

# OZCHILD INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

July 2017 to July 2019



# CONTENTS ▼

Foreword	<b>03</b>	Our Reconciliation Action Plan	<b>07</b>
Message Of Commitment From Our Chief Executive Officer	<b>04</b>	Our Past And Current Activities In Aboriginal Communities	<b>09</b>
Our Organisation	<b>05</b>	Relationships	<b>11</b>
What We Will Work Towards	<b>06</b>	Respect	<b>15</b>
Our Vision For Reconciliation	<b>06</b>	Opportunities	<b>20</b>
What Is A RAP?	<b>06</b>	Tracking Progress And Reporting	<b>22</b>

## FOREWORD ▼

*OzChild acknowledges the Traditional Owners of all lands on which we do business and we pay our respects to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as being the First Peoples and that their cultures and history is an integral part of a strong and vibrant Australian society.*

*From our President*

‘There are over 15,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who will sleep away from their homes tonight. Too many of these children are permanently separated from their family and their culture. Too many will suffer poor lifelong outcomes. More and more children are removed every day, continuing to devastate and traumatise our families and fracture our communities. There are also many more of our children whose families are in crisis; begging for support; trapped by poverty, trauma and discrimination.’<sup>1</sup>

The stark truth of these words from the 2016 Family Matters Report challenge all of us who serve in the out of home care sector to step up to the mark to work to establish policies and practices that improve life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to ensure that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who come into our care receive care that is both safe and appropriate.

I am delighted to endorse the OzChild Reconciliation Action Plan which has been developed over many months by a team of passionate and dedicated staff led by Karen Milward, who is a proud Victorian Yorta Yorta woman.

This plan raises our corporate and personal awareness and understanding of the issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities and integrates culturally safe practices into our program development and service delivery. By working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities we too hope to help turn the tide.

### **Helen Maxwell-Wright FAICD**

President  
OzChild



*1. Measuring trends to turn the tide on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child safety and removal The Family Matters Report is a collaborative effort of the University of Melbourne, the Centre for Evidence and Implementation, SNAICC – National Voice for our Children and Save the Children Australia..*

# MESSAGE OF COMMITMENT ▼

## from our Chief Executive Officer

The dominant culture in Australian society today places Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians at the margins of our society and this has been the case since colonisation. OzChild through its antecedents, since 1851, has been providing care for children, young people and families and will have played some part in the practices and policies that led to the forced separation of families, denial of language and removal from country that directly contributes to the entrenched social disadvantage and systemic racism experienced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, families and individuals today.

OzChild acknowledges the sometimes overwhelming grief, suffering and hurt that flows through the generations of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and is actively on a journey of strengthening our cultural competence so we can respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with culturally appropriate practices, responses and solutions. Informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' knowledge, our commitment is to deliver services enabling children, youth and families success.

I am proud to present OzChild's Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan for July 2017 to July 2019. OzChild is pleased to commit publicly that we are focused on building our internal and external capacity to effectively support self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities as it is with them that the solutions lay and we can learn.

### **Lisa J. Griffiths**

Chief Executive Officer  
OzChild



## OUR ORGANISATION ▼

Protecting and caring for children since 1851, OzChild is the longest continuous service to children and families in Victoria. OzChild supports vulnerable children and young people by providing healing, preventing abuse and neglect and strengthening families. OzChild works with over 6,000 children and young people with the aim of providing them a better future.

OzChild's Vision is that all children and young people are safe, respected, nurtured and reach their full potential.

Our vision would see a society in which all children, regardless of their background, culture, religion or socio-demographic circumstances, are living happily in a safe and caring environment. They are respected and supported, are part of a family and participating in their community. They have their needs met, have a home in which they are safe, well cared for, well educated, and have the supports that they need to be the best that they can be.

The values we hold in our organisation include commitment, hope, compassion, accountability, dignity, respect and honesty.

