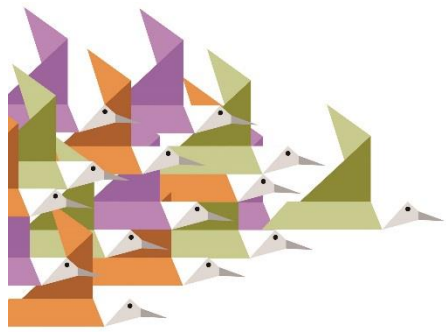


Innovative Models

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Harry Blagg
University of Western Australia

Emma Williams
Charles Darwin University

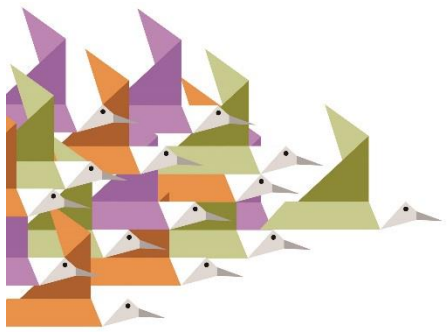


Innovative models in addressing violence against Indigenous women: A state of knowledge review

Harry Blagg

Emma Williams

Nicole Bluett-Boyd



Research

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‘One of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's
vocabulary’

Linda Tuhiwai Smith

Hello, I am Harry, this is Emma,
We are researchers.



Three Research Partners

A partnership with 3 Community Owned and Managed organizations:

Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre in Fitzroy Crossing (WA),
Darwin Aboriginal and Islander Women's Shelter (DAIWS) (NT)
Barambah Aboriginal Community Care Agency Cherbourg (QLD)

Indigenous Women and Violence

Greater Risks

While all women are potential victims, the risks are not evenly spread across society

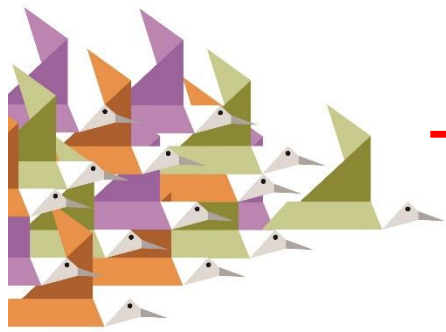
Research evidence shows that Indigenous women are more likely to be victims of family violence than non-Indigenous women.

Indigenous women living in rural and remote areas of WA are up to 45 times more likely to experience family violence than other women living in rural and remote areas.

Further, Indigenous Australian women are 35 times more likely to be hospitalised for family violence assaults than other Australian women.

But Aboriginal women are also more likely to be imprisoned than non-Aboriginal women

More likely to be victims of state violence, neglect and indifference and die in custody.



Towards Holistic Responses

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An holistic response to Indigenous family violence requires:

- Community-led, place-based approaches that work in a complementary way with non-Indigenous systems;
- The development of community education campaigns beginning in schools, but also wider campaigns aimed at the whole community in order to address intergenerational trauma and cycles of violence;
- The inclusion of more Indigenous men in the process of addressing family violence, especially the appointment of men to steering committees and action groups;
- Integration of family violence services (refuges, legal services) with other services for women and children (health, trauma, early childhood, personal and cultural healing).

Not Just a Refuge

Not Just a Legal Service

In 2007, an Indigenous women's bush meeting auspiced by Marninwarntikura Women's Refuge decided to press for a ban on strong take away alcohol.

Successfully

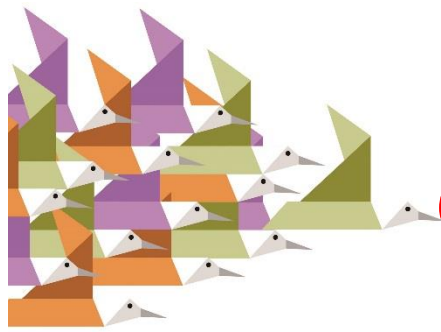


Marninwarntikura maintains the **rich cultural, social and political fabric** of the Fitzroy Valley.

Listens to fears and worries of women.

offers **support through counselling and legal advice**, to engage women in a process of **healing**, and protect them from harm.

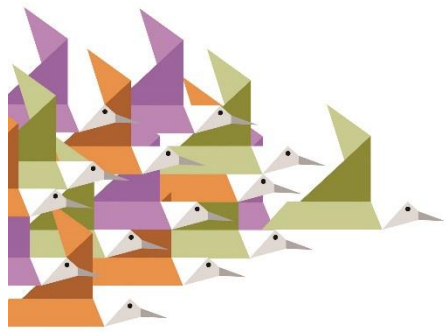
develops programs that **empower** women, **economically, culturally and politically**.



