



YWCA OF CANBERRA  
**Reconciliation  
Action Plan**





#### PAINTING NAME

Contemporary Wiradjuri woman  
*By Samara Plunkett*

#### PAINTING REPRESENTS

A young Wiradjuri girl pulls in light to shield her from the darkness. Pushing forwards regardless of knowing the darkness can reappear. She continues forward to make lives better for her community and herself. She will persist as long as is necessary to accomplish acceptance and leadership amongst her community. Every day she grows a leaf or a flower for those to see her and for her to see herself, for all her accomplishments.



YWCA OF CANBERRA  
**RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN**



## OUR BUSINESS

The YWCA of Canberra is a values led, non-profit community based organisation working and advocating for social justice within a feminist framework.

## OUR VISION

Women achieving their potential.

## OUR PURPOSE

Through the leadership of women and girls the YWCA of Canberra is building a better community for all.

## OUR WORK

The YWCA of Canberra has been providing community services and representing women's issues in the Canberra community since its establishment in 1929. We currently work with approximately 4,500 Canberran's through the delivery of 28 programs, across 20 physical locations, in the areas of children's services, community development, housing, youth services, personal and professional training, and women's leadership.

The YWCA of Canberra is a non-religious women's organisation that encourages the participation of women of all cultures, beliefs and ages. Strengthened by diversity, the YWCA of Canberra draws together members who are committed to the value of every human being and who strive to create opportunities for growth, leadership and empowerment in order to attain a common vision: peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all people.

Through our members we aim to create a community of women who share common values of equality and social justice. Men are included in many of our programs and we have male staff and volunteers. Men are invited to become associate members of the YWCA of Canberra and their input is welcome and valued.

As part of an international movement, with a global outreach of 25 million women and girls the YWCA of Canberra seeks to play its part in working for a world where reconciliation, justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom and care for the environment are promoted and sustained through women's leadership.



# OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Through progressing reconciliation and healing we will improve the wellbeing of both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the wider Australian community.

Acknowledging the continuing custodianship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of land and culture, we embrace a grass roots approach involving the whole of the YWCA of Canberra community – clients of our programs, external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners, staff, members and Board in our reconciliation journey.





# OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY

The YWCA of Canberra has been committed to reconciliation throughout its long history. For several years now we have worked to develop relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations, build respect and identify and pursue opportunities for reconciliation.

Our first Reconciliation Action Plan, launched in 2009, provided us with a tool for identifying and articulating actions that the Organisation can undertake to contribute to reconciliation. Our RAP has also been a vehicle for a journey of learning and a process for engaging with the issues in a meaningful way, on both a personal and organisational level.

Our RAP was successfully embedded across the whole Organisation and is now a standing item at all YWCA of Canberra Board, Senior Manager and YWCA Managers meetings. This has ensured that reconciliation remains front and centre in our work plans and that staff from across the organisation remain engaged with reconciliation.

We had many achievements and learnt a great deal during our 2009/2010 RAP. One notable achievement was that staff from across the organisation had access to opportunities to engage with reconciliation whether it was through increasing their

knowledge and building their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and contemporary issues, or by participating and contributing first hand to events and activities that foster reconciliation. For example:

- all staff participated in cultural awareness training
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander activities were the theme for Children's Week 2010
- staff participated in Close the Gap Day, ACT Sorry Day and NAIDOC Week
- staff participated in a workshop that explored the issues of 'white privilege' in 2010

We also had significant achievements around increasing our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations. For example:

- we delivered a number of projects in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations
- three Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women participated in our Women Out Front Leadership events
- three Aboriginal staff were employed
- we participated in the Community Partners Governance Group, through which we contributed to the design and delivery of a Diploma in Counselling and Group Work for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We believe it is important to acknowledge our achievements and progress, however we also know we have a long way to go and we are committed to the long haul. This following RAP Refresh builds on our achievements and our learnings and as with the previous RAP endeavours to advance our contribution to reconciliation.

# RELATIONSHIPS

The YWCA of Canberra believes in building strong and respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities as a way to benefit all Australians. Reconciliation is one of our stated values and strategic directions and it is through moving our values into practice that real, meaningful and personal change be created.

## FOCUS AREA

*To further support the development of strong relationships and partnership programs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers, organisations and clients.*

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Learn from and extend existing partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.	Senior Management Team Unit Managers	YEARLY	At least two projects are delivered in partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations each year.
		JUL 2011	A relationship is built with the ACT Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Policy Unit and ongoing conversations are held to identify partnership opportunities.
		DEC 2011	A list of existing partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations is developed and made available to staff.
		DEC 2011	An organisational-wide partnership is built with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Organisation.
		JUN 2013	A skills/knowledge/cultural exchange program is developed with the partner organisation.
		DEC 2013	A system for capturing and sharing learnings around building relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations is developed for staff.
Build on our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients with a view to improved client outcomes.	Senior Mangers Program Managers	MAR 2012	The ACTCOSS Cultural Awareness Self Assessment Toolkit is completed by each program and an improvement strategy is developed and implemented.
		DEC 2012	Internal process for receiving feedback and measuring outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients for each program are reviewed.



