



# National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Safety Promotion Strategy

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I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners  
of the land on which we are meeting today  
and  
pay my respect to the  
elders past and present.

# Scope of the Strategy

- Encompasses the concepts of safety promotion and injury prevention.
- Addresses intentional and unintentional injury
- Embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in urban, rural and remote areas.
- Outlines specific strategic requirements for improving safety and reducing harm to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

# Background

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples live in diverse environments with many unique social and physical risks.
- Safety issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are intertwined with feelings of cultural and spiritual injury.
- The Strategy provides a framework for action that is relevant and sensitive to the specific social and cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

# Need for a specific Strategy

- Injury a major concern
- Prevention costs more than treatment
- Programs targeting all Australians not effective in increasing safety among Indigenous people
- Communities already making a difference – but more capacity is required (case studies)
- Alignment of strategies and programs improves effectiveness and efficiency

# Values

Underlying the strategy are two basic values:

- The right to be safe
- The responsibility to promote and maintain the safety of others

# Vision

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples live in safe environments free from the impact of injury

# Goals

- To enhance community safety, prevent injury and reduce harm through:
  - Improving safety of environments
  - Increasing community capacity to promote well being
  - Supporting communities to prioritise safety issues and to design, implement and evaluate programs
  - Mobilising government and non-government organisations to ensure maximum infrastructure and support
  - Communities, government and non-government sectors working together

# Principles

- Principles for best practice in Aboriginal and TSI Safety Promotion (NSW Health 2002)
- National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health
- National Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion Plan – 2004-2014
- WHO principles for safety promotion and safe communities



# Principles for best practice in Aboriginal and TSI Safety Promotion (NSW Health 2002)

1. Acknowledge historical, social & cultural context
2. Ongoing community involvement and consultation
3. Holistic Definition of health
4. Practical application of self-determination
5. Effective partnerships
6. Capacity building
7. Evidence base
8. Sustainable and transferable programs
9. Multi-faceted programs – evaluated
10. Transparency and accountability

# A Holistic Approach

- Acknowledges overlap between risk factors for injury, mental health, violence, substance abuse, chronic disease
- Aligned with existing policy framework
- Communities working with a range of stakeholders

# Key Result Areas

- Change Process
  1. Building *collaborative relationships*
  2. Stimulate *national discussion*
- Infrastructure
  3. Increase *knowledge and skills* in SP & IP
  4. Provide resources for *workforce capacity*
  5. Support SP & IP *policies and strategies* that deal with underlying alienation & disadvantage
  6. Improve *surveillance* systems and data
- Projects and Programs
  7. Create *local focus*
  8. Develop *whole of government* focus

# Priorities for Action

- Social and emotional wellbeing
- Child and young people's safety
- Violence affecting families and individuals
- Land transport
- Water safety
- Workplace safety

# Closing the Indigenous injury mortality gap

- Based on 1999-2003 death registrations, the three leading causes of death for Indigenous Australians living in Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory were:
  - diseases of the circulatory system,
  - deaths due to external causes (predominantly accidents, self harm and assault) and
  - neoplasms (cancer).
- Deaths due to these causes accounted for almost 58% of all identified Indigenous deaths in these jurisdictions.
- These were also the leading causes of death among the Australian population as a whole, accounting for about 74% of all deaths.
- Indigenous males and females had higher death rates, and were more likely to die at much younger ages from these causes, than the general population.

# External Causes

- In 1999-2003, deaths due to external causes accounted for 16% of all Indigenous deaths.
- There were three times more deaths from external causes than expected, based on all-Australian rates.
- The majority (72%) of these deaths were for males,
- The main causes of deaths due to external causes for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people were transport accidents (35%) and intentional self-harm (26%).
- The 1999-2003 age-specific death rates due to external causes were higher among Indigenous males than among non-Indigenous males in all age groups, particularly 25-54 years.
- Death rates due to external causes for Indigenous females also exceeded those for non-Indigenous females in every age group.
- Greatest relative difference occurred in the 35-44 year age group.