share experiences in other (safe) spaces. There is, in these early reports, emerging evidence of Stolen Generations survivors beginning to feel empowered.

For organisations that received funding in early rounds and then later rounds (e.g., Sister Kate's Home funded in Round 1 and then 5 and 6), themes of belonging and connection began to deepen for participants. The data analysis reported across subsequent rounds sees 'reconnection' (specifically to culture) emerge as a theme in nearly all reports from organisations receiving funding for a second or third time.

As Stolen Generations survivors participate in gatherings for a second or third time, they begin to talk about the importance of continuing to be with each other – that is, maintaining their connection to each other has increasing importance to their wellbeing. The data suggests that as participants reconnect they are able to build collective strength by being together and that their individual stories begin to take on added strength as a collective story.

Collective trauma requires collective healing, and the Stolen Generations Initiative suggests that collective healing occurs – in part – when Stolen Generations survivors bring their stories together to form a collective story.

Figure 2: Building stronger stories and connections



As healing is strengthened, the later reports have increasing references to greater confidence. Empowerment begins to emerge more strongly as a theme and there is increasing reference to Stolen Generations survivors being active in promoting their story, the stories of others, and supporting the development and capacity efforts within the organisation to which they are connected (i.e. Link-Up Queensland, Kinchela Boys, Cootamundra Girls, and Connecting Home). 'Planning' is a term used in all reports for Rounds 1–5 for Stolen Generations organisations funded for three or more years.

“Belonging is the belonging in the Kinchela story and connection to culture is connection to the Kinchela community and shared cultural experiences as members of the Kinchela community not as Stolen Generations members or Aboriginal people.”

The term occurred less in Round 6 reports, likely due to the specific, and immediate supports being offered to Stolen Generations survivors during COVID-19.

Finally, for those organisations funded for three or more years, the reported data suggests that those who were part of the earlier activities can, in time, have increased strength and confidence to not only tell their own story but in turn advocate for other Stolen Generations survivors.

Figure 3 below maps the individual and organisational journey for organisations funded three or more times.

Figure 3: Focus of themes for participants and organisations over the life of multiple funding rounds



National Outcome Indicator 2: Increased understanding and strength in caring for loss and grief

There is a common trend that organisations that have been funded across multiple years score slightly higher than the aggregated average for all organisations on this National Outcome Indicator (7.9 versus 7.4 on the 10-point scale).

For organisations that are funded across multiple rounds there is no consistent quantitative trend or linear improvement in understanding and strength in caring for loss and grief. However, when the key themes were identified for each of the six rounds for multiple funded organisations, there is evidence that in the first round of funding participants are focused on their own understanding of loss and grief. In later rounds, as connections are built, there is still a focus on their own loss and grief but others' loss and grief begins to be referenced.

As with an increased sense of belonging and connection to culture, understanding of loss and grief is strengthened through connection to others – in this, an individual's story of loss and grief becomes part of a larger story.

In later rounds the understanding of loss and grief begins to be translated into action and finally advocacy for self and others. Participants become mobilised as survivors and are now advocates.

The key themes as they emerge across multiple funding rounds are captured in Figure 3.

Figure 4: Understanding of loss and grief



With each year of funding the themes seem to gain increased reinforcement and become embedded for, and embodied by, participants.

Key themes across progress, final, and acquittal reports for organisations receiving funding multiple times are provided in Table 4 (by funding rounds).

Table 4: Key themes in relation to trauma and grief

First time funded	Second time funded	Third time funded	Three or more times funded
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active participation • Creative expression • Sharing my experiences • Exploring loss and grief • Verbalising my loss and grief • Observing the loss and grief of others • Self-reflection/reflexive • Identifying issues • Understanding anxieties and concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coming together • Sharing stories • Reconnection • Support from each other • Connection to culture and family • Educating others – how they are managing • Connection to each other • Personal stories connected to intergenerational trauma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healing from others • Increasing support for others • Understanding cultural belonging • Meeting with policymakers • Empowerment • Control • Developing and taking actions • Active participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active support for ‘new’ members • Action plans and strategies • Powerful testimonies being told and shared • Descendants begin to understand the/their story • Collected and documented stories that are connected • Connected stories and connected individuals

Individual focus

Collective focus

National Outcome Indicator 3: Increased knowledge and confidence in utilising available support services

Across all organisations and all funding rounds the projects consistently reported that support services were more likely to be accessed as a result of participation in any of the funded projects.

