

MEDIA RELEASE

7 September 2023

On Thursday September 7, The Guardian Australia broke a series of stories revealing a state government report of the Kinchela Boys' Home site, on the mid north coast of NSW, that detailed anomalies in the ground consistent with clandestine burials.

Among Australia's most notorious Stolen Generations institutions, KBH saw an estimated 400 to 600 Aboriginal children exposed to routine acts of cultural genocide between 1924 to 1970.

Survivors from KBH are among thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children forcibly taken from their families and communities as part of official government and church programs to assimilate First Nations children into non-Indigenous society.

Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation (KBHAC) is calling for all identified anomalies to be immediately prioritised for excavation, and for further surveys to be conducted to search for additional disturbances.

These stories shed light on the decades long battle fought by Survivors of the Kinchela Boys' Home, and are a continuation of the "unfinished business" of the landmark Bringing Them Home report. There are only 56 KBH Survivors alive today. Their advanced age and declining health means this work needs to be done now, bringing to a close this unfinished business.

Quote attributable to Uncle Roger Jarrett, Kinchela Boys' Home Aboriginal Corporation board member:

"It's gotta be published because the truth has gotta come out. For the future, it's important to get the truth done, because a lot of stuff has been covered over by the government. For our justice and for our healing for all our brothers.

To be realistic [additional surveys] need to go down 3 or 4 metres to actually do a proper job...otherwise it's a typical government cover up.

Hopefully this makes the news around the world... and makes some people think and do the right thing by us. As a child when you're taken you lose your identity, your culture, the lot. And you also lose your love and your heart, which is still buried in that place now. So all the boys feel the same: we gotta get it back, to say we're free and not locked in that hell anymore."

Quote attributable to Uncle Michael 'Widdy' Welsh, chairperson Kinchela Boys' Home Aboriginal Corporation:

"This is truth-telling. It's all about family: the truth that we talk about is something we held inside of ourselves, because we had fear about talking about it.



Getting our voice out there, we're being heard. Each and every person who reads that paper will have a better understanding of us and themselves.

Their policies took us away from our families. I want their policies to give us back our heritage and build back our families. We know what works for us: the government needs to give us resources so we can make our families and communities strong again."

A note regarding Media Enquiries:

Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation will not be giving additional interviews at this time. Please respect the organisation's wishes and quote from the statement provided.

Not knowing what happened to the babies and children who never came home, who never reconnected back to family and community have left Survivors and their families with unanswered questions that we continue to work through today.

Every time, but especially at this time, we ask that respect be shown to Stolen Generations survivors and their families across Australia as they grieve for their missing children.