

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and parenting: a scoping review

Kootsy Canuto<sup>A,B,D</sup>, Stephen G. Harfield<sup>A,C</sup>, Karla J. Canuto<sup>A</sup> and Alex Brown<sup>A,C</sup>

<sup>A</sup>Wardliparingga Aboriginal Health Equity Theme, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, North Terrace, Adelaide, SA 5000, Australia.

<sup>B</sup>Freemasons Foundation Centre for Men's Health, University of Adelaide, 254 North Terrace, Adelaide, SA 5000, Australia.

<sup>C</sup>School of Public Health, Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, University of Adelaide, 57 North Terrace, Adelaide, SA 5000, Australia.

<sup>D</sup>Corresponding author. Email: kootsy.canuto@sahmri.com

**Abstract.** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men rarely rate a mention within discussions of parenting unless framed in the negative, or as the cause of dysfunctional family life. Consequently, the roles and responsibilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men within parenting have largely been neglected or ignored. This scoping review aimed to identify and describe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parenting programs that focused on male parents. A comprehensive search was conducted of databases, PubMed and Informit ATSIhealth, to identify peer-review publications, while relevant websites were also searched for grey literature. The review identified eight programs that met the inclusion criteria. The review highlights the lack of rigorously researched and published literature on parenting programs that focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parents. The programs all reported positive outcomes and demonstrate that given the opportunity, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parents are ready and determined to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as parents to the best of their ability for the benefit of their families and communities. The provision of inclusive parenting programs and services will equip Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parents to better support their families during these important times.

Received 15 May 2019, accepted 20 September 2019, published online 11 December 2019

## Introduction

Irrefutably, the continuing processes of colonisation in Australia is contributing to the poor health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As Walker and Shepherd (2008) argue, 'historical legacies of forced separation from family and removal from traditional country continues to affect the social and emotional wellbeing of Indigenous people' (Walker and Shepherd 2008, p. 6). This trauma continues to affect the lives of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as distress 'can have a significant impact on carer-child relationships, parenting styles and how well families function' (Walker and Shepherd 2008, p. 6). For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parents, colonisation restricts them from performing traditional roles as 'landowner, educators, father figures, providers and decision makers' (Reilly and Rees 2018, p. 422), which negatively affects their ability to parent.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men rarely rate a mention within discussions of parenting (Reilly and Rees 2018), unless framed in the negative (Stuart *et al.* 2015) or as the cause of dysfunctional family life (Stoneham *et al.* 2014). Contributing to this exclusion is a parenting domain, which is

dominated by a narrative that tends to exclusively focus and privilege the roles and responsibilities of females (Astone and Peters 2014). As a consequence, the roles and responsibilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men within parenting have largely been neglected and/or ignored. It is feared that 'Aboriginal children of both sexes may no longer be receiving adequate fathering' (Adams 2006, p. 70) due to the breakdown of kinship systems (Adams 2006).

A systematic review by Baldwin and Bick (2018) on the mental health of first-time fathers in high-income countries found that there were 'wide gaps in the provision of services; many fathers did not have access to tailored information resources nor were their needs generally acknowledged by health professionals' (Baldwin and Bick 2018, p. 2064). In Australia, the lack of options for male parents to engage with appropriate support services and programs is cause for concern and as Baldwin and Bick (2018) noted; 'despite increasing evidence of perinatal consequences for men's mental health, fathers continue to report being marginalized by the maternity and early years' services' (Baldwin and Bick 2018, p. 2064).

In 2014, Panter-Brick *et al.* (2014) conducted a systematic review on parenting interventions that focussed on the engagement and participation of fathers within such programmes. Panter-Brick *et al.* (2014) 'identified only 92 parenting interventions worldwide that disaggregated findings by sex of parent and thus could describe outcomes in relation to fathers' participation' (Bernard van Leer Foundation 2015, p. 30). Furthermore, Panter-Brick *et al.* (2014) go on to explain how in all the aforementioned interventions, the sample size of male parents was usually small and the 'impact of engaging with both parents was almost never mentioned' (Bernard van Leer Foundation 2015, p. 30).

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parents, education and/or support programs specifically designed for this cohort of males during this period is critical to their psychological wellbeing (Adams 2006). In addition, evidence from the systematic review by Baldwin and Bick (2018):

...adds further support for an urgent review of how we plan, provide and resource maternity and early years' services, in order to recognize the impact that pregnancy and birth may have on a father's mental health, as well as the essential role fathers play in supporting their partner and infant [Baldwin and Bick 2018, p. 2065].

