

Mudgin-Gal



**An Aboriginal women's resource centre
... and much, much more**

" We cannot depend on governments to heal our wounds. We have to help each other. "
Community Elder

Mudgin-Gal Aboriginal Corporation is a working illustration of how Aboriginal organisations should and can function. It has grown out of community need, is managed by community people and remains responsive to the ever-changing circumstances of Aboriginal women.

" Mudgin-Gal is about Aboriginal women helping themselves and solving their own social problems. The women who use the service are the same women who run it. This represents a real step towards self-determination. " Bronwyn Penrith, Chair

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Mudgin-Gal's History, Governance & Funding

South Sydney Women's Centre was incorporated as Mudgin-Gal Aboriginal Corporation on 17th June 1992 and handed over to the Aboriginal women of the community who represented the vast majority of women seeking assistance.

The services are operated by women with broad ranging expertise including young mothers, elders, educators, family support workers and academics. A Management Committee of 7 Aboriginal women meets monthly to discuss not only services but general issues affecting the community as a whole.

Mudgin-Gal receives recurrent funding from the NSW Department of Community Services, which covers wages and basic running costs. Programmes for women and children and additional expenditure depend on one-off grants. Competition for these grants is fierce and, more often than not, it is the better-resourced, professionally advised Non Government Organisations which succeed.

The permanent staff consists of 1.5 full-time workers. The balance of the critical and demanding full-time service is performed by dedicated volunteers.

Mudgin-Gal's Aims & Objectives

To focus on esteem-building projects and healing, through self-sufficiency, for the survival of the Aboriginal woman through cultural exchange and awareness; is a philosophy that is an essential component of Mudgin-Gal.

To move away from the institute-type structure to a more traditional and culturally sensitive framework that can identify Aboriginal women problems.

To act as a referral source for Aboriginal women to access services and information and to develop a women's network for access to counseling, relevant conferences or grant information

Mudgin-Gal's Community

" The community educational role is of utmost importance given the rise of 'violent living' within our community and the general debate regarding how these issues can be resolved. " Redfern community resident.

The belief that Aboriginal women working together can resolve many of their own issues is basic to Mudgin-Gal. We believe that the responsibility to address family and community issues should be a holistic one and not necessarily the responsibility of women. However, we accept the major role that is played by women in the development of families, and we will continue to work for and with Aboriginal women and their families towards righting injustices, which have been placed on Aboriginal women over the centuries.

Mudgin-Gal's Services

- daily drop-in centre
- refuge support
- advocacy and liaison
- laundry, bathroom and rest facilities
- safe accommodation for women and children
- court support

- grief and loss counseling
- anti-violence group meetings
- domestic violence assistance

Mudgin-Gal's "Black Women's Awards for Achievement"

A pat on the back, a word of encouragement and a little recognition is what keeps the hundreds of volunteer Aboriginal community workers going year after year.

The Awards are a reminder to the women that their contribution is valued by their people. The Award raises the self-esteem of the volunteer community and recognises the sacrifices they endure whilst battling the every day experience of being a Koori.