## RELATIONSHIPS CONTINUED...

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Begin to develop a web based information tool for staff which provides advice, tools and resources for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and clients.	Director, Development and Review	JAN 2012	The task of developing a web based information tool is allocated to a working group or team.
	Manager, Policy and Advocacy	APR 2012	Staff are consulted on the content to be included in the tool.
		APR 2012	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are consulted on how to work respectfully and effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and organisations.
		JUL 2012	Content for the web based tool is developed.
		DEC 2013	The web based information tool is launched, with capacity for staff to share experiences and learnings.



## RESPECT

The YWCA of Canberra believes that respect is based on understanding and that reconciliation requires a commitment to continually improve our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and contemporary issues. Respectful relationships and good communication are the foundations required for effective program delivery and ensuring we meet the needs of our members, clients and colleagues.

### FOCUS AREA

*Increasing our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and contemporary issues, of variations within those cultures. This will include how the various Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures interact with the cultures and current issues of the wider Australian community.*

# RESPECT CONTINUED...

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Training opportunities about the history, cultures and current issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are made available to all staff, including options for both beginner and enrichment levels, acknowledging that new issues are always emerging.	Senior Management Team Training Unit Manager	QUARTERLY	Every quarter the staff newsletter features articles/stories/quizzes designed to keep staff engaging with reconciliation.
		HALFYEARLY	Two informal morning teas per year are dedicated to raising awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture, experiences, stories; celebrating achievements towards reconciliation; and experiencing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures (food, music, art etc).
		DEC 2011	Training is offered to managers on hiring, inducting and supervising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.
		DEC 2011	Completion of the Share our Pride introductory web based training (on the Reconciliation Australia website), is a requirement as part of the induction program.
		DEC 2013	Internal and external training opportunities are listed on the web based tool.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Participate in NAIDOC Week and other Reconciliation events and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural events.	Manager, Policy and Advocacy Y Program and Unit Managers	YEARLY	At the beginning of each year a calendar of events is developed.
		YEARLY	Each program runs one activity per year with their clients to celebrate reconciliation.
		AUG 2011	Attendance at reconciliation and other cultural events is recognised as staff training opportunities and staff attendance is included within the training budget.
		DEC 2013	The web based information tool provides information on the history and significance of events and activities.
Support of and participation in the campaign to reform the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia to include recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as first peoples.	Senior Management Team	2011	Increase our knowledge and understanding of the campaign.
		2011-2013	Promote the campaign to our staff, members, clients, partners and others.
		2011-2013	Participate in the campaign through activities such as involvement in Expert Panel consultation process, holding events and providing submissions.
		2011-2013	Promote our support of the campaign through media and other forums.



# OPPORTUNITIES

The YWCA of Canberra believes that everyone who is part of the community has the right to contribute to, and share equally in, the benefits of the community's social, cultural and economic development. Our program delivery is more effective when members and staff are supported by a policy framework that embeds consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations as a matter of course.

## FOCUS AREA

*The YWCA of Canberra will identify specific opportunities, in terms of governance, membership, employment and service delivery, to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, especially young women, are supported to achieve their potential.*

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Ensure membership activities offered by the YWCA of Canberra are accessible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.	Membership Committee, Manager, Policy and Advocacy Program	YEARLY	In the lead up to the GreatYdeas small grants program the Organisation works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Organisations to identify young women that may want to apply.
		SEP 2011	A strategy is developed and implemented that increases participation of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the Young Women's Leadership Workshop. For example, reserving a number of places at each workshop or running a separate workshop specifically for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.
		MAY 2012	Consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations about how we can increase our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.
		DEC 2013	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations are invited to contribute to the Online Mentoring for Women program as 'friends' that are available to provide one-off advice/support to mentors around mentoring an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander woman.

# OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUED...

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
Actively recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	HR Manager; Manager, Development and Review; Manager, Policy and Advocacy Program	MAR 2011	An Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person is recruited into the Administration Trainee position.
		SEP 2011	An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traineeship position is created in the Central Team.
		DEC 2011	A feedback/review process is developed to capture the experience and learnings from trainees and the Organisation regarding traineeship positions.
		FEB 2012	All Program and Unit managers have undergone training on recruiting, inducting and supervising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.
		MAY 2011	A 'cultural supervision' policy is developed and managers are encouraged to offer cultural supervision arrangements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and work with them to implement if they want to take up the offer.
		DEC 201	An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander apprenticeship position is created in Children's Services.
		During induction of new trainee	Create formal mentoring relationships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainees within the Organisation outside of the supervisory relationship.
Foster sector workforce development		YEARLY	The Organisation leads or contributes to one project aimed at fostering sector workforce development per year.