Clearly, the roles and responsibilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parents should be considered important elements within the parenting domain, including having equal access to appropriate support services and programs throughout parenthood.

This scoping review aimed to identify and describe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parenting programs that included male parents. This review had one research question: what strategy(ies) and/or programs have been implemented that focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parenting?

## Methods

### *Inclusion criteria*

#### *Participants*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males who are either parents, carers or responsible for the day-to-day caring of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child or children.

#### *Context*

Parenting programs that included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males and was delivered or performed in any setting nationally (Australia) were included.

#### *Types of studies*

All reviews, qualitative, quantitative, economic and mixed-methods studies were considered for inclusion. Policy papers and expert opinion pieces were not included.

### *Search strategy*

A four-step search strategy was used to find peer-reviewed publications and grey literature. Key words were used to search PubMed and Informit ATSIhealth to identify additional keywords and index terms (Joanna Briggs Institute 2014).

A search was then undertaken on the PubMed and Informit ATSIhealth databases. The following websites were also searched for grey literature: Google, the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) website, Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet, National Library of Australia and the Lowitja Institute. The reference list of included publications was searched for additional studies. In addition, relevant experts were also asked if they were aware of additional missing studies.

The search of the PubMed database was conducted on 25 November 2018 and was restricted to publications published in English, with no date restrictions (Appendix 1). This was followed by the search of the Informit ATSIhealth database conducted on 10 December 2018, and restricted to publications published in English, with no date restrictions (Appendix 2). The search terms used for both databases were: Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Indigenous, men, male, dad, father, uncle, carer, guardian, parent, grandparent, grandfather, grandmother, baby, babies, kid, child, children, birth, conceive, conception, daughter, son, girl, boy.

K. Canuto identified articles that appeared to meet the inclusion criteria from their title and abstract. The full text of these articles was retrieved and reviewed by K. Canuto and S. G. Harfield to confirm if they met the inclusion criteria. If K. Canuto and S. G. Harfield should have differing opinions regarding an article's acceptance, A. Brown would be available to determine whether an article fit the inclusion criteria; however, this situation did not eventuate.

The 'JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Qualitative Research' was used to assess the quality of the included papers (Joanna Briggs Institute 2014). The lead author, K. Canuto, performed the quality appraisal, which was verified by K. J. Canuto, with any differing of opinions on the appraisal discussed until consensus was reached.

## Results

A total of 638 publications were found from the PubMed and Informit ATSIhealth database searches. After excluding duplicates and initial title and abstract screening, 210 full-text papers were retrieved along with 10 papers as a result of the grey literature search and after consultation with colleagues. A further 212 papers were excluded following full text review. At the end of study selection, eight papers (Jia 2000; Newell *et al.* 2006; Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010; Parker 2010; Hammond 2011; Kurti *et al.* 2013; Collard *et al.* 2016; Rossiter *et al.* 2017) were found to have met the inclusion criteria and were included in the review. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) diagram provides a graphical representation of the search strategy results (Fig. 1; Moher *et al.* 2009).

The results of the quality appraisal are reported in Table 1. The methodology of only three of the studies could be identified (Jia 2000; Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010; Rossiter *et al.* 2017). Three papers included a statement positioning the researcher (Jia 2000; Collard *et al.* 2016; Rossiter *et al.* 2017), with only one (Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010) also including reflections on the researchers influence on the research and vice versa.

