



**FamiliesAustralia**  
**Innovate**  
**Reconciliation**  
**Action Plan**  
January 2024 – December 2025



## Artwork story

This artwork depicts the connection between Indigenous families and peoples coming from and living in different regions. It shows communicating and building better ways of working with respect and representation beside Families Australia.

Cover image supplied by Jade Photography by Aleesha.

### Designer

Designed by Mandy Braddick, Wajamin Creative. Mandy is a South Coast NSW, Wandandian tribe and Gumea language group woman. Mandy is a Graphic Designer and communication specialist with over 12 years experience working on design, communication, digital and social media projects.

### Imagery

Imagery supplied by Jade Photography by Aleesha. In March 2023, Aleesha a Gumbaynggirr woman now living and working on Gamilaroi Country (Moree) started her business, and since then has worked with 35 families and been a photographer for multiple events in Western NSW, particularly Moree. Apart from her kids, starting her own business has been the best decision she has made. Aleesha's passion for photography drives her to do the best work for her clients.

Imagery supplied by Nikeasha Chapman. Nickeisha is a proud Gumea, Yuin, Dharawal woman from the South Coast NSW, now living in Meeanjin (Brisbane). Nickeisha's passion for photography roots from her love for culture, of art, creativity and story telling.

## Contents

Our vision for Reconciliation **6**

Our business **8**

Our RAP **10**

Relationships **12**

Respect **19**

Opportunities **21**

Governance **24**



Families Australia celebrates more than 65,000 years of custodianship and connection to lands and waters of First Nations peoples. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and extend our deepest respects to Elders and Ancestors of all First Nations peoples.

For millennia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have been nurturing children and young people through lore, kinship systems and the powerful cultural role of Elders. We honour this ongoing legacy.

Families Australia's reconciliation journey began prior to the establishment of the organisation 22 years ago. Our founding members who worked to establish the organisation in 2001 included SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children. The permanent representation of First Nations people on our board of governance and working committees since inception, are integral to our identity as a national peak body.

The efforts, learning and achievements of our reconciliation journey to date are acknowledged – there is much to celebrate. However, we are far from a fully reconciled nation, and Families Australia appreciates we still have a long way to travel.

The greatest responsibility to further reconciliation lies with non-Indigenous Australians and the broader community. Guided by First Nations leaders and communities, we embark on the next phase of our reconciliation journey with energy and optimism.

I am delighted to have been involved in the development of Families Australia's first Innovate RAP. The commitments within our RAP - goals we have set ourselves and our members, and change that we seek to influence are - ambitious. As they should be.

Implementation of our RAP will continue our efforts in building a community that enables the aspirations of First Nations peoples, families and communities to be realised. A community that celebrates the richness and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and histories.

We believe that the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, children, young people, and communities is fundamental to the wellbeing and prosperity of this country. Join us on the next phase of our reconciliation journey.

**Deb Tsorbaris, Chair, Families Australia**



## Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends Families Australia 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 Families Australia 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, Families Australia 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. Families Australia 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 Families Australia'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 Families Australia on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

**Karen Mundine, Chief Executive Officer, Reconciliation Australia**



# Acknowledgement

**Our vision for reconciliation is an Australia that forges unity between First Nations peoples and other Australians, celebrates the richness and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and histories, and enables the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities.**

Families Australia celebrates more than 65,000 years of custodianship and connection to lands and sea country of First Nations peoples. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and pay our respects to Elders and Ancestors.

For millennia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have been nurturing children and young people through lore, kinship systems and the powerful cultural role of Elders. The wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families is fundamental to the wellbeing of this country.

Families Australia's purpose is to improve the wellbeing of all families. To achieve this, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities must be at the forefront of policy and community conversations on strengthening all families. We work closely with these organisations and communities in true partnership to realise this vision.

Image supplied by Nikeasha Chapman





## Our business

Families Australia is a not-for-profit peak body that strives to improve the wellbeing of Australian families, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised. We do this by providing policy advice to the Australian Government and Parliament on behalf of more than 800 member organisations around Australia.


Our work is organised around our belief that Australia will be a fairer and more equitable and compassionate nation when:

- we better protect and value children;
- all families, irrespective of their form, are strengthened; and
- there are genuine and lasting improvements in the wellbeing of First Nations peoples.

As an independent, member-based, organisation, we strive for greater recognition of, and support for, the social, economic, cultural, spiritual, and developmental needs of families, young people and children in Australian communities. It is our belief that safe, loving and supportive families – in whatever form they take - are the most important building block of communities, societies and nations.

In collaboration with other non-government organisations, peak bodies, researchers and community organisations, we lead national advocacy and policy campaigns that celebrate the importance of families and seek changes to public policy administration that improve the wellbeing of children and families. As the principal engagement and representative body of the non-government and research sectors, we have a central role in the development and implementation of Safe and Supported: The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031.





National Families Week (held in May each year) is a major national event that we lead at community level. The aim of National Families Week is to celebrate the vital role that families play in Australian society; it is a time to celebrate the meaning of family and to make the most of family life. In May 2022, some 60,000 people participated in over 380 locally organised events across the country as part of the celebrations.