OzChild often works with children who are in the 'too hard' basket in the belief that every young person deserves the chance to shine. Our approach is comprehensive; where we can provide multiple services to address the often numerous issues in the lives of children and their families. Our approach is holistic and strengths-based addressing the complex needs of these children, young people and their families. All our services are underpinned by a robust and contemporary governance framework based on risk identification and resource prioritisation.

*OzChild's programs to support vulnerable children, young people and their families to empower them to reach their full potential, include:*

- » foster and kinship care for children aged 0 – 18 who can no longer live with their natural parents;
- » programs that provide support, counselling and referral services to vulnerable families in the community;
- » programs that use evidence-based therapeutic approaches working with vulnerable families and children;
- » services for children with disabilities;
- » health and welfare support such as counselling in schools and for families experiencing difficulties;
- » respite for families whose children often have complex needs;
- » education, scholarship, mentorship and development programs for disengaged and underprivileged youth.



**Note:** OzChild currently employs over 300 staff, including 5 Aboriginal staff, across Victoria, NSW and the ACT. In Victoria we also have 2 foster carers who are Aboriginal people.

## WHAT WE WILL WORK TOWARDS

In developing our Innovate RAP OzChild commits to completing the actions within this Innovate RAP from July 2017 to July 2019 to ensure we are well positioned to develop and pilot actions aimed at strengthening our relationships and improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, children, carers and families and organisations, including:

- » Demonstrating our commitment to reconciliation by actively working towards addressing the injustice and inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- » Collaborating, consulting, connecting and creating a respectful environment that delivers sustainable outcomes for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander children, young people, families and communities.

## OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Through culturally safe practices and actions OzChild honours and strengthens Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, children, young people and communities. This includes:

- » Acknowledging the loss of lands, traditions and cultures and recognising the impacts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and peoples.
- » Respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia and the importance of their enduring and ongoing spiritual connection to Country, languages and cultures.
- » Working towards a reconciled Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience an equitable and just society that celebrates cultures and traditions.

## WHAT IS A RAP?

The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is about organisations from every sector turning good intentions into real actions and rising to the challenge of reconciling Australia. A RAP is a business plan that uses a holistic approach to create meaningful relationships, enhanced respect and promote sustainable opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. RAPs provide a format for exploring how reconciliation can advance organisational objectives, by formalising contributions through clear actions and realistic targets, as well as identifying lessons learnt. While each RAP includes specific required actions and targets, organisations also shape their own in relation to their core business, sphere of influence, resources etc. This results in a creative blend of objectives throughout relationships, respect and opportunities sections of a RAP.



**Note:** More information on RAPs can be found at: [www.reconciliation.org.au](http://www.reconciliation.org.au)

# OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN ▾

Our Reconciliation Action Plan was developed by our RAP Working Group through four workshops and input from across all OzChild business areas including the Board President, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director of Services, Executive Director People Culture and Communications, Children's Culture and Safety Project Manager, and a number of service managers, team leaders and staff from programs across OzChild, who provided innovative ideas for inclusion in our RAP, and who are all committed to working towards positive reconciliation outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families, young people, organisations and businesses.

The RAP Working Group (RWG) consists of representatives from the following positions across OzChild:

- » Chairperson, OzChild Board
- » Finance Manager
- » Executive Director of Services
- » Senior Case Manager, Disability Services
- » Children's Culture and Safety Project Manager
- » Family Law Pathways Project Officer
- » ACT Manager
- » Project and Stakeholder Manager
- » Assistant Manager Home Based Care & Disability Services
- » Case Manager, Kinship Services
- » Coordinator, Western Federally Funded Services
- » SafeCare Educator
- » Team Leader, Kinship Services
- » Case Worker, Therapeutic Foster Care
- » Team Leader, Family Services
- » Service Allocation Coordinator, Disability Services

OzChild currently has one internal Aboriginal staff representative on our RWG, and we are seeking to also recruit additional external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members for the RWG, from ACCOs and Aboriginal communities in areas where we operate.

