



Darwin Indigenous Men's Service

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022



Indigenous people are warned that some images contained in this report may offend. DIMS has carefully selected the photos included in this publication and taken all reasonable measures to ensure that the report does not contain photos of those deceased. We thank you for your understanding with this sensitive matter.



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GOALS

- To provide a safe place where men can seek support to deal with or heal from issues such as grief, loss and trauma.
- To provide mentoring, support, case management and outreach services for men that may assist to strengthen their wellbeing and independence.
- To provide counselling and education programs for men to strengthen their social and emotional wellbeing.
- To provide therapeutic and educative groups for men to address family and relationship issues, including family and domestic violence, conflict resolution and fatherhood.
- To provide healing and cultural activities to improve men's wellbeing and strengthen cultural identity.
- To provide a safe and supportive service for males to heal and develop positive relationship skills, where they are encouraged to embrace changes that work towards building strong, healthy relationships, families, and communities

AIM

Men sharing knowledge to help each other build strong, healthy, independent men. To provide a safe and supportive service for males to heal and develop positive relationship skills, where they are encouraged to embrace changes that work towards building strong, healthy relationships, families, and communities.





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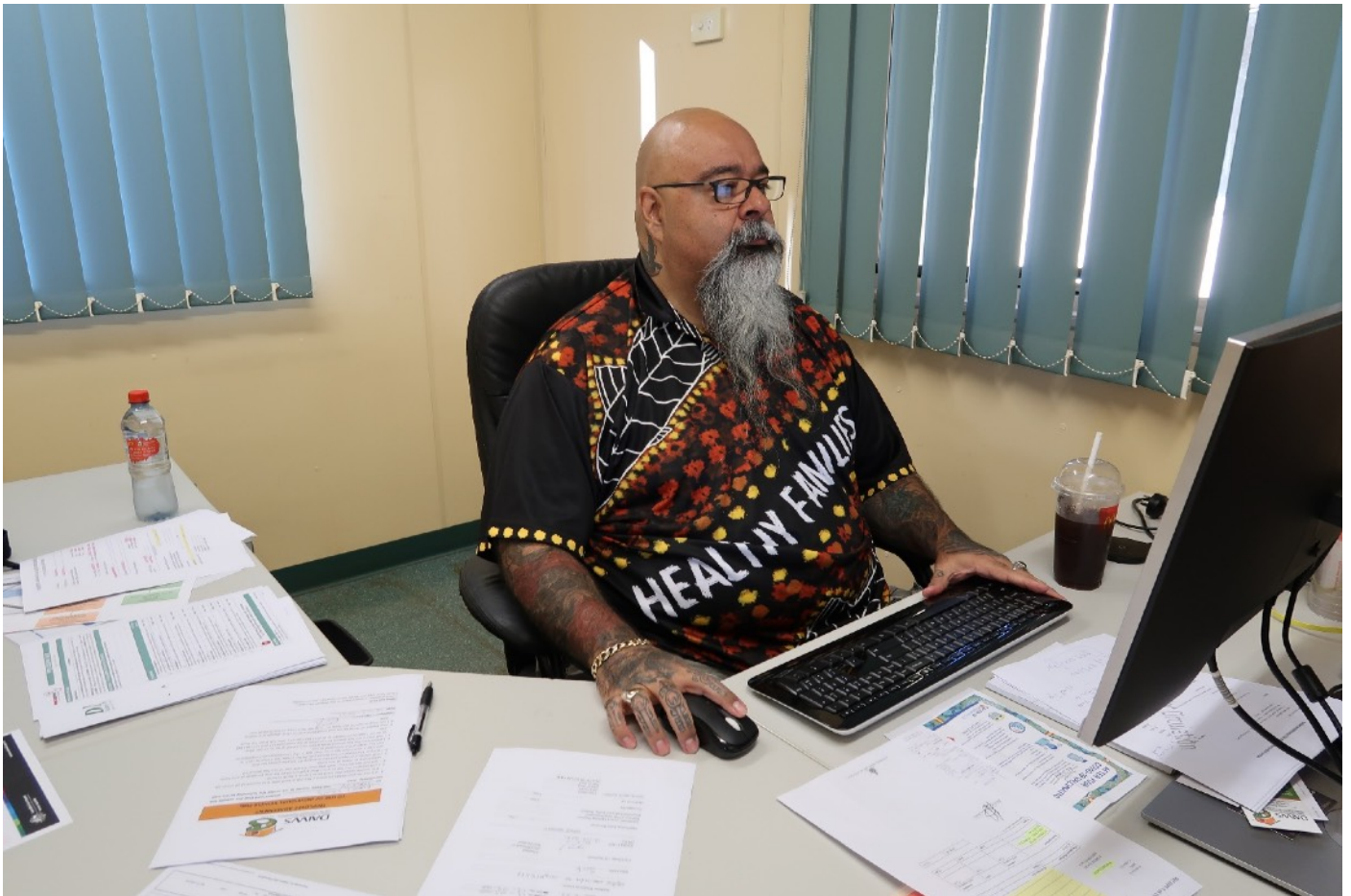
Management Board:

