



Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

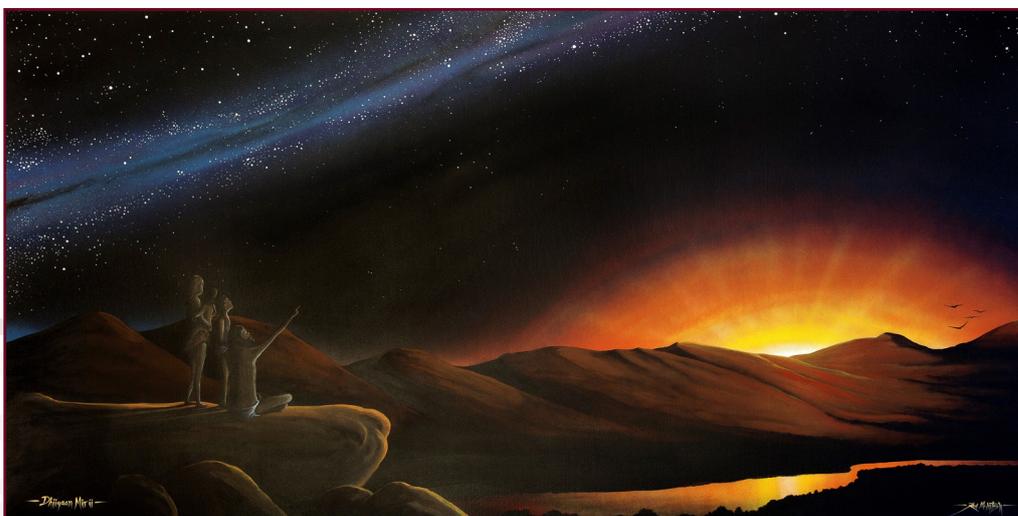
Our Innovate RAP in review 2017 – 2019

We are proud of the headway we have made in advancing reconciliation at OzChild. Our Innovate RAP focused on building our capability to support self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families, and communities. Our journey has not been without challenges and great learnings, giving us invaluable insight into the gaps that exist and what we can do to keep progressing. Outlined below are our key achievements and future aspirations.

Committed to working together to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, we have fostered new relationships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) and communities, enhanced our cultural understanding of the issues facing First Nation Peoples, and continued to adapt services to ensure we are responding appropriately to cultural needs.

In 2018 OzChild established **Dhiyaan Mirri**, its national Bridging Cultures Unit. The team now employs four full-time Aboriginal staff. In collaboration with OzChild, Dhiyaan Mirri works to create new employment opportunities for First Nations, and to increase their uptake of senior management and frontline service roles. OzChild, under the guidance of Dhiyaan Mirri will provide culturally responsive services for Aboriginal children, young people, and families, and continue to enhance its cultural competence to strengthen its capability of supporting self-determination.

We are encouraged by the renewed enthusiasm and support of our Executive and Management Teams in this journey – critical to nurturing a culture where reconciliation will become ‘business as usual’ at OzChild. Dedicated to achieving strong and sustainable outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, we look forward to partnering with other organisations to draw on complementary strengths and help us materialise the aspirations of our Stretch RAP.



Dhiyaan Mirri, a truly beautiful and heart-warming name, means Family of Stars in Kamilaroi – this so perfectly captures our vision and the aims of the Bridging Cultures Unit.

Artwork Credit: Rod MacIntosh



Relationships

- OzChild CEO attended Aboriginal Children's Forum in VIC, and OzChild-led transfer of Aboriginal children and young people to ACCOs.
- Welcome to Country and traditional Smoking Ceremonies now form part of OzChild new office openings. During 2017-2019 ceremonies were held at Dandenong, Shepparton, Mitcham, and Toowoomba office openings. Relationships with local Elders were developed in QLD, VIC, NSW and ACT.
- All OzChild induction sessions include introductions to cultural awareness and understanding.
- Recruited new Aboriginal staff in NSW, VIC and QLD for cultural advisor and skills coaching roles ensuring connections to land and culture maintained internally and through service provision.
- Formalised RAP Communication Strategy.
- Rolled out national reconciliation calendar outlining significant historical and reconciliation events.
- Consulted Aboriginal workers from AbSec to explore ways of improving support and services to Aboriginal families engaged in our services.