At the aggregated level across all projects there is a steady increase on the 10-point scale from 6.8 in Round 1 to 7.9 in Round 6.

The reporting template does not specifically ask Stolen Generations organisations to list all services that are being accessed as a direct result of the funding. Some reports, however, voluntarily named some of the services being accessed.

Table 5 below outlines, by each round, the services that were not previously being accessed that were accessed as a result of the project for organisations that received funding multiple times.

Table 5: Services being accessed as a result of the project (for organisations funded multiple times)

First time funded	Second time funded	Third time funded	Three or more times funded
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link-Up services • Men's group • Stolen Generations support group • Art therapy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal services • Men's group • Social and emotional wellbeing counsellor • VACCA • Koorie Family History Service • Disability supports • Aged Care • Support groups • Counsellors • Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling services • Family history and research services • Case management • Participation on Advisory Group • Participation in the National Stolen Generations Alliance • Determination of own services to members • Engagement and advocacy to State Departments Aboriginal Affairs • Partnering with organisations offering integrated services • Representation at the Upper House Inquiry into Reparations for Stolen Generations (NSW) 	<p>Note: At this stage of funding, organisations are directing their own service needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are focused on building the capacity of their own organisation to determine their own services and advocate for their needs. • Counselling services, family history services, men's groups, and women's groups were all established and being accessed. • Connection to other Stolen Generations survivors and descendants was still seen as the most important 'service' being accessed.

Individual referrals and access to services

Stolen Generations survivors determining their own service needs

Organisational reflections on longitudinal impacts

The second phase of the methodology was to undertake interviews with seven organisations that had received funding across three or more rounds – noting these were not necessarily consecutive rounds. Organisations interviewed were:

- Connecting Home (funded in Rounds 1,2 and 3)
- Cootamundra Girls Aboriginal Corporation (funded in Rounds 2, 3 and 4)
- Kimberley Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation (funded in Rounds 2, 4, 5 and 6)
- Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation (funded in Rounds 1, 2 and 3)
- Link-Up Queensland (funded in Rounds 1, 2, 3 and 4)
- Northern Territory Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation (funded Rounds 1,2,5 and 6)
- Sister Kate’s Home Kids Aboriginal Corporation (funded Rounds 1, 5 and 6).

Figure 5 presents a word cloud composed of the words used in the qualitative interviews. It is a data visualisation of the content of the interviews, with the size of each word indicating frequency across all the qualitative interviews. It illustrates the themes and concepts that were important to interviewees and the organisations they represent.

Of course, word clouds do not provide the context within which the word appears or give the longitudinal impacts of the Stolen Generations Initiative. Therefore, the sections that follow present the main longitudinal themes identified in the interview data. They most obviously align to the output of the Word Cloud analysis.

Gathering, connection, and healing

The most significant impact identified by organisations funded across multiple rounds of the Stolen Generations initiative, was the ability the funding provided – in the first instance – to bring Stolen Generations survivors together. All organisations stated that without the Stolen Generations Initiative funding the initial gatherings (camps, workshops, etc.) where Stolen Generations survivors could meet other survivors – sometimes for the first time – and hear and share common stories would not have happened:

‘There would have been a lot we could not do. We could not have brought the people together and Stolen Generations survivors, well some Stolen Generations survivors would never have had the environment where they would get support. Being able to be in a safe environment and share stories, well how else would it have happened. No-one funds that... and then there is no ongoing safe environment or ongoing support.’

‘The partnership with the [Healing] Foundation came at a critical time. Bringing them together would not have happened at all! So the kind of connection that is there now and that is so important to our members in terms of their healing journey might not exist. It allowed us to have those challenging conversations about working through our healing and what it means. It began the process of being able to be safe to voice the pain.’

