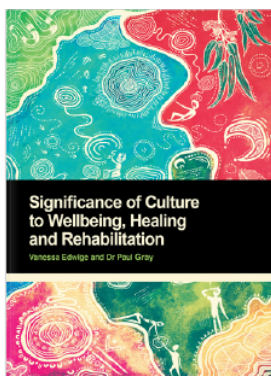


*New report published:*

## **Edwidge & Gray (2021) – Significance of Culture to Wellbeing, Healing and Rehabilitation**

The [Bugmy Bar Book](#) is pleased to announce the publication of the Significance of Culture to Wellbeing, Healing and Rehabilitation report, by Vanessa Edwidge, registered psychologist, and Dr Paul Gray, Associate Professor, UTS Jumbunna Institute of Indigenous Education and Research. Both of the authors are Directors of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association (AIPA). See below for more information about the authors.



[Click here](#) to access the report in PDF format

[Click here](#) to view information about the report on the *Bugmy Bar Book* website

This report was commissioned by the *Bugmy Bar Book* with the support of the Australian Bar Association. The report builds on the *Bugmy Bar Book*'s work to date concerning establishing the link between experiences of disadvantage and contact with the criminal justice system, and citing recognised roads to rehabilitation and healing.

The report attests to the importance of sentencing orders which enhance an offender's prospects of rehabilitation by providing for engagement with culturally appropriate services and programs, and enable Indigenous communities to play a role in the healing process wherever possible. The report will be relevant in assisting the framing of sentencing orders, including the finding of special circumstances and the crafting of conditions attached to community-based orders.

In addition to using the report in sentence proceedings, it is envisaged it may also be useful for briefing non-Indigenous mental health and other experts, as a tool for building cultural competence and an evidence base for advocating for justice reinvestment initiatives, Indigenous specialist courts and funding for Indigenous led programs.

### **About the authors:**

Ms Vanessa Edwidge is a Ngarabal woman from Emmaville, NSW. Vanessa is a registered psychologist and a Director on the Board of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association (AIPA). Vanessa has worked in Redfern, New South Wales, for the past 22 years, working predominantly with Aboriginal children, young people, families and community

providing culturally responsive psychological support for adverse childhood experiences, intergenerational trauma and supporting cultural resilience. Vanessa currently works as a Senior Psychologist, Education, for the NSW Department of Education. Prior to this, Vanessa has worked as a school counsellor, a psychologist for headspace and the dual diagnosis team, a consultant and trainer for the NSW Institute of Psychiatry, NSW Co-ordinator for Aboriginal victims of crime with the NSW Attorney-General's Department, and as the Senior Researcher for report of the Aboriginal Sexual Assault Taskforce, *Breaking the Silence: Creating the Future – Addressing Child Sexual Assault in Aboriginal Communities in NSW*, with the NSW Attorney-General's Department. Vanessa has been writing psychological reports for people who have come into contact with the justice system for the past six years. Vanessa is a member of the independent advisory panel for the *Bugmy Bar Book*.

Dr Paul Gray is a Wiradjuri man and is an Associate Professor at the University of Technology Sydney Jumbunna Institute of Indigenous Education and Research. Paul has worked in a range of roles focused on the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children and young people. Paul has worked as a psychologist and in policy and project roles with the NSW Department of Communities and Justice, and served as the Executive Leader of Strategy, Policy and Evidence at AbSec (NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation), the Aboriginal child protection peak organisation in NSW. In this role, Paul led the development of community-led approaches to child and family wellbeing and advocated for systemic and practice reforms grounded in the rights and interests of Aboriginal children, families and communities. Paul completed a DPhil in Experimental Psychology at St Catherine's College, Oxford, investigating the relationship between early maltreatment and adolescent social and emotional processes. Paul is also a member of the Family Matters National Leadership Group, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Working Group for the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children, and is a Director of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association.

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