

# DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES & JUSTICE PRACTICE CONFERENCE 2019

By Jackie Wruck



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

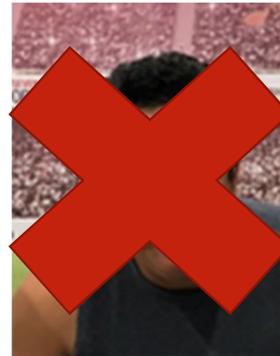
I wish to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we speak today the Cammeraygal peoples of the Eora nation, and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging.

# FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND YARRABAH/CAIRNS

Who Am I ?



# MY FAMILY'S STORY





# STATISTICS

- In 2005-06 - 44 in 1000 Indigenous Youths are represented in the juvenile justice system compared to 3 in 1000 non-Indigenous youths.
- Aboriginal people represent only 3% of the total population overall. Yet 28% of Australia's prison population are Aboriginal.

# Historical Impacts

## Loss of:

- Cultural Identity - our essence Family units Purpose & Belonging
- Language
- Traditional Lore/Storytelling
- Customs
- Rites of Passage for our young men and women



## Stolen Generation Impacts:

- Family Traditions/Language or Songlines.
- Belonging and Purpose of our people.
- Knowing our place in the world
- Leads to many feeling displaced even when placed within another family unit.
- Unsure of where or who you are.

## Fear/distrust of Government

Distrust is due to:

- Removals and break down of family structures.
- Fear in knowing the Government has power to take our children.
- Fear and knowledge of our men being taken into custody and treated badly due to their heritage
- Systems abuse and Aboriginal peoples rights not being adhered to.



## Over representations

- Child Protection.
- Justice & Criminal Systems.
- Poorer health outcomes for our people.
- Higher rates of suicide and self harming among our people.

# WORKING HOLISTICALLY

## How systems work now

- Questions & assessments targeted at mothers and children only
- No services for men as parents
- Excludes men from assessments
- Lower expectations of men as parents

## How systems need to change

- Work with a father inclusion lens
- Include the men in conversations about the family
- Educate the men about their choices and actions and how they matter
- Let them know how important they are to families
- Make them aware that their absence in family lives affects the family
- His choices, whether good or bad, matter to the family
- Support men around their cultural trauma and hold them accountable for their actions which affect child and family functioning

## 5 steps for engaging fathers

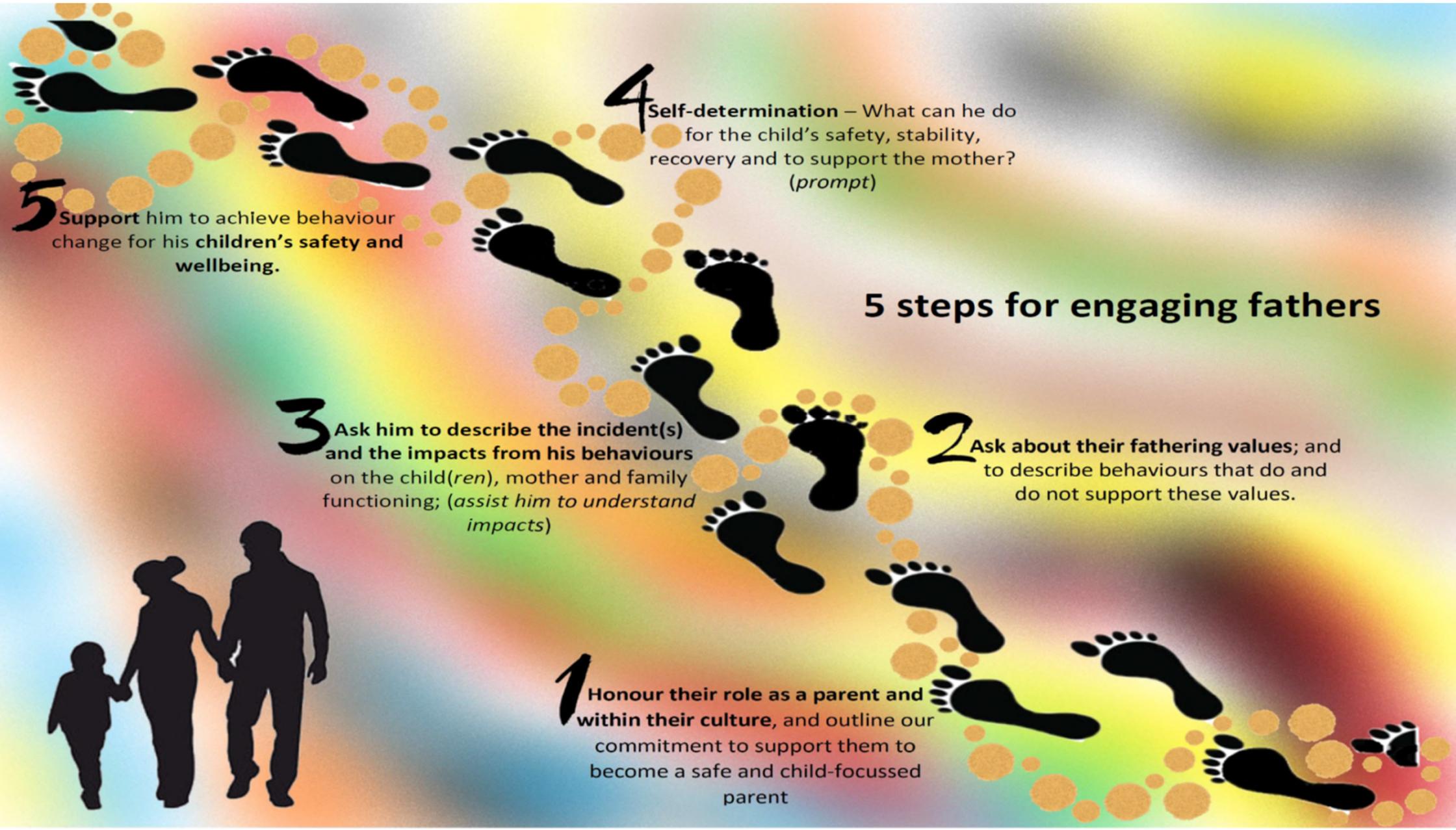
**1** Honour their role as a parent and within their culture, and outline our commitment to support them to become a safe and child-focussed parent

