



The Foster Care Association of Victoria

**RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
INNOVATE JUNE 2020 - JUNE 2022**



ARTWORK BY PAUL MCCANN



**RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN**

INNOVATE



ARTIST: PAUL MCCANN

CLAN: MARRITHIYEL

TITLE: CONNECTIONS

“This piece represents pathways leading to community and people coming together and journeying to the meeting place. The U shape represents Mob painted up with Indigenous artefacts. Painted and dotted in acrylic paint”.

Paul is a Marrithiyel man and a traditional landowner of the South West region of the Daly River (Northern Territory). Paul is a talented emerging artist who joined the Victorian Justice Department as an Indigenous Prison Officer then moved into an Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer role to better assist the Aboriginal community. Paul provides art and cultural support to Indigenous inmates across Victoria.



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

“As the CEO of the Foster Care Association of Victoria (FCAV) I’m extremely proud to be launching our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan in June 2020. In fulfilling this plan we are committed to our vision for reconciliation, where our nation acknowledges historic truths and their current impacts and where First Nations' cultures are recognised, understood and celebrated by all.

The FCAV aim to build on the past two years of learning to increase our knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and understanding of the historic role foster care systems have played in the disconnection of children and young people from their families, communities and cultures.

- We will support national reconciliation, self-determination and child placement principles through community engagement;
- Continue to support carers and work collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations
- Support the transition of Aboriginal Children to Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations (ACCOs);
- Build our relationships based on respect and learning opportunities with ACCOs and the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community;
- Deliver targeted learning & development in line with the Carer KaFE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy;
- Increase engagement and awareness amongst our members to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are recognised, understood and celebrated;
- We will plan, implement and report on our commitments outlined in our Reconciliation Action Plan.

I look forward to working with our board, staff, Association members, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and organisations and the wider community to deliver this plan.

Regards,

Samantha Hauge
Chief Executive Officer
Foster Care Association of Victoria

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

The Foster Care Association of Victoria's (FCAV) vision for reconciliation is a nation that acknowledges historic truths and their current impacts and where First Nations' cultures are recognised, understood and celebrated by all, as part of our community and country's identity.

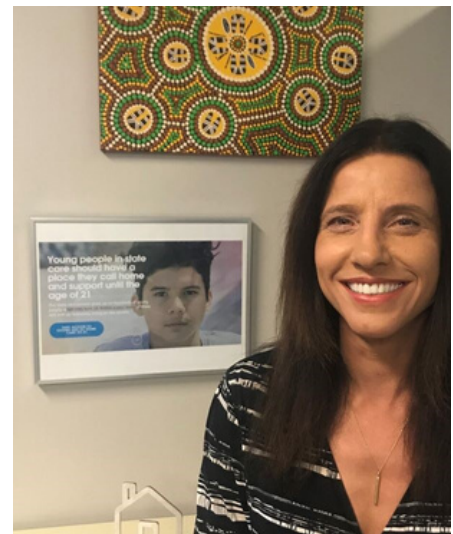
The FCAV advocates for a Child Protection system which ensures Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are safe and connected to their family, culture and community. We support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination in all areas of the care of children and young people.

ABOUT US

The Foster Care Association of Victoria (FCAV) is the peak body for Victorian foster carers. Established in 1992, the FCAV is a not-for-profit organisation working towards better outcomes for foster carers and the children in their care, representing over 4,000 foster carers Victoria-wide.

Foster care is the backbone of the Victorian response to protective intervention for children and young people at risk. Foster carers are volunteers providing a home, family life and care to children and young people who are unable to live with their birth family for a variety of reasons. All of these children have suffered traumatic events and the role of our foster carers is critical and complex so the FCAV mandate is to strengthen Victoria's investment in foster care and our volunteer carers.

Our work directly impacts the thousands of Victorian children and young people in foster care by providing both support for individual foster families and by advocating for vital improvements to our foster care system. The FCAV's work is guided by our values of empowerment, respect, innovation and accountability.