We engaged Aboriginal consultant, Karen Milward, to lead the RAP Working Group discussions to ensure that we develop culturally appropriate mechanisms to support the needs, ideas and opportunities identified by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities. The RAP Working Group will actively participate in and guide the development and implementation of actions in our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, July 2017 to July 2019. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and organisations will be invited to be members of the RAP Working Group to work with OzChild to successfully implement its Innovate RAP actions.



**Note:** The Executive Director of Services will champion this RAP within OzChild.



### 'Our Journey to Cultural Competence'

OzChild is working with Dreamtime Art to commission two original artworks symbolic to our work with children and the lands upon which we carry out our work. These photographs capture the project under development in Dreamtime Art studios and exploration at Bunjilaka Museum.



## OUR PAST AND CURRENT ACTIVITIES ▼ in Aboriginal communities

OzChild has a long working history with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, carers and families and with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and communities aimed at strengthening the relationship between OzChild and the foster care and kinship sector including:

- » Worked with Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) on the implementation of Evidence Based Services including the secondment of a VACCA staff member into the Functional Family Therapy - Child Welfare team to support the team to deliver a culturally safe and responsive service, and to encourage broader cultural safety and awareness within the Mornington site and Evidence Based Services team.
- » Co-design with VACCA and Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-Operative (GEGAC) a program aimed at reunifying children (with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children) to their families of origin.
- » Co-design with VACCA adaptations to the Treatment Foster Care Oregon program which aims to reduce the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in residential care. Exploring potential for a VACCA staff member secondment into this team.
- » VACCA joined OzChild and Department of Health and Human Service senior staff on a study trip to learn about the implementation and operation of culturally appropriate Evidence Based Services in New Zealand.
- » Sponsor of Family Matters a National campaign to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people grow up safe and cared for in family, community families, communities and cultures.
- » Every employee has a KPI to identify two actions a year that contribute to their personal understanding of cultural competence.
- » OzChild has an appointed child culture and safety project manager to focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competence in the organisation.
- » OzChild mentoring and secretary role to support the Koorie Early Years Network South West Victoria including training and support to Koorie Preschool Assistants, partnering with regional Koorie Education Support Officers to operate the Koorie Early Years Network, mentoring regional Koorie artists to produce Koorie Early Years resources and supporting local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations with funding applications.
- » It is mandatory for staff to understand and participate in Aboriginal cultural awareness and competency training.
- » OzChild representation on the Keerray Woorroong - Gunditjmara Language Group Reference Committee.
- » Support the Dhauwurd-Wurrung Aboriginal Playgroup through staff support, training and research in early year's frameworks and participation on the Women Advocating for Safe Parenting Committee.
- » Active participation in Close The Gap Day, NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Week and Indigenous Children's Literacy Day.
- » OzChild and Dhauwurd-Wurrung WWATCH Program (Well Women and Their Children's Health) MOU to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families engaging with Playgroup and OzChild Early Years Programs.
- » Promotion of important awareness days, weeks etc. (NAIDOC, Sorry Day etc.) internally and via social media.
- » Ensure external communications and marketing materials are culturally appropriate.
- » Welcome to Country and speaking opportunities at OzChild events.
- » Display Acknowledgement plaques at OzChild sites.
- » Work with VACCA to improve cultural safety in practice for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Out of Home Care.
- » Support and encourage OzChild carers to attend VACCA's Nikara's Journey Training, which is Aboriginal cultural sensitivity training for foster and kinship carers in Victoria.

- » Representation on the Healthy Koorie Kids initiative Reference Committee.
- » OzChild Team Meetings invite Aboriginal speakers from the Koori Education Support Service and VACCA to discuss the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out of home care.
- » Information about important community events, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day, NAIDOC week is regularly distributed to carers who have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in their care.
- » VACCA Diaries are provided to families caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- » OzChild staff chair the Frankston and Mornington Peninsula Aboriginal Action Group 2014-2016.
- » Active participation in NAIDOC and Christmas activities at Frankston, Cranbourne and Mornington Peninsula Aboriginal Gathering Places.
- » Ongoing meetings with local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Elders and community members.
- » Conduit between GPs and OzChild Family Services.
- » Director Finance & Planning works closely with VACCA on the Permanent Care Placement program.
- » ACT staff are actively engaged with the Barnardo's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Kinship team and have a representative on the ACT Together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Panel.
- » The ACT service works with Solid Aboriginal Consultancy who provides staff cultural training and facilitation of strategic planning days.
- » The ACT service has an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait representative sitting on all employee recruitment interview panels.

