



goodstart
early
learning



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

STRETCH

Reconciliation Action Plan

June 2024–June 2027

Our commitment to positive social change



The Heart of Reconciliation

David Williams

At Goodstart, children are at our heart; the centre of everything we do.

Their voices are stronger and prouder when stories and culture are shared.

When we walk our pathway together, we feel energised for the next chapter; to take our story forward.

Our commitment to reconciliation begins at our heart; and at the centre of the artwork is Harriet's heart, created by Goodstart alumnus and the artist's daughter, Harriet Williams.

Harriet's heart represents every child within our care, as every child will find a welcoming heart at Goodstart.

Our vision and purpose are continuous throughout the artwork, as our push for reconciliation never ends.

Children's hands represent creativity and joy, and the diversity of our people is something to celebrate; our flags fly proudly for everyone to see.

Reconciliation is everyone's business.

That's why we will be driven to make our centres more welcoming places for all children and families, and all of our Goodstarters.

We will bring joy and unite people by ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are a part of our everyday life.

And we are inspired to be bolder and a guiding influence each and every day.

As we look to the future together, we will grow with our children and communities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture proudly in our hearts.

The Heart of Reconciliation

About the artist - David Williams

As a proud Wakka Wakka man, artist and Executive Director of Gilimbaa, David brings a lifetime of culture and connections to Gilimbaa. David was influenced by his immediate family and his Elders who encouraged him to use his creative skills as a tool to connect his culture to the wider community.

David uses creativity as an effective tool of 21st century cultural communication, using this as a platform to share, educate and celebrate First Nations culture.



Acknowledgement of Country

Goodstart Early Learning acknowledges all Traditional Owners across Australia and recognises all First Nations peoples continued cultural and spiritual connection to the land, sky and waterways that surround us. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Goodstart's national support office is in Murarrie, Meanjin / Magandjin (Brisbane), and we acknowledge the Yuggera and Turrbal people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands. We pay our respect to the Yuggera and Turrbal peoples and their Elders past, present and emerging. Goodstart acknowledges that these lands have been places of teaching and learning for thousands of years and home to the longest continuing culture on earth.

Through our work with children, families and communities we seek to listen, learn and deepen our understanding and respect of First Nations cultures, tell the true stories of Australia's history, and to care for the land on which we live, work, play and learn.

Photography

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised that this document may contain names and images of deceased persons which may cause sadness or distress.

Terminology

In this Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), Goodstart may use the terms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and First Nations interchangeably.

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A message from Reconciliation Australia CEO

Karen Mundine

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I congratulate Goodstart Early Learning on its formal commitment to reconciliation, as it implements its second Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), its third RAP overall.

The RAP program is formed around the pillars of relationships, respect, and opportunities, and Goodstart has exemplified these key principles in their 10 years of involvement with the program. With this Stretch RAP, Goodstart continues to expand its impact through amplifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and embedding reconciliation values at all levels of its organisation.

As Australia's largest early learning provider, with over 650 centres across the country, Goodstart is well positioned to make great social impact. Through its previous RAPs, Goodstart has used its influence through the early learning ecosystem to affect meaningful change. This Stretch RAP is built upon these learnings and successes.

A core focus of Goodstart's reconciliation efforts have been to amplify First Nations voices, both within its organisation and its broader ecosystem, so they may drive change that acknowledges their lived experiences.

Goodstart previously partnered with the Ngurupai (Horn Island) community in the Torres Strait – with a shared goal to improve early childhood outcomes for First Nations children. The initiative prioritised local perspectives through family engagement and the formation of the Ngurupai Early Childhood Advisory Group, empowering the community to share and realise their aspirations for their children.

Through leadership employment opportunities, yarning circles and state-based initiatives, Goodstart also provides platforms where First Nations individuals actively contribute to decision-making, policy formulation and the strategic direction of the organisation.

With these learnings, Goodstart has built solid foundations upon which to expand and embed its commitments in this Stretch RAP.

Understanding that a braver approach to reconciliation actively engages local First Nations people, Goodstart commits to grow stronger connections with Elders and local groups, to ensure each centre is building connections with First Nations communities in their areas.

A series of new practice resources aims to honour first Nations perspectives by transforming standard daily practices to new lived experiences. Moving from an Acknowledgement of Country, to a walk on Country then to caring for Country will allow educators and children to move beyond symbolic recognition to perspective-shifting action.

Recognising that reconciliation can only be achieved through sustained action that prioritises the perspectives of First Nations people, Goodstart continues to focus on increasing Indigenous staff representation, especially in leadership roles. In these roles, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples can influence procedures and policies that impact their children and communities. This commitment is especially important given Goodstart exceeds the sector average of First Nations representation in enrolments with 7% of all children identifying as Indigenous.

As a large not-for-profit social enterprise, Goodstart is also well placed to influence government policy reform in the early years sector for First Nations children and families. This along with Goodstart's prioritisation of First Nations voices makes for powerful and lasting improvement in outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

It is clear through past accomplishments and now these new commitments that Goodstart has the potential to drive considerable reconciliation outcomes across its sphere of influence. On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Goodstart Early Learning on this Stretch RAP and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



A message from Goodstart Chairman

Paul Robertson AO

For tens of thousands of years First Nations people have educated very young children through observation, storytelling and by sharing their knowledge of the land, sea and sky.

These practices sit at the core of Goodstart's approach to early education. It also underpins our purpose, as we work to ensure that all of Australia's children have the learning, development and wellbeing outcomes they need for school and life.

From Meanjin (Brisbane) to Warrane (Sydney), to Naarm (Melbourne) and Nipaluna (Hobart), Tarntanya (Adelaide) to Boorloo (Perth), Garramilla (Darwin) and Waiben (Thursday Island), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have educated their children on the lands which our centres operate today.

We have been on our own reconciliation journey at Goodstart for 10 years. In that time, we have thought deeply about how Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities have been educating their children and sought to learn from their practices.

We recognise the value of storytelling in teaching and learning. First Nations leaders and community organisations have worked generously with us to bring their history and culture to life for children and adults alike.

This year as we begin the implementation of our third RAP, and second Stretch RAP, we celebrate the fact that each of our 654 centres are on their own RAP journey. We also challenge ourselves to do more – within our organisation and beyond.

Last year's Referendum shone a light on how little many Australians know about the proud and rich history of the original inhabitants of our continent.



A message from Goodstart CEO

Dr Ros Baxter

Goodstart embarked on our reconciliation journey a decade ago, and our commitment to reconciliation remains unwavering. As Goodstart's CEO, I take immense pride in introducing Goodstart's 2024-2027 Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which reflects our learning and growth over the past 10 years.

This Stretch RAP details bolder and braver actions. It reflects our organisation's maturity and desire to create more positive social change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As Australia's largest early learning provider, our reconciliation ambition is to ensure the next generation of children grow up with a profound connection to, and understanding of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, people, and Australia's true history.

Education is key, and at Goodstart, we have a window of opportunity each day with the tens of thousands of children and families attending our centres. Our vision for reconciliation is to drive greater social impact, now more than ever. We will use our influence through the early learning ecosystem to create meaningful change during a child's early years and beyond.

Over the past three years, guided by our first Stretch RAP, we have made significant strides. The foundation has been built on amplifying First Nations Voices, fostering increased cultural knowledge among our Goodstart employees, and engaging in deeper critical reflection. We draw on the wisdom of Elders and other knowledge holders who continue to positively shape our journey and maintain our authenticity and focus. However, we recognise that there is more work to be done, and we are committed to doing it.

Our commitments for our second Stretch RAP are more courageous, with more 'stretch' to drive more impactful reconciliation outcomes. For example, in employment, we are committed to not just greater First Nations workforce representation but improving the representation of First Nations employees in leadership positions.

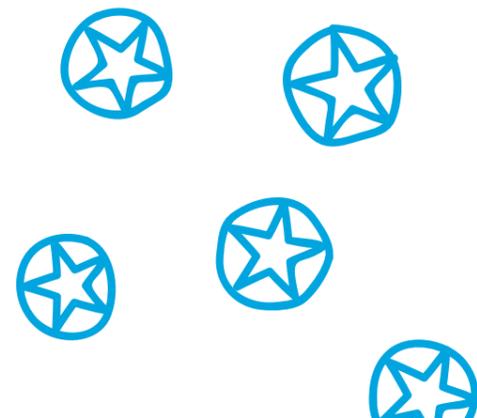


I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our First Nations Goodstarters. Your voices provide constant and invaluable cultural guidance and leadership for Goodstart's journey. This allows us to more authentically consider and weave First Nations perspectives into our work, enriching the educational experiences we offer. Our 15,000 educators and teachers make this possible each day through their early learning experiences, and more than 650 centre-based RAPs drive local reconciliation outcomes.

As Goodstart's CEO, I am honoured to reaffirm our commitments to reconciliation in this new Stretch RAP. I commit to walk alongside First Nations people in the reconciliation journeys of both Goodstart and Australia, and to use my voice for courageous and positive change.

In the wake of the recent Referendum, the work of reconciliation is more important than ever, and Goodstart is proud to be part of this new phase in Australia's reconciliation journey.

Dr Ros Baxter
Chief Executive Officer, Goodstart



On her first day joining the organisation on March 20, 2023, Goodstart's CEO Dr Ros Baxter received a blessed message stick from Aunty Flo Watson (pictured), an Elder and Traditional Owner and proud descendant of the Ghunghanghi People of Yarrabah, North Queensland, and Torres Strait Island Elder Ama Rose (Aunty McRose Elu). This gift signifies that Ros will carry the blessing with her, wherever she goes, in her instrumental role in leading Goodstart forward to enhance outcomes for all Australia's children and bring our reconciliation vision to life in every community we are a part of.



Our vision for reconciliation

At Goodstart, reconciliation is central to our vision of providing all Australia's children with the best start in life. We have both the opportunity and responsibility to help inform Australia's future leaders through our early learning programs provided to over 61,000 children each year. In 650 unique communities across the nation we are committed to sharing our commitment to reconciliation with children, their families and communities.

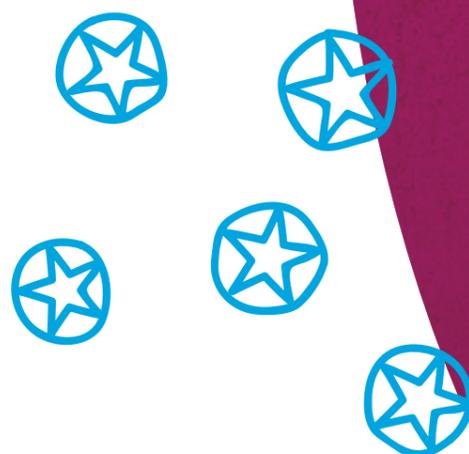
We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the original storytellers, teachers, and guides of this nation. We take pride in sharing Australia's rich past and creating a strong sense of belonging for First Nations children, employees and families, who are part of our Goodstart community.

Our vision for reconciliation is a thriving Australia that embraces and celebrates the rich cultures, histories, and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We envision a future where every child, family, and community we serve is empowered, respected, and actively a part of Goodstart's and Australia's shared journey of reconciliation.

Guided by Reconciliation Australia's five dimensions of reconciliation, we aspire to lead the early learning sector and advance Australia's journey towards reconciliation. As the nation's largest provider of early childhood education we will be bold, brave, and innovative in our approach, always striving to do more and achieve more.

We believe that reconciliation is about more than just words; it's about meaningful actions. We are dedicated to deep listening, engaging with our First Nations Goodstarters, Elders, and Knowledge Holders to shape our reconciliation journey in every community we are a part of. We recognise the importance of stronger First Nations representation across all role types and in leadership positions.

