



CatholicCare
Social Services

Innovate

Reconciliation Action Plan
December 2022 – December 2024





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Acknowledgement to Country

Today, we acknowledge all First Nations People of this land and celebrate their enduring connections to country. Let us sense the land beneath our feet, acknowledge to whom it belongs, and pay our respects to the Elders, past, present, and emerging. For we too are one in land, one in spirit, one in faith united in God's love.

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Our vision for reconciliation

CatholicCare Social Services' (CatholicCare) vision for reconciliation is that First Nations Peoples in our communities across the Darling Downs and South West Queensland are treated equally and with respect and dignity. As part of our Reconciliation Action Plan, we will provide culturally appropriate services to First Nations Peoples and communities that meet real needs in creative and inclusive ways across our service areas. We will strive to improve community awareness of CatholicCare and the services we provide, with particular focus on our First Nations Peoples services and their concerns and issues.



Alexander Woodbridge, Jordyn Kerr, Isaac Kidd, Cooper Murray, Kaden Murray, Jett Silcox-Doyle, Alfred Orcher



Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends CatholicCare Social Services on the formal endorsement of its inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Commencing an Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build strong foundations and relationships, ensuring sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for CatholicCare Social Services to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff, and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, CatholicCare Social Services will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program's framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities emphasises not only the importance of fostering

consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process, as well.

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. CatholicCare Social Services is part of a strong network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals CatholicCare Social Services's readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations CatholicCare Social Services on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



Kate Venables
Executive Director/RAP Champion



Damien Bell
CatholicCare Council Chair

Message from the Executive Director and Chair

We are implementing our Reconciliation Action Plan as part of the national reconciliation movement, to build even stronger relationships and connections with First Nations Peoples both within our organisation and the communities we serve.

In implementing our RAP, we will be purposeful in:

- » Fostering and embedding knowledge about, respect for and celebration of the world's longest surviving cultures and communities through educational activities and recognition days
- » Listening and responding to First Nations staff for all our plans and strategic activities
- » Providing professional development and career progression for First Nations team members and volunteers
- » Delivering excellent service support to First Nations individuals, families and communities that reflects our deepening understanding of cultures, that avoids and rejects unconscious bias and racism



Our Business

At CatholicCare we know that everyone needs a little help sometimes. Our Mission is to empower individuals, families and communities to meet the challenges of life and relationships throughout our region from Taroom to Goondiwindi and from Toowoomba to the border.

Our work is focused on four key groups within our communities:

- » Families
- » First Nation Peoples
- » Refugees and Migrants
- » and Business Communities

Stakeholder engagement:

- » Our staff, including the Executive Leadership Team (ELT)
- » Elders and respected people
- » the Catholic Church leadership, parishes, schools and agencies
- » Business and service partners
- » Pro-Bono partners
- » Program volunteers
- » Communities across Darling Downs and South West Queensland
- » Local, State and Federal members
- » Media
- » Suppliers
- » Research partners

We are an inclusive agency and are committed to helping people in need regardless of race and religious beliefs.

- » We employ 74 staff
- » We have 3 First Nations employees
- » We have 15 former refugee and migrant employees
- » We cover 456,000 km² from Toowoomba and throughout Southwest Queensland
- » We have 84 volunteers

Our core values are **Justice, Respect, Integrity, Hope** and **Compassion**. We are dedicated to respecting the dignity, diversity, culture, and beliefs of all people.

At CatholicCare we focus on client needs, offering families, children and individuals' opportunities for growth, healing, and hope.

Our current services include:

- » Family and relationship counselling
- » Family and property mediation (through the Family Relationship Centre) including child inclusive and legally assisted family mediation
- » Murri Court
- » Deadly Sistas - First Nations Women's Group
- » Deadly Bruthas
- » Youth Justice Support programs, including Bail Support, CHOICE and CHANGE
- » Whaddup - First Nations Youth Group
- » TRAMS – Toowoomba Refugee and Migrant Support program including settlement support services, SQW and DQW trainee programs
- » And the Business Resilience Centre that provides Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counselling, seminars, and Critical Incident responses, wellbeing support and interpreting services



Charlie Rowe, Aunty Noeleen Dempsey,
Stacey McCarthy, Alfred Orcher, Deena Dood

Our Innovate RAP

Moving into the future with an Innovate RAP, CatholicCare will: identify, build, and grow collaborative relationships throughout the Darling Downs and South-West Queensland; respect, promote and support First Nations cultures; and seek opportunities to deliver actions specific to our business and our sphere of influence.

The Innovate RAP will allow CatholicCare to focus on building strong relationships both internally and externally, raise awareness with our stakeholders to ensure there is a shared understanding and ownership of our RAP within our organisation. Our RAP involves consultation with staff in our organisation including First Nations Peoples, Elders, and stakeholders to achieve the vision of the RAP.

