

# *Victims paying the cost for systems that neglect and stigmatise*

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The agenda to come..... not necessarily in this order.....

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- Jack's story
  - Disabilities and the cost of wrongful detainment
  - Creation vulnerable groups
  - Breaches of human rights
  - Foetal programming of life outcomes
  - Forms of violence
  - Ongoing racism
  - Improving support for women & their families
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# Vulnerable people and their vulnerability

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- “vulnerable adjective exposed to being attacked or harmed”
- “*vulnerable to criticism* EXPOSED TO, open to, liable to, prone to, prey to, susceptible to, subject to, an easy target for....”

(Oxford Dictionary Thesaurus and Wordpower Guide, 2001)

Jack's story, "Survival where justice has no conscience" in *Alcohol in Pregnancy: No Blame No Way* (Elizabeth Russell, in publication)

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*.. if 'Jack' were a Caucasian child presenting with the same spectrum of problems we would classify him as extremely disabled. He is a 14-year old boy with the academic skills of the average 7-year old. In functional terms this is equivalent to a mild to moderate intellectual disability. He essentially does not have the skills to manage the present, yet alone build towards any form of optimistic future. I feel this is a tragedy that his situation could have reached this state*

(Child Development Paediatrician, May 2002)

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*Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Human Rights Social Justice Commissioner, HREOC, 2005)

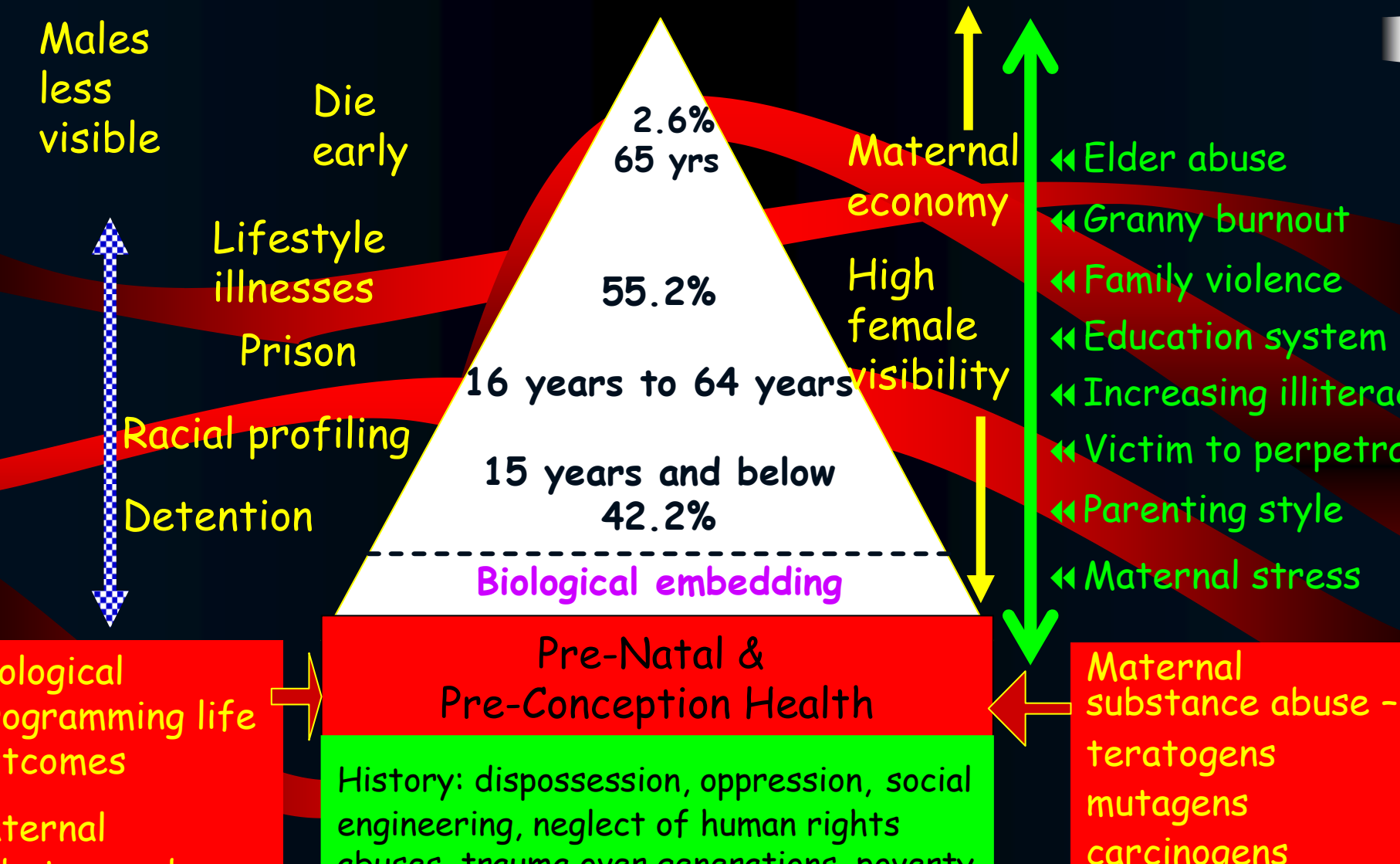
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***Cognitive disability*** - The category of cognitive disabilities includes a range of disorders relating to mental processes of knowing, including awareness, attention, memory perception, reasoning and judgment. Cognitive disabilities include intellectual disabilities, learning difficulties, acquired brain injury, foetal alcohol syndrome, dementia, neurological disorders and autism spectrum disorders.