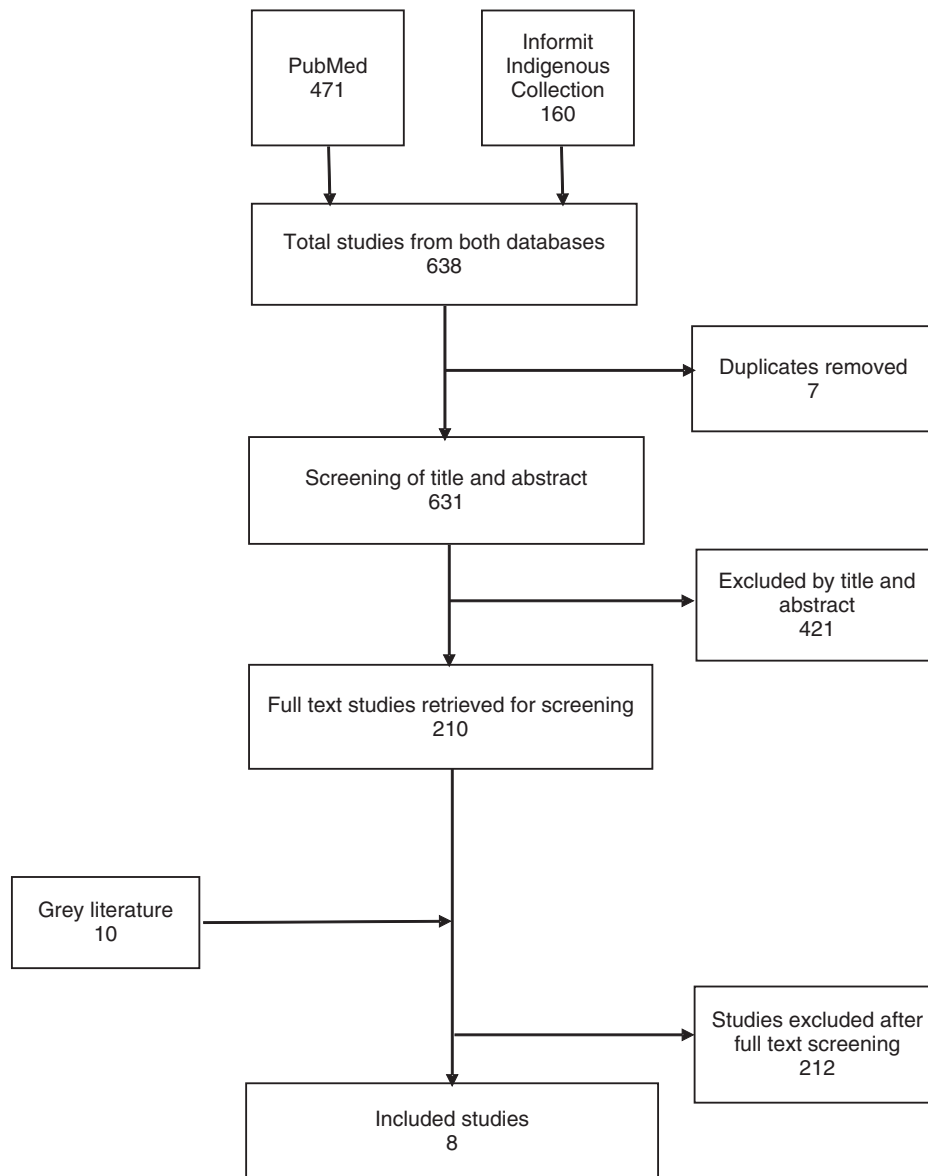


Fig. 1. PRISMA diagram of the study selection.

Table 1. Quality appraisal of included studies  
Q, question; Y, yes; N, no; U, unclear

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
Collard <i>et al.</i> 2016	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	U	Y
Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	U	Y
Newell <i>et al.</i> 2006	U	U	U	U	U	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Kurti <i>et al.</i> 2013	U	U	U	U	U	N	N	Y	U	Y
Jia 2000	U	U	U	U	U	Y	Y	N	U	Y
Hammond 2011	U	U	U	U	U	N	N	Y	U	N
Parker 2010	U	U	U	U	U	N	N	N	U	N
Rossiter <i>et al.</i> 2017	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y

Most of the papers were able to adequately represent the participants voices in the publication (Jia 2000; Newell *et al.* 2006; Parker 2010; Hammond 2011; Kurti *et al.* 2013; Rossiter *et al.* 2017) and most of the study's conclusions appropriately draw from the analysis, or interpretation, of the data (Jia 2000; Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010; Parker 2010; Hammond 2011; Kurti *et al.* 2013; Rossiter *et al.* 2017); however, only two studies explicitly stated that appropriate ethics approval was granted for the study (Kurti *et al.* 2013; Rossiter *et al.* 2017).