Directors - Chairperson: Damien Mick: **Vice Chairperson:** Jye Cardona: **Treasure:** John Ah Mat: **Secretary:** Shawn Wilson: **Directors:** Anthony Castro, George Donaldson.





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Managers' Report: Malcolm Darling

Has been a busy year in 2022 here at DIMS, now that covid restrictions have eased. We still receiving a lot of referrals from other organisations CAAPS, FORWAARD, Salvation Army, Corrections, Mission Australia, DAIWS, Team Health, Save the Children, Carers and Anglicare and DIMS is now getting referrals from SUPORTLINK. DIMS staff also refer men to other services around Darwin such as Danila Dilba Aboriginal Medical Service, Relationships Australia, and private Counsellors. We have had some staff turnover due to various reasons this year we are currently at 7 staff with a new employee to start in mid-January 2022.

May 4th to 6th DIMS staff attended Crab Claw Island for strategic planning workshop.

A big thank you to Nicole Brown who supported DIMS with \$1000. In Art Supplies.

DIMS staff attended the 2022 Men's Day Forum here in Darwin which was good for staff to see and hear what others are doing around the country and network with others around what we are doing here at DIMS, all feedback from staff was they enjoyed the day.

Mid July 22 Michael McGregor from Price Waterhouse and Coopers here in Darwin attended DIMS to introduce Tom Thomas Bergin (PwC | Senior Associate) to us as Tom wanted to do some volunteer work for a small organisation, Tom has been a great asset helping with write-ups of



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different projects he has also run training for the DIMS staff training done so far. Tom is also providing support to DIMS and DAIWS for our separation process.

- How to create Power point presentations x 2 sessions
- How to do Excel spreadsheet x 1 session
- Leadership session x 1
- Tom is also going to do another session for Excel and PowerPoint for new staff and any other staff that want to do a refresher
- Tom also plays footy in Melbourne for Old Xaverians Football Club who raised 2k for DIMS which was spent on camping trip for our participants, camping gear, and other DIMS promotional items.

Due to the stress of the Job for staff listening to the client's issues and their own personal stuff going on, I wanted to take staff on an outing and not think about work and just unwind so on the 16th of September I arranged a day out for DIMS staff we attended Mandorah for the day lunch was provided. Staff got to relax have a fish from the beach throw the net even spearing, go for walk or just relax at the camp site. Feedback from staff they all enjoyed the day healing on country and requested we do this more often. To invest in staff, I will arrange outings for staff maybe once every three months to say thank you for work they are doing.

DIMS was successful in grant application to FACS to purchase a demountable for the Boulter Rd site which will hold around 30 people. Our current demountable we are limited to 10 people per-session due to small size and covid restrictions, once new demountable is complete we will be able to hold bigger group sessions for DIMS clients. This has now been finalised and work has commenced on the deliverables we hope to have the demountable up and running by end of February 2023.