We are committed to ongoing learning and improvement in our reconciliation efforts.



1 Race relations

We are committed to fostering positive race relations by promoting understanding, respect, and appreciation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures within our organisation and beyond.

2 Equality and Equity

We are dedicated to promoting economic and social inclusion by increasing the diversity of our workforce and supplier base to better reflect the communities we serve.

3 Institutional Integrity

We are committed to using our relationships and influence to amplify First Nations voices and support Australia's reconciliation movement and impact.

4 Unity

We actively engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to co-create initiatives that support reconciliation, ensuring that our actions are driven by community needs and aspirations. Working within 650 communities, and with tens of thousands of families we recognise we have an enormous opportunity and responsibility and commit to fostering strong community connections to inform our local RAP journeys.

5 Historical Acceptance

We incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and histories into our early learning programs and practices. We advocate for social justice, equality, and equity for First Nations peoples through our actions and partnerships. We value and promote the importance of truth-telling.



Goodstart wholeheartedly supports the Uluru Statement from the Heart, and proudly joined 70 other RAP partners to support a Yes Vote on the Referendum in 2023. As an evidence-informed organisation, Goodstart collaborated with partners to raise awareness about constitutional recognition and its importance for all Australians. Despite the unsuccessful referendum, Goodstart's commitment to First Nations peoples and communities remains unwavering. We will continue to aspire for meaningful social change with our second Stretch RAP detailing more tangible commitments and practical outcomes to support Australia's reconciliation journey. This Stretch RAP reaffirms our commitment to working closely with our First Nations partners, governments, and sector partners to build a stronger and more cohesive community.

Our business

Goodstart is Australia's largest not-for-profit early learning provider and the largest non-government provider of kindergarten and preschool programs.

About Goodstart

At Goodstart, we are shaping Australia's future by laying the foundations for children to thrive. Every moment counts during a child's formative years, from birth to age five. That is why we are committed to delivering exceptional and inclusive teaching and learning experiences every day across more than 650 communities.

Since our founding in 2010 by four leading charities, Goodstart has been driven by a powerful social purpose: to create life-changing social impact for children, families, and communities. We strive to give all of Australia's children the best possible start in life through access to high quality early learning, with a special focus on children experiencing vulnerability. We aim to maximise the potential of each child, empower our educators, teachers and early learning professionals who truly make the difference, and uphold the highest standards of quality, safety, and excellence in all aspects of our work. Reconciliation is woven across everything we do.

Our social purpose extends beyond the walls of our early learning and preschool/kindergarten rooms. We invest in ground-breaking research to understand what truly makes a difference for children. Informed by international and local evidence, we advocate for improved affordability, greater access, and enhanced participation in early learning programs. Our goal is to ensure that every child, regardless of their circumstances, can thrive.



Our vision

For Australia’s children to have the best possible start in life.

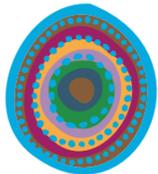
Our purpose

To ensure children have the learning, development and wellbeing outcomes they need for school and life.

Our Guiding Principles



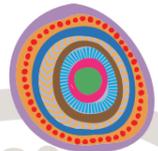
Children are central to everything we do.



Our people make the difference.



Families are our primary partner.



Being a valued member of each unique community.

Founding partners

- The Benevolent Society
- Mission Australia
- Brotherhood of St Laurence
- Social Ventures Australia

Our Social Impact

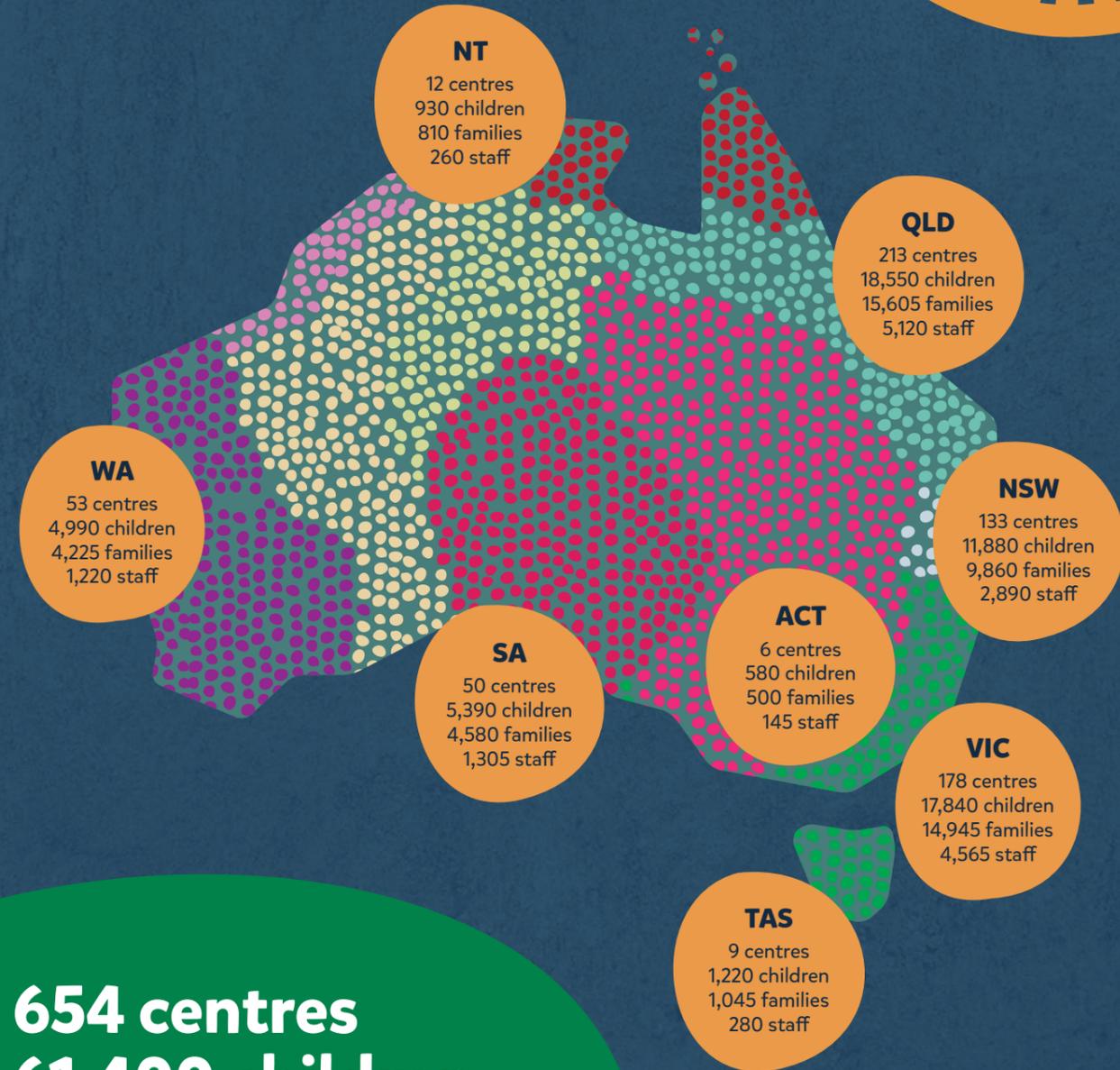
All quality early learning in Australia provides social and economic benefits, but at Goodstart, we deliver even more for children, families and our community. In 2023, Goodstart’s Social Impact Study revealed that we generate \$5.60 for every \$1 invested in our targeted social purpose investments. Our ongoing commitment and investment in reconciliation includes increasing representation of First Nations children and investment in First Nations Goodstarters to create culturally safe centres for First Nations children.

Learn more



Goodstart centre locations

Goodstart has a diverse centre footprint across every state and territory – from Gubbi Gubbi lands on the east coast of Australia, across to Wadjuk Noongar Country in Western Australia, up to Larrakia in the Northern Territory, to Yuggera Country in Meanjin where Goodstart’s national centre support office is located.



654 centres
61,400 children
51,500 families
15,800 people

Key facts

- A diverse footprint**
 - Close to one quarter of Goodstart centres are in low socio-economic areas (SEIFA 1-2)
 - Nearly one third of Goodstart centres support children living in regional and rural areas
- First Nations representation**
 - More than 367 First Nations educators, teachers and early learning professionals were employed at Goodstart in FY23, a 13 percent increase on FY22
 - 7% of children attending our centres identify as First Nations

First Nations children and employees

Goodstart is deeply committed to inclusion, ensuring all children feel a strong sense of belonging. This commitment is evident in the increasing representation of First Nations children attending our services. Currently, over 6,698 First Nations children attend Goodstart’s early learning services, accounting for 7% of all children, which exceeds the sector average. In 2014, when Goodstart first published its Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, only 2.4% of children in our centres identified as First Nations.

Goodstart is also dedicated to increasing the representation of First Nations educators and teachers to enhance our early learning programs and centres for the benefit of both First Nations and non-Indigenous children. Through our First Nations Employment Strategy, we have seen a rise in the number of First Nations employees, reaching 367 in 2023, an increase of 63% from January 2020 and the commencement of Goodstart’s previous RAP. This Stretch RAP outlines Goodstart’s commitments to further improve representation, particularly in leadership positions and key support roles within Goodstart’s centre support functions.

Supporting local reconciliation outcomes

Goodstart’s commitment to reconciliation is visible across more than 654 communities, with 100% of Goodstart centres on their journey with Reconciliation Australia’s Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education program – 41% of centres published their RAP commitments in 2023.

Advocating for all children, and for First Nations Voices

As a large not-for-profit social enterprise, Goodstart is uniquely placed to drive policy change and promote opportunities for First Nations voices to be heard and to inform policies that impact First Nations children, families and organisations.

Goodstart works closely with campaign partners Thrive by Five and The Parenthood to raise the profile of early learning in both free and social media, with our own campaign channel – The Smart Start – amplifying the message to our families and educators. Through peak bodies – the Early Learning and Care Council of Australia (ELLACCA) and Early Childhood Australia (ECA) – Goodstart collaborates with other providers to inform policy development. We also strive to support First Nations organisations working with children and families including SNAICC – the National Voice for First Nations Children.

We are an active participant in sector discussions that seek to identify common ground on policy issues and strengthen the impact of lobbying efforts on behalf of families and children. Goodstart is committed to transforming the national narrative about the importance of early learning. This includes ensuring that children who benefit most from quality early learning and care, get the support they need in the first five years of life, to succeed in later life.

Centre Profile: Goodstart Shailer Park, Yugambeh Country

In the heart of Logan, Queensland, Goodstart Shailer Park was one of the first Goodstart centres to start their reconciliation journey, more than seven years ago.

Honoured at the national 2023 Narragunnawali Reconciliation in Education Awards, Goodstart Shailer Park was among the six education facilities nationwide commended for their outstanding efforts. Judges were particularly impressed by the centre's strong leadership and passion for reconciliation, evident in their continuous commitment through an active RAP.

What sets Goodstart Shailer Park apart is not just the duration of their commitment, but the depth of community engagement. Actively collaborating with local Elders, schools, the Nangara Group, and the Department of Education, the centre is a hub for meaningful connections.

Goodstart Shailer Park has deep community connections and its journey has inspired other Goodstart centres on their reconciliation journey.



Centre profile: Goodstart Calala – Kamilaroi Country

Goodstart Calala's service philosophy is 'respect' with the team focused on connection with local community and continuation of this connection into everyday practice. In 2024 Goodstart Calala joined with community for a week-long celebration of NAIDOC Week, Keep the Fire Burning! Blak Loud and Proud.

