

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**10 May 2017**

## **National Sorry Day – Still More Action is Urgently Required**

This year's *National Sorry Day* on May 26 marks the twentieth anniversary of the *Bringing Them Home Report*.

This anniversary offers us a time to reflect and remember the past policies of the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families.

The continued need for effective strategies to address the unresolved trauma for members of the Stolen Generation underpins public policy about Aboriginal services.

Continued failure to address the intergenerational trauma which burdens the Aboriginal community hampers the development and design of effective services for Aboriginal communities.

While some progress has been made, many of the recommendations from the *Bringing Them Home Report* are yet to be implemented. And tragically the services that were introduced have tended to be short term and ad hoc.

Serious problems in Aboriginal communities today, including rising suicide rates and higher levels of incarceration, can be linked to intergenerational trauma caused by forcibly removing tens of thousands of children from their families over a 70-year period.

“We know, the Stolen Generation, their children and grandchildren are still battling with **emotional, spiritual, physical** and **intellectual** scars because they have not been able to heal.

The *National Sorry Day* event at the Stolen Generation Memorial & Healing Garden is an opportunity for us all to come together and **recognise** and **acknowledge** the past to provide a space to encourage **healing, hope** and **aspiration** for a **positive future**,” said Relationships Australia SA CEO, Claire Ralfs.

The *National Sorry Day* event at the Stolen Generation Memorial and Healing Garden will begin with an Acknowledgement of Country by Allan Sumner, then elders will lead a short walk to the memorial where community leaders will speak.

The ceremony will be followed by festivities at the John McVeity Centre with a free BBQ lunch and traditional catering. Marra Dreaming and Aboriginal Contemporary Arts workshops will be available and live entertainment from Hannah Yates & Anton Seaborn, Nathan May and Scott Rathman Jnr.

“All members of the community are encouraged to attend the *National Sorry Day* event. Attendance at these events are an opportunity to strengthen a shared Reconciliation Journey, through reflecting on the past and honouring the strength and survival of Aboriginal people.

These shared events build our collective understanding and empathy, which allows us to truly **recognise** and **learn** the history of Australia,” said Scott Rathman, Aboriginal Artist and Cultural Learning Facilitator.

**-ends-**

Scott Rathman, Aboriginal Artist and Cultural Facilitator is available for comment.

### **Sorry Day Community Sharing & Healing Community Event**

Date & Time: Friday, 26 May, 10 am – 2 pm

Ceremony: The Stolen Generation Memorial & Healing Garden, Stebonheath Park, Davoren Road, Andrews Farm

Celebration & Lunch: John McVeity Centre, 182 Peachy Road, Smithfield Plains

Limited bus pick-ups are available on the day, please phone 08 8255 3323 to book.

Flyer attached.

### **For media enquiries or further information, please contact:**

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