Interviews across the organisations were highly consistent and extremely affirmative in highlighting that many of the positive individual and organisational outcomes achieved over nearly a decade have their genesis – in part – in *‘the early gatherings we were able to have due to that funding from the [Healing] Foundation’*.

It is each organisation’s ability to bring Stolen Generations survivors together in a culturally safe environment that has provided the means for stories to be told and heard. In some cases, this was through yarning with others, facilitated programming, creative and cultural expression and, as far as possible, on Country. While there are variations in program/project design, it was always with other people who have similar experiences and stories of trauma:

‘These gatherings and coming together were for many the beginning of hope and the end of isolation, loneliness, and everything that was bad. It created connection and strengthened the bonds between our clients and their communities.’

‘In safe spaces we were able to create an environment where bonds to move forward were created. We were able to go somewhere out on Country or bush instead of meeting in the boardroom. We were able to create sustainable gatherings with groups ongoing where previously we had to have them on site and where they were hard to sustain.’

‘The forums [gatherings] are the beginning of healing. Without the funding [Stolen Generations Initiative] there is no healing for the Stolen Generations.’

While each of the organisations interviewed expressed the importance of the funding in creating connections between Stolen Generations survivors and their organisations, each expressed the greater importance of connecting survivors to each other. The organisations therefore might be seen as the facilitators of connection, and the Stolen Generations Initiative is the enabler of connection and subsequently healing:

'We are just facilitating the journey ... they have the solutions.'

The Stolen Generations Initiative is enabling gatherings, in safe spaces, which allow for storytelling and sharing. It seems that the gatherings are a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for healing for Stolen Generations survivors.

Indeed, one of the benefits of the Stolen Generations Initiative funding has been that it has enabled initial connections to be maintained. For the Kinchela Boys and Cootamundra Girls, a key stressor after the gatherings was how the connections made were going to be maintained. Subsequent funding allowed for the ongoing support and connections to be enhanced and strengthened. This meant healing journeys and strategies for managing trauma and grief could be imagined and enacted.

From these gatherings there is a heavy emphasis in the interviews and the reporting on the enhanced ability of Stolen Generations survivors to be able to commence and/or continue their healing journeys. It was not only the case of understanding trauma and healing but the ability to share in others' experiences of trauma and healing:

'Some thought they were the only ones removed and abused. Listening to others became a powerful experience ... coming together and connecting was healing for people. You could watch people become more comfortable and confident. More able to share their story as they listened to others' stories. We could see people healing as they started to interact and engage with each other.'

'From the camp [gathering] people were able to engage with us more and access more support for their healing. They had safe and ongoing support and healing that reached beyond the camp.'

'Coming together provided collective healing from transgenerational trauma and began to build identities, which is important as they need to understand where they belong. The biggest impact of the funding is the ability to get together for quality time and maintain continuity. Healing is simply being together.'

However, one organisation was cautious in overestimating the evidence of outcomes and impacts of the Stolen Generations Initiative. Progress is not linear and does not exist along a continuum. All organisations noted this aspect of healing:

'We have seen incredible stories of [clients] healing. I can think of clients that were not engaged and could not share their trauma or story. Now they can present ... tell their story of trauma and healing in front of whole groups. But then we see something happens and they withdraw ... then they have to build themselves up again, but we are always there for them. Healing is ongoing and we provide ongoing support but it's not a straight line from struggle to success.'

'Our clients are 50 plus now and focused with their children and how their trauma has affected their children. If our clients have seen another day and seen their kids it's a good day! Another day might be the best outcome we can hope for. This is the level of complexity and trauma we are dealing with.'

The impacts of COVID-19 restrictions demonstrated this non-linear process, with Stolen Generations survivors reporting the re-triggering of trauma and a negative impact on healing journeys, resulting from

Commonwealth and State Governments public health responses.¹⁴ Accordingly, this review notes the importance, to Stolen Generations survivors, of The Healing Foundation's response offering up to \$30,000 grant funding to Stolen Generations organisations. That is, support for organisations that voluntarily addressed the pressing needs of those who were feeling increased levels of stress, anxiety, isolation, and a decline in physical and mental health.

