



Reflection RAP December 2019 – June 2021

Our vision for reconciliation

Family Services Australia's vision for reconciliation is that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people of Australia can live safely and well with their family and community.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan, or RAP, is an agreed strategy that Family Services Australia (FSA) has respectfully committed to and will contribute to reducing the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

We aim to achieve a high level of cultural safety for our staff and throughout this process build a culturally diverse workforce, whilst raising the awareness of the unique heritage and history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

At FSA we acknowledge and celebrate the importance of Australia's rich cultural history and recognise the strengths and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

Our Community Services

Family Services Illawarra Limited, now trading as Family Services Australia (FSA) was established in 1992 and aims to keep families **Safe, Well, Strong and Connected** through direct community services to local children, young people, parents and families who are striving to achieve this but face multiple and sometimes insurmountable challenges.

In 2016 a revised multi-disciplined service commitment was launched to holistically support unmet client needs in various geographies in Southern and Northern NSW and in South East and South West QLD, expanding from (2) to (34) sites. Throughout the regions it operates in, FSA has been established to continue its community support journey through Merger and Acquisition (M&A), Community, Philanthropic, Government, Non-Government Organisation (NGO) and select Corporate sector partnerships.

Our FSA team continues to expand and we now have approximately eighty staff members whom of which fourteen percent identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Our Reconciliation Action Plan

This being our first RAP, we believe it will assist our organisation to focus on how we can contribute to ensuring that our values, actions and goals are achieved in not only a timely manner but are done so in a culturally appropriate way and in a way which is suited to each community and local circumstances.

With the aim of laying down a firm foundation for our staff to learn, explore and appreciate, we hope that this will greatly support us on our journey to becoming an organisation that is advancing in the way of Reconciliation, allowing us to immerse ourselves and our organisation in the culture and communities in a way which we have not done previously.

In November 2018, FSA employed their first Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer. This was a great milestone for the organisation with the purpose of ensuring continuous improvement of cultural competence, our commitment to knowledge (Knowing), Awareness (Understanding), Sensitivity (appreciating), Competence (Practicing and Demonstrating) and Proficiency (Embedding).

We currently work collaboratively with a number of Aboriginal Organisations in each service area, ensuring we have a sustainable relationship which allows us to support our clients to have the knowledge and ability to access any cultural services they require.

Our attendance at community events is currently growing, with our staff being encouraged to engage and interact at a community level. Our Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer attends the local interagency meetings with the purpose of engaging with other community workers, identifying gaps and concerns in the community and to plan future collaboration opportunities with other organisations.

Set on 3,000 sqm in December 2019, FSA is launching *Family Services House, Illawarra-Shoalhaven Community Service Hub*, which has been secured for our community over the next 30years. For FSA *Family Services House is to represent a welcoming and trusted place to go when people need a hand up in life*. FSA will operate all six of its community service streams from this location and through Central Triage informed by a Senior Aboriginal Leadership Group Member, all incoming referrals are assessed carefully for therapeutic risk and cultural needs, ensuring continuity of care and reduced referral pathways.

FSA has 325 annual outreach activities per annum and will respectfully connect to country and place at *Family Services House*, to acknowledge, represent, honour and celebrate our Aboriginal culture and heritage and the wellbeing of Aboriginal peoples. FSA are actively engaged with our local community to assist in the design and community messages we want to respectfully portray in this community meeting place. FSA is now firmly on a very exciting journey of evolving cultural competence.



Relationships			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<p>I. Establish, strengthen and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to support positive outcomes</p>	<p>a. Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our sphere of influence.</p> <p>b. Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</p> <p>c. Attend local Working Base Group meetings to develop and strengthen our relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations within the local service areas.</p> <p>d. Parenting groups & play groups advertised through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities.</p> <p>e. Develop a data base of organisations/people who can support us with our RAP implementation - e.g elders, performers, caterers. Engage through site cleansing and ceremony the opening of Family Services House, Illawarra-Shoalhaven Community Services Hub</p> <p>f. Encourage and support staff to participate in community events such as NAIDOC and Sorry Day.</p>	<p>a. January 2020</p> <p>b. February 2019</p> <p>c. December 2019 – June 2021</p> <p>d. December 2019 – June 2020</p> <p>e. March 2020</p> <p>f. December 2020 – June 2020</p>	<p>a. Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer</p> <p>b. Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer</p> <p>a. Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer</p> <p>b. Group work staff/ Family Workers & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer</p> <p>c. Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer, RAP Working Group</p> <p>d. CEO, Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer</p>