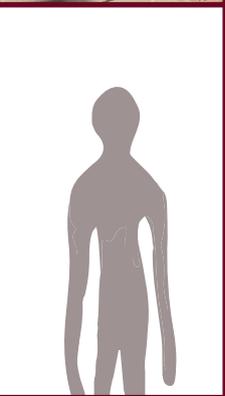
Respect

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and acknowledgement guides are in all OzChild sites, with the inclusion of specifically commissioned Aboriginal artwork to tell the story of connections.
- Elders engaged in a cultural healing capacity with young people in our programs.
- Partnerships formed with Goolburri Aboriginal Health Advancement QLD, Willum Warrain Aboriginal Association; MOU's now in place with three regional ACCOs (Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) funding).
- Established working relationship with Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation's social and emotional wellbeing and medical teams.
- VACCA employee seconded to OzChild SafeCare® program to provide support in working with Aboriginal families and developing learning opportunities to strengthen cultural responsiveness.
- Facilitated referrals to Goolburri's BackTrack (family finding) program connecting a family that may be able to provide a long-term care placement for children post involvement in Treatment Foster Care Oregon program.
- OzChild staff and carers participated in cultural training to increase awareness of challenges faced by our First Nation Peoples.
- OzChild kinship program transitioned all (11) Aboriginal children in its care over to VACCA.
- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff attended SNAICC National Conference.
- Undertook internal cultural audit to measure aptitude and knowledge, and to address future planning for training.
- Implemented National Cultural Practice Framework to inform OzChild programs and services.
- Incorporated cultural leave provisions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.



Opportunities

- Established OzChild's First Nations National Standing Committee: committee will meet every six months to assist OzChild with strategic matters. Regional Committees also established to assist service staff to provide culturally responsive and effective services to Aboriginal children, young people and their families.
- Aboriginal Data Project/s: OzChild established Data Analysis Working Group (DAWG) to analyse the variables impacting on the efficacy of services, through an Aboriginal perspective.
- Increased service accessibility to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employment opportunities.
- Increased supplier relationships.
- Ensure all employees have received first level training by mid-2020, developing their cultural competence and responsiveness – increasing their capability to deliver culturally safe services.
- Seek further opportunities to partner with other Aboriginal organisations for sector development.



What our staff are telling us



of staff surveyed believe a **strong relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples** and other Australians is fairly or very important.



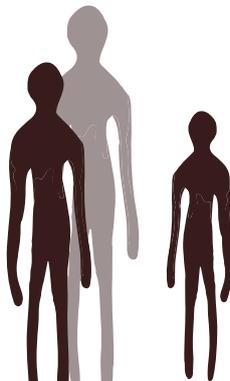
of staff surveyed have attended some **form of cultural awareness/competency training** during their time at OzChild.



of staff surveyed have an understanding of why an **Acknowledgement of Country** is recited at the beginning of meetings.