The FCAV's CEO, Sam Hauge stands in front of Paul McCann's artwork titled 'Connections'

WHAT WE DO

The services we provide to all foster carers across the state include:

- A Carer Information & Support Service, offering free, independent information, advice and support to foster carers, including support to carers relating to Section 18; Transitioning Aboriginal children to ACCOs;
- Advocacy to improve legislation, processes, funding and services for foster carers to government, foster care agencies and in the community, including advocating for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination in all areas of the care of children and young people;
- A statewide learning and development program, Carer KaFE which provides free learning opportunities for kinship and foster carers across Victoria. Carer KaFE provides dedicated cultural training and community building activities to promote awareness and capacity for foster and kinship carers to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to feel safe and connected to their family, culture and community
- Carer news and information through our website, social media and carer newsletter, supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait cultural awareness and engagement for all foster carers in Victoria, providing information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander significant dates and promotion of cultural events and activities to our members.

The FCAV currently employs:

- 17 staff (3 full time, 14 part time);
- no Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander staff;
- works state-wide across Victoria;
- has a single office location (Level 1, 398 Smith Street Collingwood Vic 3066) and remote workers (Carer KaFE Champions)

OUR CORE CLIENT GROUP

The FCAV's core client group include many child and family services Victoria-wide which work for and with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and families, including Anchor, Anglicare Victoria, Berry Street, Brophy Family and Youth Services, Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative, MacKillop Family Services, Mallee District Aboriginal Services, Oz Child, Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative, Upper Murray Family Care and VACCA.

OUR RAP

The FCAV celebrates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures and acknowledges the wrong doings of the past including the forcible removal of children and young people, some of whom told their stories in the national inquiry for the Bringing Them Home Report 1997.

As the peak body for foster carers in Victoria, our plan for reconciliation is to support all carers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and young people in obtaining the knowledge and resources they need to provide children in their care meaningful connections to family, community and culture. We facilitate this through continuing and growing partnerships with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Service Sector and advocating for Aboriginal children in Aboriginal care (ACAC), a new program for Aboriginal children and young people subject to a Children's Court protection order. We are developing a RAP to support growth towards excellence in cultural safety within our organisation and to promote the principles of reconciliation within our membership of foster carers across Victoria.

The RAP provides the platform for the FCAV to recognise, monitor and increase the integration of cultural awareness, safety and support into our relationships and membership support. This includes developing our relationships with ACCO colleagues and subscribers to support communities' focus on self-determination and healing. The FCAV is committed to Aboriginal Child Placement Principles and the Wunggurilwil Gaggapduir Aboriginal Children and Families Agreement.

Our Chief Executive Officer champions the commitment to our Reconciliation Action Plan across the organisation and our RAP working group includes:

- 2 FCAV Board Members (and foster carers)
- FCAV Chief Executive Officer
- FCAV Carer Information and Support Service (CISS) Manager
- FCAV Office Manager
- FCAV Media & Communications Coordinator
- Carer KaFE Program Manager
- Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) Leader, Learning & Development
- External Organisation RAP Working Group member

Two members of our RAP working group are Aboriginal people.

ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES & LEARNINGS

We completed our first (Innovate) RAP in May 2020. The focus of the first iteration of our RAP was on developing relationships and providing learning opportunities within our organisation and amongst our members. In particular we have had great success in the collaborative co-hosting of cultural events for foster carers, staff and children, with a focus on learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures.

Once we started our learning journey as an organisation we began to appreciate some of the complexities to be understood and integrated into our practise. A key challenge is in accessing rounded knowledge and information ourselves in order to support carers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children. We have been grateful for the input of ACCOs including VACCHO into the production of culturally appropriate policy and messages in relation to Section 18 and transition work. Resources are limited and we are mindful of any demands we place on community members and ACCO staff.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

The FCAV (funded by Carer KaFE), partnered with ACCOs to co-host several cultural events across the state, for kinship & foster carers, staff and children. These events have a focus on learning about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures and ensuring Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children in care can remain connected to their community, culture and family.

In October 2018 we travelled to Ballarat to co-host a Cultural Experience was at Lal Lal Falls, with Ballarat & District Aboriginal Co-operative (BADAC).

Uncle Peter Lovett provided an Acknowledgement of Country, spoke about the significance of Lal Lal falls and Bunjil the Creator, played didgeridoo and led a walk around Lal Lal Falls.

Carers enjoyed a BBQ lunch in a natural setting, basket weaving, art activities and prizes.