15th October 2021 I met with Annmarie McLeod from Indigenous Allied Health Australia we discussed placements for students in their programs which I advised we can only take students 18 and above, early August 2022 we took on student Demitrus he has been attending our Tuesday Program: Respectful Relationships and all feedback from staff he is great young man he gets involved in conversations with the other participants, helps prepare for the day with meals and cleaning up pick-ups and drop offs. DIMS staff attended the student's graduation with the academy. Demi finished with DIMS mid November 2022 we wish him all the best for his future and that he is welcomed back to DIMS anytime.

We were contacted by Salvation Army asking for their participants (Sunrise group) to attend the First Nations Fathers program, but we were not able to fit them into the closed groups already running so I sat down with staff to try finding a way to accepting this group of men which has been running since 20th September every Tuesday afternoon from 1pm to 3pm. This is our first afternoon group.

Michael Torres and I still struggle to find funding opportunities to have DIMS funded continuously for 3 to 5 years this would give our DIMS employees jobs security, Government prefers to fund big church organisations and drip feed funding to little organisations like DIMS, but we will keep fighting for our staff and our men.

After the DAIWS financial audit report DIMS has some surplus, we have submitted application to the funders to use this money to purchase 2 more vehicles for DIMS, 1 x new bus for Coconut



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grove site as their bus is 2006 model and falling apart 2nd vehicle request is a 4x4 to support the camping trips with clients.

DIMS is a great place to work and great team to work with, I look forward to what the future brings for DIMS.

Malcolm Darling
DIMS Manager



Coordinator Counsellors Report: Michael Torres

Darwin Indigenous Men's Service (DIMS) is auspices by Darwin Aboriginal Women's Shelter (DAIWS). DIMS has two premises, Shed 2, Durand Court, Coconut Grove and 30 Boulter Road Berrimah. Our Coconut Grove premises delivers three programs per week. Our main office in Berrimah delivers five programs per week and our counselling services.

DIMS main programs are; Respectful Relationships (8 week program); Indigenous Men's Healing Program (8 week program); and Fathers Program (8 week program). The programs are designed



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for men to learn respectful relationships, improve parenting skills and address their healing needs. We implement internal evaluations of our programs to ensure they meet client needs and programs are continually improved.

DIMS has MOU's with CAAPS, FORWAARD and Stringy Bark (Mission Australia) rehabilitation centers and the NT AID & Hepatitis Council, who refer clients to our programs and services. We receive referrals from Police, Support link, Corrections, Salvation Army, DAIWS, Anglicare, YISSA Mission Australia, Danila Dilba, Relationships Australia, Anglicare, DAIWS, Save the Children, Team Health and self-referrals to our counselling service and weekly programs.



DIMS Staff 2021 - 2022



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Programs: Boulter Road Premises; (a) Young Indigenous Men and their Partners Program

Darwin Indigenous Men's Service (DIMS) is a project of Darwin Aboriginal Women's Shelter (DAIWS). DIMS in partnership with DAIWS delivers the following programs at DIMS premises 30 Boulter road Berrimah Darwin NT. The service delivers an eight-week family violence prevention and healing activity weekly groups ongoing for per year that supports local Indigenous men 18-25, and their partners, at risk of or experiencing family violence to address past trauma to become stronger current or future parents in mind, body and spirit. Activities include respectful relationships, including defining healthy and abusive relationships, communication, fatherhood and motherhood, keeping children safe and healthy, share knowledge and experiences, understanding trauma and its effects and relaxation exercises.

We receive referrals from CAAPS, Salvation Army, DAIWS, Community Corrections, Anglicare, Mission Australia, Danila Dilba, Relationships Australia, Anglicare, DAIWS, Save the Children and Team Health, Support Link, Police to our counselling service and weekly programs. CAAPS rehabilitation centre refers couples to this program as they have a childcare worker to look after the children while their parents are undertaking programs. Our organisation is not funded to employ a childcare worker. DIMS has an MOU with CAAPS for providing education programs to their male clients and couples.

