

# Survivor story

STOLEN GENERATIONS RESOURCE KIT FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

## FLORENCE ONUS



Florence Onus is a descendant of the Birri-Gubba and Kairi/Bidjara clans of north-east Queensland.

She is the fourth generation of women from her family to be forcibly removed from land, culture and family.

'My grandmother and my mother were both trained and sent out as domestic servants on properties. They weren't allowed to speak their native language or practice cultural ceremonies, or they would be severely punished,' Florence said.

'And then I became part of the Stolen Generations when I was removed from my family to be raised in a white foster home.'

Her two older sisters were sent to Rockhampton to live with nuns, while Florence and her two other siblings went to Townsville foster homes. There, Florence spent most of her childhood.

'I embarked on my healing journey when at 21 my mother attempted suicide and I became her full time carer and together we began the journey of healing.'

'It wasn't until I started doing my own research and had access to policies that I truly realised that my mother was suffering from the impacts of Intergenerational Trauma.'

Florence has four adult daughters and she is a grandmother. She is passionate about breaking the cycle of trauma through healing, education, cultural identity and spiritual nurturing.

Florence is an educator and an advocate for social justice. Her maternal grandfather died in custody in the early 1960s following his arrest as an agitator.

Florence has carried on his fight for social justice, with a particular focus on the impact of Black Deaths in Custody and Stolen Generations issues.

'There needs to be an increase in healing resources for the Stolen Generations and our families to heal from the trauma, pain and suffering that we're still dealing with today,' she said.



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