**VACCA staff teach
basket weaving at Lal Lal Falls.**

Testimonial:
***“Thanks for providing a very pleasant
opportunity for Koori kids to be together.”***

In November 2018 we facilitated the 'Connecting to Culture' webinar in partnership with VACCA. Aunty Eva Jo Edwards, a proud Boonwurrung, Mutti Mutti and Yorta Yorta woman and a survivor of the Stolen Generation, shared her story with us about the impact of being removed from her family when she was just 5 years old. Aunty Eva Jo's story demonstrates both the strength and power of culture and her determination to break the cycle of trauma and disconnection.

Emma Bamblett, a proud Wemba Wemba woman from Echuca, is an artist and the State wide Coordinator of Aboriginal Culture at VACCA. Emma showcased the Cultural information portal – Deadly Story and other resources to support the connection of children and young people to their culture.

Deb Collard, CISS Coordinator from FCAV asked how carers of Aboriginal children and young people can support their connection to culture, community and identity. Carers came away with the understanding that they need to keep trying, to build their knowledge of culture and encourage children in care to attend cultural events and visit significant places around Victoria which will help them find their mob. Emma explained that they can obtain help to do this via the Deadly Story Portal and by downloading the book "I love being a Koori Kid".

Testimonials:

"The webinar was amazing. The stories shared were inspirational and heart felt."

"Thanks for sharing your story, I feel encouraged and less scared."



Deb Collard, Aunty Eva Jo and Emma Bamblett co-host the 'Connecting to Culture' webinar.



In June 2019 we held a second webinar 'Cultural Support Plans', in partnership with Emma Bamblett from VACCA (funded by Carer KaFE). Carers learnt about what is involved in creating a Cultural Plan, who is involved, encouraging connection to community, culture and family and learning about how to access cultural events. Having access to this knowledge will make it a lot easier for carers to explore and help Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and young people in their care to stay connected to their culture.

Testimonial:

"The webinar was great. The presenter and facilitator were very knowledgeable, and talked about the reasons behind the template and the benefits of it for children and young people of all ages."

We co-hosted a Cultural Carer Lunch at Charcoal Lane on 1 March 2019 in partnership with VACCA. Charcoal Lane is a social enterprise restaurant that provides guidance and opportunity to young Aboriginal people who are in need of a fresh start in life.

Carers enjoyed a 2 course meal and heard from guest speakers Aunty Eva Jo Edwards and Emma Bamblett from VACCA as they spoke about the strength and power of culture and how carers of Aboriginal children and young people can support their connection to Country, culture, community and identity.

Carers were really engaged and asked many questions related to the children in their care. Carers came away having a greater understanding of the impact of the Stolen Generation and how their culture was almost decimated and the real importance of making sure Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and young people are exposed to cultural activities and encouraged to be proud of their culture. We have been very grateful for the engagement of ACCOs and their staff providing guidance and collaborating to host these cultural events, providing carers with opportunities to learn and make connections.



Carers share a meal with Aunty Eva Jo and Emma Bamblett at the Cultural carers lunch, Charcoal Lane.

FCAV INTERNAL RECONCILIATION INITIATIVES

- All staff, volunteers and board members are required to complete cultural awareness training and engage in continuous cultural learning opportunities.
- FCAV board and staff along with Brent Ryan from VACCA were honoured to Walk on Country with our Board Member and Wurundjeri man, Daryl Sloan in October 2018 and 2019. We explored Taungurong land near Euroa. The event was such a success we are collaborating on a project to offer this to carers and the children & young people in their care in the coming year.



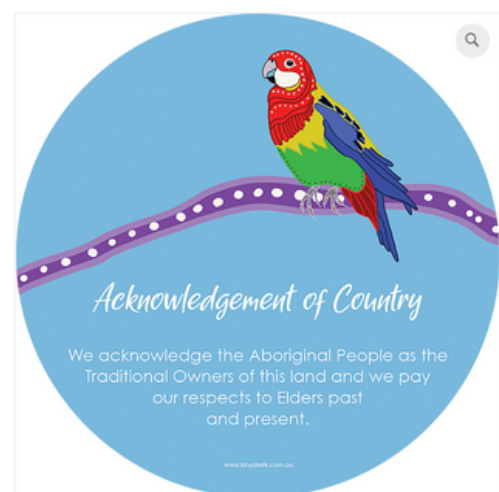
FCAV Board, Staff & RAP Working Group Members Walking on Country with Board Member and Wurundjeri man, Daryl Sloan.