Client Feedback; Couples Respectful Relationships Program 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022. The following were taken from 22 participants who completed 69 survey forms.

1. Did you like the group/service? 99% of participants said they liked the program.
2. Was our group/service helpful? 98% of participants said they found the program helpful.
3. Do you feel less stress now? 97% of participants said they felt less stress after the program.
4. Sharing your thoughts / feelings? 97 % of participants liked sharing their thoughts and feelings.
5. Attend future groups/services? 98% of participants said they would attend future programs.
6. Were staff helpful? 99% of participants said they found staff helpful.
7. Recommend our service to others? 98% of participant said they would recommend our service to others.

(b) DIMS Indigenous Men's Program

The activity delivers an eight-week family violence prevention and healing activity weekly groups ongoing for the year that supports local Indigenous men 18-61, at risk of and/or using family violence to address past trauma to become stronger individuals/parents in mind, body and spirit. The clients are single or separated, are likely to have experienced or used violence in the past to deal with trauma and may be exiting prison, alcohol and drug rehabilitation or other programs. Activities include respectful relationships eight-week program and eight weeks men's healing program, including defining healthy and abusive relationships, communication, fatherhood, keeping children safe and healthy, share knowledge and experiences, understanding trauma and its effects and relaxation exercises.



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Below are the results from 60 participants and 100 feedback forms over a two-month period. Participants were asked the following questions. The ratings for question 1-7 show the percentage of participants who said yes.

Tuesday Program: Respectful Relationships

1. Did you like the group/service? 100% of participants said they liked the program.
2. Was our group/service helpful? 99% of participants said they found the program helpful.
3. Do you feel less stress now? 82% of participants said they felt less stress after the program.
4. Sharing your thoughts / feelings? 99 % of participants liked sharing their thoughts and feelings.
5. Attend future groups/services? 99% of participants said they would attend future programs.
6. Were staff helpful? 99% of participants said they found staff helpful.
7. Recommend our service to other services? 97% of participant said they would recommend our service to others.

Thursday Program: Respectful Relationships

1. Did you like the group/service? 100% of participants said they liked the program.
2. Was our group/service helpful? 100% of participants said they found the program helpful.
3. Do you feel less stress now? 98% of participants said they felt less stress after the program.
4. Sharing your thoughts / feelings? 99 % of participants liked sharing their thoughts and feelings.
5. Attend future groups/services? 95% of participants said they would attend future programs.
6. Were staff helpful? 100% of participants said they found staff helpful.
7. Recommend our service to other services? 97% of participant said they would recommend our service to others.

Total for the year 2021/2022, 181 participants attending programs.

(C) DIMS Brotherboy and Sistergirl Program

The program focused on Indigenous gay men and sistergirls 18-29 and above, at risk of experiencing or using violence to address past trauma. Provide general support, mentoring, case management, counselling, weekly yarning circles, respectful relationships education, cultural and healing activities to build stronger individuals in mind, body and spirit. Activities include weekly yarning circles, topics are lifestyle, trauma, depression, anxiety, healthy and unhealthy relationships, sexual identity, cultural identity, self-esteem, health, healing, alcohol and other drug education, relaxation exercises including Indigenous mindfulness and guided meditation, cultural healing and arts.

The positions were advertised locally, however due to COVID 19 and mandated vaccinations, it was difficult finding workers. DIMS staff shared the role until for a few months until a worker was found. One Indigenous man was employed who met all requirements. He was trained with other DIMS staff to facilitate the men's healing program and yarning circles. The Coordinator counsellor provided guidance and training for staff to develop and deliver programs. There were



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several clients requiring long term support, counselling and case-management due to trauma they have suffered as a child and ongoing mental health issues. Although client numbers were low this reporting period, they require intensive case-management transporting them to and from medical appointments, counselling services, centrelink, and DIMS programs and emergency relief such as food vouchers, cloths and accommodation. They are more stable now with less suicidal thoughts and they commented that our services are the only one assisting Indigenous gay people.