Accordingly, it is clear that over the life of the Stolen Generations Initiative, the funding has directly and indirectly enabled the healing process of Stolen Generations survivors. It has enabled more than 6,000 Stolen Generations survivors to come together as participants in healing programs, to connect and share, and tell their stories.

The quantitative data identifies broadly the importance of connections to land, culture, and others as part of the healing process. However, the organisational interviews provide strong evidence that connection to other Stolen Generations survivors provides the confidence and strength many say they need to explore more deeply reconnection to the families, communities, culture, and land that was lost as a result of forced removal.

Indeed, interviews highlighted how coming together, and the increased sense of connection, led to Stolen Generations survivors feeling a sense of empowerment in their healing journey and a sense of how self-determination becomes a reality within and through the healing process.

Empowerment, self-determination, and advocacy

For organisations funded across multiple rounds the interview data provides evidence of how ongoing funding allowed Stolen Generations survivors to feel empowered and begin to determine their own healing journeys.

Numerous stories were shared of clients gaining confidence and being able to share their story, and, where they had felt isolated and alone, they now felt valued and respected. This cannot be underestimated as for many survivors this was the first time they had felt either (valued or respected):

'David [pseudonym] is a great example of how people became stronger and empowered. He was reluctant to speak [at the event] but then decided he would speak on behalf of the group. He told his story ... it was the first time he spoke publicly and gained confidence for other times. Even when the Minister turned up. He carries himself better ... it built him as a person and now he feels valued and respected... important.'

'We have people now that embody empowerment and they know where to go to take control in a crisis for them or their family. They take control of their situations and make what they believe are better and right choices. They have become empowered to talk about the pain and restoring family structures.'

'The [Stolen Generations Initiative] funding allowed people to go from isolation to connection and then to empowerment.'

The organisational interviews suggest that as Stolen Generations survivors become empowered, they begin the process of determining their own future outcomes. In most cases those interviewed suggested that this often took the form of advocating (with increasing confidence) for better policy responses at the local, state, and Commonwealth levels.

¹⁴ The Healing Foundation (2021), *Impacts of COVID-19 on Stolen Generations Survivors*, Canberra (April)

Stolen Generations survivors were making contributions back into the organisations that had activated and/or enhanced their healing through the initial gatherings. There were many examples of Stolen Generations survivors now volunteering at, and in some cases employed in the organisations. This was across numerous roles including Board positions and as project workers. In a small number of cases Stolen Generations survivors had been employed as social and emotional wellbeing workers and in one case as a Case Manager.

The impact was that organisations originally established to support Stolen Generations survivors were now having processes, strategies, and procedures fully informed by survivors. The interviews suggested that Stolen Generations survivors were, over time, increasingly informing ('self-determining') the future direction of organisations – at both governance and operational levels.

The ongoing support of The Healing Foundation through the Stolen Generations Initiative was further acknowledged:

'There is a long road ahead. But we want our clients to be telling us what we need to do. We have to strengthen the role we play in their journey, but they have to set the agenda for us. They know what they need, and they know the solutions, so what we do has to be determined by them and their needs. It's not perfect and it might never be, but whitefellas way [governance] is not perfect either so let's not get carried away or be too critical of what we might think is not being achieved.'

'Nobody funds Aboriginal organisations getting stronger. There are no resources to support the Boards and getting us to where we can apply for funding and become sustainable ... There is no funding for building the capacity of our organisations but this [Stolen Generations Initiative] funding helps us do just that.'

From the interview data there is a thread that suggests from the early funding rounds, and the gatherings facilitated by the funding, that a longer-term outcome of the funding (initial and ongoing) was the ability of Stolen Generations survivors to self-determine at the individual and organisational levels.

Stolen Generations Initiative: enabling change

The key inquiry of this review is to determine, as far as possible, any change the Stolen Generations Initiative has enabled over time. This question was explored during the interviews with organisations funded across multiple rounds. Of course, determining causal relationships from funding to outcomes is challenging. At both the individual and organisational level there is a complex environment/context within which the funding, and the programs it enables, is located.

The table below is a summary of the changes organisations believe the ongoing funding through the Stolen Generations Initiative has activated and/or enhanced.