Testimonials:

It was an honour and a privilege to walk on country with Daryl and immerse ourselves in a rich cultural experience. - Sam.

It was a fantastic day visiting and hearing about the beautiful Taungurong country. There is fantastic commitment from the FCAV on this exciting journey. Darryl confirmed the importance when walking on country, deep listening and being observant so you don't miss anything and can take in the whole journey. Darryl's knowledge and passion was evident and infectious. - Brent

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- We developed an Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019–21 that represents our commitment to strengthen employment opportunities and outcomes for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.
 - We nominated an Aboriginal employee in the sector for the Molly Dyer Awards in 2018. We attended the ceremony and our nominee won the award for their contribution to Aboriginal child and family welfare!
 - We held a NAIDOC Week competition in our newsletter in 2019 with copies of the book *Nganga: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Words and Phrases* to give away to carers.
 - We held a fundraising morning tea for the VACCA Christmas Gift appeal in December 2019, raising money to support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children in care.
 - We invited an Aboriginal Elder to meet with the team in regards to Transition of Aboriginal children to ACCOs. The presentation helped us to better understand how or why decisions are made, the cultural context in decision making and how we can best support carers through the process.
 - We purchased an original artwork from Paul McCann, a Marrithiyel artist in 2020. It was wonderful to have Paul come to our office for afternoon tea, to present his artwork title 'Connections' and explain the meaning to staff. The artwork is displayed in our foyer and used throughout the design of our RAP.
 - We purchased Acknowledgement of Country Plaques from Kinya Lerrk, a 100% Aboriginal owned and operated business that creates design and art which celebrate Aboriginal cultures and respectfully acknowledge Traditional Owners of land.



***Acknowledgement of Country
Plaque from Kinya Lerrk***

CARER KAFE (KINSHIP & FOSTER CARE EDUCATION)

The Carer KaFE (Kinship & Foster Care Education) Program is committed to their Aboriginal Strategy that reflects Aboriginal Child Placement Principles and Wungurilwil Gagapduir. This strategy was created by the Carer KaFE Governance Reference Group, which include members from VACCA and The Alliance.

- Carer KaFE is committed to funding learning opportunities for connection to culture and Country as well as therapeutic based training designed and delivered with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and Clinicians.
- Delivers dedicated training sessions under a model of capacity building with ACCO's allowing a higher percentage of Agency Staff to attend the learning sessions and working with a local Elder or Clinician from community and or the hosting ACCO.
- Works with VACCA and The Alliance to ensure best practice is implemented in all training sessions and activities.
- Had 6% attendance by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers and 35% attendance of carers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children in the past year.
- Funded 15 sessions of Nikara's Journey, VACCA's two day workshop that provides carers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children with introductory knowledge and understanding to assist them in supporting the best interest of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children in their care.
- Funded VACCA to host two Cultural Camps for carers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and young people providing the opportunity for the whole family unit to spend time with cultural support workers from VACCA and participate in cultural learning activities.
- Introduced several online learning units that were culturally reviewed by Aboriginal Governing Reference Group Members.
- Successfully went to tender for a tailored learning and development session for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers where an Independent Panel, comprising of identified DHHS workers and Elders, selected two training sessions that were delivered in 2019.

ROADMAP TO REFORM

The FCAV is engaged in partnerships arising from one of the pillars of the Victorian Government Roadmap to Reform initiatives (October 2016) which focuses on retaining connection to culture and community for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out of home care.

As the peak body for foster carers in Victoria, the FCAV has long advocated for policy changes to support foster carers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people to provide for their connection to culture, Country and identity.

The FCAV is a signatory to a sector endorsement of Section 18 and the reforms in child and family welfare based on Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care principles and Nugel. Nugel meaning “belong” in Wurundjeri is a new program allowing the transfer of power, decision making and case management for that young person and family from DHHS to VACCA.

After Nugul’s success there are now pilots starting out at Njernda (Echuca) and BADAC (Bendigo). This is achieving self-determination for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people as ACCO's are holding the care, supports and upholding the culture of our vulnerable children to ensure they are connected.

Keystone principles of Section 18 transfer include Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander operated organisations listen to families’ stories, bring family back together and ensure connection to culture is at the forefront.

The FCAV will ensure we promote updates from the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations whilst ensuring we support the transition in a safe and supportive way for our children and young people. The FCAV is a signatory to the call for the establishment of the role of National Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young people.