**2** Ask about their fathering values; and to describe behaviours that do and do not support these values.

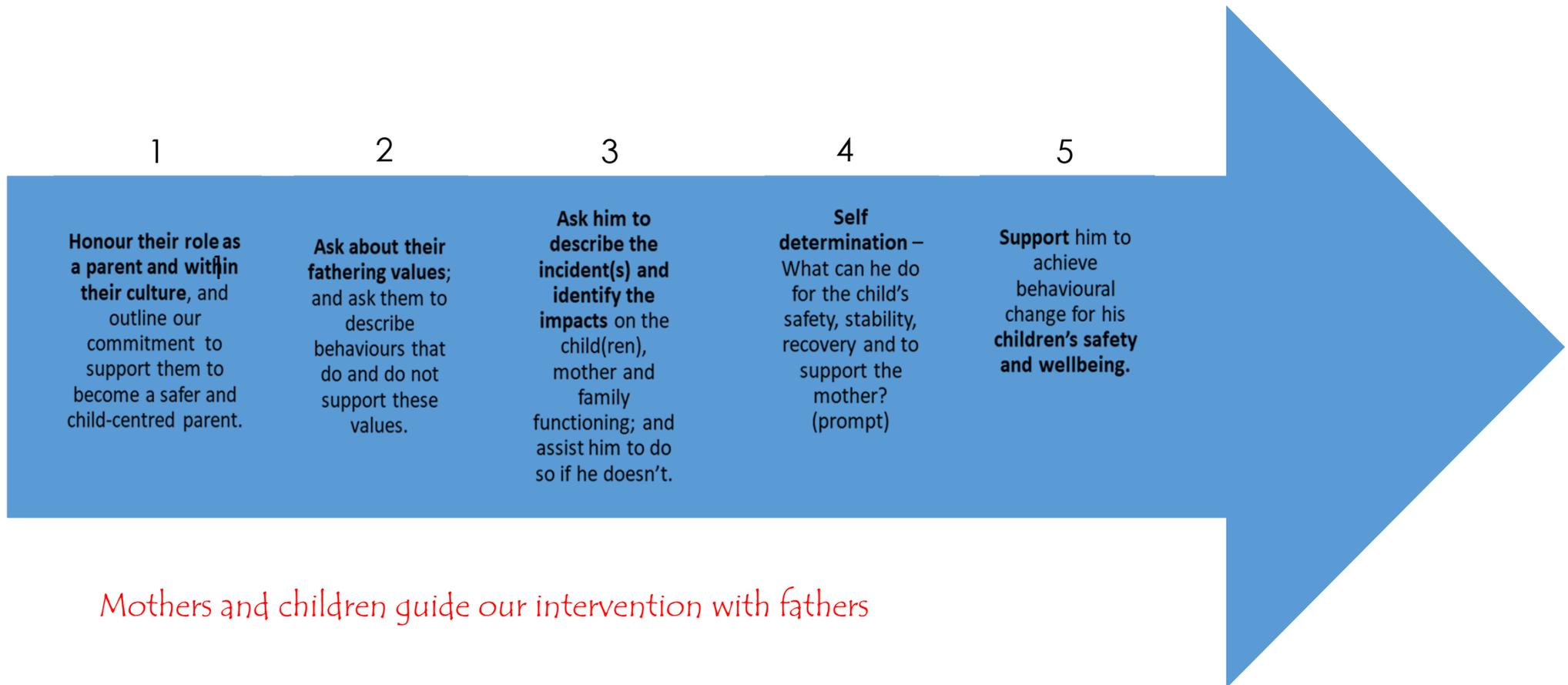
**3** Ask him to describe the incident(s) and the impacts from his behaviours on the child(ren), mother and family functioning; (*assist him to understand impacts*)