CatholicCare: Diocese of Toowoomba's Innovate RAP focuses on:

- » Engaging the services of local First Nations Peoples training organisations to provide our staff with continued Cultural Awareness Training.
- » Committing to the procurement of services from First Nation Peoples organisations where possible to continue our goal of growing staff knowledge about First Nations cultures.
- » Striving to continually make our services culturally appropriate through community consultations and client feedback.
- » Building CatholicCare's community relationships by participating in First Nations Peoples events, and enables us to respond to a wide variety of enquiries and assist the community with support and guidance as needed.

It is an enormous privilege to lead CatholicCare and be part of this important reconciliation journey – guided and led by our RAP Working group, which consists of the following members

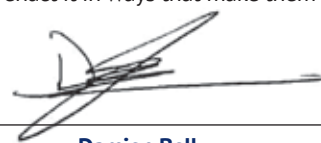
Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group

NAME	POSITION	ORGANISATION	LOCATION
Aunty Glenda Humes	Respected Murri Court Community Elder	CatholicCare Social Services	Toowoomba
Stuart Hall	People and Culture Team Leader	CatholicCare Social Services	Toowoomba
Stacey McCarthy	CJG/Yumbin Coordinator	CatholicCare Social Services	Toowoomba
Gavin Turnbull	Youth Support Worker	CatholicCare Social Services	Toowoomba
Tia Hinch	Community Services Trainee	CatholicCare Social Services	Toowoomba
Robyn Silcox	FRC Family Advisor	CatholicCare Social Services	Toowoomba
Kate Venables	Executive Director/RAP Champion	CatholicCare Social Services	Toowoomba

Four of our six RAP Working Group identify as First Nations People. Our RAP Champion will be Kate Venables Executive Director of CatholicCare Social Services. We particularly want to acknowledge the wisdom, experience and generosity of our First Nations staff and the wonderful Elders who have developed the plan - and hope and pray that we will be able to enact it in ways that make them proud!



Kate Venables
Executive Director/RAP Champion



Damien Bell
CatholicCare Council Chair

**YUMBIN Wakka Wakka language
meaning "All of US"**

Some Events CatholicCare participates in, include:

NAIDOC Week

These are the activities that CatholicCare Staff will actively participate in each NAIDOC Week:

- » Community Day
- » Queensland Police Service and Court House Flag raising
- » Local First Nations history of traditional gardens
- » History of Meerwah with local Elder and young people
- » Local NAIDOC events
- » Sponsorship of Toowoomba Mountaineers Queensland State League Indigenous Round
- » Inhouse cultural craft activity/ies
- » Harristown State High School celebrations

National Reconciliation Week

Relationships

CatholicCare Social Services (CatholicCare) commits to build on developing and maintaining positive relationships both external and internally for all staff. The strength of this relationship is important as we continue to build towards the wholeness and healing of our communities leading to more equitable outcomes for First Nations Peoples



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 develop guiding principles for future engagement.	December 2022	Yumbin Coordinator
	» Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	December 2022	Yumbin Coordinator
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	» Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2023, 2024	Marketing and Events Coordinator
	» RAP current Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event	May June 2023, 2024	Yumbin Coordinator
	» Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May June 2023, 2024	Executive Director/RAP Champion
	» Organise at least one NRW event each year	May, June 2023, 2024	FRC Family Adviser in consultation with Executive Leadership Team
	» Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website	May 2023, 2024	Yumbin Coordinator



Mayalii Gordon-Martin, Paige Weribone

3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence

» Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	December, 2023,2024	Marketing and Events Coordinator
» Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly	December 2022,2023	Marketing and Events Coordinator
» Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	March 2023	Marketing and Events Coordinator
» Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation	February 2023	Executive Director/RAP Champion
» Promote our RAP to CatholicCare stakeholders and community groups	February 2023	RAP Champion
» Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags are displayed in the reception area	December 2022	Yumbin Coordinator

4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies

» Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	June 2023	Executive Leadership Team
» Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	March 2023	Executive Leadership Team
» Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	March 2023	Executive Leadership Team
» Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	June 2023	Yumbin Coordinator

Respect

CatholicCare Social Services is committing to raising awareness and profile of First Nations Peoples stories, cultures, and connection to land within our workplace, and the broader community. Understanding the traditional stories of past builds cohesive and purpose and direction for future generations.



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5. 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	December 2022, 2023	Deputy Director Delegate
	» Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy	April 2023	Yumbin Coordinator
	» Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.	November 2023	Executive Leadership Team
	» Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	December 2022, 2023	Youth Support Worker
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	» Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	May 2023	Youth Support Worker
	» Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	June 2023	Executive Leadership Team
	» Continue to invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at Staff Forum and other significant events each year.	Review July 2023, 2024	Executive Director/ RAP Champion
	» Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of meetings.	Review July 2023, 2024	Executive Director/ RAP Champion



Aunty Glenda Humes, Summer Humes

7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week and other days of significance.

