



WARLGA NGURRA
WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S REFUGE

2024-2026 Strategic Plan



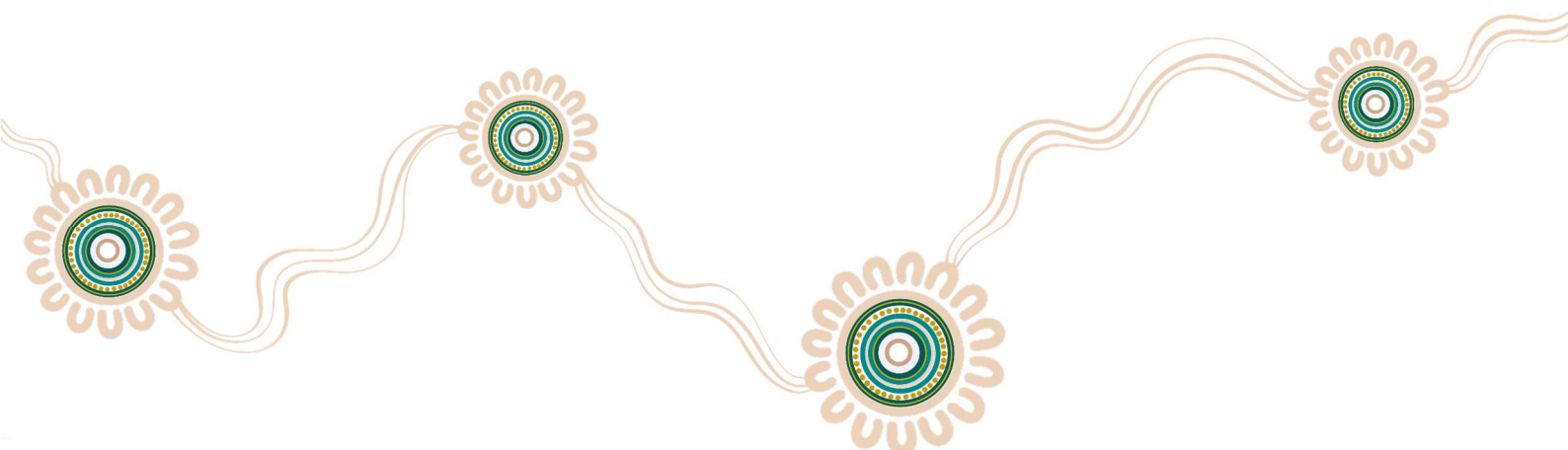
We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we live and operate. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging, recognising their enduring connection to the land and water ways. We extend our acknowledgment to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the community.

We express our deepest gratitude to the founding members whose vision and dedication established the foundation upon which our organisation stands today. Their unwavering commitment to addressing the needs of women and children, particularly those facing homelessness and domestic and family violence, has shaped our mission and fuelled our ongoing efforts. We honour their legacy and commitment, acknowledging the impact of their collective wisdom, leadership, and advocacy.



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VISION

To create a safe and inclusive community free from domestic and family violence

MISSION

To empower women by providing a safe and supportive space, breaking the cycle of violence, and fostering holistic healing for a future of independence and resilience.

VALUES



COLLABORATION

Warlga Ngurra is committed to fostering a collaborative environment that promotes teamwork, innovation and effective partnerships with external key stakeholders, clients and community.



CULTURALLY SAFE

Warlga Ngurra is committed to providing a culturally safe service for our clients, staff, volunteers and wider community. We acknowledge and respect the cultural values, protocols, traditions and knowledge from our Elders.



EMPOWERMENT

Warlga Ngurra is committed to fostering an environment that supports our Women and children to regain control over their lives, fostering independence and provide the tools and resources needed for self-determination.



ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE

Warlga Ngurra is committed to improving our sustainability practices by acknowledging and respecting the deep connection that Aboriginal Communities have with the land, water and natural resources.



FAMILY FOCUSED

Warlga Ngurra is dedicated to acknowledging the significance of supporting women and their children collectively, all the while recognising the variations in family kinship models specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Our commitment extends to nurturing a family-oriented atmosphere for both our staff and clients



GROWTH & DIVERSITY

Warlga Ngurra is committed to addressing the immediate needs of women and children seeking refuge as well as increasing our capacity to accommodate more women in need using evidence-based data. We support diversity, promote inclusiveness, and committed to ensuring our programs are tailored to support women and children from cultural, LGBTQ+, disability and other marginalised community groups.



INTEGRITY & RESPECT

Warlga Ngurra is committed to fostering an environment that promotes integrity and respect for our staff, volunteers and clients.



WELL-BEING

Warlga Ngurra is committed to cultivating a culture of staff and client wellbeing. We will develop a wellbeing strategy that is holistic and acknowledges cultural, physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing for our clients and staff.