**4** Self-determination – What can he do for the child's safety, stability, recovery and to support the mother? (*prompt*)

**5** Support him to achieve behaviour change for his children's safety and wellbeing.



# 5 STEPS TO ENGAGING FATHERS





## DO'S & DON'TS

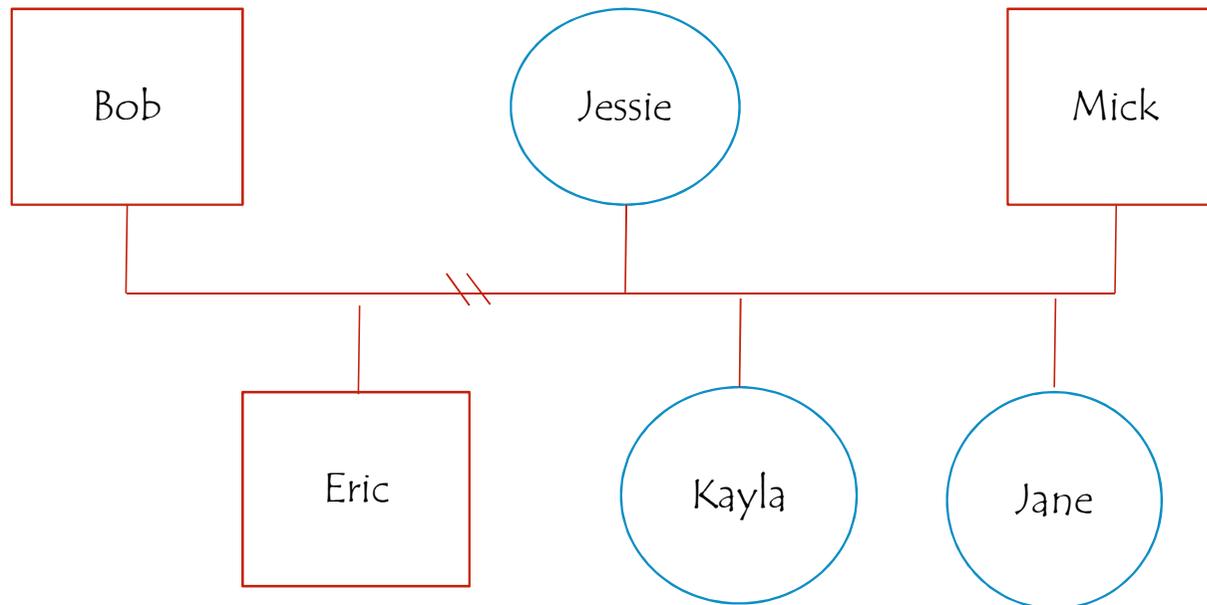
### DO

- Assess his attitude to his own behaviours
- Connect behaviours to impact on child and family functioning
- Identify if he is willing to change
- Demonstrate high parenting and behavioural expectations
- Be clear that abuse is not acceptable and is detrimental to family functioning

### DON'T

- Get a confession
- Confirm mum or children's stories
- Teach dad a lesson
- Learning about 'triggers'
- Understand the father's side in regards to DFV

# BRINGING THE FAMILY INTO THE ROOM





# FATHERING VALUES

What is a father? (He might say?)