Total for the year 2021/2022, 45 participants attending our service.

Family Violence Prevention and Healing Program



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The coordinator counsellor has the domestic and family violence portfolio and oversees DIMS programs at two premises, Boulter Road Berrimah and Durand Court Coconut Grove premises. He provides individual counselling and relationships and family violence education and healing activities to clients. He participated in the DAIWS/DIMS Family Violence 4th Plan Co-design project which now funds our Berrimah premises.

He submitted feedback on the National Plan to stop violence against women and children. In August 2021 he became a member of the Aboriginal Advisory Council on family, domestic and sexual violence to the Minister of Department of Social Services, and meets regularly contributing towards the National Family Violence Plan and the Aboriginal Action Plan. He networks with Government and non-government agencies and developed four MOS's with NT Aids



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and Hepatitis Council for our LGBT+ Program, FORWAARD Alcohol rehabilitation centre, CAAPS for our Indigenous Men's Program and Stringy Bark (Mission Australia). He has negotiated with Department of Health annual grant funding for one position for five years, after this years trail of our Men's Healing Programs. These funds will enable DIMS to employ one full-time worker to assist and facilitate the Men's programs at Coconut Grove premises.

General Counselling and Healing Activities

The individual tells their story in a safe and private environment. They talk about their concerns and clarify their thoughts and feelings around their concerns. They can discuss solutions to their problems and set goals. They can develop an action plan to achieve their goals. The aim of the counselling process is to empower the client to make positive changes in their life. The counsellor uses a number of therapies such as Narrative Therapy, Person Centred Therapy, Solution Focused Therapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Motivational Interviewing and Problem Management Model.

Healing activities; consists of Visualisation (Help the client get a better understanding on what happen to them in their life): Visualisation and Art (Help the client promote greater self-awareness of themselves at different stages of their life. How they are acting and regarding to the here and now. Understand the things that shaped them and that awareness can be used to promote wellbeing).

Indigenous Healing; Indigenous Healing Bead Exercise (This exercise helps to calm the mind and reduce stress. It can produce a deep state of relaxation and a calm mind. During the exercise you focus attention on the beads and breath counting to empty your mind from thoughts that may be crowding your mind and causing stress. This process may result in enhanced emotional well-being).

Indigenous art painting objects such as stones, shells, wooden artifacts and painting on canvas and board while speaking about culture and life experiences can be relaxing and enhance emotional, cultural and spiritual wellbeing.

Education program consists of the following topics; what is respectful relationships, what is abusive relationships, communication in relationships, managing anger and life planning.

The Coordinator counsellor participated in the Healing Foundation's Knowledge Circle providing information on Indigenous men and boys, issues and healing activities, and information regarding family violence frame work for men and boys.

Total for the year 2021/2022, 115 participants receiving counselling.



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2. Coconut Grove Premises

The Strong Men Strong Communities Project and Indigenous Men's Healing program operates from the Darwin Indigenous Men's Service (DIMS) 2/4 Durand Court Coconut Grove Darwin NT. The coordinator counsellor over see's the projects, Men's Healing Group and Fathers programs while providing individual counselling and mentoring to Indigenous men.

The SMSC Project officer visits Indigenous men in the town communities and urban areas. He engages with the men individually and in groups to discuss their needs and our programs and services. He provides mentoring, case management and cultural activities to help men re-connect with cultural, build confidence, learn healthy living skills and become leaders in their family. The project officer and mentor trainer facilitate three weekly Men's programs per week. FORWAARD transports their clients to and from our Tuesday program. Stringy Bark transports their clients to and from our Thursday program. DIMS staff transport clients to and from our Wednesday program which is open to the public and accepts self-referrals.

Our partner organisations FORWAARD and Stringy Bark alcohol rehabilitation centres refer clients to our weekly programs. Corrections, Health, Anglicare, Mission Australia, Carer organisations refer clients to our



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groups. We receive referrals and refer men to appropriate services such as health service (clinics) and mental health, and Alcohol and other Drug Services for care and treatment.

