Amplifying voices: advocating for Stolen Generations survivors

Collective Healing Grants have been distributed by The Healing Foundation to Stolen Generations Organisations on behalf of the National Indigenous Australians Agency since 2012.

The Collective Healing Grants support Stolen Generations survivors and their descendants through initiatives that promote healing, strengthen community connections, and enhance wellbeing for Stolen Generations survivors and their communities. These initiatives are delivered by dedicated and committed organisations working to create lasting and positive change across Australia.

The grants program emphasises the importance of intergenerational connections, cultural preservation, and capacity building within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The recommendations of the 1997 *Bringing them home* report have sat largely unactioned. The Healing Foundation's 2025 report, *Are you waiting for us to die?*, found that just 6% of those 83 recommendations have been implemented. With most Stolen Generations survivors now aged over 50, many have been waiting their entire adult lives for governments to act.
The Healing Foundation's advocacy is built on a simple premise – there is no more time to wait.

Central to this advocacy is ensuring Stolen Generations survivors are heard directly by decision-makers. The Healing Foundation combines survivor testimony, research, policy analysis and direct engagement with governments to amplify survivor voices and press for implementation of the *Bringing them home* recommendations. The Collective Healing Grants are central to this – through its grants program and the relationships it sustains with Stolen Generation Organisations (SGOs) across Australia, The Healing Foundation stays directly connected to the emerging needs of survivors, their descendants and families – and ensures their voices and experiences shape national advocacy.

> *'The grants program and those relationships are a critical part of framing how we consult and get information about what's happening on-the-ground. More than half of our consultation is with our network of SGOs and survivors.'*
> ***– Leonie Williamson, Deputy CEO, The Healing Foundation***

The unfinished business

The 1997 *Bringing them home* report made 83 recommendations – spanning health, housing, family support, records access, cultural connection and redress – that were intended to begin the work of healing and restitution.

The review conducted for *Are you waiting for us to die?* drew directly on input from SGOs to identify the urgent priorities and activities needed to meet the needs of survivors.

The national advocacy platform created by The Healing Foundation creates conditions that contribute to state-based advocacy. The WA Redress Scheme – introduced after the *Are you waiting for us to die?* report – is one example. The Healing Foundation played a supporting role to locally led advocacy, helping WA SGOs participate in state-based discussions and the rollout of the scheme.

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HealingFoundation

'We have solid networks and relationships through the grants, and they provide a two-way channel through which we inform, support and know.'
– Leonie Williamson, Deputy CEO, The Healing Foundation

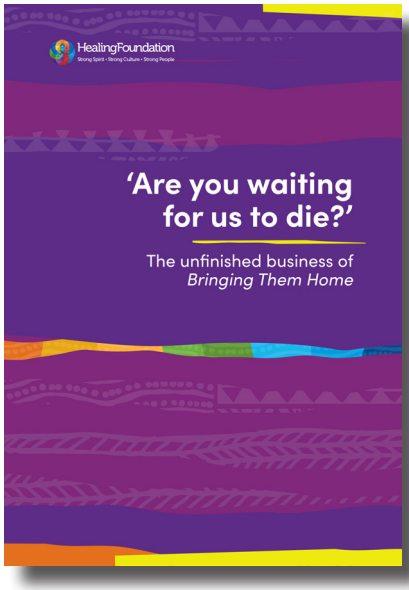
From Sorry to Action: The 2026–2028 plan

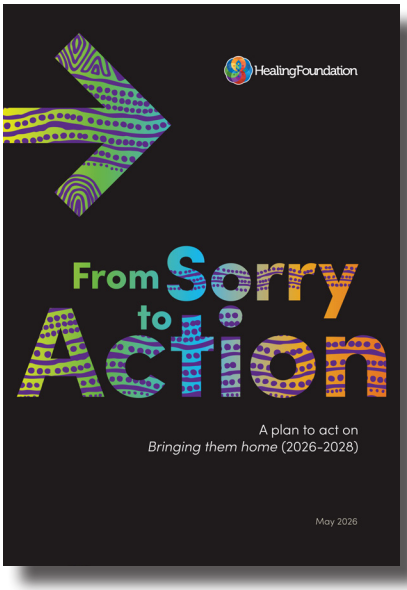
On 26 May 2026 – National Sorry Day, and 29 years after the *Bringing them home* report – The Healing Foundation launched *From Sorry to Action: A plan to act on Bringing them home (2026–2028)*. The plan outlines critical priorities and tangible actions for leaders and policymakers, translating long-outstanding recommendations into a clear, time-bound framework for change. The strong connections and ongoing relationships The Healing Foundation has with the SGOs through the Collective Healing Grants program supports them to be informed about these priorities and actions.

'The words and the language and the sentiment of From sorry to action are really from our SGOs and the survivors … the strategic direction, the intent of it – it's what we've heard over and over again.'
– Leonie Williamson, Deputy CEO, The Healing Foundation

The plan covers five interconnected priority areas that work together to contribute to Stolen Generations healing:

- health, social and emotional wellbeing, and ageing
- records, redress, and acknowledgements
- education, research and data
- sector support and workforce development
- governance and accountability.





Why this advocacy matters

Since being established in 2009, The Healing Foundation has helped keep implementation of the *Bringing them home* recommendations on the national agenda. The *From Sorry to Action* plan provides a concrete, time-bound call to governments and institutions to finally deliver on promises made in 1997.

The Collective Healing Grants are part of how The Healing Foundation sustains the relationships and trust that make this advocacy credible – informing and supporting SGOs, while being informed by them, so that a collective national voice reinforces local action, and local action strengthens the national case for change.

'We've heard increasingly from SGOs that, "We do the work on the ground, but we need you to be our national voice."'
– Leonie Williamson, Deputy CEO, The Healing Foundation