Cross-Cutting not Cost-Cutting

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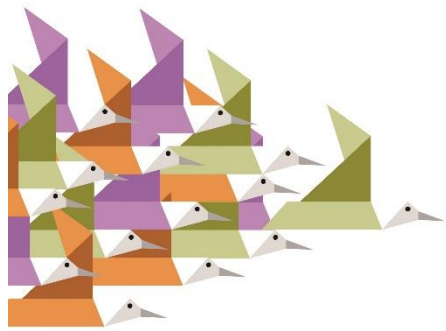
- International research on ‘integrated’ models of service delivery, the ‘multi-agency approach’ etc, tells us that they are sometimes good for agencies but bad for communities.
- Often ‘good relationships’ becomes the end rather than the means.
- ‘Success’ becomes defined in bureaucratic metrics (time, money).
- A truly ‘joined up’ approach must connect agencies with communities.
- Invest in community and build capacity
- **In the FV field we are currently building the capacity of mainstream agencies (police, DCP etc.) while stripping funding from Indigenous services.**



Under-reporting of Violence Against Women in Indigenous Communities

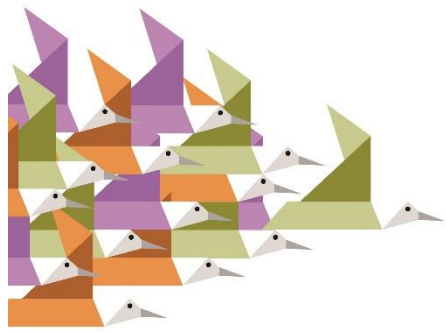
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- A reluctance to report because of fear of the police, the perpetrator and perpetrator's kin;
- fear of 'payback' by the offender's family if he is jailed;
- concerns the offender might become a death in custody;
- Non-Indigenous justice systems viewed as instruments of dispossession;
- a degree of normalisation of violence in some families and a degree of fatalism about change.



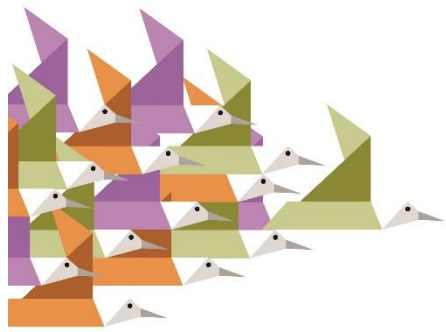
Continued....

- the impact of 'lateral violence' which makes victims subject to intimidation and community denunciation for reporting offenders in Indigenous communities;
- negative experiences of contact with the police when previously attempting to report violence (such as being arrested on outstanding warrants);
- fears that their children will be removed if they are seen as being part of an abusive household;
- lack of transport on rural and remote communities, as well as a general lack of culturally secure services.



Given that family violence for Indigenous communities is a whole-of-community problem, programs and services that focus purely on the individual victim/survivor cannot address the underlying causes of violence.

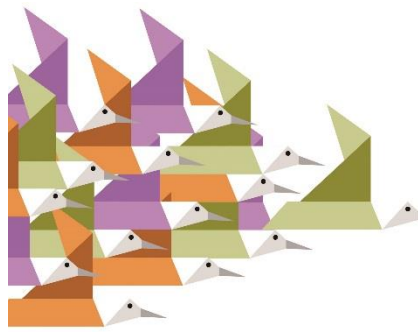
Must address at least four levels of trauma: individual, family, local 'community', and collective Indigenous experience (colonisations and aftermath)



REALIST APPROACH

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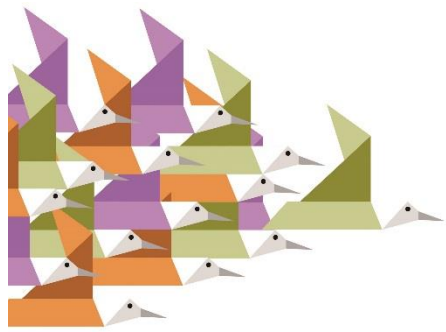
- *Rather than assuming that policies or programs ‘work’ or ‘don’t work’, a realist approach assumes they work for some people in some contexts and levels, but not others.*
- *Realist researchers seek to understand how and why this is so; realist analysis is meant to be explanatory rather than descriptive.*
- *Realists try to work with ‘middle range theories’, general enough to apply to interventions in different sites, but specific enough to generate testable propositions.*



NT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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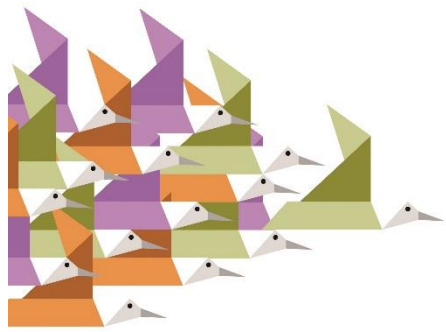
- >60% of assault offences in the Northern Territory associated with domestic violence.
- 82% of domestic violence victims are women.
- Indigenous females in the Territory almost 22 times more likely to be victims of domestic violence than non-Indigenous females.
- 73% of domestic violence victims are Indigenous women.
- >70% of sentenced prisoners in NT have one or more convictions of domestic violence-related offences.
- (All statistics from NT Dept Attorney General & Justice)



DARWIN, NT

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- Researching at four levels:
- 1) Looking at how the 11 partners in the Domestic and Family Violence Reduction Strategy, each with a different mandate and set of priorities, are attempting to provide an ‘integrated response’.
- Some early indications of areas of success but also tension points, eg between child protection with mandate to protect children from witnessing violence versus attempts to encourage more women to report violence
- Perverse outcome of ‘silent screaming’.



DARWIN, NT, cont'd

- 2) Focus on Darwin Aboriginal and Islander Women's Shelter (DAIWS): consultation with shelter staff and management, outreach clients and men's program director
- Some emerging issues include stories of success but again points of tension, eg between straitened funding and call for increased staff to manage issues of violence between women
- 3) At individual level, looking at women's experience of violence through life, inc home communities
- 4) Also intend to look at broader policy and funding landscape, eg impact of Indigenous Advancement Strategy

PLACING COUNTRY IN THE CENTRE