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# Determinants of Indigenous Life Course:

## History, Pre-Conception, Pre-Natal & Later Risks



# History as a biological violation of human rights

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History: dispossession, oppression, social engineering, neglect of human rights abuses, trauma over generations, poverty

# Johan Galtung on violence

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*..avoidable insults to basic human needs...*

1. need for survival
2. need for well being
3. need for identity
4. need for freedom

**Power can be exercised in two ways: as an act of commission.... or as an act of omission. What is not done is as worthy of attention as what is done (Galtung)**

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Dutch Hunger Winter Study (DHWS)

Foetal Origins of Adult Disease (FOAD)

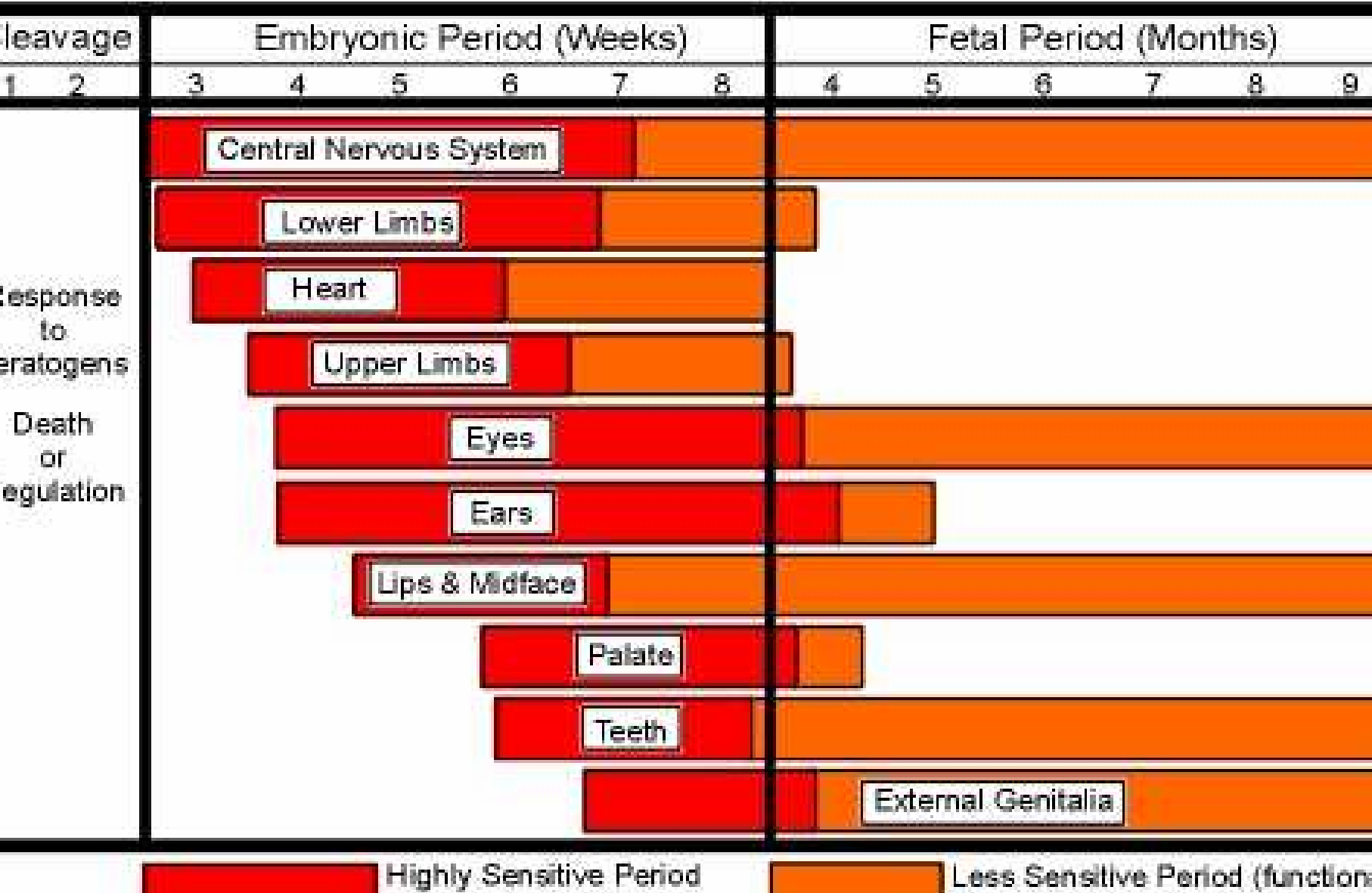
Developmental Origins of Health & Disease (DOHaD)