<p>II. Celebrate and Participate in National Reconciliation Week by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians.</p>	<p>a. Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and materials to our staff. b. Participate in an external NRW event. c. Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. d. Hold at least one internal event to encourage awareness and celebrate NRW for our staff.</p>	<p>27th May- 3rd June 2020</p>	<p>a. Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer b. RAP Working Group c. CEO, Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer & HR d. Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer & RAP Working Group</p>
<p>III. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence</p>	<p>a. Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff. b. Direct all new employees to our RAP as part of their induction. c. Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey. d. Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.</p>	<p>December 2019 – June 2020</p>	<p>a. CEO, Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer b. Senior Leadership c. Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement d. Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement</p>
<p>IV. Promote positive race relations through anti- discrimination strategies.</p>	<p>a. Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti- discrimination. b. Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti- discrimination provisions, and future needs.</p>	<p>a. February 2020 b. February 2020</p>	<p>a. Community Services Manager & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer b. Community Services Manager & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer</p>



Respect			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
I. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. b. Develop and implement a cultural awareness and safety training strategy for our staff; including information around working with Aboriginal children and families, understanding transgenerational trauma, social determinants of health etc. c. Investigate opportunities to work with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants to assist in the development/delivery in internal/external training and programs. d. Encourage all staff to visit the Reconciliation Australia website and complete the 'Share our Pride' cultural learning module. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. February 2020 b. March 2020 c. March 2020 d. February 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. CEO, Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer b. Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer c. Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer d. Senior Leadership
II. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area. b. Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. January 2020 b. March 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer b. Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer



<p>III. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</p>	<p>a. Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.</p> <p>b. Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.</p> <p>c. Participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.</p> <p>d. Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in a NAIDOC Week event during work hours.</p> <p>e. Encourage staff and senior management to acknowledge NAIDOC week and its importance by participating in external event.</p> <p>f. Support an external NAIDOC Week event – NAIDOC awards, NAIDOC ball, NAIDOC art exhibition etc.</p>	<p>a. July 2020 b. July 2020 c. July 2020 d. July 2020 e. July 2020 f. July 2020</p>	<p>a. Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer</p> <p>b. Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer</p> <p>c. RAP Working Group</p> <p>d. Senior Leadership</p> <p>e. CEO, Senior Leadership</p> <p>f. CEO, Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer</p>
<p>IV. Create a culturally safe and welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and community.</p>	<p>a. Conduct a review on each Family Services Australia’s main offices.</p> <p>b. Implement recommendations from the review</p>	<p>a. March 2020 b. August 2020</p>	<p>a. Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer</p> <p>b. Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer</p>



Opportunities			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
I. Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within Family Services Australia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop and implement an Indigenous Employment Strategy, a strategy/review process for retention which includes professional development b. Engage and consult with existing staff whom are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander on the Employment Strategy and any professional development ideas/plans c. Advertise any vacant positions in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media d. Review HR and recruitment policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Islander employees and future applicants. e. Review and possible inclusion of Cultural and ceremonial leave. f. Educate staff on the importance of community and family responsibilities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. January 2020 b. January 2020 c. June 2021 d. March 2020 e. April 2020 f. April 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. General Manager Community Services & HR b. General Manager Community Services, HR & Senior Leadership c. HR d. HR & Aboriginal Community Engagement e. HR & Aboriginal Community Engagement f. HR & Aboriginal Community Engagement
II. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a businesscase for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. b. Investigate Supply Nation Membership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. March 2020 b. February 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. CEO, Senior Leadership & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer b. CEO & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer



Governance			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
I. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Form an RWG to govern RAP implementation. b. Draft terms of reference for the RWG. c. Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. February 2020 b. March 2020 c. April 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer b. RAP Working Group c. RAP Working Group
II. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Define resource needs for RAP implementation. b. Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments. c. Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. March 2020 b. January 2020 c. April 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. RAP Working Group b. Senior Leadership & RAP Working Group c. RAP Working Group & Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer
III. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. RAP Working Group to report to CEO on a six-month basis, outlining achievements and challenges. b. Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. January 2020 & July 2020 b. September 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. CEO & RAP Working Group b. RAP Working Group and Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer
IV. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. June 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. CEO, Senior Leadership & RAP Working Group

Public Enquiries:

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