Of the eight papers that met the selection criteria (Jia 2000; Newell *et al.* 2006; Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010; Parker 2010; Hammond 2011; Kurti *et al.* 2013; Collard *et al.* 2016; Rossiter *et al.* 2017), all described a parenting program or projects that included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males. Five were program reports (Jia 2000; Newell *et al.* 2006; Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010; Kurti *et al.* 2013; Collard *et al.* 2016), two were descriptions about a particular program (Parker 2010; Hammond 2011) and one was a qualitative study (Rossiter *et al.* 2017). Table 2 provides brief details about each paper including the particular male parenting program. With the exception of Collard *et al.* (2016) who included four children in the production of the short films for future men's parenting resources, in all other papers, the participants were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males (Jia 2000; Newell *et al.* 2006; Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010; Parker 2010; Hammond 2011; Kurti *et al.* 2013; Collard *et al.* 2016; Rossiter *et al.* 2017).

Programs were delivered in a variety of states. Four were delivered in New South Wales (Newell *et al.* 2006; Hammond 2011; Rossiter *et al.* 2017), one was in Queensland (Jia 2000), one in South Australia (Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010), one in Western Australia (Collard *et al.* 2016), one was a national program (Parker 2010) and one program (Kurti *et al.* 2013) was delivered across 12 sites throughout Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and the Northern Territory.

Two of the programs delivered in New South Wales were delivered to men within correctional centres (Hammond 2011; Rossiter *et al.* 2017), two were delivered in community settings (Parker 2010; Collard *et al.* 2016), one in the health service setting (Newell *et al.* 2006), one in an early years parenting centre (Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010), one was delivered in both the community and health service settings (Kurti *et al.* 2013) and one setting was not defined (Jia 2000).

The program by Rossiter *et al.* (2017) involved five 3-h sessions including topics such as: being a dad today; understanding our kids; yarning; keeping our kids safe; and coaching our kids. The program by Newell *et al.* (2006) included two 15-week structured focus group sessions and the rest of the programs involved yarning sessions (Hammond 2011), workshops (Parker 2010; Hammond 2011; Collard *et al.* 2016), support groups (Jia 2000) and/or a variety or combination of strategies (Jia 2000; Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010; Parker 2010; Hammond 2011; Kurti *et al.* 2013; Collard *et al.* 2016).

The program by Kurti *et al.* (2013) was the only program that included male partners, grandfathers and uncles in addition

to fathers. The program by Newell *et al.* (2006) supported Aboriginal men who had between zero and eight children and all the other programs (Jia 2000; Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010; Parker 2010; Hammond 2011; Collard *et al.* 2016; Rossiter *et al.* 2017) specifically targeted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fathers.

All eight programs (Jia 2000; Newell *et al.* 2006; Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010; Parker 2010; Hammond 2011; Kurti *et al.* 2013; Collard *et al.* 2016; Rossiter *et al.* 2017) reported positive outcomes including, but not limited to, positive lifestyle changes (Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010; Parker 2010) and improvements in attitudes towards parenting and personal growth (Newell *et al.* 2006; Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010; Kurti *et al.* 2013; Rossiter *et al.* 2017). Another program outcome was the development of resources to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander father (Collard *et al.* 2016). These results are detailed in Table 2: characteristics of included studies.

## Discussion

There are currently few published studies on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and parenting, and the evidence from this scoping review is unlikely to be of sufficient depth and breadth to be generalisable for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men in Australia. In saying this, the eight papers (Jia 2000; Newell *et al.* 2006; Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010; Parker 2010; Hammond 2011; Kurti *et al.* 2013; Collard *et al.* 2016; Rossiter *et al.* 2017) highlighted the men's willingness to engage with male parenting programs. This scoping review highlights the lack of programs and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parents from antenatal to post-natal periods and beyond.

When discussing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parenting, it is important to understand the 'contextual factors including colonization, discrimination and bias in government policy' (Reilly and Rees 2018, p. 421) and their effect on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and their parenting. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in general continue to show great resilience in the face of historical and contemporary traumas resulting from a continuing colonisation process. In saying this, the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men have largely been 'shaped by unique historical, socio-cultural economic, environmental and political factors that impact on their psychological and physical wellbeing' (Canuto *et al.* 2018, p. 2).

Despite the important roles and responsibilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males as parents (Jia 2000; Adams 2006; Newell *et al.* 2006; Parker 2010; Hammond 2011; Collard *et al.* 2016; Fletcher 2017; Rossiter *et al.* 2017) and the many health challenges associated with fatherhood (Giallo *et al.* 2012), the availability of appropriate strategies and programs for this cohort of men remains limited. Moreover, the realms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parenting remains underfunded and under-resourced, and as Panter-Brick *et al.* (2014) suggests, men-only parenting services 'are often add-on to other programmes, and deemed unsustainable when resources are short' (Panter-Brick *et al.* 2014, p. 1208).

