
MEDIA RELEASE

John Robertson MLC

Minister for Corrective Services
Minister for Public Sector Reform
Special Minister of State



Friday 4 September

NSW Government helping Aboriginal Communities to Speak Up on Child Sexual Abuse

Speak Up, a new resource aimed at preventing and raising awareness about child sexual assault in aboriginal communities will be launched by the NSW Government in collaboration with indigenous community leaders today.

The DVD resource, funded and developed by Corrective Services NSW in partnership with a number of aboriginal communities, is part of the NSW Government's response to the *Breaking the Silence* report into child sexual assault.

Minister for Corrective Services John Robertson said the project was an important example of how Governments can work together with aboriginal communities to help prevent child sexual abuse.

"*Speak Up* is a comprehensive DVD based resource kit that was put together over the past two years to help combat child sexual abuse," said Mr Robertson.

"This project would not have been possible without the support and involvement of members of the Shoalhaven, Toomelah and Bogabilla communities, who have taken the courageous step to *Speak Up* on this issue."

The DVD features a welcome from prominent aboriginal actor Leah Purcell, a rap by teenagers from the Shoalhaven about tackling child abuse and a number of brave aboriginal people speaking up about their personal experiences.

The second part of the DVD features local Australian actors role-playing situations relevant to identifying and preventing child sexual abuse.

"The voices in this project have one very clear message; that this is not a part of aboriginal culture and that everyone has a role in protecting children from abuse.

"The DVD covers a range of issues too often not talked about including understanding child sexual assault, its effect on individuals, how to respond when a victim confides in you and how to protect children from abuse.

"*Speak Up* is a direct response to the *Breaking the Silence Report*, and is part of the Government's five-year plan to tackle child sexual abuse in Aboriginal communities.

"One of the actions we committed to was the development of a suite of culturally appropriate awareness raising programs to target the causes and address the consequences of abuse.

Speak Up is just that – it is a resource that has been created by aboriginal communities, for aboriginal communities – with support from the dedicated staff at Corrective Services NSW.

“Income generated via Corrective Services Industries through inmate labour has funded the project to the tune of \$382,000.

“Sexual assault of children is a national problem which destroys individual lives, families and whole communities - today is about speaking up, starting the conversation and protecting children in NSW,” said Mr Robertson.

Speak Up will be rolled out by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in consultation with local Aboriginal communities in the coming months.

Speak Up script writer Scott Higgins last week received the award for *Best Documentary – Corporate Training* at the prestigious Australian Writer’s Guild Awards for the role play scenario titled, *Not My Sister*.

Launch of Speak Up
Minister for Corrective Services John Robertson
Art Gallery of NSW, Art Gallery Rd, The Domain
12:20pm, Friday 4th September

Note: Excerpts approved for broadcast will be available at the launch

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