- Worker
- Provider
- Protector
- Decision Maker
- Tough
- Do things with the kids

His named values:

- Nurturing
- Caring
- Provider
- Provide discipline

## Behaviours which match his values

What are your values as a father	What behaviours fit these values	
Nurturing	I play with kids, make sure I am with them after school, when they fall I pick them up cuddle them	
Provider	I give them food, shelter all their needs are met	
I provide discipline	I make sure when they are naughty, I stop them	
I am there for them	I want to always be there for them	

## Behaviours that do not fit his values

What are your values as a father	What behaviours fit these values	What behaviours do not fit these values
<p>Nurturing</p> <p>Provider</p> <p>I provide discipline</p> <p>I am there for them and support the children's mother</p>	<p>I play with kids, make sure I am with them after school, when they fall I pick them up</p> <p>I give them food, shelter all their needs are met</p> <p>I make sure when they are naughty, I stop them</p> <p>I want to always be there for them and support them with mum</p>	<p>I have not been home, I am out with my mates, and when I am home I am yelling at the kids and abusing mum</p> <p>I have no money left at the end of the week</p> <p>I have been violent towards the kids and mum</p> <p>I damage her chances to parent</p>

# PARENT CENTRED PARENTING CHILD CENTRED PARENTING CONTINUUM

• Parent Centred  
Parenting

Child Centred  
Parenting

## Selfish/my needs

- Drugs/drinking
- Violence to mum/child
- Meeting my needs

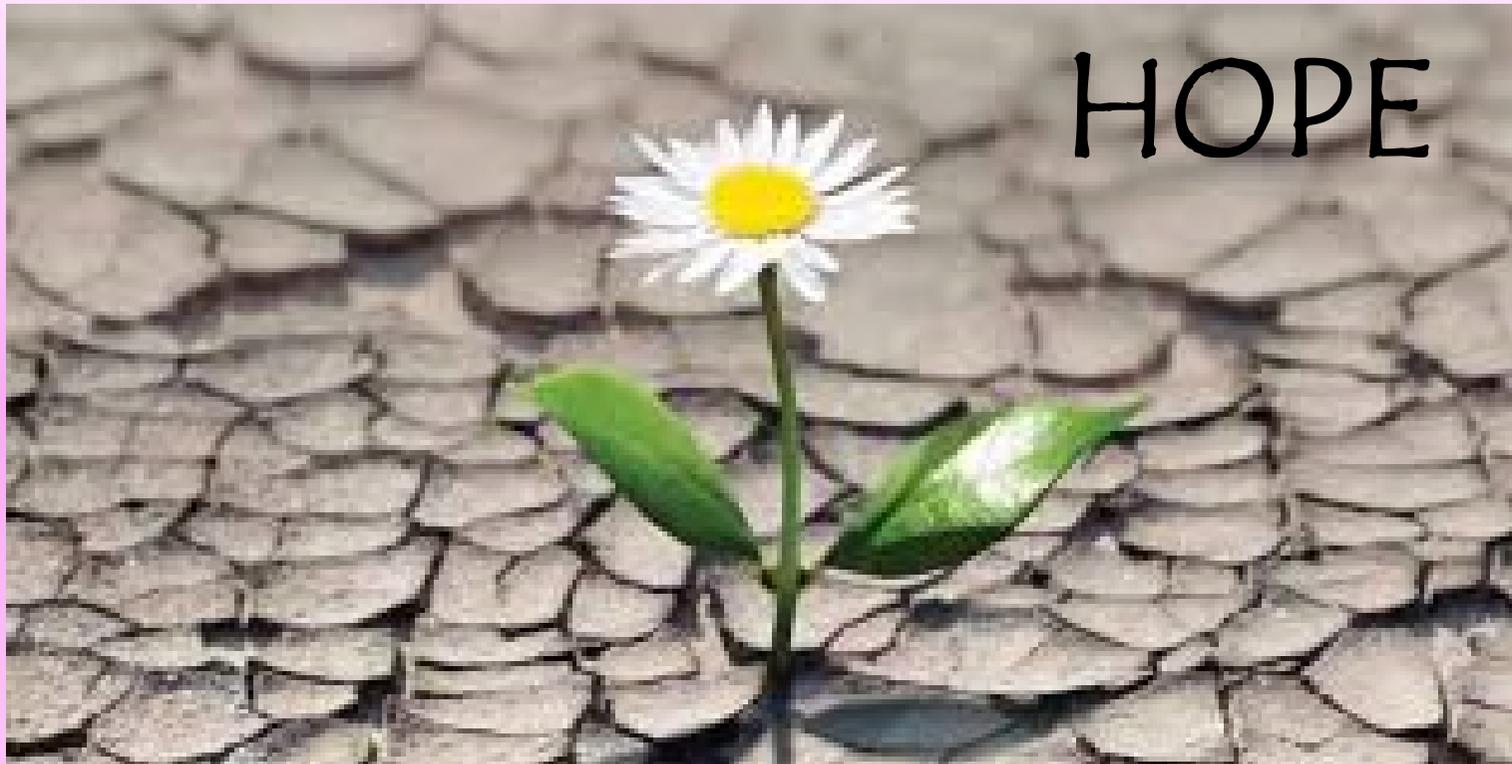
## Placing the children's needs first

- Meeting their needs
- Supporting mum
- Nurture/kindness/Caring
- Support child-mother relationship