The centre hosted the Kilala Yarn and Gather event which allowed the centre team to share with community how they weave Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into playful teaching and learning. The gathering opened with a Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country with Uncle Len Waters, followed by weaving, painting, cultural play experiences, songs performed by the Garriya Room children, games and stories.

The Calala team then joined with local community organisations to host a joint Campfire Storytime at Tamworth Library, with children performing some songs they have been learning in Gamilaraay language and hearing stories by Aunty Audree.

The centre team and children then worked together to make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island flags for participants in the 2024 Tamworth NAIDOC March before hosting an activity stall at the Family Fun Day, as well as using their social media platforms to promote and share other NAIDOC Week celebrations happening in community.



Torres Strait Islander playgroup

Existing to ensure all Australia's children can access early learning care, Goodstart partnered with the Ngurupai (Horn Island) community in the Torres Strait – with a shared goal to improve early childhood outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Following family engagement and the formation of the Ngurupai Early Childhood Advisory Group, comprising local people, the Ngurupai community has been empowered to share their aspirations for their children.

Through this community partnership, and funding support by The Paul Ramsey Foundation, outcomes have included a monthly playgroup 'stay and play,' and agreement to proceed a concept proposal to re-open an early learning facility on the island under a community-controlled model.

The monthly playgroup has attracted increasing numbers of children and parental attendance and engagement. Building family confidence is also helping strengthen home-based learning opportunities.



Learn more





PUSH THIS DOOR

How many of these remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do you know?
Painted by goodstart calala

WELCOME TO KIDS WARD
YAAMA MALIYAA

Our RAP

Goodstart's Stretch RAP 2024 - 2027 outlines our deepening commitment to reconciliation. As our second Stretch RAP, it sets higher goals, increased accountability, and tangible commitments to drive meaningful change at Goodstart, and beyond, in alignment with the five dimensions of reconciliation.

RAP development

The RAP was developed over the past 12 months through a collaborative process involving all parts of our organisation. This included input from our Board, Senior Leadership Team, Goodstart centres, and First Nations Goodstart employees. The development process was guided by our vision for reconciliation and informed by the principles of respect, relationships, and opportunities.

Guiding Strategic Priorities

Our second Stretch RAP is guided by three strategic priorities:

- Strengthening the relationship between Goodstart centre RAPs and our enterprise-level RAP to foster stronger community engagement and reconciliation outcomes.
- Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in pedagogy and practice as articulated in the revised Early Years Learning Framework Version 2.0 that came into effect early 2024.
- Supporting national Government and community reconciliation objectives in areas such as the commitment to grow community-controlled organisations through Closing the Gap strategies; and the first Universal entitlement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children delivered through the July 2023 Child Care subsidy changes.

The expanded Stretch RAP reflects Goodstart's dedication to amplifying First Nations voices within our organisation and creating culturally safe environments for all. It seeks to build on past successes while addressing areas where improvement is needed. Stakeholder engagement was a crucial component of the development process.

The development process began with a critical reflection on our past reconciliation efforts. We were inspired by the work of other organisations, and asked ourselves:

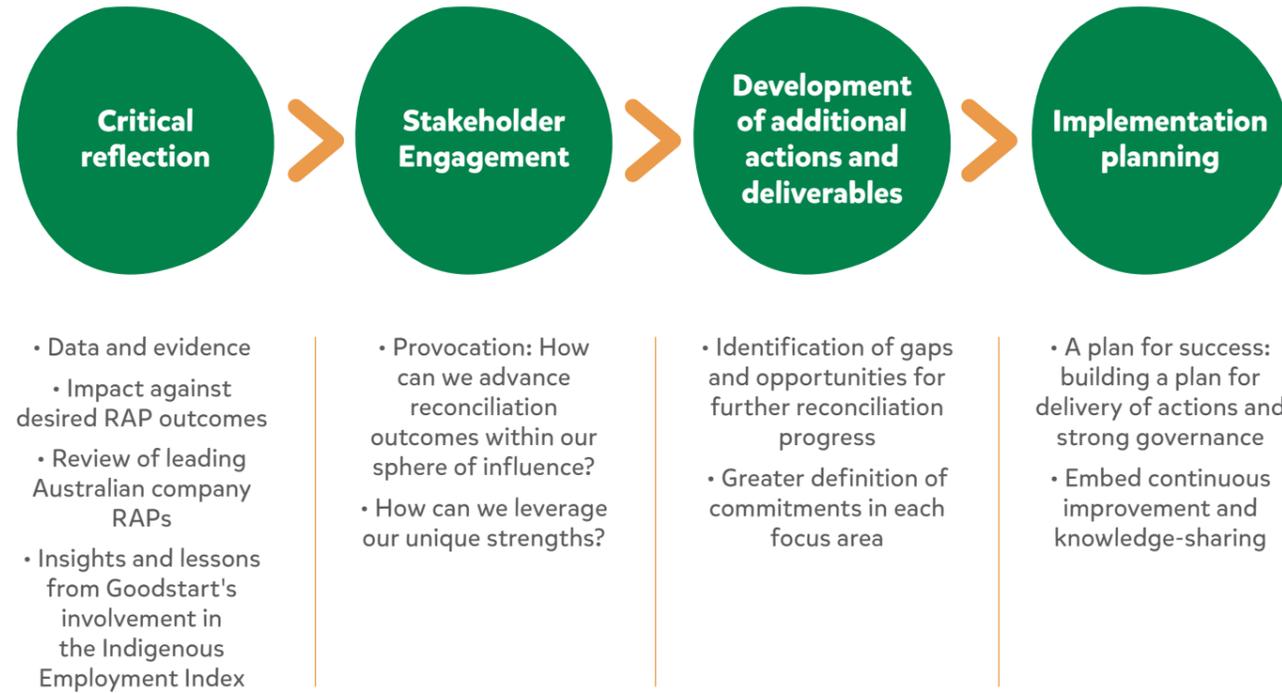
What more can we do?

What barriers exist, and how can they be overcome?

How can we advance reconciliation within our sphere of influence?

And, how can we leverage our unique strengths as the nation's largest provider of early learning?

RAP content development process



- Data and evidence
 - Impact against desired RAP outcomes
 - Review of leading Australian company RAPs
- Insights and lessons from Goodstart's involvement in the Indigenous Employment Index

- Provocation: How can we advance reconciliation outcomes within our sphere of influence?
- How can we leverage our unique strengths?

- Identification of gaps and opportunities for further reconciliation progress
- Greater definition of commitments in each focus area

- A plan for success: building a plan for delivery of actions and strong governance
- Embed continuous improvement and knowledge-sharing

RAP consultation

Spanning 12 months, the Social Impact team within Goodstart oversaw consultation across the organisation and among critical friends and stakeholders to inform the RAP development and commitments.

RAP Working Group

A cross-functional group of Goodstart employees representing every area of our organisation, including Property, Finance, IT, People and Culture, Health and Safety, Advocacy, Communications, Operations, and Pedagogy and Practice. All individuals had been actively engaged in reconciliation over the past three years in various capacities, demonstrating both a personal and professional responsibility to reconciliation.

- Development input (May 2023 to March 2024)
- Meetings held fortnightly during initial phases and monthly thereafter
- Contributors to building the RAP implementation plan

First Nations Leaders Group

Comprising of Indigenous leaders from diverse backgrounds, this Goodstart group provided guidance and insights to help shape Goodstart's RAP development ensuring bolder and meaningful commitments.

- Input at both RAP Working group and National Reconciliation Committee level and through regular group meetings
- Cultural leadership and guidance
- Connection to external First Nations critical friends

First Nations Voices Group

Comprising centre-based and centre support First Nations Goodstarters, these voices helped shape actions and commitments.

- Cultural perspectives across the national footprint
- Share examples of Centre Reconciliation activity to inform RAP actions

National Reconciliation Committee

This group of Goodstarters representing every function within the organisation are focused on ensuring delivery of RAP commitments.

- Critical reflection session to inform RAP development
- Dedicated session to gather input and perspectives
- RAP development progress updates every six weeks
- Lead implementation of RAP

State Reconciliation Committees

These groups comprise centre support and centre representation in every Goodstart state and territory and meet every six to eight weeks.

- Dedicated representatives on RAP working group
- Collaboration to align State RAP plans to organisation RAP

Key Stakeholders and Critical Friends

Stakeholders and critical friends included Goodstart children, who are central to everything we do, families as our primary partners, Goodstart's Board who are deeply committed to reconciliation, external First Nations and Community friends.

- Consultation and input (May 2023 to March 2024)
- Children voices represented through the children's artwork displayed within the RAP
- Family voice represented through family feedback at national and centre level and through the artwork designed by David Williams, a Goodstart Red Hill parent
- Dedicated Reconciliation session with the Goodstart Board and regular Board updates and input throughout the development process
- Regular engagement with Elders and First Nations friends of Goodstart



“Having a part in helping shape Goodstart's next RAP was a really impactful. It's great to be part of an organisation that values the voices of First Nations Goodstarters and recognises the unique perspectives we all bring from across the country.”

First Nations Voices Group member

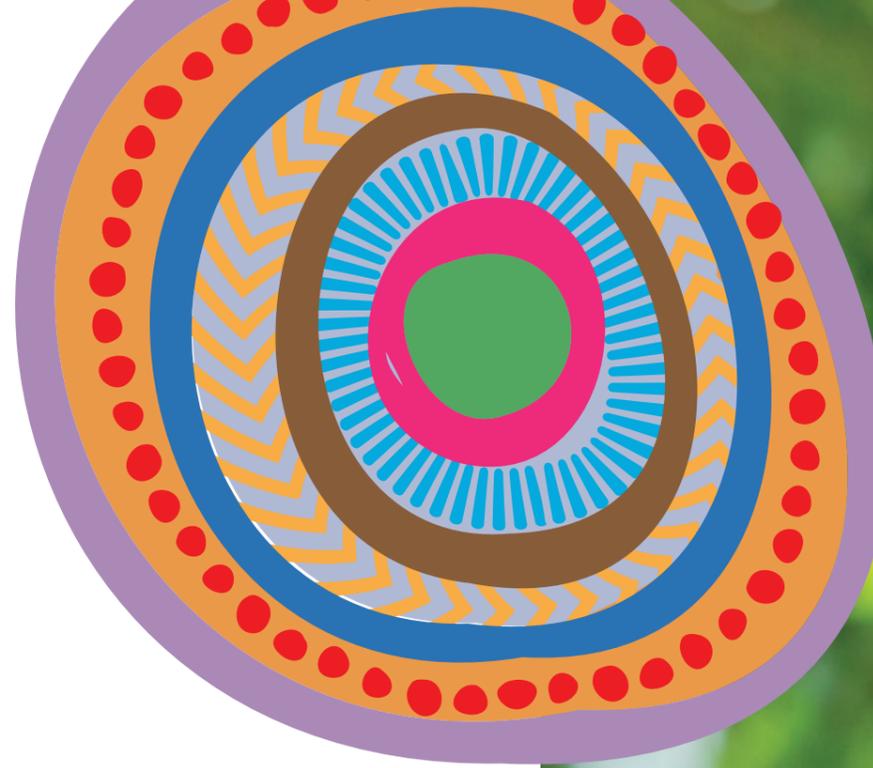
RAP Governance

Goodstart's commitment to reconciliation is embedded in our governance structure, ensuring that it remains a priority at all levels of the organisation. Goodstart's General Manager Social Impact and the Chair of the First Nations Leaders group co-lead reconciliation for the organisation which ensures the RAP is visible and supported at the highest levels. Additionally, Goodstart's CEO and Board champion reconciliation and dedicate a meeting each year to discuss reconciliation initiatives, drive accountability for progress, and deepen their own understanding through cultural learning activities.