Table 2. Characteristics of included studies

Program name and author/date	Article type	Participants	Program setting	Program description	Purpose	Results
Quop Maamani: Aboriginal Fathering Project (Collard <i>et al.</i> 2016)	Report	Aboriginal (Noongar) fathers	South-west Western Australia (community setting)	Three workshops to develop, design and approve the final make-up of the workshop series and resources	To develop and trial a program that includes a series of workshops and resource packages for Aboriginal (Noongar) fathers	Quop Maamani developed six short videos, a facilitator's guide for the workshop, seven information sheets and a PowerPoint for the workshops
Aboriginal Dads Program (Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie 2010)	Report	Aboriginal fathers	Port Augusta, South Australia (predominantly based at the Early Years Parenting Centre)	Provision of 4–6 h per week of mentored family-focused activities such as: young dads playgroup; family playgroup; small babies playgroup; family camps; and community BBQs	Supporting young Aboriginal fathers in positive parenting and community involvement through mentoring	As a result of the program, Aboriginal fathers were: getting involved with their children; taking on roles of responsibility and leadership; learning to be a good dad; demonstrating changes in attitude leading to changes in lifestyle; improved participation in playgroups and pre-school by Aboriginal children; improved nutrition in the home; families getting out and getting involved in the local community; and giving back to the community through a range of community development activities
Koorie Fathering Program (Newell <i>et al.</i> 2006)	Report	25 local Aboriginal men	New South Wales (North Coast Area Health Service)	Two pilot rounds of 15-week courses: session 1, gaining informed consent, pre video interviews with participants and setting group rules; session 2, what is communication?; session 3, communication maintenance; session 4, what is discipline?; session 5, building relationships; session 6, review of sessions 2–5; session 7, self-reflection and connecting; session 8, sharing responsibility; session 9, showing affection; session 10, review of sessions 7–9; session 11, child development; session 12, sex, pregnancy and babies; session 13, hunters and gatherers; session 14, review of sessions 11–13; session 15, post 1 (or post 2) video interviews with participants	Supporting Aboriginal men to develop, understand and improve their roles as parents and/or partners	Impact indicator results included changes in participants' knowledge and attitudes about parenting; child development; communication; and discipline. Outcome indicator results were perceived changes in participants' parenting skills and practices; parenting support; relationships – with their partners; relationships – with their children; relationships – with the broader community; and other areas of participant's lives
Strong Fathers Strong Families Programme (Kurti <i>et al.</i> 2013)	Report	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fathers, partners, grandfathers and uncles	12 sites across New South Wales, Northern Territory, South Australia and Queensland (community settings and health services)	Organisations implemented a range of activities including: education courses/workshops; health services and checks; health promotion cooking classes, gym sessions and gardening; men's groups and yarning sessions; cultural camps; and community BBQs and fun-days	To promote the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fathers, partners, grandfathers and uncles and encourage them to actively participate in their children's and families' lives	Key outcomes for men participating in the programme included: improved self-esteem; improved health outcomes and health literacy; improved access to services; education and training opportunities; employment opportunities; increased connection to the community and willingness to share issues and concerns; increased connection to culture

(continued next page)

Table 2. (continued)