# TRACKING PROGRESS AND REPORTING

<i>ACTION</i>	<i>RESPONSIBILITY</i>	<i>TIMELINE</i>	<i>MEASURABLE TARGET</i>
The RAP working group continues to meet on a regular basis to have an overview of the implementation and tracking of the RAP.	RAP Working Group convener	QUARTERLY	RAP working group meets face to face at least 4 times per year
Feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander external advisors.	Executive Director Manager, Policy and Advocacy	TWICE PER YEAR	Feedback is incorporated into the annual RAP report and refresh.
RAP is a standing agenda item at all YWCA of Canberra team, management and Board meetings.	Executive Director Y Program and Unit Managers	FORTNIGHTLY	RAP is a standing agenda item at all team meetings.
		MONTHLY	RAP is a standing agenda item at all Y Program and Unit Manager meetings.
		MONTHLY	RAP is a standing agenda item at all Board meetings

<i>ACTION</i>	<i>RESPONSIBILITY</i>	<i>TIMELINE</i>	<i>MEASURABLE TARGET</i>
Progress in implementing the RAP is reported on a regular basis.	Executive Director Manager, Policy and Advocacy	QUARTERLY	RAP report is provided for the Board and Y Program Managers. The Board and Y Program and Unit Managers provide feedback on RAP progress.
RAP reported on and refreshed annually.	Executive Director Manager, Policy and Advocacy	JUL 2011	RAP report and refresh available on YWCA of Canberra and Reconciliation Australia websites.
Numbers of, and feedback from, Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander members and people participating in events is collected.	Director, Corporate Partnerships and Communications, Director, Development and Review Manager, Policy and Advocacy	Collected after each event, reported on quarterly	A system for capturing the data is developed A report template is created in the Organisation's evaluation database. Participation numbers and feedback are entered into the system after every event. A report is provided to Board quarterly.
Feedback is collected from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and reviewed regularly.	Program Managers Unit Managers Director, Development and Review Manager, Policy and Advocacy	QUARTERLY	A system for capturing the data is developed A report template is created in the Organisation's evaluation database. Feedback is regularly collected and entered into the system after every event. A report is provided to Board quarterly.



# TRACKING PROGRESS AND REPORTING CONTINUED...

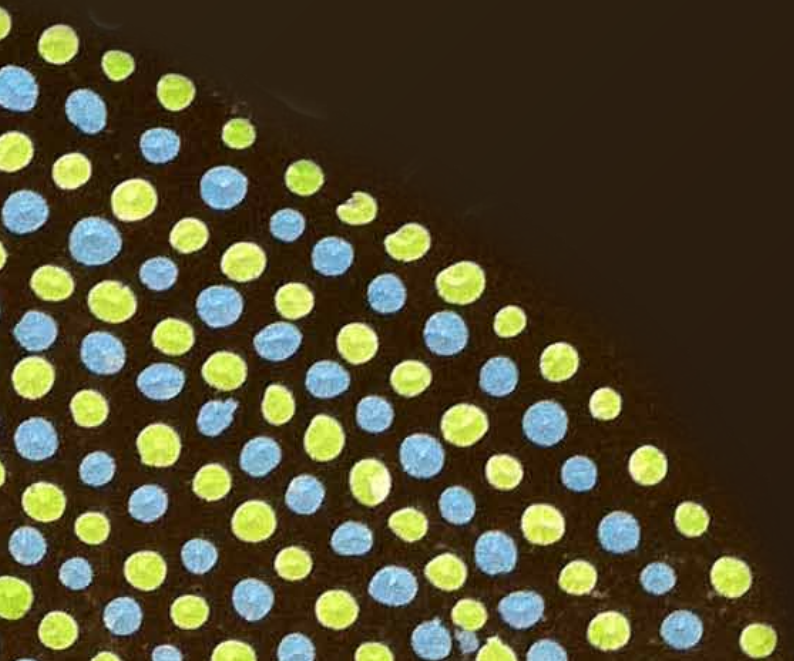
ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
The number of reconciliation or cultural events the Organisation participates in is recorded in the evaluation database and reported on.	Director, Development and Review  Manager, Policy and Advocacy	QUARTERLY	A report template is created in the Organisation's evaluation database.  Data is regularly collected and entered into the system.  A report is provided to Board quarterly.
A stakeholder survey specifically focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners is developed and promoted to our partners.	Director, Corporate Partnerships and Communications,  Manager, Development and Review,  Manager, Policy and Advocacy	YEARLY	A stakeholder survey is developed that specifically focuses on identifying strengths and areas for improvement in our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners and participation at reconciliation events.  The survey is distributed.  The results are analysed and used to inform the RAP and continues improvement.  Results are reported to the Board



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