Table 6: Longitudinal changes identified in interviews attributed to the Stolen Generations Initiative

Individual change	Organisational change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased connection to self, others, and culture • increased participation in services • decreased isolation and feeling of loneliness • improved health and wellbeing • able to express feelings of grief and trauma • increased sense of self and identity • increased self-expression and creativity • increased ability to understand and share their story • enhanced healing and confidence • ability to access ongoing support • willing and able to go 'home' • acknowledge intergenerational trauma as a reality • positive legacy for survivors, families, and descendants • creates a future and hope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bringing survivors together and staying connected • provision of ongoing support for survivors • organisational certainty/sustainability • increased capacity to meet current and future needs • capture, document, and publish stories • strengthened truth telling over time • increased reach of services and supports • stronger ability to advocate • stronger ability to influence research and policy • establish ongoing/sustainable women's and men's groups • build a trauma-aware, healing-informed service model • better understanding of ongoing and complex needs • relationships and collaborations with other service providers • enhanced governance

This is a significant set of real and potential changes either initiated or strengthened through the Stolen Generations Initiative. As noted, they are necessary, though not sufficient, for ongoing healing and do not represent linear changes over time. They are, however, important enough to indicate that without the funding committed over multiple years, the healing that is activated and strengthened at the individual and organisational levels might have been slower or in some cases may not have existed:

You can quote me in the report. Without this funding I would not be where I am today, and this organisation would not even be here. We couldn't have achieved all we have achieved without it.

In those early days we could not have brought survivors together. I think we all would be less than we are today. It was the ongoing funding commitment and the partnership with the Foundation that allowed us to progress the way we have.

Summary

This findings section has brought together the content analysis findings from the reports and acquittals and the interview data for organisations funded across multiple rounds. There is strong alignment across the findings that suggest the funding has enabled connections to self, others, organisations, services, land, and culture, and in this healing takes place. Within the healing process empowerment and self-determination are strengthened as Stolen Generations survivors take control of their own journeys and place their empowerment within family and organisational structures.

The Stolen Generations Initiative has built stronger organisations that are not only better positioned to respond to survivors' needs but are able to ensure survivors themselves determine future policy directions within organisations and at the government (State and Commonwealth) level.

This has been done through a model of funding that has partnership as a cornerstone of the relationship The Healing Foundation has with Stolen Generations organisations. While there are the necessary accountabilities and governance in place that go with disbursing more than three million dollars in funding, there are common goals and shared values and understanding. This was critical to the success of the funding provided during the COVID-19 pandemic. Understanding the importance of connection to health and wellbeing and immediately responding with funding to minimise the effects of restrictions was critical for Stolen Generations survivors.

While COVID-19 disrupted the healing journey for many, the Stolen Generations Initiative, has, at the individual and organisational level, ensured Stolen Generations survivors are more hopeful and can remain hopeful of a better future – a future informed and shaped by themselves.