*Image Credit: River by Dedoma*





## RELATIONSHIPS ▾

In the delivery of our services OzChild works with a significant number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, and we recognise the critical importance of building and maintaining ongoing respectful mutually beneficial relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Aboriginal) communities and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs). These relationships are crucial for us to ensure that we implement culturally appropriate and safe practices in all our programs, and to supporting and linking our Aboriginal clients with their culture, community and Aboriginal services wherever possible.

As OzChild's programs impact Aboriginal children and families it is essential that we partner with relevant Aboriginal communities and organisations to achieve the best cultural and life outcomes for those engaged in our services. Furthermore, it is important for OzChild to engage the services of and partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to assist us to achieve all our business and operational goals. It is also important for OzChild to engage with and gain a better understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our organisational governance, and we will seek to have Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander involvement on our Board.

### Focus Area

We will build and maintain respectful and collaborative relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across our organisations. All our services will provide opportunities for inclusion and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, their families and communities.

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline
(1) Develop respectful, open, honest and transparent relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families, carers and communities, and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations and networks.	» Develop relationships at all levels of the organisation by developing and implementing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholder engagement plan including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, peak bodies, services, Traditional Owner Groups, Elders and the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Formalise and embed relationships with above listed groups.</li> <li>– Proactively identify opportunities for engagement across OzChild (for example, invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Board meetings and/or sub-committees, AGM, Carers' Dinner and Gala).</li> <li>– Actively engage Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander representation on OzChild's Board.</li> </ul>	Chief Executive Officer	OCT 2017 2018
	» Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles and protocols for future engagement.	Executive Director of Services	OCT 2017

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline	
(2) OzChild to support partnership opportunities with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and businesses.	» Explore co-location opportunities with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs).	Executive Director of Services	NOV	2017 2018
	» Ensure that ACCOs are involved in OzChild networks and OzChild is involved in ACCO networks (e.g. co-hosting events and activities in National Reconciliation Week).	Executive Director of Services	APRIL	2018 2019
	» Collaboratively develop local service delivery partnerships and arrangements that meet Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community's needs.	Executive Director of Services	NOV	2017 2018
	» Promote local OzChild-ACCO partnerships and also partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, to develop and showcase best practice.	Executive Director of Services	JULY	2017 2018 2019
(3) Actively monitor RAP development, including implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting.	» Monitor implementation of the RAP to ensure it links with and supports the OzChild strategic plan, in particular <b>Goal 1:</b> Strengthen our Impact. <b>Goal 4:</b> Develop and Nurture our People.	Chief Executive Officer	JAN	2018 2019
	» Identify OzChild RAP champions to actively promote the RAP across the organisation.	Chief Executive Officer	JULY	2017 2018
	» Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented on the RAP Working Group and are actively involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the RAP.	Executive Director of Services	JULY	2017 2018
	» The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.	Chief Executive Officer	JULY	2017
	» The RAP Working Group (RWG) meets at least twice per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation.	Executive Director of Services	SEPT MAR/SEPT MAR	2017 2018 2019
	» Agree Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group.	Children's Culture and Safety Project Manager	JULY	2017



