



WIRKARA KULPA

ABORIGINAL YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGY

Information for Aboriginal
children and young people



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge and pay our respects to ancestors of this country, Elders, knowledge holders and leaders – past, present, and emerging. We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are steeped in culture and lore having existed within Australia continuously for some 65,000 years.

Advice to our readers

To our Aboriginal readers, we advise that this document may include photos, quotations and/or names of people who have passed.

The term Aboriginal children and young people is used to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children currently from or residing in Victoria.

A MESSAGE TO ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

YOU CARRY THE STRENGTH
AND LEGACY OF YOUR OLD PEOPLE

IT'S THROUGH THEIR STRENGTH
LOVE AND RESILIENCE
WE PUSH THROUGH

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF
LOOK AFTER YOUR SPIRIT
AND KNOW YOU ARE LOVED.

- Koorie Youth Council



WIRKARA KULPA

Meaning of Wirkara Kulpa
(pronounced *WEER-ghara GHOUL-par*)
(Alongside, next to talking/speaking)
– a language name in Barkindji/Paakantyi

This name was chosen by Aboriginal children and young people in the youth justice system.



"We wanted to talk about the young people talking and walking alongside one another and talking at the same time to Elders. Because that's the only way they will be able to listen and listen to Elders; by walking alongside each other and talking together."

- Uncle Ivan Johnson and Uncle Peter Peterson, Barkandji/Paakantyi Elders

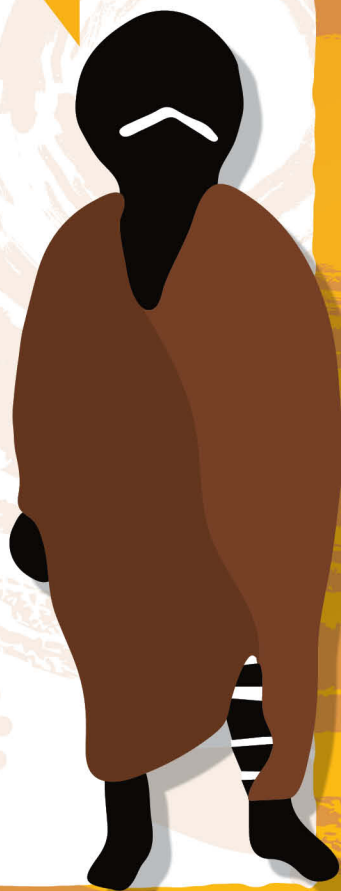
We offer our sincere thanks to Uncle Ivan Johnson and Uncle Peter Peterson who provided the name.





WHAT IS WIRKARA KULPA?

- It is the first Victorian Aboriginal youth justice strategy in Victoria.
- It aims to improve the youth justice system.
- It has the wellbeing of Aboriginal children and young people at its heart.
- It is a roadmap to guide us on a 10-year journey together.





WHAT IS ITS AIM?

Aboriginal children and young people are not in the youth justice system.

This is because they are:

- strong in their culture,
- connected to families and communities, and
- living, thriving culturally rich lives.





WHY WAS IT CREATED?


- Too many Aboriginal children and young people end up in the youth justice system.
- Aboriginal families and communities know what causes this and how to fix it.
- They are helping to drive the change to make the system more safe and helpful to Aboriginal children and young people.





HOW DID WE GET HERE?

(PROCESS OF WORKING TOGETHER)

- 
- Aboriginal community leaders and Aboriginal children and young people have shared ideas and solutions to make the system better.
 - These are now set out in Wirkara Kulpa.
 - These changes will keep Aboriginal children and young people strong and with their families and communities.



WHAT WILL THIS MEAN FOR ME?

(WHAT ABORIGINAL CHILDREN
TOLD US THEY WANT AND NEED)



***"First and foremost,
I am treated like a child."***



***"My complex needs are
understood, and my path is
healing me, not harming me."***



***"I am supported to be
strong in my Aboriginal
identity and culture."***



***"I am always connected to
family and community."***



***"I am seen as a future
leader and my strengths
are built upon."***



***"I have the right supports at
the right time and I am never
left to walk alone."***



WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?

Some of the ideas and solutions in Wirkara Kulpa, to help Aboriginal children and young people are ready now, including:

- More Aboriginal workers to support Aboriginal young people to get back on track
- Cultural programs and services that strengthen connection to culture, family and community
- Cultural plans for Aboriginal children and young people
- More cautions and diversions to keep Aboriginal children and young people out of the system
- Balit Ngulu, the Aboriginal youth legal program through VALS, for culturally safe and responsive legal help
- More support when leaving custody to help settle back into community.





WHAT IS HAPPENING NEXT?

Other changes still to come will include such things as:

- Aboriginal bail support and healing programs
- Help for Aboriginal children and young people at night and on weekends
- Aboriginal youth justice hubs, safe places for young people to access services
- Aboriginal children and young people will have a trusted worker to walk alongside them
- Help to keep Aboriginal children (10-13 years old) out of the system
- More learning, training, living skills and work opportunities
- More help for young people to stay mentally and emotionally strong.