Our RAP Committee, which meets every six weeks, plays a crucial role in ensuring the progress of our RAP deliverables. Representing each area of the organisation, the committee is responsible for overseeing the implementation of reconciliation initiatives, connecting with state and centre-based activities, and communicating progress throughout Goodstart. This high level of visibility ensures that reconciliation remains a central focus of our organisational culture.

Our RAP Committee comprises leaders from across our organisation including six Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, ensuring that First Nations voices and perspectives are integral to our reconciliation journey.

We extend our sincere thanks to all the contributors for their dedication and expertise in developing and implementing our RAP.



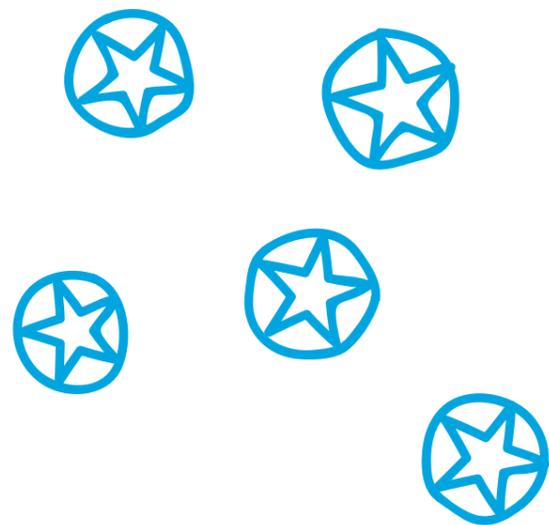
National RAP Committee members

First Nations RAP committee members

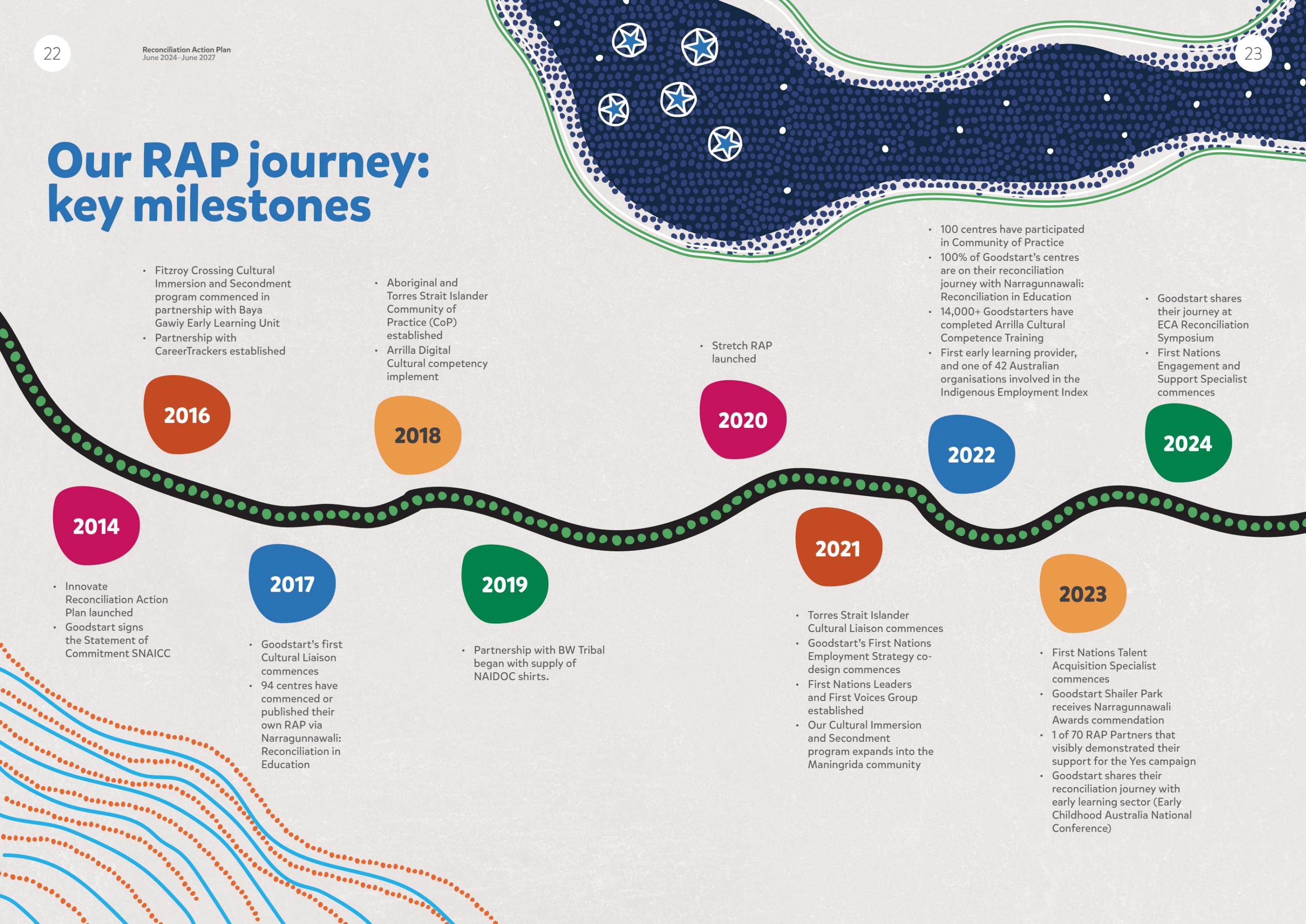
- National Cultural Liaison
- Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
- State Manager – Regional QLD
- Centre Director – WA
- First Nations Talent Acquisition Specialist
- Inclusion & Diversity Specialist – First Nations

Other RAP committee members

- Chief Executive Officer
- General Manager Social Impact
- Chief Products and Enabling Services
- Head of Corporate Affairs Communications and Partnerships
- Partnerships and Corporate Profiles Specialist
- Workforce Diversity Manager
- Program Manager Social Impact
- People Partner
- State Manager Victoria / Tasmania
- National Lead Teaching and Learning Projects
- National Social Policy Manager
- Head of Centre Procurement
- Information Technology Partner
- Head of Marketing, Brand and Family Services
- Head of Centre Services
- Social Inclusion Coordinator NSW/ACT
- Social Inclusion Coordinator WA
- Learning Partner



Our RAP journey: key milestones



2014

- Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan launched
- Goodstart signs the Statement of Commitment SNAICC

2016

- Fitzroy Crossing Cultural Immersion and Secondment program commenced in partnership with Baya Gawayi Early Learning Unit
- Partnership with CareerTrackers established

2017

- Goodstart's first Cultural Liaison commences
- 94 centres have commenced or published their own RAP via Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education

2018

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community of Practice (CoP) established
- Arrilla Digital Cultural competency implement

2019

- Partnership with BW Tribal began with supply of NAIDOC shirts.

2020

- Stretch RAP launched

2021

- Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison commences
- Goodstart's First Nations Employment Strategy co-design commences
- First Nations Leaders and First Voices Group established
- Our Cultural Immersion and Secondment program expands into the Maningrida community

2022

- 100 centres have participated in Community of Practice
- 100% of Goodstart's centres are on their reconciliation journey with Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education
- 14,000+ Goodstarters have completed Arrilla Cultural Competence Training
- First early learning provider, and one of 42 Australian organisations involved in the Indigenous Employment Index

2023

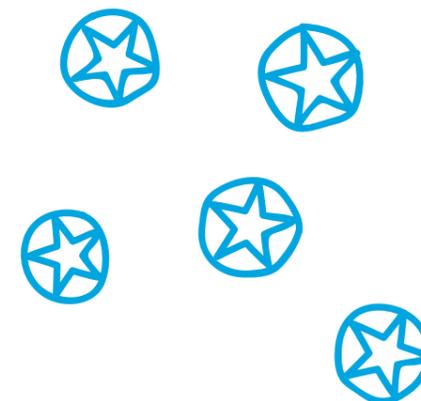
- First Nations Talent Acquisition Specialist commences
- Goodstart Shailer Park receives Narragunnawali Awards commendation
- 1 of 70 RAP Partners that visibly demonstrated their support for the Yes campaign
- Goodstart shares their reconciliation journey with early learning sector (Early Childhood Australia National Conference)

2024

- Goodstart shares their journey at ECA Reconciliation Symposium
- First Nations Engagement and Support Specialist commences



Our RAP journey: key learnings & reflections



As we reflect on Goodstart's 10-year reconciliation journey, we have identified critical enablers and reflected on areas to improve as part of our next Stretch RAP 2024–2027.

Key learnings

- 1 Strong and visible leadership:**
We recognise the importance of strong leadership for reconciliation at every level of our organisation. An actively engaged Board and strong centre leadership has been crucial to shaping our reconciliation ambitions backed by support and investment.
- 2 Strengthening relationships with Elders and Knowledge Holders:**
We prioritise building relationships with Elders and Knowledge Holders at a national level and locally to guide our journey authentically and courageously. Their voices matter and we hold deep respect for their help in guiding our work with tens of thousands of children every day.
- 3 Employee engagement:**
We have achieved high levels of employee engagement for reconciliation, including completion rates of cultural competency training and multiple engagement opportunities throughout the year for learning, unlearning, and relearning. But we must and will do more.
- 4 Creating culturally safe workplaces:**
We promote culturally safe workplaces to enhance First Nations engagement and participation for both employees and children, aligned with our ambitious First Nations employment strategy.
- 5 Amplifying voices from First Nations employees:**
We must amplify the voices of our First Nations employees to shape initiatives, remove unconscious bias, and authentically direct and promote Goodstart's reconciliation journey.
- 6 Truth-telling:**
We engage in truth-telling throughout the year, recognising it as fundamental in the reconciliation process. Honest acknowledgment of historical truths fosters transparency and sincerity, laying the foundation for trust between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples.
- 7 Local leadership for reconciliation is vital in every Goodstart community:**
All centres are encouraged and supported to publish their commitment to reconciliation on the Narragunnawali platform. Strengthening the relationship between centre-based RAPs and our enterprise-level RAP will support stronger reconciliation outcomes locally and nationally.



Our RAP journey: artwork

Goodstart’s journey towards reconciliation is not just a story – it is a visual narrative captured in the artwork of talented First Nations artists. These artworks serve as powerful reminders of where we have been and where we are headed as we develop our new Stretch RAP.

Each piece of art tells a story of our past RAPs and the progress we have made. Cyndy Newman’s “Pathways Leading to Reconciliation,” created for the 2014-2016 RAP launch, symbolises our ongoing journey. Elizabeth Maloney’s “Together We Grow,” commissioned for the 2020-2023 Stretch RAP, emphasises the central role of children, inclusivity, and the embedding of First Nations culture in our work.

In 2020, we deepened our commitment to Torres Strait Islander history and culture with Jacob Pilot Snr’s artwork, “Weres Segur & Dhari.” This piece highlights the joy and celebration in Torres Strait Islander culture, reminding us of the uniqueness and importance of these traditions.

As we reflect on these artworks and our past RAPs, we are inspired to push boundaries, be braver, and make stronger commitments in our new Stretch RAP 2024-2027. Our journey towards reconciliation is ongoing, and these artworks serve as a constant reminder of our past achievements and future ambitions.



