

NOONGAR MIA MIA

Noongar Housing First Principles

The Noongar Housing First Principles have been developed to help housing providers and support service providers to create culturally safe environments and housing & support services for Noongar people experiencing homelessness, their families and communities. The Housing First Principles for Australia (HFPA) was used to guide the Noongar Housing First Principles (NHFP).

NHFP are grounded in the concept of DOYNTJ-DOYNTJ KOORLINY - Going Along Together - to achieve greater collective impact through meaningful partnerships and strong relationships throughout the journey from homelessness to secure, stable and culturally safe housing. Working with Noongar people requires an understanding of the importance of culture being embedded into all programs and service delivery. For Housing First interventions to be successful, all service providers must establish culturally safe and secure practices to recognise and respect Noongar culture as a source of great strength to the Noongar people and design & deliver services that meet the needs of "the Noongar community", and the expectations and rights of individuals, families and communities

By implementing these principles we can lay the foundation for reducing Aboriginal homelessness, improve Aboriginal health and ensure the well-being of all Noongar and Aboriginal people boordawan - future.

What is Housing First?

Housing First is an international model for housing and supporting people who have experienced long term and reoccurring homelessness and who face a range of complex challenges. It supports strategies to end homelessness and is a methodology for effectively assisting some of the most vulnerable people in our community.



Noongar Cultural Framework

Noongar Cultural Connections

For Noongar people, culture is the foundation upon which everything else is built, underpinning all aspects of life including connections to boodjar (land or country), moort (family and community) and kaartdijin (cultural knowledge and wisdom) through the expression of traditional and contemporary forms of cultural expression such as cultural practices, Noongar language, smoking ceremonies, cultural events, storytelling, dance, music and art. These cultural values and cultural connections are shown within the following diagram:



Important cultural values common to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities include survival and protection of cultures, languages and identity.



Sand Ceremony



Smoking Ceremony



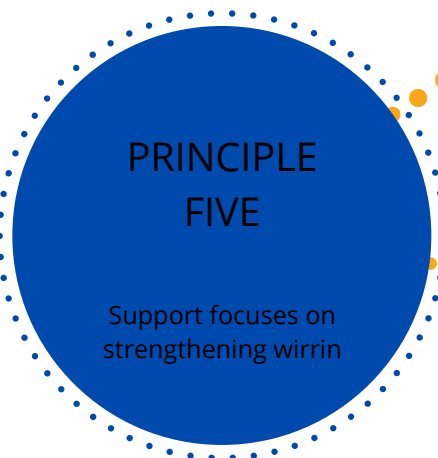
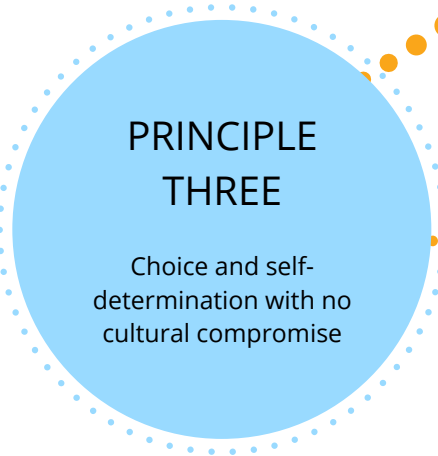
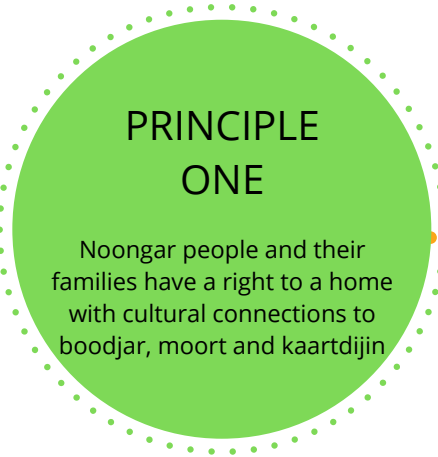
Hello



Boodjar



Noongar Housing First Principles at a glance



Noongar people and their families have a right to a home with cultural connections to Boodjar, Moort and Kaartdijin



Boodjar - Moort - Kaartdijin

Noongar people have immediate access to a permanent, self-contained home which meets their cultural and social needs.

Location

Noongar people have a right to decide on location based on their cultural and spiritual connection to boodjar, moort and kaartdijin.

The location of homes must also take into account family and cultural dynamics that may impinge on Noongar families being housed in the same vicinity.

Sustainability

Location, affordability, access to services and quality of property meets the specific needs of the Noongar family being housed. Considerations include safety and connection to kinship/moort community (and for Noongar people with physical disability, maximising their capacity to live independently without being separated from kin).

Where possible, negotiate with the family to make it possible to maintain the property during their absence without undue financial stress to the family.

A home may not just be for a single person. Where other family members/kin also live in a home, they may be added to the tenancy to avoid the remaining family members losing their home if the lead tenant passes away or is absent.

Support is flexible, culturally appropriate and is available whenever it is needed - Moort and Koort



Collective Wellbeing - Noongar families are supported holistically by their moort. The cycle of support is never ending. Caseworkers will connect them to their significant family and appropriate services for ongoing support, if the person chooses to be supported in this manner, making use of the strengths of kin as a support network

Holistic – The holistic needs of Noongar people (physical, cultural and spiritual) are supported. Support is directed by the people receiving the support, and is available across a wide variety of domains being sensitive to people's family context and cultural identity.