Reporting to a member representative governing board of twelve (12), our team and office is located on Ngunnawal/Ngambri Country in Canberra. Our member organisations are based in city, regional and remote areas across all states and territories. No current staff members (four individuals) identify as being of First Nations people.

Image supplied by Nikeasha Chapman





## Our RAP


We have been on our reconciliation journey since our inception, increasing efforts over the years. We are proud of the progress we have made. However, this journey is in its early stages, and we have a long way to go. Since inception, Families Australia has had a permanent position on our board of governance for a person of First Nations origin. We have progressed our reconciliation efforts through a dedicated Reconciliation Working Group and reported on activities associated with our reconciliation journey through our annual reports for many years.

We recognise that we have a long way to go on our reconciliation journey. Development of an endorsed RAP will not only support our own individual journey as an organisation, it will also further national efforts through promoting and encouraging RAPs to be adopted by our member organisations, promoting reconciliation across the country.

Board, members and staff are committed to our reconciliation journey through:

- deepening our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories;
- building on existing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, organisations and stakeholders;
- expanding our partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members and stakeholders in all activities of the organisation;
- advocating for the direct involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in formal decision making processes that impact upon their communities and families;
- contributing to the development and growth of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled sector; and
- encouraging and supporting our member organisations on their reconciliation journey.

Image supplied by Nikeasha Chapman



We cannot fully achieve our purpose – to improve the wellbeing of all families – unless we strengthen our reconciliation efforts and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities.

Our Chair and CEO are honoured to take on the responsibility of being Families Australia's RAP champions; to progress our RAP commitments and incorporate these into the suite of performance indicators for individuals in their respective roles.

This RAP has been developed through the Families Australia Reconciliation Working Group (RWG). The RWG is a standing sub-committee of the Board that reports to the board at each meeting four times per year. The five person RWG (two of whom identify as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people) comprises:

- The Families Australia Board Chair
- Three Families Australia board members
- and the Families Australia CEO.



Image supplied by Jade Photography by Aleesha





Image supplied by Jade Photography by Aleesha



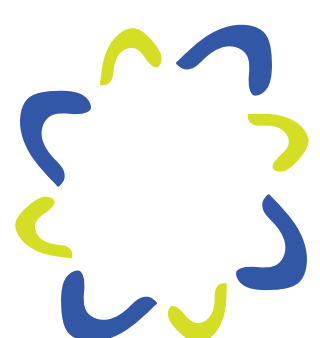
## Relationships

Families Australia is committed to strengthening our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These relationships are intrinsically valuable to our organisational culture and traditions. Most importantly, the experiences, aspirations and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must be reflected in the policy positions and advocacy work that we undertake.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</b>	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	February 2024	CEO
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	May 2024	CEO
	Establish new relationships with two (2) national/major Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations that Families Australia has not previously worked with.	June 2024	CEO
	Attend at least two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led conferences national meetings per year (once announced).	June 2024 & June 2025	CEO

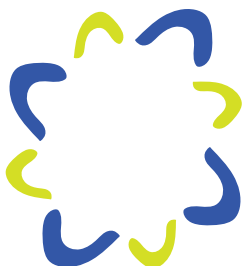
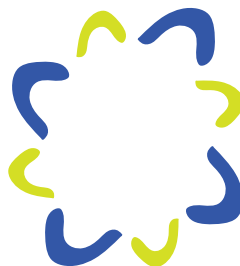


Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</b>	Organise for bilateral working arrangements between the National Coalition on Child Safety and Wellbeing Steering Group and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership group to be established.	June 2024	CEO
	Families Australia staff are actively encouraged to participate in at least two local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander-led community events on Ngunnawal-Ngambri Country each year (work related activity).	June 2024 & June 2025	CEO
	Representatives from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations will be invited to speak at Families Australia staff meetings two times per year to build knowledge of policy issues and cultural awareness.	May and November 2024 & May and November 2025	CEO





Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).</b>	Organise at least one NRW event each year.	27 May – 3 June 2024 & 2025	CEO
	Support staff to attend at least two NRW external events of other organisations as part of NRW celebrations.	27 May – 3 June 2024 & 2025	CEO
	RAP Working Group and Families Australia Board members to attend at least one external NRW event in their community.	27 May – 3 June 2024 & 2025	Board Chair
	Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s NRW resources and reconciliation materials to Families Australia members in the lead up to NRW.	May 2024 & May 2025	Office Manager
	Register all Families Australia NRW events on Reconciliation Australia’s NRW website and actively encourage Families Australia members to do this also.	May 2024 & May 2025	Office Manager







Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</b>	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	June 2024	CEO
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly: - RAP webpage to be created on Families Australia website	January 2024	CEO
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	November 2024 & November 2025	Board Chair
	Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	August 2024 & August 2025	CEO
	Consult with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations on major policy and advocacy positions adopted or made by Families Australia	June 2024 & June 2025	Policy Officer
	Host a policy or practice forum on a First Nations policy challenge or opportunity once a year.	May 2024 & May 2025	Policy Officer
	Incorporate a distinct First Nations focus into future National Families Week program design, content, activities and events (designed in consultation with First Nations organisations and communities)	May 2024 & May 2025	CEO



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</b>	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	October 2024	CEO
	Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	June 2024	CEO
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	April 2024	CEO
	Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	September 2024	CEO
	Two staff development and awareness sessions to be held each year on topics such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unconscious bias</li> <li>- Combatting racism</li> <li>- Language and cultural diversity</li> <li>- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories.</li> </ul>	May and October 2024 & May and October 2025	CEO





# Respect

Building respect for First Nations people and cultures is of great importance to our organisation. Families Australia celebrates the richness and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and histories and strives to enable the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities.

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.	July 2024	CEO
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/ or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.	December 2024	CEO
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.	December 2024	CEO
	Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural awareness training; two sessions per year.	September 2024 & September 2025	CEO
	Organise for external cultural awareness training to be delivered and become a mandatory element of on-boarding new employees. (Organisational training and development funds will be drawn upon to support).	June 2024	CEO



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.</b>	Increase staff’s understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	March 2024	CEO
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country at significant events and meetings	April 2024	CEO
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	April 2024	Office Manager
<b>7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</b>	Host and deliver an annual NAIDOC week activity.	July 2024 & July 2025	CEO
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2024 & July 2025	CEO
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	May 2024 & May 2025	CEO



# Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.</b>	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	March 2024	CEO
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	March 2024	CEO
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	June 2024	CEO
	Incorporate within recruitment procedures that all advertising of job vacancies must effectively target and reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and communities. - Promote and advertise all employment vacancies through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander networks and media.	June 2024	CEO
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	June 2024	CEO
	Offer a secondment opportunity to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to work at Families Australia on a joint initiative/project.	January 2025	CEO



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.</b>	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy. - Review the Supply Nation business register when sourcing external goods & services over \$1500 in value.	July 2024	CEO
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	July 2024	CEO
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	March 2024	CEO
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	January 2025	CEO
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	December 2024	CEO
	Strengthen the relationship and governance arrangements between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group of Safe and Supported: The National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2021-2031  - Establish CEO level six monthly meetings to support work between both entities.	February and August 2024 & February and August 2025	CEO



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
--------	-------------	----------	----------------

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

Recognise and celebrate national days of significance of First Nations peoples.

Families Australia will acknowledge and participate in significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates and actively encourage our members to do likewise, including:

- National Apology Anniversary; May 2024 & 2025
- Close the Gap Day; March 2024 & 2025
- National Sorry Day; May 2024 & 2025
- National Aboriginal and Islander Children’s Day; August 2024 & 2025
- Reconciliation Week; May 2024 & 2025
- NAIDOC Week; and July 2024 & 2025
- Mabo Day. June 2024 & 2025

CEO

**10. Investigate opportunities to raise awareness about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination.**

Create awareness opportunities for members and staff around the Voice to Parliament.

Continue to promote and encourage the use of the Families Australia position statement on a Voice to Parliament as a template on which Families Australia members and stakeholders could base their own position on a Voice to Parliament.

Host a members and stakeholders forum in exploring the positive impact a Yes vote would have on First Nations families, children and young people.

CEO

February to October 2023

September 2023



# Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	January 2024	Board Chair
	Review and update our existing Terms of Reference for the RWG.	June 2024	Board Chair
	RWG to meet at least three times per year to drive RAP implementation.	February, July and October 2024 & February, July and October 2025	Board Chair
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	June 2024	CEO
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	February 2024	CEO
	Implementation of RAP commitments (contributing to) to be incorporated into staff work plans and performance agreements	June 2024	CEO



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.</b>	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments:	March 2024	Board Chair
	- RAP implementation to be designated as a priority KPI of the CEO, reviewed annually;		
	- to be incorporated into CEO's annual performance expectation statement following Reconciliation Australia's endorsement of RAP.		
	Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	February 2024	CEO
<b>13. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.</b>	Incorporate RAP deliverables into Board and organisational planning documents and processes.	February 2024 & February 2025	Board Chair
	Set the RAP as a standing agenda item at staff meetings.	January 2024	CEO
	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 2024 & June 2025	Office Manager
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	1 August 2024 & 1 August 2025	Policy Officer
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2024 & 30 September 2025	CEO
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders every six months (minimum).	February and September 2024 & February and September 2025	CEO



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	December 2024 & December 2025	CEO
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2024	CEO
	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	December 2025	CEO
<b>14. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.</b>	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	October 2025	CEO

### Contact details

Jamie Crosby | Chief Executive Officer | 0457 537 953 | Email: [jamie.crosby@familiesaustralia.org.au](mailto:jamie.crosby@familiesaustralia.org.au)



**Families**Australia



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

**INNOVATE**

[www.familiesaustralia.org.au](http://www.familiesaustralia.org.au)