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*The consequences of an unfavourable environment in the womb may even be passed across many generations ..... The concept of programming of lifelong health and disease by prenatal life has important health implications for future generations of our children and the society in which they will live (Nathanielsz, 1999:1)*

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# Degrees of Susceptibility of Embryonic Organs to Teratogens at Different Developmental Periods



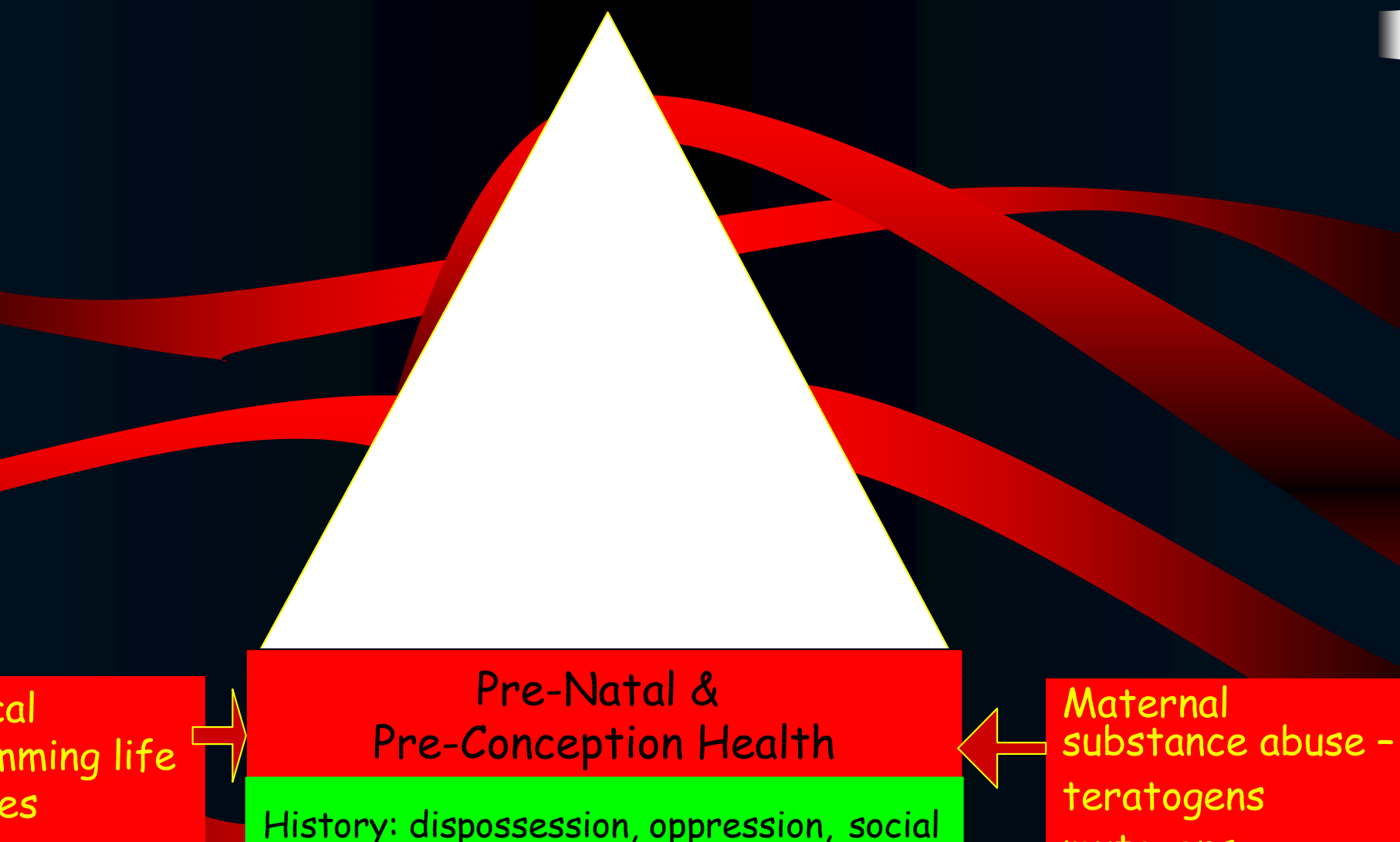
I'M DOING MY BIT  
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT...