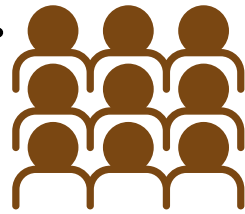
Informed - The person is informed of the services (both Aboriginal-led and mainstream) available to them and are given choices.

Accessibility – Noongar people are able to quickly re-engage with support without needing to undergo a new assessment or intake process.

Relationship – Support is built from an authentic relationship from the koort (heart), and it is practical, flexible, creative, respectful, compassionate and kind – responding to each unique set of circumstances as required.

Continuity – Support does not have a fixed end date; people can return to or continue support outside of family for as long as needed. The offer of support is made not only to the primary person, but to all people living under one roof. Even if the primary person is incarcerated or leaves the home, or passes away, or if a tenancy fails, the support services will continue. The support is available to people in their new living situations including a return to homelessness or to an institutional setting where support will actively assist people secure new homes.

Choice and self-determination with no cultural compromise Boodjar - Moort - Wirrin - Koorndarn



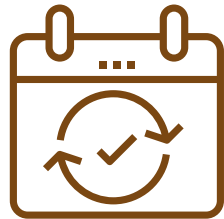
Noongar people define for themselves what makes a place a home which may include connection to particular moort, particular land or to particular families. Noongar people are given a choice of where they live and the type of housing in which they want to live according to their needs and family makeup. Noongar people have a right to choose support that accommodate their needs which may include their extended family members.

Household – People are able to choose with whom they live, who they invite into their own home and whether visitors are able to stay.

Person-centred – Support acknowledges that the best way to understand and respond to the needs of Noongar people, is to listen to their views and questions, so that any planning is directly responsive to their particular cultural values, concerns and dreams. This approach respects each individual and that person's strengths rather than focusing negatively on each person's limitations.

Harm Reduction - While acknowledge the impact of alcohol and substance use on people, culture and communities, people will not be shamed or excluded from housing and support because of their use.

Culturally appropriate active engagement through Kwop Daa Koort - Koorndarn - Kaarnya - Kwop Daa



Koorndarn – The onus is on workers to show respect for the people and for their culture.

Kwop Daa – Engage in good talk that is open and honest. While individuals and families can refuse support, staff persist without intruding and use their relationship to make ongoing and regular offers in ways that show care and respect for people and culture.

Koort – A deep understanding of people, means that support is designed to fit the individual and their moort (kin) rather than the individual being required to fit the service.

Kaarnya – Workers employ creative and imaginative approaches to ensure their work is engaging rather than blaming people for “disengaging”. Our responsibility is to re-engage without blame or shame.

Availability – Caseloads are small and support is available outside normal working hours. This allows workers to be persistent and proactive in their approach, have time to support the whole family, doing “whatever it takes” within the Noongar cultural framework, and not giving up and closing off when engagement is low.

Support focuses on strengthening Wirrin Wirrin - Kaarnya



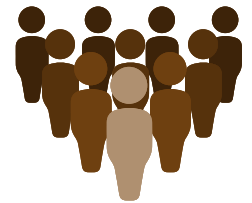
Strengthen Wirrin - to recover a sense of themselves and their place in their community. Strengthens the whole family and their connection to each other, their culture and their land.

Hope – Support offers hope and actively encourages Noongar people to dream and imagine a future for themselves and allow them to make their own decisions that benefit them, their families and their culture. Towards a future focusing on gaining a sense of purpose with the prospect of enjoying a good and secure life. A healthy, stable home environment and family creates strong wirrin (spirit) for everyone.

Kaarnya - a process of trial and error involving small steps forward and backward celebrating successful experiences but also learning from experiences of pain and frustration without karnya - a sense of shame.

Strengths – Celebrating and working with people's capacity and abilities that are quite separate from any diagnosis they may have. Work together with people towards goals, recognising their unique strengths.

Appropriate – see each person as an individual, honour culture, and recognise that individuals are all unique and valued.



Social, cultural and community inclusion Moort - Kaartdijin - Wirrin

Koorndarn – The onus is on workers to show respect for the people and for their culture.

Belonging – Social, cultural and community inclusion is an integral part of support as it rebuilds a sense of self and connection to others, which in turn is a protective factor for people's tenancy, health and well-being, recognising that wellbeing is collective. Encourage opportunities to practice culture and reconnect with cultural knowledge and pride. Understand that belonging is not only to family, but to land.

Relationships – Support people to build friendships and relationships within their community, and where possible to reconnect with family, culture and those who are important to them. Respect cultural values and protocols.

Participation – Support people to participate in a wide range of pursuits including education, employment and volunteering opportunities as well as cultural, artistic and recreational activities.

Understand - that mainstream interventions and organisations may not be fit for purpose and listen to community voices about suitable alternatives.

Workers - should be aware of when key cultural activities occur in the community. They should facilitate and encourage people to 1 and link into community, to connect with culture through participating in art activities, events and community organisations, etc.

Community - Homes exist as part of a community. Support not only helps people connect to that community, but also uses strategies to build acceptance amongst neighbours of people with different experiences, lifestyles and appearances.

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