Program name and author/date	Article type	Participants	Program setting	Program description	Purpose	Results
Indigenous Young Fathers' Support Group (Jia 2000)	Program description	Indigenous fathers (16 – 25 years)	Brisbane, Queensland (at strategic locations at the request of the young fathers)	Support group meetings and support camps	To ensure appropriate anger/stress management programs are in place; to educate Indigenous fathers about the physical, emotional, spiritual and cultural needs of infants/children; to help young Indigenous fathers understand the need for bonding and to ensure physical contact and closeness with their infants/children; give young Indigenous fathers a better understanding of their parenting role; enable young Indigenous dads to support their partners; assist young Indigenous fathers to identify and maintain the strengths of a family unit; and assist young Indigenous fathers and their partners with social skills that are beneficial to their families	The program has highlighted lack of education and employment opportunities; discrimination towards the young fathers; the young fathers being put down and feeling constantly kept down; young fathers have a lack of positive role models and lack of knowledge of parenting issues such as nutrition. On a positive note, the project has been a success in terms of supporting these young fathers in a culturally respectful way
Brothers Inside: Fathering workshops with Aboriginal prisoners (Hammond 2011)	Program description	Aboriginal men in the corrective system	New South Wales (correctional centre)	Initial program ran for 4 h a day, 1 day a week over 8 weeks. Subsequent programs ran for 2 days a week for 2 weeks. Workshops involved a variety of activities such as building a sense of community; yarning together; video messaging to their children; drawing and poetry	To help these men rejoin their families and communities successfully when released, strengthen the relationship between the men and the services that could support them in returning to their communities and strengthen the men's capacity to be fathers and father figures	Workshops were able to help some of the 'Brothers' understand the complexities and intricacies with navigating a relationship between themselves and their children. The workshop provided the 'Brothers' with information about their legal rights as fathers. The 'Brothers' remained aware of the role and responsibilities they still have while inside and that they will have an important role to play when they left prison
Hey Dad! For Indigenous Dads, Uncles and Pops (Parker 2010)	Program description	Indigenous men	National (community setting)	Delivered in various formats: as a 2-day workshop, a series of shorter workshops, or as an extended, weekly program	To build individual and community skills and provide the men with the confidence to be strong role models for their kids	Fills a significant gap in the provision of services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, and feedback from participants and facilitators suggest potential health and wellbeing benefits not only to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, but also their children, families and communities
Babin-Miyagang programme (Rossiter <i>et al.</i> 2017)	Qualitative study	28 imprisoned Indigenous men (except those with current convictions for sexual offences or child protection orders, or serious mental health issues)	New South Wales (correctional centres)	Five 3-h sessions addressing the following topics: Being a Dad today; Understanding our kids; Yarning; Keeping our kids safe; and Coaching our kids	To give incarcerated fathers/carers greater understanding of their role and the opportunity to develop an enriched relationship with their children	Participants identified how the programme supported their learning and their capacity to embrace the role of parenting, and facilitated their growth as individuals and as parents

The lack of appropriate education, support programs and services available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parents has not stopped this cohort of males from engaging in and wanting to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as parents (Jia 2000; Newell *et al.* 2006; *Males in Black Inc.* and *UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie* 2010; Parker 2010; Hammond 2011; Kurti *et al.* 2013; Collard *et al.* 2016; Fletcher 2017; Rossiter *et al.* 2017; Reilly and Rees 2018).

## Conclusion

The lack of published literature on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parenting programs is reflective of the lack of programs and services delivered. The value and importance male parents can add to the lives of their children should not be underestimated. Having the opportunity to perform their roles and responsibilities as parents is not only important because ‘children need and love their dads, but also because of the significant impact that fathers have on the social, cognitive, emotional and physical wellbeing of children from infancy to adolescence and with lasting influences into their adult life’ (Berlyn *et al.* 2008). Although it is acknowledged that the family unit and connection to culture is central to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Brown *et al.* 2009), many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parents may lack the necessary resources and support to navigate the realms of parenting in a beneficial way for their children and families.

Addressing the attitudes and beliefs of some maternal and early year services and staff (Brown *et al.* 2009; Fleming and King 2010; Cameron *et al.* 2014; Panter-Brick *et al.* 2014) should be seen as an opportunity to create inclusive spaces for male parents. Maternal and early years services that exclude male parents should begin to reorient their services to focus on the strengths and positive effects these male parents can have on the child and the whole family unit (Bernard van Leer Foundation 2015). Supplying and delivering culturally appropriate information to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male parents during the pre-natal, pregnancy and post-partum period could increase these parent’s understanding of what is occurring, what to expect and how best they can support their family during these important times.

## Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

## Acknowledgements

All authors acknowledge the custodians of the land on which this review took place: the Kurna people (the custodians of Adelaide and the Adelaide Plains). All authors acknowledge the significant administrative support provided from the Lowitja Institute, the Wardliparingga Aboriginal Health Equity Theme within the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI) and the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia (AHCSA). Financial support for this review was received from the Lowitja Institute’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Cooperative Research Centre Research Activity Funding: Valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young Men Research Grant Funding, 2017, and SAHMRI Women and Kids Theme. A. Brown is supported by a NHMRC Senior Research Fellowship (APP1137563).

