

CNV Statement – January 26

The Centre for Non-Violence does not believe January 26 is a day for celebration. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, this is a painful day that marks the start of colonisation, dispossession, and suffering.

As a feminist organisation committed to social justice, inclusion, and equality for all, we acknowledge the harm and trauma that celebrating January 26 as Australia Day causes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to our wider community.

First Nations activists, organisations and communities have been leading the national conversation on the impact of January 26 as a day of celebration.

They have urged all of us to consider what it means to celebrate a day that marked the beginning of a campaign of genocide, dispossession and human rights abuses suffered by First Nations Australians.

CNV is committed to respecting and acknowledging what January 26 represents for First Nations people and shares the view it should not be the date to celebrate our national identity.

We know our position on this requires more than just words.

That's why the board and staff team have decided to take meaningful action.

CNV is working hard to address cultural safety and reconciliation with our Aboriginal community through our cultural safety and reconciliation action plan projects.

CNV is now starting the process of moving away from a public holiday on January 26 – with the view to offering staff an alternate day off by January 26, 2023.

We recognise there is ongoing impact of dispossession and colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and continue to support the call for truth-telling about our history.

We acknowledge our privilege and will use that to amplify the voices of Aboriginal community members as we walk with them towards healing.