Executive Summary



Warlga Ngurra Women and Children's Refuge Strategic Plan 2023-2026 outlines a comprehensive framework aimed at addressing the urgent needs of women and children facing homelessness and experiencing family and domestic violence.

It provides a roadmap for the organisations activities with a focus on expanding outreach, strengthening support services, fostering collaborations, and promoting prevention initiatives. With a commitment to enhancing empowerment, cultural competency, and staff development, the plan aims to create a comprehensive and responsive support system for survivors.

Regular monitoring and evaluation will guide ongoing adjustments, ensuring a dynamic and effective approach in breaking the cycle of violence and empowering women towards sustained resilience, independence and holistic well-being.

Introduction

Warlga Ngurra Women and Children's Refuge originated four decades ago through the dedicated efforts of a group of esteemed community leaders who tirelessly advocated for a much-needed service for women and children.

Our reach extends across a vast geographical area, encompassing Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, and Port Stephens, catering to both local residents and those in remote NSW communities and interstate.

As a crucial service in the local Aboriginal Community and the wider Domestic and Family Violence and Homelessness sector, we are committed to promptly addressing the immediate needs of our community while actively pursuing opportunities for growth and expansion.

Despite anticipated challenges, our confidence in overcoming them is strengthened by our experience, resilience, and the support given by other Domestic Violence support services and local Aboriginal communities.

Acknowledging our organisation's size, we are equipped with a robust roadmap to formulate an operational plan, aspiring to achieve our goals over the next three years. Our vision includes the growth of the organisation and an expanded reach within our service delivery area.

Strategic Objectives



Collaboration

Goal: Warlga Ngurra is committed to fostering a collaborative environment that promotes teamwork, innovation and effective partnerships with external key stakeholders, clients and community.

The organisation focuses on enhancing communication and information sharing by implementing systems that facilitate interaction among staff, clients, and the community. Physical and virtual spaces are intentionally created to foster innovation, spontaneous interactions, and teamwork. Collaborative efforts are recognised and rewarded through performance evaluation. Strategic partnerships with external organisations, businesses, and stakeholders that align with Warlga Ngurra's mission and values are identified and established. Active participation in sector collaborations, consortiums, community events, and gatherings is encouraged to share knowledge and resources. A sense of shared purpose and collective responsibility is instilled among staff, and feedback from employees, clients, and the community is actively sought to improve collaboration processes.

Culturally Safe

Goal: Warlga Ngurra is committed to providing a culturally safe service for our clients, staff, volunteers and wider community. We acknowledge and respect the cultural values, protocols, traditions and knowledge from our Elders.

To instil cultural competence within the organisation, initiatives should provide training for staff, volunteers, students, and the Board. Staff should have access to cultural supervision and direct learning opportunities from Elders and cultural advisors. The refuge should integrate traditional healing programs, ceremonies, and cultural activities, promoting local community events for women. Establishing an advisory committee with past founding members and local Elders, along with regular community consultations, ensures ongoing feedback and improvement. Policies must prioritise and safeguard the cultural safety of clients, staff, volunteers, and the Board, enforcing a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination or racism. Culturally responsive program delivery should address unique needs, recognising the impact of historical and generational trauma.

Empowerment

Goal: Warlga Ngurra is committed to fostering an environment that supports our Women and children to regain control over their lives, fostering independence and provide the tools and resources needed for self-determination.

The organisation aims to enhance the overall well-being of clients by developing comprehensive, empowered case plans addressing physical, emotional, social, and economic aspects. Workshops on self-esteem, self-care, and resilience, along with the integration of traditional healing practices, are provided in therapeutic services. Educational opportunities focus on financial literacy, job readiness, and entrepreneurship to build capacity. Efforts to reconnect women with their cultural identity involve providing resources for cultural exploration, participation in community events, and the creation of a robust support network within and beyond the refuge. Empowering women through increased awareness of legal rights is a priority. Ongoing support during the transition to independent living, coupled with a systematic follow-up, ensures sustained assistance. The organisation actively cultivates a positive and affirming environment, fostering personal growth, and celebrates success stories and achievements.

Strategic Objectives



Environmentally Sustainable

Goal: Warlga Ngurra is committed to improving our sustainability practices by acknowledging and respecting the deep connection that Aboriginal Communities have with the land, water and natural resources.

To build a mutually beneficial connection with local Aboriginal communities, meaningful consultations with Aboriginal Land Councils and community Elders are essential. It's crucial to integrate traditional ecological knowledge whenever possible. Empowering staff and residents for active participation in environmental stewardship, such as recycling, energy efficiency, and community gardens, is a key focus. Establishing partnerships with Aboriginal organisations, government bodies, and non-profits is vital for effective resource and expertise collaboration. Organisational policies should align with sustainable practices, providing necessary tools and resources at work sites, while ongoing staff training ensures a grasp of environmental footprints, proper waste disposal, and support for innovative projects aligned with environmental goals.