Total for the year 2021/2022, 213 participants attending programs.

Referrals:

The above programs are a continuation of our existing family violence prevention and healing activities. Clients from the three program areas can access individual counselling, mentoring, case-management and referral to other agencies such as mental health services and medical clinics. We receive referral from Police, Supportlink, Mission Australia, Alcohol rehabilitation centers CAAPS, FORWAARD and Stringy Bark rehabilitation centres, DAIWS, Catholic Care, Angelicare, Salvation Army, Health Department, Hospital, Corrections, Larrikia Nation, NT Aids & Hepatitis council, Danila Dilba Aboriginal Medical Service, Save the children, Head Space, Territory Families, Yilli Housing, YISSA, and self-referrals.

Summary:

The Co-design Family Violence 4th Plan funding made it possible for The Darwin Indigenous Men's Service (auspice by DAIWS) to receive additional funding to expand its service to provide family violence prevention and healing programs to fill the gaps for Indigenous people. The program is essential in preventing violence against women and children, by providing a culturally safe place for Indigenous men to learn respectful relationships, healthy families education and undertake healing.

Darwin Indigenous Men's Service has developed three new programs, Respectful Relationships (8 week program); Men's Healing Program (8 week program) and 8 week Fathers Program to assist Indigenous men to learn healthy relationships and parenting education, and heal from trauma and seek medical / counselling services. These programs have proven to be quite successful as the majority of men said they liked the program, found the program helpful, felt less stress after the program, liked sharing their thoughts and feelings, would attend future programs, found staff helpful and would recommend our service to others.

Darwin Indigenous Men's Service has expanded to include couples in our Respectful Relationships program and are continuing to explore this further. Previous trials with CAAPS couples were successful as CAAPS provided childcare while couples attended programs. DIMS are constantly reviewing and improving our programs for Indigenous people. DIMS provides a Cultural Safe environment where Indigenous people feel comfortable, safe and secure. Shared respect, knowledge and experience of learning and working together with dignity. Promote the strengthening of identity, culture, families and community.



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Financial Summary

The DIMS Management would like to thank the following agencies and organisations for their financial support during 2021-2022 financial year.

National Indigenous Australian Agency

NT PHN

Department of Education N.T.

Department of Health N.T.

Healing Foundation

DIMS is incorporated under ORIC and Darwin Aboriginal & Islander Women's Shelter (DAIWS) provides auspices services for DIMS and audit for each financial year. The men's programs financial sheets are shown in the DAIWS Audit report 2022.





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DIMS Healing Garden: A place to relax, destress, meditate and connect to one's spirit.



Healthy Families Theme - Indigenous men are strong grandfathers, fathers, uncles, brothers and son's. Strong in spirit and culture. Protectors and providers for our families. Nurturing and educating our children. Healthy parenting and relationships. Promoting safe families and



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communities. The T-Shirts were designed from Michael Torres painting 2020, for DIMS Respectful Relationships and Fathers Program.



Strong Spirit Strong Culture is about resilience. Indigenous people surviving for over 60,000 years maintaining cultural connections to land and sea. The crocodiles and turtles survived for millions of years, a symbol of resilience, imbedded in Indigenous culture. The T-Shirts were



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designed from Michael Torres painting 2019 for the Men's Healing Group. DIMS provide a safe environment where Indigenous people feel comfortable, safe and secure. Shared respect, knowledge and experience of learning and working together with dignity. We promote the strengthening of identity, culture, families and community.



Strong Culture is knowing where you come from, who you are and your connection to country. Culture unites people through shared beliefs and traditions. Culture is a way of life for people, behaviours, beliefs and values, are passed on by communication from one generation to the next. Strong culture improves identity, self-worth and wellbeing. The T-Shirts were designed



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from Michael Torres painting 2021 for the Indigenous Men's Healing Programs. Participants are given a t-shirt and certificate after completing the program.