THE FCAV'S CARER INFORMATION & SUPPORT SERVICE (CISS)

The FCAV Carer Information & Support Service (CISS) supports all carers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and young people in obtaining the knowledge and resources they need to provide children in their care meaningful connections to family, community and culture. We facilitate this through continuing and growing partnerships with the Victorian ACCOs and advocating for Aboriginal children in Aboriginal care (ACAC).

We have been doing a number of things as a team to focus on the transition of Aboriginal children to Aboriginal Controlled Agencies. We have invited Aboriginal Elders to give guest presentations to our staff and board to hear about the significance of family and culture and hear stories on the impact of separation. This helps our Organisation have a greater understanding of the particular issues and dilemmas in the transition space.

Sue- Anne Hunter, and Aboriginal Elder presented to the board and staff to reiterate issues and complexities in the transition work. Case studies were discussed to provide practitioners a safe and open opportunity to ask difficult questions and understand case planning decisions for Aboriginal children in care.

We are working with VACCHO to develop a position statement in relation to key messages to foster families involved with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children in their care.

RELATIONSHIPS



FCAV VALUES STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH ABORIGINAL AND/OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER INDIVIDUALS AND ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED ORGANISATIONS.

These partnerships are key across many of our service delivery areas, instilling the knowledge of history, contemporary issues and culture into our programs of support, information, forums and advocacy. It is these relationships that build the Organisation knowledge and understanding we use to support carers across the state, to ensure Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and young people in their care are given every opportunity to maintain their connection to family, community and culture.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA

- *Engage with Community - Support national reconciliation, self-determination and child placement principles*
- *Continue to support carers - Develop and implement collaborative strategy with key ACCOs to support the transfer of the case management of Aboriginal children in care to ACCOs in line with the priorities set out in the Koorie Kids: Growing Strong in their Culture and the goals of the Aboriginal Children's Forum (ACF) & Aboriginal Child Placement Principles (ACPP)*
- *Deliver the state wide kinship and foster care learning and development strategy Carer KaFE - Deliver evidence based practice.*

ACTION

1. ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STAKEHOLDERS AND ORGANISATIONS.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	September 2020	CISS Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a communication specifically to ACCOs about what services we offer.	December 2020	CISS Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and update guiding principles for working with ACCOs, adhering to self-determination, cultural safety and supporting communities focus on social and emotional wellbeing.	March 2021	CISS Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop partnership agreements for partnering with two ACCOs per year (Agreement on event/ project, checklist, timelines, resources & communication).	June & December 2021, June 2022	CISS Manager, CISS Program Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meet with VACCHO/ Alliance twice per year to explore opportunities to support their advocacy	October 2020, April & October 2021, April 2022	Chief Executive Officer

ACTION

2. BUILD RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH CELEBRATING NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK (NRW).

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	27 May- 3 June, 2021, 2022	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May- 3 June, 2021, 2022	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage and support staff and board to participate in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May- 3 June, 2021, 2022	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organise at least one NRW event each year, engaging our members.	27 May- 3 June, 2021, 2022	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate opportunities to provide pro bono support for an external NRW event.	27 May- 3 June, 2021, 2022	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	27 May- 3 June, 2021, 2022	Office Manager

ACTION

3. PROMOTE RECONCILIATION THROUGH OUR SPHERE OF INFLUENCE.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply for membership to the Aboriginal Children's Forum to be the voice for carers of Aboriginal children and young people.	August 2020	Chief Executive Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publically.	June 2020, 2021, 2022	Communications Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	June 2020, 2021, 2022	Communications Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborate with RAP and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.	April, October 2021	Office Manager

ACTION

4. PROMOTE POSITIVE RACE RELATIONS THROUGH ANTI-DISCRIMINATION STRATEGIES.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and update our Anti-discrimination Policy in consultation with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander advisors.	May 2021	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a Communications Strategy for internal and external communications reflecting the healing language, strengths and resilience of community.	November 2020	Communications Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	June 2021	Communications Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Board Members to read and discuss the Uluru and the Apology Statements to provide direction on the FCAV developing an Organisation stance.	June 2021	Chief Executive Officer