GAYNOR CARDEW ©

I'M NOT BREEDING!



# Determinants of Indigenous Life Course. History, Pre-Conception, Pre-Natal & Later Risks



# A biological crisis?

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*Kids on the grog, fightin', breakin' into houses, terrorisin' the street, fillin' up the jails, they got no respect ....*

*We need to grow up our kids better .....*

*These kids are hard headed*

*I don't know what's up with them.*

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# Comments from Granny Burnout Study

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*I was this biggest drunk in this community*

*I had five kids from one night stands... never been in a relationship*

*I let him abuse me thinking he'd leave my little sisters alone but he got at them too.*

*We never had any money and the old fullas would pay us a shilling to look at their privates .... or more if we'd touch them.*

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Anxiety, depression, suicide, PTSD, aggression & other significant behavioural problems....

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*Maltreatment at an early age can have enduring negative effects on a child's brain development and function ..... the aftermath is reflected in anxiety, depression, suicide, PTSD, aggression and significant other behavioural problems including addictions* (Teicher, 2004)

*The origin of these behaviours can be traced back to foetal development and infancy. High quality care – giving support during the first three years .... reduces ... the seriousness of behavioural problems* (R. Tremblay, "Developmental Health and the Wealth of Nations", 1999).

# Who Speaks for the Child?

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*the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth*

(UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).

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# Johan Galtung on violence

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*..avoidable insults to basic human needs...*

1. need for survival
2. need for well being
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direct violence - physically hurting, wounding, maiming, killing