Pathways Leading to Reconciliation
Cyndy NEWMAN

Born Griffith NSW, 1979
Wiradjuri woman of Condobolin, NSW
Pathways Leading to Reconciliation, 2014,
Canberra | Acrylic on Canvas



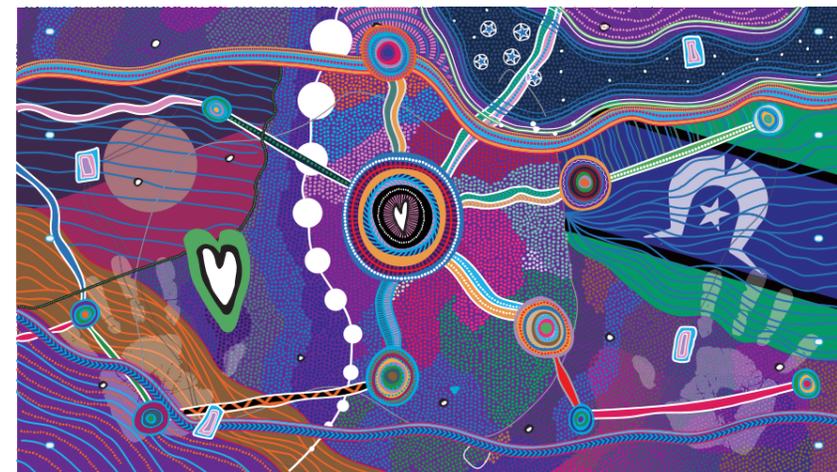
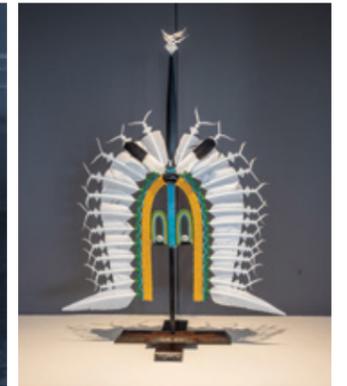
Together We Grow
Elizabeth MALONEY

Born Tamworth NSW, 1981
Kamilaroi woman of Gunnedah, NSW
Together We Grow, 2018,
Redland Bay | Acrylic on Canvas



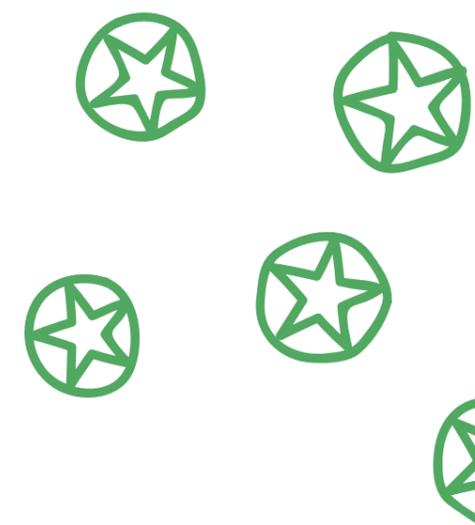
Weres Segur & Dhari
Jacob PILOT SNR

2020, Erub (Darnley Island) |
Acrylic on Paper & Feathered
Headdress

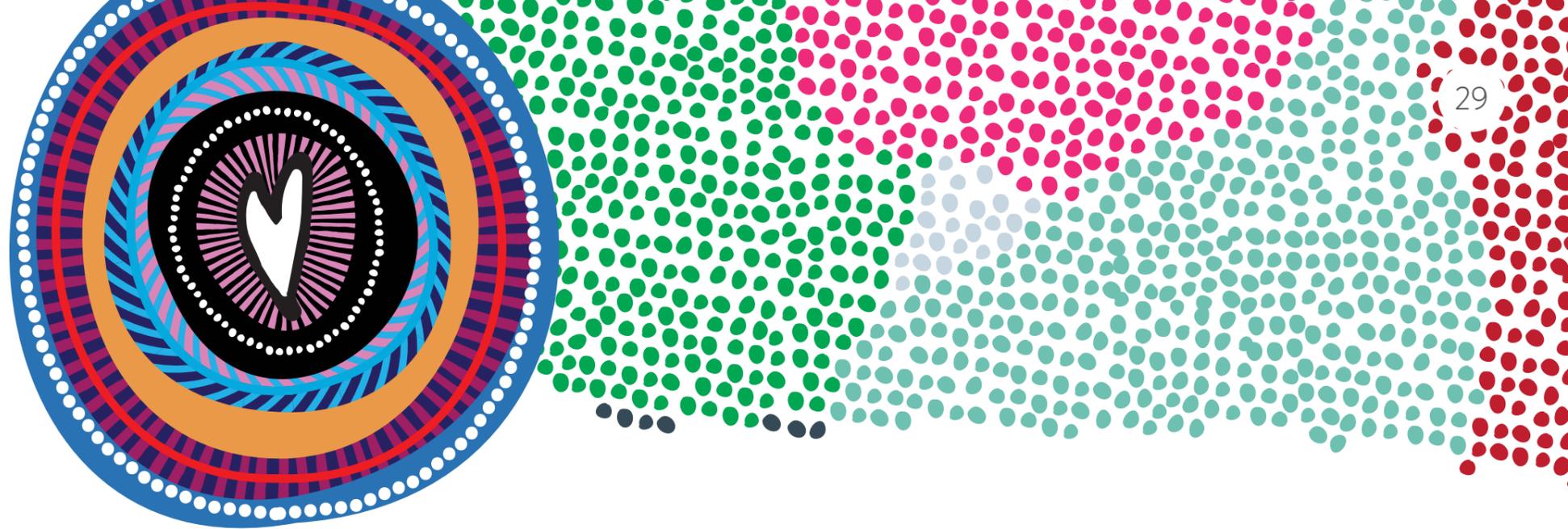


The Heart of Reconciliation
David WILLIAMS

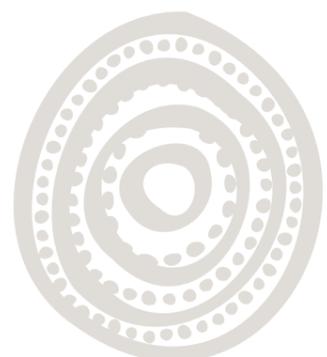
Born Rockhampton QLD, 1983
Wakka Wakka man of Brisbane, QLD
The Heart of Reconciliation, 2024,
Brisbane | Digital Media



Our RAP journey: a decade of commitment

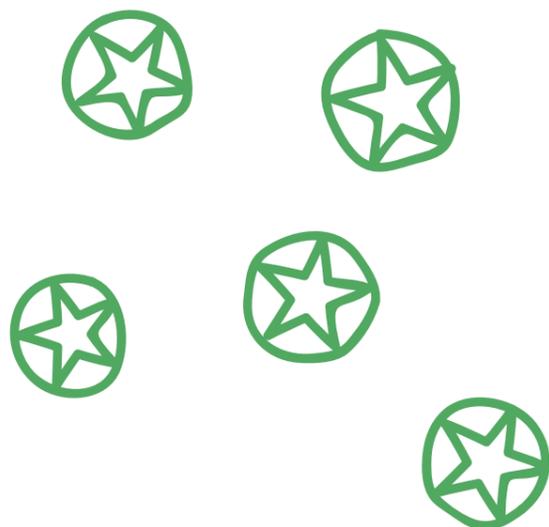


Every year, as a not-for profit social enterprise, we have prioritised investments and organisational resources to support our reconciliation efforts. A decade later, we have strong foundations across our centres and our organisation which will support our 2024 – 2027 Stretch RAP journey. We know there is more to do, and our commitment remains strong.



Amplifying First Nations voices and representation

A core focus of our reconciliation efforts has been to amplify First Nations voices within our organisation. Through leadership groups, yarning circles, and state-based initiatives, we provide platforms where First Nations individuals actively contribute to decision-making, policy formulation, and the strategic direction of our organisation. This commitment is about ensuring that these voices are heard and respected at every level of our organisation.



First Nations Voices Groups at Goodstart

First Nations Leaders

Comprising key individuals in leadership positions at Goodstart, this group plays a vital role in supporting our reconciliation journey. Members include Melody Ingra, National Cultural Liaison Officer; Peter Pilot-Wakaisu, Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison; Cassy Baker, Regional Queensland State Manager; and Samara Ahmat, National First Nations Talent Acquisition Specialist. They serve as leading voices for engagement, ensuring that Goodstart’s commitment to reconciliation and cultural inclusivity is reflected in its practices and policies. Their expertise and leadership contribute significantly to creating an environment where all employees feel valued, respected, and empowered, benefiting the children, families, and communities served by Goodstart.

First Nations Voices Group

This group provides a space for First Nations people within Goodstart to collaborate, and represent the unique and diverse voices of First Nations people across the different parts of our nation. Representatives from diverse roles come together to share knowledge, cultural strengths, and community contacts. The group plays a crucial role in ensuring that Goodstart stays on the path to reconciliation while improving First Nations representation. This group is instrumental in guiding and maintaining the cultural integrity of our RAP journey and initiatives.

State-based Yarning Circles

These circles provide First Nations Goodstarters with a culturally safe and welcoming space to come together to collaborate, experience, connect, and share. They encourage involvement in their team’s cultural journey and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to guide and walk beside Goodstart on its two-way cultural learning journey. The circles play a crucial role in fostering a sense of community and belonging among First Nations employees and contribute to creating culturally inclusive environments in Goodstart centres.

Improving the representation of First Nations people within our organisation is a priority because we understand that this will improve our ability to improve outcomes for First Nations children. Our First Nations Employment Strategy (2021-2025), co-designed with input from 40 First Nations and non-Indigenous Goodstarters, focuses on attracting, retaining, and supporting First Nations employees. This strategy aims to create a culturally safe workplace that provides meaningful opportunities for career growth. The First Nations Voices Group and First Nations Leaders Group have played crucial roles in ensuring that our commitment to reconciliation and cultural inclusivity is reflected in our practices and policies.

As we deliver our second expanded Stretch RAP, guided by Goodstart’s First Nations Employment Strategy, we are committed to increasing the representation of our First Nations workforce across all role types particularly in leadership positions, strengthening First Nations Voices at Goodstart to influence our journey ahead.

“I feel a sense of pride in my organisation when speaking with other First Nations community members as I know that First Nations voices are shared and valued and our commitment to reconciliation is authentic. This has changed a lot over time, and I know that we will continue in the right direction.”

**First Nations Voices
Group member**

Driving local reconciliation outcomes: the significance of Narragunnawali

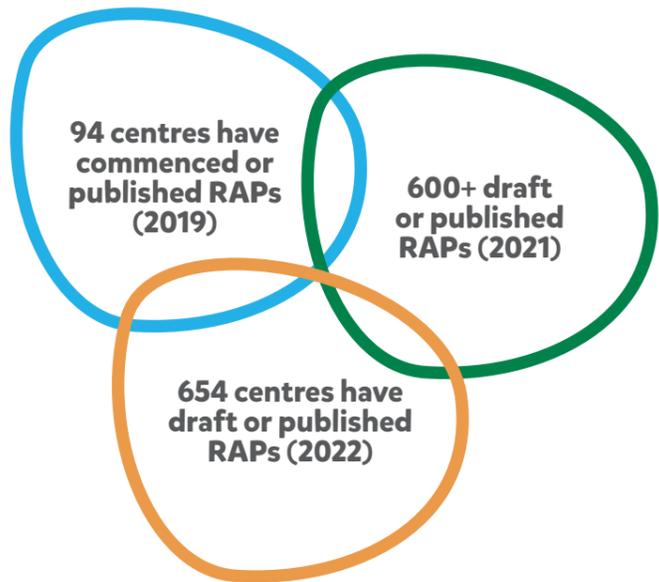
Central to our reconciliation journey is Reconciliation Australia’s Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education program.

Narragunnawali (pronounced narra-gunna-wally) is a word from the language of the Ngunnawal people, Traditional Owners of the land on which Reconciliation Australia’s Canberra office is located, meaning alive, wellbeing, coming together and peace, and is used with permission of the [United Ngunnawal Elders Council](#).