ACTION

5. INCREASE ENGAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AMONGST OUR STAFF AROUND SECTION 18 & TRANSITION

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage with each ACCO to develop relationships and create a register of primary contacts to refer transition enquiries to.	June 2021	CISS Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Partner with ACCOs and/ or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors in the wider community to deliver two Professional Development sessions for staff per year, to guide our work and embed our learning into practice.	September, March 2020, 2021, 2022	CISS Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Attend quarterly meetings for the Transitioning Aboriginal children to ACCOs project reference group organised by DHHS to be the voice for carers of Aboriginal children and young people.	February, May, August, November 2020, 2021, 2022	CISS Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review what needs to be undertaken around Section 18 & transition in the next two years, clarify our purpose and objective post transition and update this action accordingly.	August, 2020	CISS Manager

RESPECT



ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES, CULTURES, HISTORIES AND RIGHTS ARE SIGNIFICANT TO FCAV'S CORE BUSINESS AS WE CONTINUE TO LEARN ABOUT THE HISTORIC ROLE OF FOSTER CARE SYSTEMS IN THE DISCONNECTION OF CHILDREN FROM THEIR FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES AND CULTURES.

We respect the 'Wungurilwil Gagapduir' Agreement, a partnership between Aboriginal communities, the Victorian Government and the child and family service sector working together for the benefit of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and families, based on the principle of Aboriginal self-determination.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA

- *Build an evidence base to support advocacy - Strengthen consumer research activity to inform policy and system based advocacy ·*
- *Strengthen advocacy and the voice of carers - Proactively advocate to address issues impacting Carers and the children and young people they care for and respond to practice, policy and system issues as they arise ·*
- *Help evolve the Foster Care System - Engage proactively with Agencies to advocate for policy and system change to improve carer recruitment, support, training and development and retention. Engage with Government and peak Carer groups to explore opportunities to collaborate and coordinate activity to best leverage available resources and services*
- *Deliver the state wide kinship and foster care learning and development strategy Carer KaFE*

ACTION

1. INCREASE UNDERSTANDING, VALUE AND RECOGNITION OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURES, HISTORIES, KNOWLEDGE AND RIGHTS THROUGH CULTURAL LEARNING.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and update our Cultural Learning Strategy in consultation with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors.	June, December 2021, 2022	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	June, December 2021, 2022	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure all RAP Working Group members, staff and board have cultural safety training.	June, December 2021, 2022	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, staff and board to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	June, December 2021, 2022	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Collect data from the Carer Information & Support Service (CISS) relating to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander carers, children and young people in care to inform our work and ensure culturally responsive practice.	June, December 2021, 2022	CISS Manager

ACTION

2. DEMONSTRATE RESPECT TO ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES BY OBSERVING CULTURAL PROTOCOLS.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and update a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	September 2020	Member Relations Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create Acknowledgement of Country prompt cards for the office and meeting rooms	September 2020	Member Relations Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Display Aboriginal Language Maps in the office showing local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters in our local area and sphere of influence	October 2020	Member Relations Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	October 2020	Member Relations Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year	September 2020, 2021	Office Manager, CISS Program Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	December 2020, June, December 2021, June 2022	Staff & Board members

ACTION

3. BUILD RESPECT FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURES AND HISTORIES BY CELEBRATING NAIDOC WEEK.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	First week in July, 2020, 2021	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to staff, board and RAP Working Group	First week in July, 2020, 2021	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">All staff granted one day's leave to participate in a NAIDOC Week activity, event or celebration.	First week in July, 2020, 2021	Chief Executive Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event	First week in July, 2020, 2021	Chief Executive Officer

ACTION

4. INCREASE ENGAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AMONGST OUR STAFF AND BOARD ABOUT THE HISTORIC ROLE OF FOSTER CARE SYSTEMS IN THE DISCONNECTION OF CHILDREN FROM THEIR FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES AND CULTURES.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circulate resources and screen relevant documentaries/films to educate staff and board about child removal policies for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children historically and today.	May, 2021, 2022	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partner with ACCOs to co-host two cultural events per year for kinship & foster carers, staff and children. These events will have a focus on learning about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures and ensuring Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children in care can remain connected to the their community, culture and family.	December 2020, 2021, 2022	CISS Program Coordinator