## References

- Adams M (2006) Raising the profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men’s health: an Indigenous man’s perspective. *Australian Aboriginal Studies* 2, 68.
- Astone NM, Peters HE (2014) Longitudinal influences on men’s lives: research from the transition to fatherhood project and beyond. *Fathering: A Journal of Theory, Research & Practice about Men as Fathers* 12(2), 161–173.
- Baldwin S, Bick D (2018) Mental health of first-time fathers – it’s time to put evidence into practice. *JBIR Database of Systematic Reviews and Implementation Reports* 16(11), 20642065. doi:10.11124/JBISRIR-2017-003983
- Baldwin S, Malone M, Sandall J, Bick D (2018) Mental health and wellbeing during the transition to fatherhood: a systematic review of first-time fathers’ experiences. *JBIR Database of Systematic Reviews and Implementation Reports* 16, 2118–2191. doi:10.11124/JBISRIR-2017-003773
- Berlyn C, Wise S, Soriano G (2008) Engaging fathers in child and family services: participation, perceptions and good practice. *Family Matters* 80, 37–42.
- Bernard van Leer Foundation (2015) Annual Report 2014. (Corporate Publications: The Hague, The Netherlands) Available at <https://bernardvanleer.org/publications-reports/annual-report-2014/> [Verified 11 January 2019]
- Brown L, Callahan M, Strega S, Walmsley C, Dominelli L (2009) Manufacturing ghost fathers: the paradox of father presence and absence in child welfare. *Child & Family Social Work* 14(1), 25–34. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2206.2008.00578.x
- Cameron G, Coady N, Hoy S (2014) Perspectives on being a father from men involved with child welfare services. *Child & Family Social Work* 19(1), 14–23. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2206.2012.00876.x
- Canuto K, Wittert G, Harfield S, Brown A (2018) ‘I feel more comfortable speaking to a male’: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men’s discourse on utilizing primary health care services. *International Journal for Equity in Health* 17, 185. doi:10.1186/s12939-018-0902-1
- Collard L, Adams M, Palmer D, McMullan J (2016) Quop Maaman: Aboriginal Fathering Project. (The Fathering Project, University of Western Australia: Perth, WA, Australia) Available at <http://thefatheringproject.org/fpwp/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/AFP-Final-Report-Final.pdf> [Verified 1 November 2019]
- Fleming J, King A (2010) A road less travelled: working with men as fathers in family-based services. *Developing Practice: The Child, Youth and Family Work Journal* 26, 40–51.
- Fletcher R (2017) Assessing mobile phone access to child development, parenting and mental health information for young Aboriginal fathers: Final Report. (University of Newcastle: Newcastle, NSW, Australia) Available at [https://www.newcastle.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/386839/2017-SOT-Report.pdf](https://www.newcastle.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/386839/2017-SOT-Report.pdf) [Verified 1 November 2019]
- Giallo R, D’esposito F, Christensen D, Mensah F, Cooklin A, Wade C, Lucas N, Canterford L, Nicholson JM (2012) Father mental health during the early parenting period: results of an Australian population based longitudinal study. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology* 47, 1907–1916. doi:10.1007/s00127-012-0510-0
- Hammond C (2011) Brothers Inside: fathering workshops with Aboriginal prisoners. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning* 51, 374–389.
- Jia T (2000) Indigenous young fathers’ support group. *Aboriginal and Islander Health Worker Journal* 24, 18–20.
- Joanna Briggs Institute (2014) ‘Joanna Briggs Institute Reviewers’ Manual: 2014 Edition.’ (Joanna Briggs Institute: Adelaide, SA, Australia)
- Kurti L, Holloway L, Hudson S (2013) Descriptive analysis of the Strong Fathers Strong Families programme: final report. (Department of Health: Canberra, ACT, Australia) Available at [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/0B45B5011865395FCA257D090006FBFF/\\$File/Final%20Report%20Strong%20Fathers%20Strong%20Families%20](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/0B45B5011865395FCA257D090006FBFF/$File/Final%20Report%20Strong%20Fathers%20Strong%20Families%20)