The Narragunnawali online platform is free to access and provides practical ways to introduce meaningful reconciliation initiatives in the classroom, around the school and with the community. Through the Narragunnawali platform, schools and early learning services can develop a [Reconciliation Action Plan \(RAP\)](#), and teachers and educators can access [professional learning](#) and [curriculum resources](#) to support the implementation of reconciliation initiatives.

The Narragunnawali program is aligned to the early years National Quality Standards and National Quality Framework, and provides support and guidance to educators in understanding how to meaningfully embed reconciliation into their pedagogy and practice.

100% Goodstart centres are now on their reconciliation journey with Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education (draft or published RAP)



Did you know?

Each Goodstart centre with a published RAP has a personalised Acknowledgement of Country

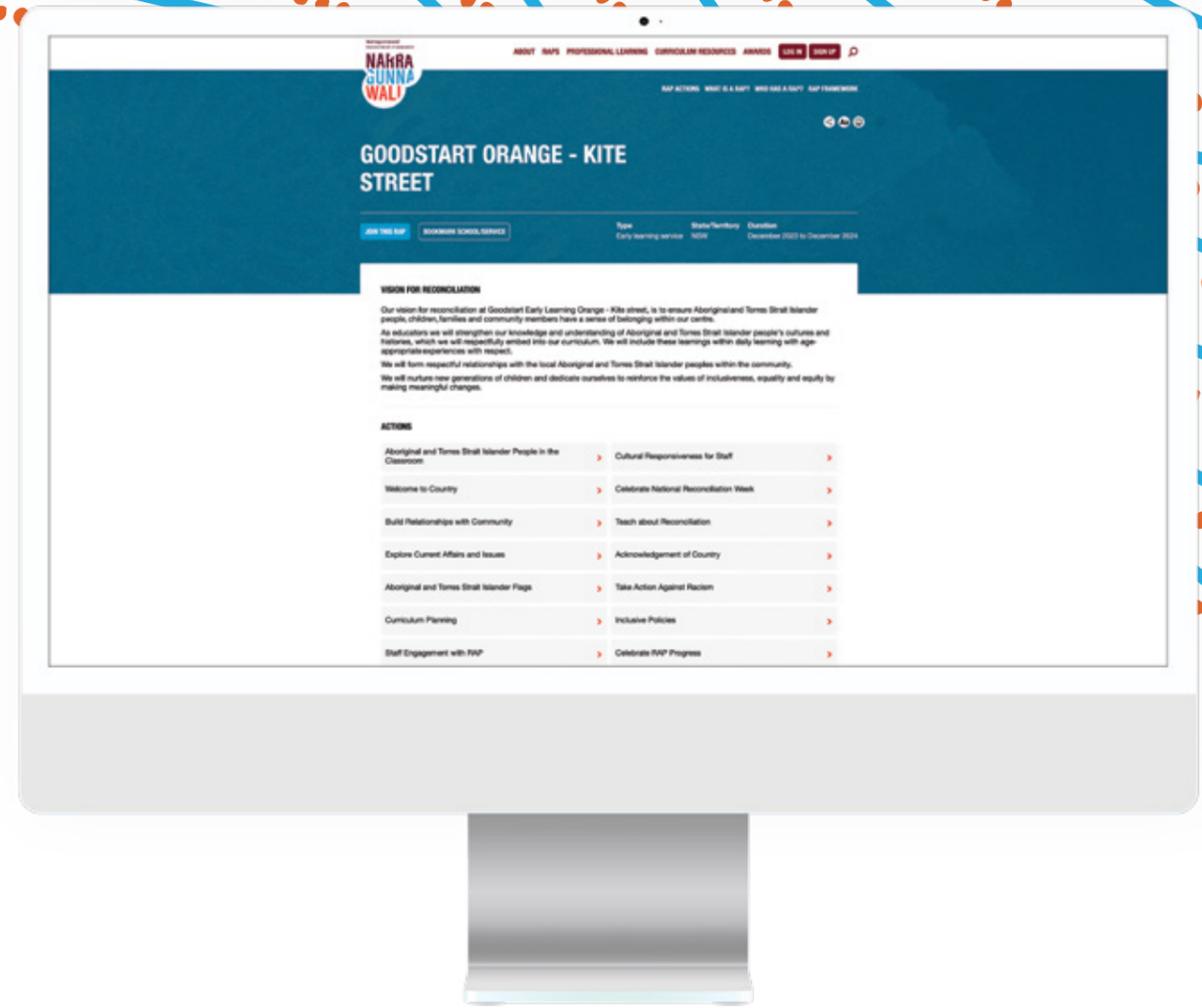


Goodstart Virginia provides a glimpse of their daily Acknowledgement of Country, with children’s voices captured about what it means.

This platform has been instrumental in guiding our 654-strong network of centres to develop their local Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs), ensuring that reconciliation is embedded in every aspect of our operations. In December 2022, we achieved a significant milestone when 100% of our centres registered to develop and maintain a Narragunnawali RAP, with 246 RAPs published. This program has been essential in creating culturally inclusive environments in our communities, promoting respect, relationships, and opportunities.

Published RAPs are refreshed annually to ensure their vision for reconciliation is continuously strengthened and promoted.

In this Stretch RAP, we will build a closer relationship between centre-based RAPs and our enterprise-level RAP to foster stronger reconciliation outcomes. To support the early learning sector, we will continually and proactively share our learnings to inspire their RAP journeys and continue to work closely with the Narragunnawali team at Reconciliation Australia to support more early learning organisations utilising the platform.



Sample of Goodstart Orange – Kite Street published RAP via Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education

[Search Goodstart centres with published RAPs here](#)

Continuous improvement: Annual Goodstart Goodies Award and recognition

As part of commitment to continuous improvement, and to inspire reconciliation progress and impact among our centres, the annual Goodstart Goodies Awards, recognise outstanding contributions to reconciliation. These awards recognise individuals, teams, or initiatives that exemplify excellence in embedding reconciliation principles, fostering cultural understanding, and actively contributing to our commitment to creating culturally safe and inclusive environments. This knowledge-sharing is vital in helping inspire other Goodstart centres and their reconciliation journeys, progress and impact.

Centre Profile: Goodstart Mount Louisa, Townsville (Land of the Wulgurukaba of Gurambilbarra and Yunbenun, Bindal, Gugu Badhun and Nywaigi peoples)

At Goodstart Mount Louisa, reconciliation is not just a goal; it is a way of life. Recognised at Goodstart’s 2023 Goodies Awards for Advancing Reconciliation, the centre team has intricately woven First Nations culture into their centre philosophy and quality improvement plan, embodying the ‘8 Aboriginal ways of ways of learning’. This integrated approach guides their daily practice.

The team’s dedication goes above and beyond, actively seeking internal and external support to amplify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, and actively engage with Traditional Elders and Community Elders. This commitment has received validation from Aunty Jenny Kum Sing, a Cultural Advisor from the local Regulatory Authority.

A standout moment for the Centre’s Director was receiving an invitation from Aunty Jenny Kum Sing to showcase Mount Louisa’s journey toward reconciliation at a community level, underscoring the centre’s significant reconciliation commitment and contribution.

Goodstart has also actively supported recognition for First Nations Goodstarters.

Cassy Baker a 2022 Robert Skyes Scholarship recipient: a PittaPitta woman, and Goodstart’s Regional Queensland State Manager was awarded a highly prestigious scholarship to attend Harvard University in Boston, by the Chief Executive Women and the Aurora Foundation. The scholarship supported Cassy’s ambition for greater social impact through reconciliation.

State recognition for Corrine Ferraro, Centre Director of Goodstart Stratton: Corrine is a proud Ballardong Noongar woman, and her family are from Northam WA. Corrine received recognition in March 2023 for her deadly work progressing reconciliation and supporting culturally inclusive learning environments embracing our rich First Nations history and culture. Corrine was named Outstanding Indigenous Educator winner at the Early Childhood Learning & Development Sector Awards and featured at the 2023 WA National Reconciliation Week breakfast sharing the centre’s reconciliation journey. Corrine speaking at the 2023 WA National Reconciliation Week breakfast.

Family and community engagement

During National Reconciliation Week (NRW) and NAIDOC Week, and other culturally significant days, we engage our people, families, and communities in meaningful activities to promote reconciliation. These events go beyond symbolic gestures, offering opportunities for education, awareness, and meaningful conversations about reconciliation. NRW and NAIDOC Week will continue to play a huge part in driving reconciliation outcomes – and creating the opportunity for community engagement.



Goodstarters and children across the nation joined a live stream of our CEO Dr Ros Baxter reading the book, ‘Finding our Heart’ by Thomas Mayo to the Kindergarten children of Goodstart Murarrie, Meanjin (Brisbane), as part of 2023 National Reconciliation Week.



“National Reconciliation Week represents such a great opportunity every year for centres to really take on board the theme for the year and reflect, challenge and celebrate their reconciliation journeys, it’s a week where we can take the time to deeply listen and unlearn and relearn from First Nations people. It’s also a deadly week of incredible events and rich learning experiences for children – involving our centre communities from Elders, Aunts and Uncles, children and families. Goodstart centres always have a range of great celebrations planned to celebrate the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture, from cups of tea and damper with local Elders, to smoking ceremonies, to learning about the local stories of the area. We love National Reconciliation Week at Goodstart but know that reconciliation happens every day not just in one week.”

Melody Ingra – Goodstart Early Learning National Cultural Liaison



Left to right: BW Tribal owners Warwick and Maxine Go Gam, and Goodstart's National Cultural Liaison Melody Ingra.



BW Tribal shares the impact of Goodstart's partnership

“We at ‘BW Tribal’ love to see the level of interest the Goodstart staff display by wearing these yearly shirts and participating in the national NAIDOC celebrations. As an Indigenous people /company we feel a sense of hope, pride and joy to be able to create and supply these beautiful shirts for Goodstart and we feel a connection with not only the organisation, but the staff members themselves when we see a staff member wearing these shirts throughout the country.

The partnership between ourselves and Goodstart has allowed BW Tribal to grow as an Indigenous company in the business landscape over the past years. We have been able to employ more people and secure a larger premise over the last year due to Goodstart being one of our partners on this journey. The partnership has also opened doors for BW Tribal with Goodstart's other partners offering us more opportunities to work with these other companies. It has also given our collaborating artists national exposure by the staff wearing their artwork everyday. The benefits of this partnership also flows over into the artist's community and families, making the impact beyond more than one geographic area of Australia.”

Warwick and Maxine Go Sam - BW Tribal owners

Goodstart's annual NAIDOC shirt initiative, made possible by our partnership with BW Tribal, is a powerful way for Goodstarters to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture in centre and in their community during NAIDOC Week and beyond.



Bush tukka experience with centre cooks:

For NRW 2023, local cooks in Meanjin, Brisbane, were treated to a unique bush tukka learning experience run by Jacob Davidson, of FigJam & Co, a 100% Indigenous owned and operated and Supply Nation certified catering business. Our cooks gained new information and inspiration about how to incorporate bush foods into centre menus, and to support enriching learning experiences.



Embedding Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander perspectives at Goodstart Hampton Park – Coral Drive:

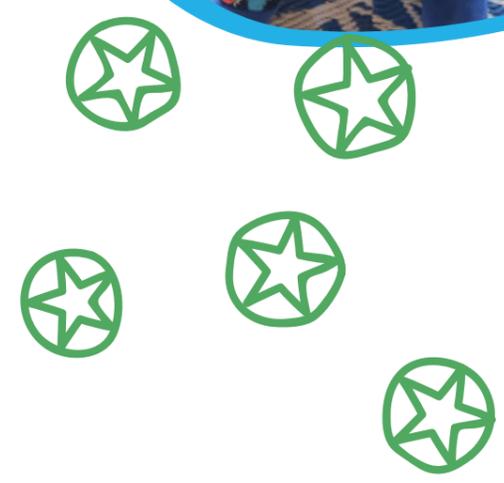
The team at Goodstart Hampton Park embeds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in their Centre everyday, they were a part of the Sea of Hearts challenge during National Reconciliation Week and are consistently reflecting on their practices to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island culture and people are valued.