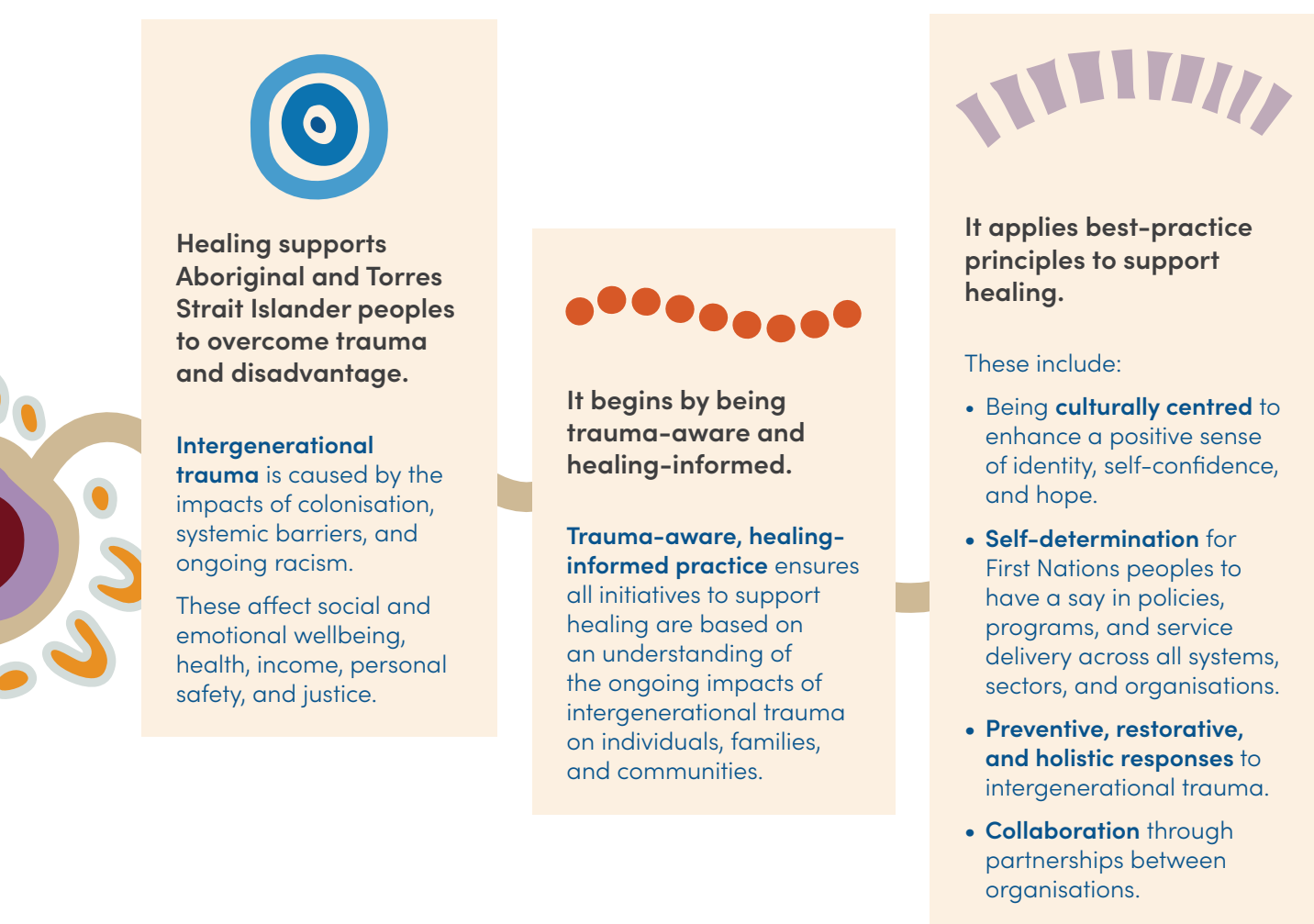
Conclusion: Stolen Generations Initiative and a Theory of Change