HOW CAN MY VOICE BE HEARD?



- We want Aboriginal children and young people to talk up and to have a say.
- The Koorie Youth Council is working with Aboriginal children and young people to find a way to have their voices heard.

**To have your voice heard, speak to
the Koorie Youth Council, contact**

**(03) 9267 3707 or see more at:
www.koorieyouthcouncil.org.au**



WHERE CAN I GO TO FOR FURTHER SUPPORT?



**For help and support, talk to
your local Community-Based
Aboriginal Youth Justice Worker.**

**See the next page for contact
details.**

COMMUNITY-BASED ABORIGINAL YOUTH JUSTICE WORKERS:

Where	Who	Contact
Geelong	Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Operative	(03) 5277 0044
Warrnambool	Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-Operative	(03) 5559 1234
Chirnside Park and Eastern Metro surrounding areas	Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)	(03) 8727 0200
Bairnsdale	Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-Operative (GEGAC)	(03) 5150 0700
Lakes Entrance	Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association	(03) 5155 8465
Morwell	Anglicare Victoria	(03) 5135 9555
Ballarat	Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-Operative (BADAC)	(03) 5331 5344
Horsham	Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-Operative	(03) 5381 6333
Shepparton	Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-Operative	(03) 5820 0010
Wodonga	Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation	(02) 6024 7599
Bendigo	Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co- Operative (BDAC)	(03) 5442 4947
Echuca	Njernda Aboriginal Corporation	(03) 5480 6252
Mildura	Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited (MDAS)	(03) 5018 4100
Swan Hill	Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited (MDAS)	(03) 5032 8600
Thornbury	Bert Williams Aboriginal Youth Services/ Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited (VACSAL)	(03) 9484 5310
Dandenong	Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)	(03) 9108 3500
Frankston, St. Kilda	Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)	(03) 8796 0700

REMEMBER THAT IF YOU NEED HELP, THERE IS SUPPORT OUT THERE

Balit Ngulu (youth specialist legal advice): 03 9418 5999

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS): 1800 064 865

Yarning Safe'N'Strong: 1800 95 95 63 (24 hours/7 days)

**Djirra Aboriginal Family Violence Response & Support Service:
1800 105 303 (9am-9pm, Mon-Fri)**

**Lifeline: 13 11 14
lifeline.org.au**

**Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467
suicidecallbackservice.org.au**

**Beyondblue: 1300 224 636
beyondblue.org.au**

**Headspace: 1800 650 890
headspace.org.au**

**QLife: 1800 184 527 (3pm-midnight, 7 days)
Online Chat: qlife.org.au/resources/chat**

**Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
kidshelpline.com.au**

ABOUT THE ARTIST

KIEWA TYA AUSTIN-RIOLI

SWEET WATER ART

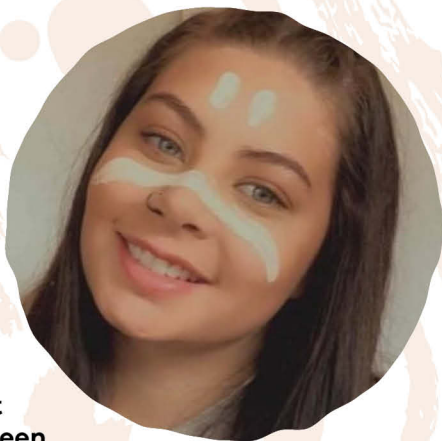
I am a proud Gunditjmara and Tiwi Islander woman.

I have loved art since I was little and in the past year have been exploring the digital art space.

In doing the artwork for Wirkara Kulpa, I was constantly reflecting back on my life and thinking about my family and friends that I have seen go through the justice system and what they experienced.

I wanted to highlight that their journey through all of this is not an easy one but there are a lot of support networks along the way that can help young people get out of the cycle and heal.

I also wanted to emphasise that there are layers of support for each person and although their support networks may be different there is always a network there for someone.



**Authorised and published by the Victorian Government,
1 Treasury Place, Melbourne**

**© State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Justice and
Community Safety, May 2022**

Printed by Printman Colour Group - Carrum Downs

ISBN 978-1-922262-82-0 (Print)

ISBN 978-1-922262-83-7 (PDF/online/MS word)



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The designs are based on artwork created by young Aboriginal artist, Kiewa Tya Austin-Rioli as part of a project to create the visual narrative for future state of Aboriginal Youth Justice.

Design and layout by Dixon Patten (Bitja), a Yorta Yorta, Gunnai and Gunditjmara man of Bayila Creative.

Available at: <https://www.Originaljustice.vic.gov.au/wirkara-kulpa-information-for-young-people>



WIRKARA KULPA
ABORIGINAL YOUTH
JUSTICE STRATEGY



KOORIStrong
KOORIProud
KOORIJustice
Victorian Aboriginal
Justice Agreement