ACTION

5. INCREASE ENGAGEMENT AND AWARENESS AMONGST OUR MEMBERS TO ENSURE FIRST NATIONS' CULTURES ARE RECOGNISED, UNDERSTOOD AND CELEBRATED BY ALL, AS PART OF OUR COMMUNITY AND COUNTRY'S IDENTITY.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include a dedicated section in our bi-monthly Newsletter to promote Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander significant dates, promote resources, share positive stories and opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.	January, March, May, July, September, November 2020, 2021, 2022	Communications Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partner with RIAC (Rights Information and Advocacy Centre) to deliver 'Walking with' events, offering foster carers, children and young people in their care to Walk on Country with an Aboriginal Elder, to learn about Aboriginal histories & cultures and support services such as the NDIS in Victoria.	March, September, 2021, 2022	Chief Executive Officer

ACTION

6. DELIVER TARGETED LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT IN LINE WITH THE CARER KAFE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STRATEGY.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Require providers of all Carer KaFE sessions to have done cultural safety training..	June, December 2021, 2022	Carer KaFE Program Manager
Provide training that supports carers to maintain and strengthen children's connections to family, community and culture.	June, December 2021, 2022	Carer KaFE Program Manager
Fund the creation of Aboriginal specific modules to fill identified training gaps for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander carers. Content of units to be audited by community members	June, December 2021, 2022	Carer KaFE Program Manager
Maintain attendance of Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander carers at 6%	June, December 2021, 2022	Carer KaFE Program Manager
Increase attendance of carers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to 26%	June, December 2021, 2022	Carer KaFE Program Manager
Collect data from Carer KaFE relating to cultural learning participants for inclusion in the RAP Annual Report	June, December 2021, 2022	Carer KaFE Program Manager

OPPORTUNITIES



THE FCAV BELIEVES RECONCILIATION IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN WORK PRACTICES THAT REAP THE BENEFITS OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

FCAV sees the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, board members and foster carer members as an opportunity for sharing in knowledge and strength for our core activities, policies and partnerships.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA

- *Resource and deliver quality services and supports - Provide a great place to work that values and is valued by staff.*

ACTION

1. IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES BY INCREASING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	June, 2021, 2022	Office Manager, CK Program Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	June, 2021	Office Manager, CK Program Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and update an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy including recruitment, retention and professional development.	June, 2021	Office Manager, CK Program Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	June, 2021, 2022	Office Manager, CK Program Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	June, 2021	Office Manager, CK Program Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce.	June, 2022	Chief Executive Officer

ACTION

2. INCREASE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SUPPLIER DIVERSITY TO SUPPORT IMPROVED ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OUTCOMES.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and update an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	October 2020	Office Manager,
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	October 2020	Office Manager,
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	October 2020	Office Manager,
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	March 2021, 2022	Office Manager,
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Purchase one original artwork or digital image per year from an Aboriginal artist for use in our publications.	March 2021, 2022	Office Manager,

GOVERNANCE



GOVERNANCE, TRACKING PROGRESS AND REPORTING

ACTION

1. ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN AN EFFECTIVE RAP WORKING GROUP (RWG) TO DRIVE GOVERNANCE OF THE RAP.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
• Engage an additional Board member to join the RAP working group	July 2020	Chief Executive Officer
• Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	July 2020, 2021, 2022	Chief Executive Officer
• Review and update a Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group (RWG).	July 2020	Chief Executive Officer
• Meet four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	February, May, August, November, 2020, 2021, 2022	Chief Executive Officer

ACTION

2. PROVIDE APPROPRIATE SUPPORT FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF RAP COMMITMENTS.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define resource needs for RAP implementation	June 2020	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage our Staff and Board in the delivery of RAP commitments.	July 2020	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	July 2020	Chief Executive Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	July 2020	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include RAP in our budget to procure goods and services from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander suppliers, successfully complete the activities within our RAP and maintain a culturally safe workplace.	July, 2020, 2021, 2022	Chief Executive Officer

ACTION

3. BUILD ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY THROUGH REPORTING RAP ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND LEARNINGS BOTH INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September, 2020, 2021, 2022	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Report our RAP progress to staff and board quarterly.	Quarterly 2020, 2021, 2022	Office Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, twice yearly (paragraph summary for National Reconciliation week newsletter and in depth report for Annual Report).	May, July 2020, 2021, 2022	CISS Manager

ACTION

4. CONTINUE OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY BY DEVELOPING OUR NEXT RAP.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	January 2022	Office Manager



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We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.