Children’s learning through First Nations perspectives

Children’s learning is enriched through the embedding of First Nations perspectives in our learning programs. By incorporating First Nations cultures, histories, and languages into our programs, we provide children with a broader understanding of the world and foster respect for diverse cultures. Our Teaching and Learning team have a dedicated intranet page and resources to support centres, educators, and teachers in embedding perspectives, and our national cultural liaisons guide the pedagogy and practice team. The strength of a centre’s ability to integrate perspectives relates to their knowledge and understanding and commitment to reconciliation, and their partnership with the local community. By encouraging centres to continue with a highly individualized reconciliation journey through the Narragunnawali program, we strengthen our early learning programs with First Nations perspectives. Centres will receive resourcing and funding to enable and encourage them to improve their embedding of First Nations perspectives in a variety of ways including:

- Local Elders are connected to the centre and share knowledge with children, families, and educators
- Children use local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander language
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander art is displayed with respect, and children understand the meaning of the painting and are knowledgeable about the artist
- Educators and teachers read Dreamtime stories with children and think about Country applying an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective
- A bush tucker garden offers food for insects, birds, and us
- Children and educators walk on Country and squeeze their toes into the earth and listen deeply to the sounds of nature
- Educators’ programming includes a connection to the Centre’s Reconciliation Action Plan
- Children say Acknowledgment to Country that is genuine to their centre, with understanding, value, and child agency.



Our 2024–2027 RAP commitments and targets

Relationships



At Goodstart, we prioritise building strong relationships built on trust and mutual respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and all Australians. Strong relationships with First Nations people, organisations and communities, enrich our organisation and support us in delivering meaningful reconciliation outcomes. Their voices and perspectives guide and inform our journey and actions, helping us improve our approach to embedding First Nations perspectives into our early learning and teaching programs.

As a leader in the early childhood sector, we understand the importance of genuine partnerships in driving meaningful change. We commit to leveraging our voice and influence in the sector to promote our vision for reconciliation, to show what’s possible and to drive meaningful outcomes for Australia’s children and First Nations peoples.

Through our centre-based RAPs, we strengthen relationships with our First Nations people and communities. Celebrating National Reconciliation Week and other significant dates are vital ways to engage meaningfully with our stakeholders, including our people, families and communities, about our shared reconciliation journey.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to continuously improve guiding principles for engagement.	November 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Review, update and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	April 2025, 2026, 2027	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Establish and maintain formal relationships at national and state-based levels (10) two-way partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or organisations, with a view to promoting self-determination and community controlled organisations in ECEC.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	National		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNAICC – the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Children’s Ground CareerTrackers National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC) Torres Strait Regional Authority Torres Strait Islanders’ Regional Education Council (TSIREC) 		
	State based		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VACCA – Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency VAEAI – Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. Baya Gawiy – Early Childhood Learning Unit (ECLU) Manayingkarirra Child and Family Centre NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Torres Strait Islander Regional Council (TSIRC) Kaurareg Native Title Aboriginal Corporation (KNTAC) Mura Kosker Sorority Torres Strait 		
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s NRW resources and reconciliation materials to all staff.	May 2025, 2026, 2027	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW) <i>continued.</i>	RAP Committee Group members to participate in 2+ external NRW events.	June 2025, 2026, 2027	RAP committee chair/s
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in 2 external events to recognise and celebrate NRW.	June 2025, 2026, 2027	RAP committee chair/s
	Organise 6 (1 at each Centre Support Office) internal NRW events, including at least one organisation wide NRW event, each year. Goodstart to fund all Goodstart centres to participate.	June 2025, 2026, 2027	State Managers
	Register all Goodstart internal NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's website, and provide support to all Goodstart Centres to do the same.	June 2025, 2026, 2027	State Managers
	Each Centre Support Office (CSO) to establish and maintain a Celebration Group to support NRW celebrations each year.	June 2025, 2026, 2027	RAP committee chair/s
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Formalise internal communications plan to engage and raise awareness of reconciliation for all Goodstarters.	March 2025, 2026, 2027	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships
	Deliver at least 1 cultural learning activity at Board / Senior Leadership Team (SLT) / Goodstart Leadership Team (GLT) / State leadership level.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
		March, June, September, November 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison
		March, June, September, November 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison
	Continue to work in partnership with the Narragunnawali team to identify opportunities to share with the education and training sector how early childhood services can deepen their knowledge and engagement with reconciliation in education by developing and maintaining a Narragunnawali RAP.	March, June, September, November 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison
	Attend at least two quarterly RAP Leadership Gatherings per year.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence <i>continued.</i>	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	November 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships
	Revise current strategies to build on and strengthen them, while continuing to develop, implement and share new strategies to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	November 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships
	Collaborate with 8 RAP and other like-minded state/territory reconciliation bodies to implement innovative approaches to advance reconciliation, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benevolent Society • Mission Australia • The Brotherhood of St Laurence • ECA • SVA • Big Fat Smile • United Workers Union • State Government Education department in respective states • Relevant support organisations. 	November 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Engage all staff through the State RAP engagement plan and organisation Stretch RAP implementation plan.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships/ Chair of State RAP Committee/s
	Connect each State/territory RAP committees with state-based reconciliation bodies.	December 2024	Chair state RAP Committee
		December 2024 July 2025, 2026	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships/ Chair of State RAP Committee/s
	Engage external stakeholders through the State RAP engagement plan and organisation Stretch RAP implementation plan.	July 2025, 2026	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships/ Chair of State RAP Committee/s

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Continuously improve HR policies and procedures concerned with anti-discrimination.	October 2024, 2025, 2026	People Partner
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to continuously improve our anti-discrimination policy.	October 2024, 2025, 2026	People Partner
	Review anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	October 2024, 2025, 2026	People Partner
	Provide ongoing education to senior leaders, managers, and Centre Directors on the effects of racism.	October 2024, 2025, 2026	People Partner
	Senior leaders (Goodstart SLT & GLT) to publicly support external and lead internal activity to support anti-discrimination campaigns, initiatives, and stances against racism.	October 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Corporate Affairs
	Establish Goodstart as a zero-tolerance for racism organisation.	Feb 2025, 2026, 2027	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships/ People Partner
	Develop key messages for one annual campaign to combat racism.	Feb 2025, 2026, 2027	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships/ People Partner
	Develop a position statement which reflects Goodstart’s commitment to embed reconciliation into our ways of working and provide a toolkit for Goodstart leaders to identify ways to incorporate cultural responsiveness into their work activity.	September 2024, 2025, 2026 December 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships/ People Partner National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Foster connection and engagement with communities at a local level within each managed state.	Develop and implement a plan to grow stronger connections with Elders and community, to ensure each centre is engaged and building connections with their local First Nations communities.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Engage local First Nations experts to advise and provide cultural perspective and practical application on embedding culture aligned to the local context. Example, joint facilitation at local area learning activities.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
6. Work with Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education to strengthen reconciliation in Goodstart centres and across the sector.	Work with Reconciliation Australia’s Narragunnawali team to co-design resources/training programs for Centre based staff that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on topical subjects • Maximise opportunities for Truth Telling – at State and local level • will impact the sector in future years. 	December 2025, 2026	Head of Professional Learning National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Cultural Liaison
	Scope a research project in partnership with Reconciliation Australia to measure the impacts of RAPs in Centres.	December 2025	National Research Manager and National Cultural Liaison
	Work with Reconciliation Australia to co-design a Professional Development workshop for State Managers and Leaders.	June 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison
	Continue to work with the Narragunnawali team to promote how the Narragunnawali program and platform supports the early childhood sector to engage with the National Frameworks, Teacher professional standards, and National Quality Framework and National Quality Standards. Identify other organisations within the education and training sector that have similar goals to Goodstart.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Work with the Communications Team to develop a state-based communication plan in order to ensure that the centre Narragunnawali RAP deliverables align with Goodstart’s organisational Stretch RAP deliverables.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Nominate services that are demonstrating outstanding commitment to reconciliation for the biannual Narragunnawali Awards.	June 2025	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison

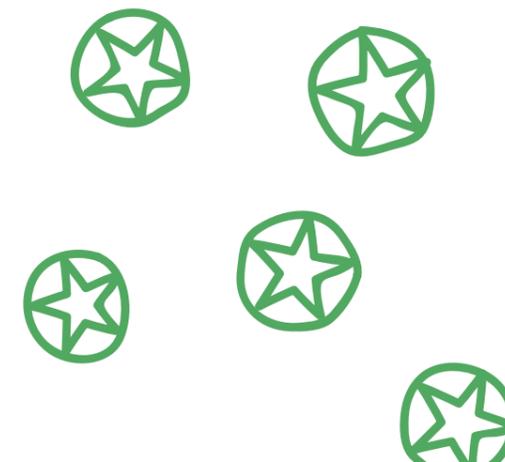
Our 2024–2027 RAP commitments and targets

Respect



At Goodstart, we deeply value and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights. This respect is not just important; it's fundamental to who we are and how we operate, ensuring cultural safety for all First Nations children, employees and families engaged in our early learning services. We understand our significant role and opportunity as Australia's largest not-for-profit early learning provider with tens of thousands of children attending our centres every day. We understand that by honouring and learning from First Nations cultures and histories, and acknowledging their contributions, we can enrich the experiences of our children, families, and communities.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	September 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Professional Learning
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development of a new cultural learning strategy.	April 2025, 2026, 2027	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for all Goodstarters.	July 2025, 2026	Head of Professional Learning
	Embed reconciliation as part of the organisation Performance Excellence Program (PEP).	December 2024, 2025, 2026	People Partner
	Develop a formal cultural learning plan to be completed by Goodstart's RAP Working Group, People team and Leadership team.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Professional Learning
	90% all new starters undertake online formal and structured cultural learning.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Professional Learning
	All centre environments to reflect respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories through children's access to resources and high-quality teaching and learning about diversity as documented in their Narragunnawali RAPs.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Lead Early Learning Projects
	Create a calendar of cultural learning activities covering topics such as history, traditions, and contemporary cultural issues that can be accessed quarterly both online and in person.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison National Lead Early Learning Projects



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Reinforce the significance of cultural protocols through a multi-channel communication plan to ensure staff’s understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Professional Learning
	Implement and communicate a cultural protocol document (tailored for all local communities we operate in), including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	September 2024, 2025, 2026	First Nations Leaders Group Chair
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at all national and state significant events each year, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goodies awards • NRW events • Teachers conference. 	May 2025, 2026, 2027	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison/s
	Continue to be culturally responsive in providing an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	First Nations Leaders Group Chair
	Staff and senior leaders to provide meaningful, place based Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at all public events.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	First Nations Leaders Group Chair
	Each Early Learning Centre and corporate office to maintain their current Acknowledgment of Country plaques, and extend this to provide Acknowledgment information on Centre website profile pages and the corporate website profile.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	State Managers / First Nations Leaders Group Chair
	9. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	RAP Committee Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2024, 2025, 2026
Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.		May 2025, 2026, 2027	People Partner
Support all staff to participate in 1 NAIDOC Week event in their local area.		July 2024, 2025, 2026	People Partner
In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, support State leadership team to attend at least 1 external NAIDOC Week event each year.		July 2024, 2025, 2026	Chair of State RAP Committee/s