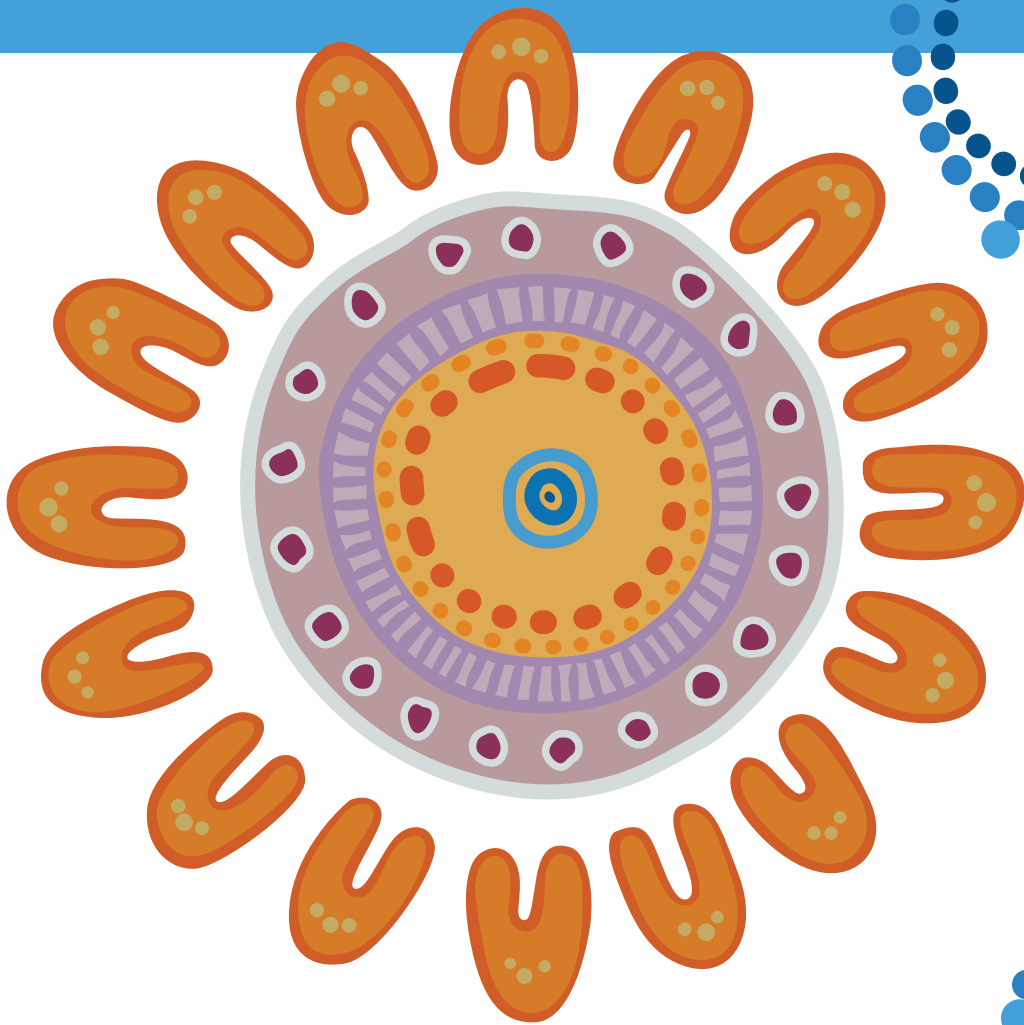
Since 2019, The Healing Foundation has had a Theory of Change for Healing. It allows The Healing Foundation to better:

- articulate how healing can lead to positive social change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities
- identify the key elements required to create the optimal environment for healing at the national, regional, community, and individual levels
- target investment of resources at those elements deemed most critical in creating the environment for healing
- strengthen and build the evidence base for healing.

At the time of writing, The Healing Foundation is reworking its Theory of Change. Figure 6 provides the key elements of the Theory of Change as of March 2022.

Figure 6: The Healing Foundation Theory of Change for Healing – Key elements





It focuses on mechanisms for positive change, which are practical initiatives based on evidence.

These include:

- Developing and transferring knowledge and resources, supporting processes over single events, and applying active and integrated strategies for healing.
- Supporting truth-telling to tackle racist attitudes and encourage people to acknowledge responsibility.
- Implementing evidence-based collective healing programs.
- Building the capability of systems, organisations, and workforces to be trauma-aware and healing-informed.

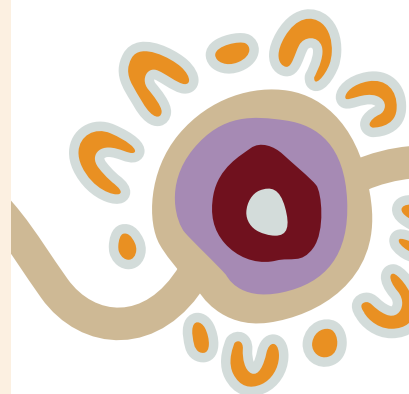


To make healing happen.

Enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to address distress, overcome trauma, strengthen connections, and restore wellbeing.

At a community, family, and individual level.

In a continuous process throughout each person's life and across generations.



Though established prior to the development of the Theory of Change, this review finds that the Stolen Generations Initiative has led to enhanced healing for Stolen Generations survivors. It is indeed making healing happen and over time, it has led to positive outcomes for survivors at the individual, organisational, and national levels. This report provides evidence for the validity of the top line elements of the draft Theory of Change.