# Case Plan Grid

Fathers Pattern of Behaviour	Impact o family functioning	Behavioural descriptions of what he has to change in order for the children to be safe and reduce risk	Interventions	How will we know Are they working
_____ is yelling abuse, putting mum down smashing windows	Loud noises are distressing for the children. Scares the children and mum. The children are not able to be "kids" they worry about dad. mum is unable to attend to the children's needs.	He will continue not to use physical violence, threats, verbal abuse, and property damage.	Attend WWD to support him in having child centred parenting choices that are not harmful. He will complete a Men's Choosing Change Program	Has he been able to acknowledge all of his behaviours, and the impact this has had on the children.
_____ is smacking the children harsh discipline	The children are scared of him, when he pulls into the driveway the children run to their rooms	He needs to become child centred, learn ways to interact with his children which support nurturing.	Attend DV informed programs that support change, and be supported to do this at contact.	When children fell safe/er with dad
_____ texts and phone all the time, intimidating, controlling making mum worried and anxious	Mum is unable to attend to the children's needs, she is trying to placate dad to make it safe for the children	Dad will not "stalk, text or call mum, dad will abide by the DVO	Become aware of the impact his behaviour has on mum and interrupts the relationship with the children	When there are no breaches

# WHAT MOTHERS AND CHILDREN WANT!

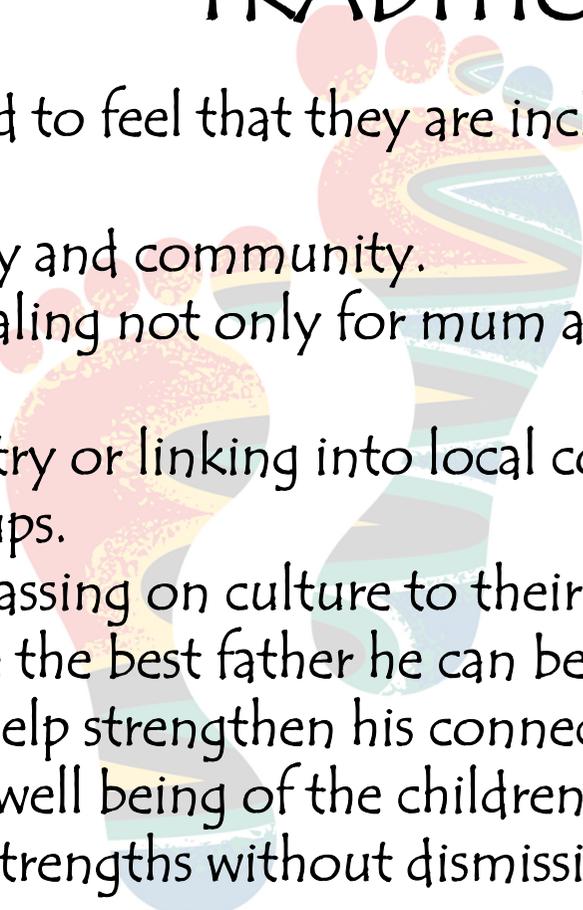


# WHAT FATHERS WANT!

- ✓ To be included!
- ✓ Want to be important in their child's life.
- ✓ Want to be better connected to their children and do not want their children to be scared of them.
- ✓ Want to belong to a community and be able to fulfil their roles in community especially if the community is a small one.
- ✓ They want to be a better man/brother/uncle/father and community member.



# HOW? - HEAL OUR WAY THROUGH TRADITIONAL CONNECTIONS

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- ✓ Aboriginal men need to feel that they are included in all aspects of the children's lives.
  - ✓ Has to include family and community.
  - ✓ Needs to include healing not only for mum and dad but also for the children.
  - ✓ It takes time to heal.
  - ✓ Going back to country or linking into local community supports.
  - ✓ Elders and Men groups.
  - ✓ Dads take a role of passing on culture to their children.
  - ✓ Encourage dad to be the best father he can be and ensure he has supports within the community to help strengthen his connection to family, kin and country.
  - ✓ Always pivot to the well being of the children.
  - ✓ Acknowledge their strengths without dismissing their behaviours.

# HEALING FOR MEN IN NSW



Aboriginal Men's Group – **Mudjilali**



Yaamanhaa Aboriginal Men's Group



Lyndon Aboriginal Men's Group



# FINAL NOTE





THANK YOU! QUESTION TIME!