- 20Programme%20Descriptive%20Analysis.PDF [Verified 1 November 2019]
- Males in Black Inc. and UnitingCare Wesley Port Pirie (2010) Aboriginal Dads Program: supporting young Aboriginal fathers in positive parenting and community involvement through mentoring. (UnitingCare Wesley: Port Pirie, SA, Australia) Available at [http://www3.aifs.gov.au/institute/cafcapppp/ppp/profiles/cfc\\_aboriginal\\_dads.html](http://www3.aifs.gov.au/institute/cafcapppp/ppp/profiles/cfc_aboriginal_dads.html) [Verified 7 January 2019]
- Moher D, Liberati A, Tetzlaff J, Altman DG, Group P (2009) Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: the PRISMA statement. *PLoS Medicine* **6**, e1000097. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1000097
- Newell S, Franks A, Lloyd D, Telford G, Binge C (2006) Koori Fathering Program: pilot phase evaluation report. Health Promotion Unit, North Coast Area Health Service, Lismore, NSW, Australia.
- Panter-Brick C, Burgess A, Eggerman M, McAllister F, Pryett K, Leckman JF (2014) Practitioner Review: engaging fathers – recommendations for a game change in parenting interventions based on a systematic review of the global evidence. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, and Allied Disciplines* **55**(11), 1187–1212. doi:10.1111/jcpp.12280
- Parker R (2010) ‘Hey Dad! For Indigenous Dads, Uncles and Pops.’ (Centracare Broken Bay: Hornsby, NSW, Australia)
- Reilly L, Rees S (2018) Fatherhood in Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities: an examination of barriers and opportunities to strengthen the male parenting role. *American Journal of Men’s Health* **12**, 420–430. doi:10.1177/1557988317735928
- Rossiter C, Power T, Fowler C, Jackson D, Roche M, Dawson A (2017) ‘Learning to become a better man’: insights from a fathering programme for incarcerated Indigenous men. *The Australian Journal of Social Issues* **52**, 13–31. doi:10.1002/ajis.4.4
- Stoneham MJ, Goodman J, Daube M (2014) The portrayal of Indigenous health in selected Australian media. *International Indigenous Policy Journal* **5**(1), 1–13. doi:10.18584/iipj.2014.5.1.5
- Stuart G, May C, Hammond C (2015) Engaging Aboriginal fathers. *Developing Practice: The Child, Youth and Family Work Journal* **42**, 4–17.
- Walker R, Shepherd C (2008) ‘Strengthening Aboriginal Family Functioning: What Works and Why?’ (Australian Institute of Family Studies: Melbourne, Vic., Australia)



**Appendix 1. PubMed search strategy**

The search strategy in PubMed was as follows: Search: (((Aborigin\*[Title] OR Torres\*[Title] OR Indigen\*[Title])) AND (men\*[Title/Abstract] OR male\*[Title/Abstract] OR dad\*[Title/Abstract] OR father\*[Title/Abstract] OR uncle\*[Title/Abstract] OR carer\*[Title/Abstract] OR guardian\*[Title/Abstract] OR parent\*[Title/Abstract] OR grandparent\*[Title/Abstract] OR grandfather\*[Title/Abstract] OR grandmother\*[Title/Abstract])) AND (baby\*[Title/Abstract] OR babies[Title/Abstract] OR kid\*[Title/Abstract] OR child\*[Title/Abstract] OR children\*[Title/Abstract] OR birth\*[Title/Abstract] OR conceive\*[Title/Abstract] OR conception\*[Title/Abstract] OR daughter\*[Title/Abstract] OR son\*[Title/Abstract] OR girl\*[Title/Abstract] OR boy\*[Title/Abstract])).

**Appendix 2. Informit ATSIhealth search strategy**

The search strategy in Informit ATSIhealth was as follows: Search: (TI:Aborigin\* OR TI:Torres\* OR TI:Indigen\*) AND (Subject:men\* OR Subject:male\* OR Subject:dad\* OR Subject:father\* OR Subject:uncle\* OR Subject:carer\* OR Subject:guardian\* OR Subject:parent\* OR Subject:grandparent\* OR Subject:grandfather\* OR Subject:grandmother\*) AND (Subject:baby\* OR Subject:babies OR Subject:kid\* OR Subject:child\* OR Subject:children\* OR Subject:birth\* OR Subject:conceive\* OR Subject:conception\* OR Subject:daughter\* OR Subject:son\* OR Subject:girl\* OR Subject:boy\*).