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Expand and deepen celebrations around First Nations history and culture.	Create a series of practice resources which allows educators to explore with children during everyday learning experiences, culture, traditions, history and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives on a variety of topics – this could include for example moving practice from an Acknowledgement of Country, to walk on Country to caring for Country.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison National Lead Early Learning Projects
	Establish a calendar of First Nations cultural events to be celebrated both in Centres and with Centre Support teams, and expand and deepen cultural understanding of all Goodstarters. Eg – National Apology Day, National Close the Gap Day, Sorry Day, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Day.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison National Lead Early Learning Projects
	Engage Torres Strait Islander community leaders and Elders and through a series of events such as webinars, training sessions, resources and celebrations such as for Mabo day and Coming of the Light, deepen understanding specifically around Torres Strait Islander history and culture.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison National Lead Early Learning Projects
	Continue to work with the Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education team to support 100% of our early childhood services to develop and maintain a RAP on the Narragunnawali platform.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Encourage all services with a published Narragunnawali RAP to participate in monthly learning circles and other professional learning offerings.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Support all new employees to engage with professional learning as part of their onboarding process, including signing up to Narragunnawali news.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Work with the Narragunnawali team to identify how Goodsart services might engage with the broader community of practice and use this to foster an internal community of practice and place based reconciliation.	December 2025	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison

Our 2024–2027 RAP commitments and targets

Opportunities



We are committed to achieving meaningful reconciliation outcomes, which requires us to stretch by detailing our ambitions and setting targets. We will leverage our influence, voice, and partnerships to drive positive change. To create opportunities and strengthen our organisation, we will continue to improve the representation of our First Nations workforce, including in leadership positions. We are dedicated to supporting their growth and development, empowering them to make a difference. We remain committed to increasing our social impact, by engaging more First Nations businesses in our supply chain at a local and national level. Through our inaugural procurement strategy, we will increase our supplier diversity and engagement of First Nations organisations.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on the effectiveness of our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	Workforce Diversity Manager
	Review and update an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	November 2024, 2025, 2026	Workforce Diversity Manager
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	February 2025, 2026, 2027	First Nations Talent Acquisition Specialist
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	February 2025, 2026, 2027	First Nations Talent Acquisition Specialist
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to be supported to maximise career progression opportunities in leadership positions as aligned with career goals and skills sets.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	Workforce Diversity Manager
	Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment by recruiting into 300 Goodstarter positions.	May 2027	Workforce Diversity Manager
12. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Launch Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	July 2024	Head of Centre Services
	Review membership with Supply Nation.	September 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Centre Services
	Execute on Goodstart’s procurement strategy to maximise purchase of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	January 2025, 2026, 2027	Head of Centre Services
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Centre Services
	Increase spend with First Nations businesses year on year by 10%.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Centre Services
	Support a diverse range of First Nations suppliers (minimum 5) at a National and local level to deliver goods and services for Goodstart.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Centre Services
	Train all relevant staff in contracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses through Supply Nation or an equivalent organisation.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Centre Services

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
13. Increase leadership opportunities for First Nations Goodstarters.	Develop and implement a plan to increase First Nations representation across different employment levels and leadership roles including increasing First Nations representation by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 Centre leadership roles (eg - Centre Director, Assistant Director, Educational Leader, Teacher) 3 Centre support Leadership roles (eg - Goodstart Leadership team, Coaches, Performance Leads) Explore opportunities for a First Nations Executive position. 	December 2024, 2025, 2026	First Nations Talent Acquisition Specialist / Workforce Diversity Manager
	Utilising Goodstart's qualification upskill pathways program, develop a plan to include upskill opportunities for First Nations Goodstarters.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	First Nations Talent Acquisition Specialist / Workforce Diversity Manager
	Goodstart to work with local Elders and/or First Nations businesses to source at least one new educational product/resource each year that supports celebration and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements, and is shared with children to support ongoing learning.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Build on the current remote "First Nations Community immersion program", to add additional opportunities for both centre-based and centre support Goodstarters in new locations, including exploring opportunities for smaller local level immersion in addition to the national program.	December 2025, 2026	Workforce Diversity Manager
14. Drive policy and sector influence to progress reconciliation in early learning.	Demonstrate sector leadership through organisational campaigns and position statements advocating around contemporary issues impacting First Nations peoples.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships
	Influence government policy reform in the early years sector for First Nations children and families.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Social Policy Manager

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
15. Leverage partnerships to strengthen sustainability of reconciliation work.	Leverage existing and develop new partnerships to collaborate towards reconciliation outcomes.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships
	Working with the Narragunnawali team, share with other leaders in the early childhood education and care sector some of the ways you have supported services to engage with the Narragunnawali program and Narragunnawali RAP development and refresh process.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Support Reconciliation Australia by regular and attendance at events such as RAP Leaders Yarning Circles and collaborate with other Stretch RAP organisations to identify additional action to grow reconciliation across the sector and more broadly.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Key Goodstart staff (eg State Cultural Liaisons) to engage in a workshop with our Narragunnawali team to receive program updates and up-to-date advice re how best to message the Narragunnawali program/RAP development process and support services behind the scenes.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison
16. Continue to work in partnership with Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education team.	Key Goodstart Staff/leadership to engage in capacity building training with the Narragunnawali team to foster a deeper understanding of how managers and educational leaders engage with and utilise the Narragunnawali framework and resources.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison
	Meet regularly with the Narragunnawali team to discuss the implementation of unique Narragunnawali deliverables and identify any areas of support that might be appreciated.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison
	Work with the Narragunnawali team to identify any possible projects or opportunities to collaborate on future or current projects.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison



Our 2024–2027 RAP commitments and targets

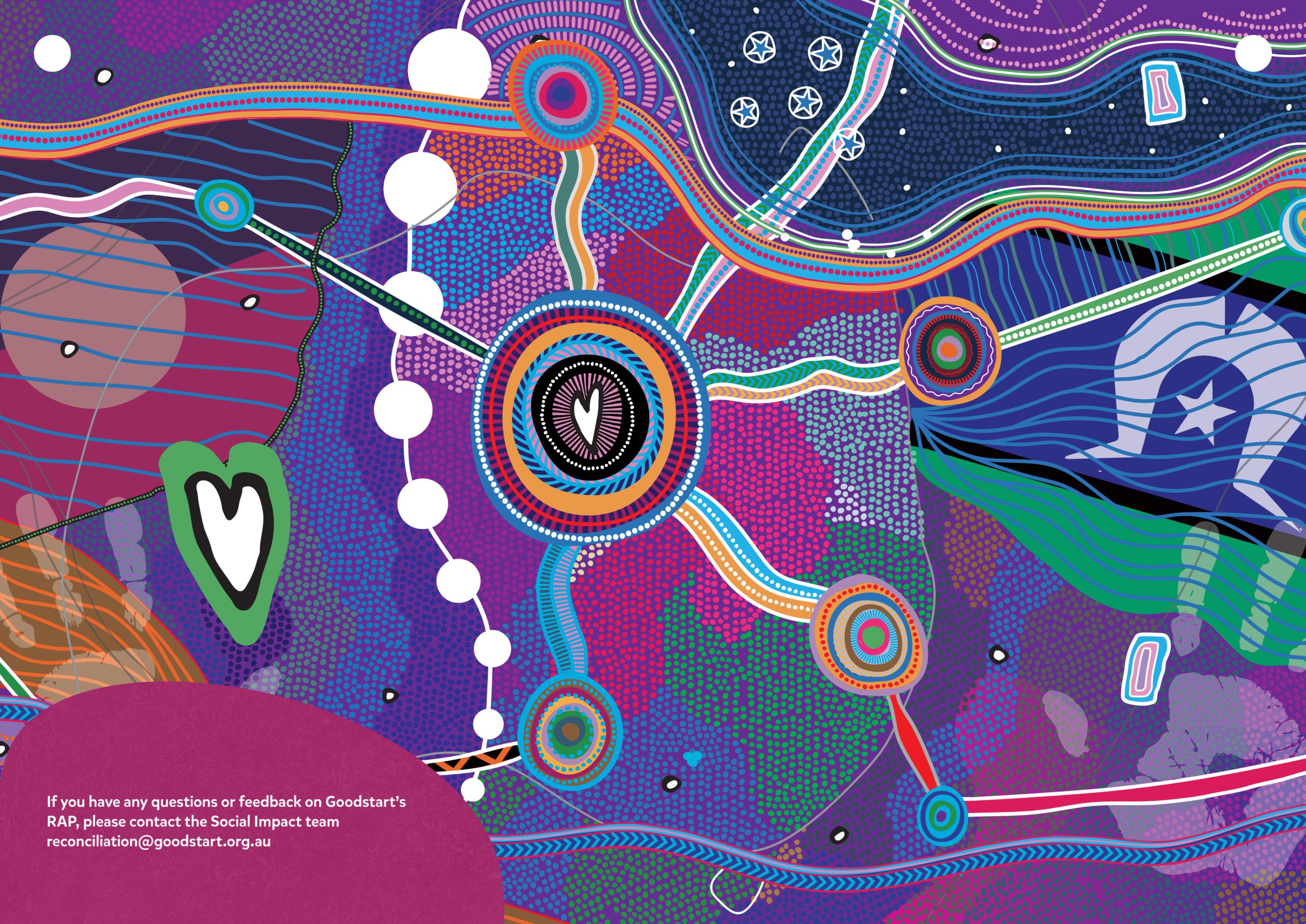
Governance



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
17. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Committee to drive governance of the RAP.	Establish and distribute meeting invitations for a six-weekly meeting rhythm for the RAP Committee annually, to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	January 2025, 2026, 2027	RAP Committee Chair/s
	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP committee annually, though annual review of committee membership.	January 2025, 2026, 2027	RAP Committee Chair/s
	Evaluate governance of the RAP Committee annually and update the Terms of Reference accordingly to continuously deliver strong governance for our RAP committee.	November 2024, 2025, 2026	RAP Committee Chair/s
18. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Embed resource needs for RAP implementation.	September 2024, 2025, 2026	RAP Committee Chair/s, Program Manager Social Impact
	Embed key RAP actions in performance expectations of senior management and all staff.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	People Partner
	Embed appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	Program Manager Social Impact
	Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	January 2025, 2026, 2027	Chief Executive Officer
	Include our RAP as a standing agenda item at senior management meetings.	January 2025, 2026, 2027	Chief Executive Officer
19. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June 2025, 2026, 2027	National Cultural Liaison
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August 2024, 2025, 2026	National Cultural Liaison
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2024, 2025, 2026	RAP Committee Chair/s

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
19. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally continued.	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	April / July / October / January 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships
	Publicly report against our RAP commitments annually, outlining achievements, challenges and learnings.	September 2024, 2025, 2026	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May, 2026	RAP Committee Chairs
	Goodstart senior leaders promote and engage in the delivery of RAP outcomes with our Board and Syndicate members.	December 2026	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Liaison/s
	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	May 2027	Program Manager Social Impact
	Launch new Stretch RAP	July 2024	Head of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Partnerships
20. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	May 2026	National Cultural Liaison
21. Ensure quality and responsive Governance to support Goodstart's reconciliation journey.	Conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of the Stretch RAP Governance framework with the RAP Committee members and make relevant changes prior to the commencement of the next RAP year.	December 2024, 2025, 2026	RAP Committee Chairs
	Share the RAP governance framework and outline responsibilities for the Senior leadership and Goodstart's whole leadership team to ensure clear understanding of deliverables and accountabilities.	July 2024, 2025, 2026	General Manager Social Impact





If you have any questions or feedback on Goodstart's RAP, please contact the Social Impact team reconciliation@goodstart.org.au