Funding organisations through the Stolen Generations Initiative ensured there were programs that promoted healing as a direct response to overcoming trauma and disadvantage, which are the result of colonisation and systemic and ongoing racism.

The report also reinforces that when healing begins and best practice principles to support healing are applied (culturally centred, self-determination, preventative, restorative and holistic, and collaborative), Stolen Generations survivors can take control of their own futures and the future direction (strategic and service provision) of the organisations that represent them.

The mechanisms for positive change proposed in the revised Theory of Change are:

- developing and transferring knowledge and resources, supporting processes rather than single events, and applying active and integrated strategies for healing
- supported truth telling to tackle racist attitudes and encourage people to acknowledge responsibility
- implementing evidence-based collective healing programs
- building capability of systems, organisations, and workforces to be trauma-aware and healing-informed.

There is evidence in this report to suggest the Stolen Generations Initiative can support/reinforce these mechanisms. However, the current aims and the National Outcome Indicators will need to be revised. Measures that align with the Theory of Change and those identified in the AIHW report (2018), summarised in earlier sections of this review, will need to be developed.

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Indeed, regardless of the Theory of Change and the AIHW indicators of health and wellbeing, the Stolen Generations Initiative does so much more now, in addition to enhancing the sense of belonging and connection to culture, increasing understanding and strength in caring for Stolen Generations survivors' loss and grief, and increasing knowledge and confidence of survivors to utilise available support services (the existing three National Outcomes Indicators that organisations report against).

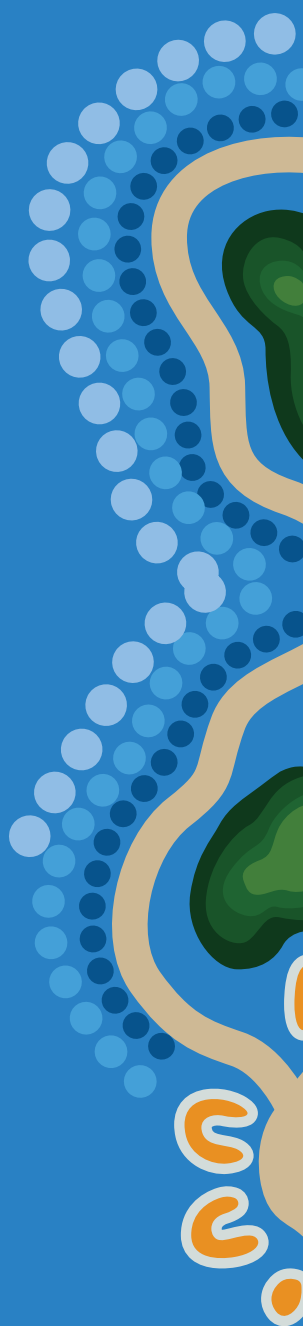
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The mechanisms of positive change contained in the Theory of Change for Healing may provide a basis for improved measures of success that can be developed from – but not limited to – the following:

- To what degree has the Stolen Generations Initiative developed and transferred knowledge and resources, and supported processes that apply active and integrated strategies for healing?
- To what degree – and in what ways – has the Stolen Generations Initiative supported truth telling to tackle racist attitudes and encourage people to acknowledge responsibility?
- To what degree has the Stolen Generations Initiative supported the implementation of evidence-based collective healing programs?
- To what degree has the Stolen Generations Initiative supported enhanced capability of systems, organisations, and workforces to be more trauma-aware and healing-informed?

Further, this report notes that as Stolen Generations survivors, descendants, and organisation have, through successive funding rounds, become increasingly empowered and moved closer to self-determination, the role of The Healing Foundation might have changed from a 'provider' for healing programs to an 'enabler' of change. Being an enabler of change might be substantially easier with a network of partners who have travelled the long road, with a clear vision of the future still front of mind:

We have been with The [Healing] Foundation all the way. Right from the start for them and right from the start for us. We have walked together. They have helped us, but we have helped them too. When [we] tell the stories and we feel the pain and they understand that and helped us do it. We don't need so much help now with gatherings, we need support to be an organisation of influence that speaks the truth and lets people know what happened here and how everyone needs to heal.



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