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|--|--------------------|---|
| » RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event | July 2023, 2024 | Whaddup Coordinator/
Cultural Family Advisor |
| » Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week. | June 2023 | Counselling Team Leader |
| » Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff. | July 2023, 2024 | Whaddup Coordinator/
Cultural Family Advisor |
| » Prepare and promote a calendar of significant dates to First Nations Peoples and communities and encourage staff/members to attend or host local celebrations. | January 2023, 2024 | Yumbin Coordinator |

8. Build and provide culturally appropriate and respectful services to First Nations People

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|---|------------------------------|--|
| » Introduce protocols that ensure First Nations staff voices are included in all our plans and strategic activities that directly affect First Nations peoples and communities | August 2023 | FRC Adviser in consultation with Executive Leadership Team |
| » Ensure feedback mechanisms are promoted and available to all First Nations stakeholder and clients so that we can continuously assess and improve our services | Review
January 2023, 2024 | Marketing and Events Coordinator |
| » Consult with First Nations Elders and key community members about how our organisation might strengthen our services better to respond to the unique needs of First Nations peoples and community members | Review
August 2023, 2024 | Yumbin Coordinator |
| » Conduct an internal review of all our programs to assess culturally appropriateness. | May 2023 | RAP Champion |

Opportunities



It is important that we take the opportunities presented to us as a service committed to strengthen families, to reach out in partnership with the First Nations Peoples of our region combining the strength of traditional knowledge and practice adding value to how we strengthen families. This extends opportunities for employment within the community, and professional development within in the organisation culminating in a richer fuller service to the families of our region.

Focus area: We want to enhance our focus and be recognised for collaborative, innovative, high performing and sustainable social services partnerships that add value to our service deliveries

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing First Nations Peoples recruitment, retention, and professional development.	» Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing and volunteers to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	May 2023	Deputy Director Delegate
	» Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and volunteers to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy as needed for relevant positions.	June 2023	Executive Director/RAP Champion
	» Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy for staff and volunteers.	October 2023	Executive Director/ RAP Champion
	» Advertise job/volunteer vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders	November 2023	Executive Director/ RAP Champion





Bailee Webster, Robyn Silcox

Tasharni Thurston-Dickman

9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

» Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	February 2023	Deputy Director
» Investigate Supply Nation membership	June 2023	Executive Director
» Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff	July 2023	Executive Director/ Executive Leadership Team
» Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	July 2023	Executive Director/ CatholicCare Executive Leadership Team
» Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	July 2023	Executive and Deputy Director



Peta Etchell, Ornikka Waters, Shakya Weribone, Claire Salmon

Governance

Through our governance structures at CatholicCare, we intend to be accountable for the RAP, by closely monitoring and tracking our progress over the coming years to ensure that the outcomes from the RAP are in line with our commitments to the First Nations Peoples within the community we serve



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group to drive governance of the RAP.	» Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	December 2022	Yumbin Coordinator
	» Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	December 2022	Yumbin Coordinator
	» Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	April, July, October, December 2023, 2024	Yumbin Coordinator
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	» Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	February 2023	Executive Director/ RAP Champion
	» Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	February 2023	Executive Director/ RAP Champion
	» Define resource needs for RAP implementation	May 2023	Executive Director/ RAP Champion
	» Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	June 2023	Executive Leadership Team

12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting challenges, learnings 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 annually	Deputy Director
Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August annually	Yumbin Coordinator
Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September annually	Yumbin Coordinator
Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly	April, July, October, December 2023, 2024	Yumbin Coordinator
Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	October 2023, 2024	Executive Leadership Team and Marketing Officer
Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	March 2024	Yumbin Coordinator
Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	June 2024	Yumbin Coordinator
Provide a quarterly update on our RAP implementation to the Council Members	Feb, May, August, November 2023, 2024	RAP Champion/RAP Working Group

13. Continue our reconciliation by developing our next RAP plan

Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	June 2024	RAP Champion /RAP Working Group
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Contact

(for public enquiries about our RAP)

Name: Kate Venables
Position: Executive Director
Phone: 1300 477 433
Email: kvenables@catholiccare.services

We're with you

Our Offices

Toowoomba (Head Office)

502 Ruthven Street,
Toowoomba Q 4350

Office Hours:

8:30am - 5:00pm, Monday to Friday
Outside of hours by appointment only

Call 1300 348 248 to reach our
Family Relationship Centre directly

Dalby

Myall Youth and Community Centre
28A Nicholson Street, Dalby Q 4405

Roma

96 Arthur Street,
Roma Q 4455

St George

119 Victoria Street,
St George Q 4487



Artist - Susie Klein

I am a Jaularoi [pronounced 'joo-la-roy'] woman born on Mandandanji [pronounced 'man-dan-dan-gee'] traditional lands to which I whole-heartedly pay my respects. The Town of Roma is found on this land in South-West Queensland, Australia.



CatholicCare
Social Services

We're with you.

Catholic Diocese Of Toowoomba, CatholicCare Social Services

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☎ 1300 477 433

🌐 www.catholiccare.services