Family Focused

Goal: Warlga Ngurra is dedicated to acknowledging the significance of supporting women and their children collectively, all the while recognising the variations in family kinship models specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Our commitment extends to nurturing a family-oriented atmosphere for both our staff and clients.

The organisation is dedicated to providing comprehensive support services that address the holistic needs of women and their children, emphasising the importance of treating them as a family unit. Specialised child-focused programs are developed to foster healing and development, complemented by parenting workshops and support groups to enhance parenting skills. A safe and supportive environment is created for children, offering educational and recreational activities to promote healthy growth. Families are equipped with essential education and life skills for long-term stability, aiming for their successful integration into the broader community. The establishment of meaningful partnerships with NDIS, family support services, schools, preschools, community centres, and recreational facilities facilitates client access to crucial resources. Programs are designed to highlight family strengths and capabilities, featuring workshops on goal setting, problem-solving, and effective communication.

Growth and Diversity

Goal: Warlga Ngurra is committed to addressing the immediate needs of women and children seeking refuge as well as increasing our capacity to accommodate more women in need using evidence-based data. We support diversity, promote inclusiveness, and committed to ensuring our programs are tailored to support women and children from cultural, LGBTQ+, disability and other marginalised community groups.

To broaden service outreach and inclusivity, efforts should focus on identifying expansion opportunities, such as Core and Cluster models. Diverse programs should address varied needs, informed by needs assessments to understand specific challenges. Facilities must prominently display inclusive signage, fostering a supportive environment. A strong online presence, coupled with staff training, enhances support for diverse and marginalized communities. Resources in multiple languages should be provided, and partnerships with agencies specialising in diverse communities should be forged. Data-driven insights should guide service improvement, and policies should explicitly demonstrate a commitment to diversity.

Strategic Objectives

Integrity and Respect

Goal: Warlga Ngurra is committed to fostering an environment that promotes integrity and respect for our staff, volunteers and clients.

To cultivate a positive organisational culture, the emphasis is on transparent communication, active listening, and embracing diverse perspectives. Regular forums and feedback mechanisms are implemented, allowing community members, clients, and staff to actively participate in decision-making processes. Governance structures prioritise accountability, fairness, and ethical behaviour. Training programs underscore the importance of integrity, honesty, and respect. Policies and procedures are aligned with ethical standards, and a comprehensive code of conduct is communicated to set expectations for ethical behaviour. Mechanisms for enforcing the code and addressing breaches are established promptly and fairly. Key performance indicators (KPIs) and regular assessments are implemented to measure progress towards organisational goals. Additionally, team-building activities, such as promoting 'above and below the line behaviours,' are developed to foster a positive workplace culture.

Wellbeing

Goal: Warlga Ngurra is committed to cultivating a culture of staff and client wellbeing. We will develop a wellbeing strategy that is holistic and acknowledges cultural, physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing for our clients and staff.

The organisation prioritises mental health by implementing awareness programs, workshops, and access to counselling services, including Employee Assistance Programs (EAP). Opportunities for supervision, both formal and cultural, with a focus on well-being are provided. A stigma-free environment is fostered to encourage open conversations about mental health concerns. Policies are in place to reflect and promote work-life balance, with clear job roles and expectations regarding overtime. Partnerships with local Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS's) support health screening and preventative care initiatives. A supportive environment for physical health is created, promoting activities like walking groups, exercise, and healthy eating. Initiatives are implemented to cultivate positive relationships among staff, and achievements are celebrated to boost morale. Continuous learning, staff development, and career advancement opportunities are actively encouraged.



Conclusion

Warlga Ngurra has provided discreet and effective support to numerous women and children over the past four decades, aspiring to become the foremost service for Aboriginal women and children facing domestic and family violence and homelessness.

A key takeaway from the last year has been the vital role of consistent leadership and management, and as an Aboriginal-led and operated organisation, we take great pride in this aspect, aiming to nurture a culture of stability and advancement.

Looking ahead, our significant challenge involves meeting sector accreditation requirements. We are methodically addressing all criteria for ASES accreditation standards, identifying areas for improvement, and acknowledging our strengths.

Embracing this continuous improvement process, we recognise the importance of meeting national standards to enhance the quality of service for our clients. Our commitment extends to cultivating a culture aligned with our organisational values, capturing and honouring our history, while also fostering innovation, seizing opportunities, and promoting future growth and development



ARTIST ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All artwork in this report is provided by Kimberly Mann (Payne).

Kim is a proud Barkindji Nhungku (woman) who's family originates from Far West NSW where the Baaka (river) runs through the desert. Granddaughter of Mervyn Payne, Florence Payne & Samuel Payne she has been creating since she could walk and is highly inspired by country, connection, culture and how it is so sacredly interwoven and important.

Kim has over 18 years experience in creating commission pieces and artwork but has more recently started enjoying digital design and corporate design.

A Ngamaka (mother), community worker, small business owner and multi-medium Artist - You can find out more about Kim's art and connect with her via

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