



The Principles

1. For all Australians to own their heritage it is imperative that indigenous peoples' right and responsibility to survive as a unique group is recognised.
2. Equality and fair play are fundamental Australian values.

The Issues

1. Indigenous people are perceived as “a black problem”, rather than appreciated for their uniqueness.
2. The lack of affirmative action implementing policies to preserve the autonomy of indigenous people increases the continuing harmful effects of dispossession.
3. The current poor standard of basic services available to many Aboriginal people in health, housing, water supply, sewerage, education, employment and training in both rural and urban areas of NSW.
4. The discrimination continually experienced when accessing basic services, particularly in the areas of welfare, housing, employment and some non-government agencies.
5. The one government department to which indigenous people have immediate access is the police, which in itself is discriminatory.
6. Lack of consultation with Aboriginal interagency bodies by government or local councils, especially regarding the allocation of funding.

The Alternatives

1. Establish protocols and develop processes that give indigenous people representation at all levels of government.
2. Negotiate partnerships and agreements so that indigenous people participate in developing policy, distribution of funding and access to services.
3. In consultation with indigenous people ensure that services offered are appropriate to their needs, respecting their heritage and culture.
4. All government departments develop policies and training programs to eliminate racial discrimination in services provided to indigenous people.
5. Pursue implementation of the Aboriginal Justice Agreement (signed July 2002) as a ‘whole-of-government’ framework for dealing with Aboriginal justice issues, designed to reduce incarceration rates and improve relationships with police.
6. Expand throughout the State the Circle Sentencing process already trialled in Nowra.
7. Work with Indigenous people in NSW to establish a Treaty which ensures that:
 - the non-indigenous community honours the right and responsibility of the Indigenous people of this state to maintain their culture;

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Your Voice Strengthens Our Voice



- the various Indigenous communities have real opportunities to exercise this right and responsibility.

The Principles

A profound cultural and spiritual connection with the land is a fundamental source of Aboriginal identity and well-being. Justice demands that this truth be recognised and respected.

Native Title claims should be settled in culturally appropriate negotiations, not in the Courts. Governments have a role and responsibility to ensure such negotiations are carried out in good faith.

The Issues

1. The lack of consultation and involvement of indigenous communities at every stage of design, development and implementation of policies that affect them.
2. Lack of funding for immediate needs, eg, getting people to hospital or assisting rural Aborigines to return to their communities after family members have been in urban hospitals.
3. Truancy among indigenous children whilst the school attendance of non-indigenous children is enforced.
4. Deterioration of indigenous medical and psychological health as evidenced in the high suicide rate of young Aboriginal men.

The Alternatives

1. The NSW Government involve indigenous communities at every stage in the development of policies that affect them.
2. Establish clear lines of communication and accountability between Aboriginal agencies at local community and government levels.
3. Establish community schools with appropriate holistic curricula that are attractive and meaningful to indigenous children in order to enhance their Aboriginal identity and their self confidence as well as to facilitate their capacity to compete in the job market.
4. Provide further professional training for indigenous health workers, social workers and teachers in order to attract more indigenous women and men to these professions.
5. Ensure that adequate appropriate health services are made available to all Aboriginal communities in NSW.
6. Support and fund indigenous self-help initiatives, in particular, the National Indigenous Youth Movement in NSW.
7. Continue to settle native title issues in NSW by negotiation with Aboriginal claimants, without costly court proceedings.