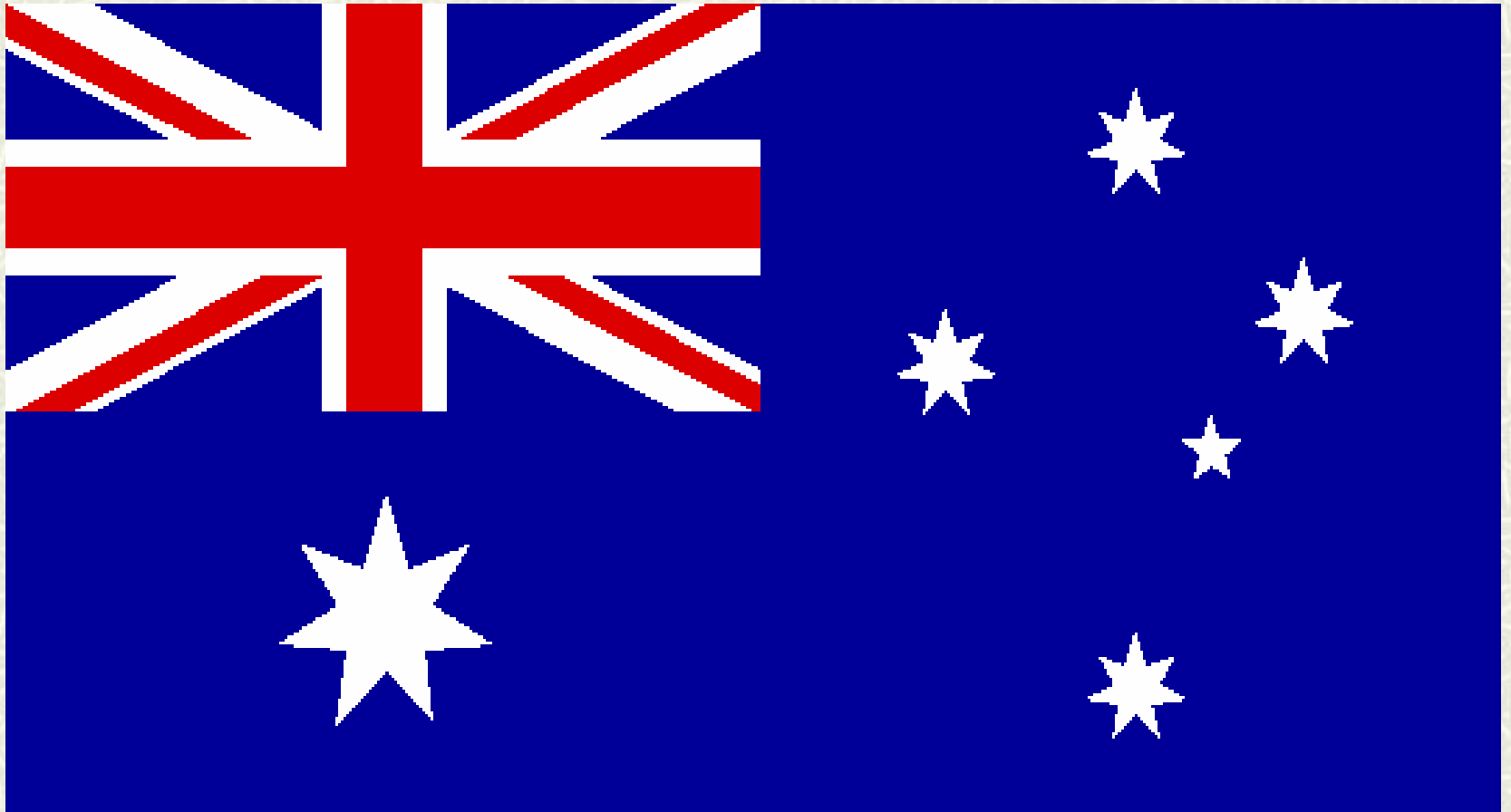
structural (institutional) violence - inequality in the distribution of power - exploitation & marginalisation - laws, education, religion

cultural violence - *any aspect of culture that can be used to legitimise violence in its direct or structural form* - symbols, language, art, religion – these represent oppression

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# Understanding cultural violence

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# Oppression and Lateral Violence

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## ILLUSTRATION OF LATERAL VIOLENCE

Jane Middleton-Moz (1999)

OPPRESSION/SHAMING/VIOLENCE



gossip .. put downs .. competitions  
family feuds .. bloodism .. religious  
wars .. gang wars