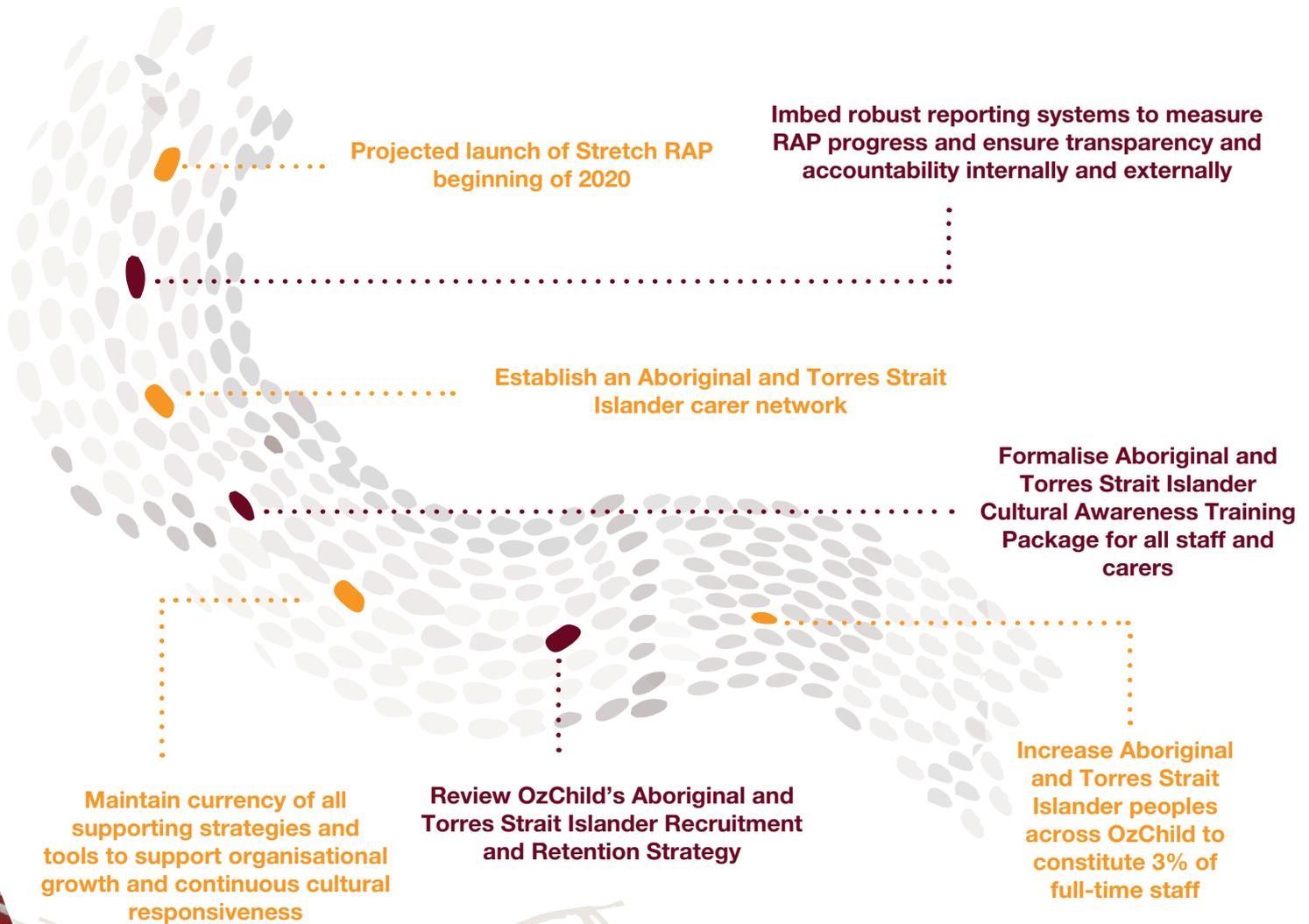


of staff surveyed strongly agreed or agreed that **OzChild is a culturally safe organisation** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and families.



Where to Now?

Strong collaboration across departments, and the unrelenting support and guidance of our Dhiyaan Mirri Team has positioned us strongly for a Stretch journey which we envisage will be marked by sustainable positive outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, clients, and families. Proactive collective participation remains critical to achieving our RAP goals.



Find Out More

As an organisation we are committed to understanding and sharing the issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities as we focus on ensuring those children who come into our care receive care that is both safe and culturally responsive.

If you would like more information about OzChild's Reconciliation journey and the outcomes achieved or would like to speak with our team about our journey to come please email dhiyaanmirri@ozchild.org.au or call our National Support Office – 03 9695 2200