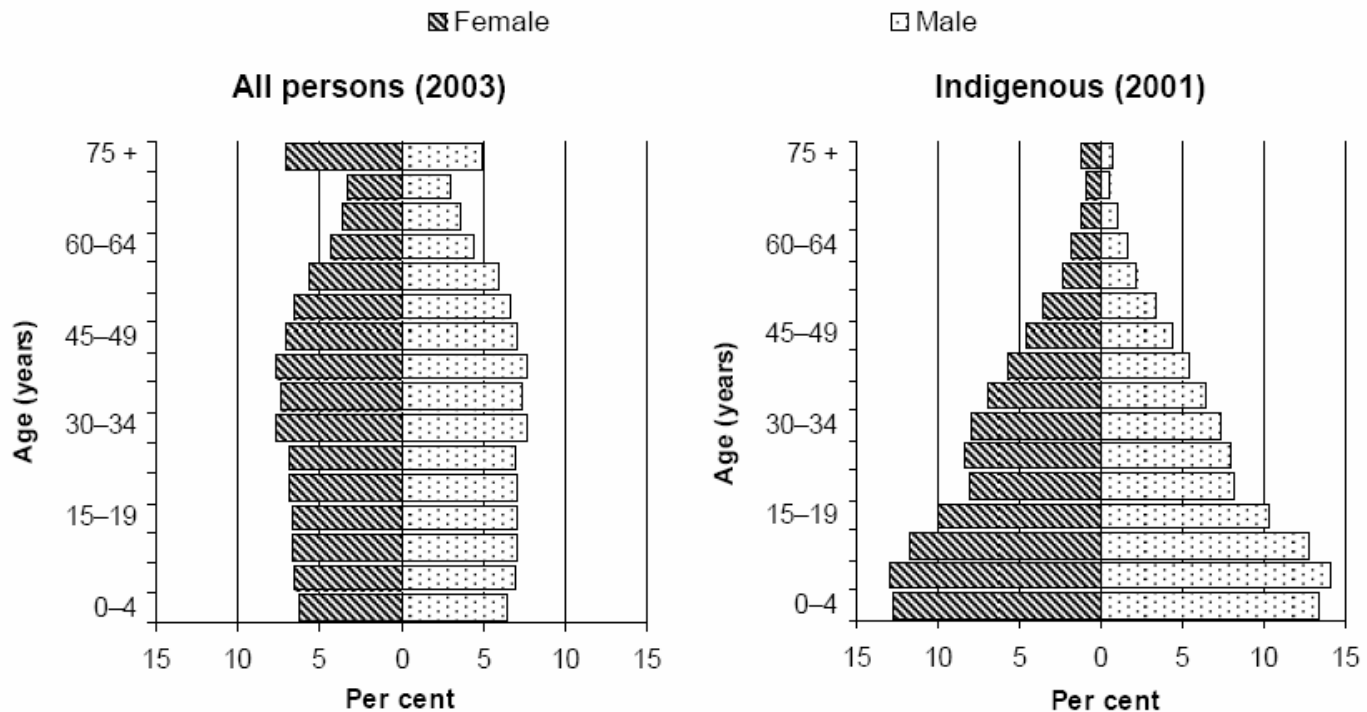


Another group just as oppressed or more so.

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# A statistical profile of racism

Figure A.1 Population distribution, by age and sex, 30 June<sup>a, b</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Totals may not add as a result of rounding. <sup>b</sup> Includes other territories.

Source: ABS (2001 and 2004c); tables A.1 and A.7.

“Obstetric Outcomes In An Aboriginal Community: A Comparison With The Surrounding Rural Area” (Powell & Dugdale, *Aust J Rural Health*, vol 7, no 1, Feb 1999)

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**1990, 1991 & 1992**

146 Aboriginal babies

**2005**

Children now aged 15, 14 & 13 yrs

**25 children (17%) remain at school**

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# *Black Buckets – Keeping up appearances*

(National Indigenous Times 20/04/06)

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|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup>   | Norway               |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>   | Iceland              |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>   | Sweden               |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>   | Australia            |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>   |                      |
| 60 <sup>th</sup>  |                      |
| 70 <sup>th</sup>  |                      |
| 80 <sup>th</sup>  |                      |
| 90 <sup>th</sup>  |                      |
| 99 <sup>th</sup>  | Indigenous Australia |
| 100 <sup>th</sup> | China                |

# Framework for Action

## Support women unconditionally Leave no child behind

Monitor all processes & work towards full inclusion of mothers

1. Form collaborative group & audit human + other resources  
Describe the team profile?
2. Count the kids.....  
Who is where and who has this vital information?  
How many in total? What other information – early childhood development index?
3. Conduct Learning Circle consultations to identify the problems, educate the team, assign tasks & decide method of evaluation
4. Group sets realistic targets & mean it....
5. What supports will be needed for parents? How will this operate?
6. Plan activities to ensure every child participates in early childhood programs, pre school, school, after hours activities plus curfew.
7. Conduct parallel activities for individual parents & individual groups
8. Identify children's learning difficulties, absences, etc, & add in extra interventions immediately where necessary
9. Implement, monitor all personal & group feedback - report weekly & diligently