## RELATIONSHIPS ▼

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline	
<b>(4)</b> Actively promote and participate in local National Reconciliation Week activities and events.	» Host at least one internal event for National Reconciliation Week (NRW) each year.	Chief Executive Officer	MAY	2018 2019
	» Register all NRW events via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	Senior Manager Marketing and Communications	MAY	2018 2019
	» Support at least one external NRW event.	Chief Executive Officer	MAY	2018 2019
	» Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	Executive Director of Services	MAY	2018 2019
<b>(5)</b> Raise awareness of RAP commitments and progress internally and externally.	» Include information on our RAP in OzChild's induction training for all board members, new staff, volunteers and carers.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	OCT	2017 2018
	» Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders.	Chief Executive Officer	JULY	2017 2018
	» Develop and implement a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders.	Senior Manager Marketing and Communications	JULY	2017
	» Ensure that OzChild external communication channels have a specific reference to information on the RAP, e.g. newsletters, website, annual report, etc.	Senior Manager Marketing and Communications	JULY	2017
	» Provide and publish regular RAP updates and reports to all board members, staff, carers and volunteers and our external stakeholders.	Senior Manager Marketing and Communications	NOV MAY/NOV MAY	2017 2018 2019

## RAP CASE STUDY 1

### Koorie Early Years Network South West Victoria

OzChild Western Region has been a founding member of the Koorie Early Years Regional Network (Glenelg, Southern Grampians, Warrnambool and Moyne Shires). OzChild chairs and mentors the network originally established to support Koorie Playgroup Leaders, Koorie Engagement Support Officers and Kindergartens and their programs to build their capacity and capabilities in management and leadership roles across the education spectrum.

Now the Koorie Early Years Network SW, we have grown from less than ten to 51 members in three years. Through this Network OzChild has provided support to stakeholders (Department of Education and Training (DET) and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations) to broaden the support systems for the Koorie Pre-school Support Officer (KPSA) and Koorie Education Support Officer (KESO) roles. This has successfully resulted in strengthening the roles of Koorie early years staff in preschool and school settings, the Transition to School process for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. Playgroups now plan their programs using the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework and meet the five prescribed Outcomes within this framework.

*Additional outcomes from the network support under the guidance of OzChild include:*

- » Empowerment of Playgroup Leaders and KPSAs with the support of the network have negotiated long-overdue pay rises and working conditions with their CEOs.
- » Support for six Playgroup Leaders and KPSAs to update their qualifications to Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care (two staff) and Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care (four staff).
- » Peer Support System for Koorie early years staff across the region.
- » Koorie early years staff are now linked into Family Support Services, Child FIRST, Child Protection and Foster and Kinship Care in the region.
- » Koorie early years staff now work in partnership with Maternal and Child Health, Speech Therapists and other Allied Health Services to support preschool children in the journey towards kindergarten and school readiness.
- » Mentoring of the Gunditjmara early years worker to prepare a regional Koorie Early Years resource kit which will be distributed to all preschool programs including playgroups, kindergartens and day care centres. This will assist non-Aboriginal staff to deliver culturally safe and valid curriculum in their programs which reflect local traditions, languages and knowledge systems.
- » Four regional KESOs organised and delivered a Network Planning Day in November, 2016 which will now become an annual event on the Network calendar. This has provided a strong direction for regional Koorie early years staff for 2017.

Claire Jennings  
Team Leader Early Years Intervention Programs



**Note:** The strength of participation of regional KESOs and KPSAs in the Network means that it will become sustainable with KESOs taking over the Chairperson position from 2017. OzChild will remain in a support role until December 2017.



## RESPECT ▼

Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, lands and histories is important to OzChild because embedding cultural respect into the services we offer and the way we practice will lead to improved outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, more efficient and effective services, and improved client satisfaction. OzChild will foster respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples throughout the organisation through creating opportunities for learning about and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures from the Board and executive through to service staff and volunteers.

OzChild operates in a number of different locations and it is important to us that we understand and appreciate local Aboriginal history, lands and culture where we operate, so that we can connect in respectful partnerships with local Aboriginal communities and organisations to meet the needs of our Aboriginal clients in those areas. Through respectful partnerships and relationships with Aboriginal communities at local and regional levels we will acknowledge, learn about and celebrate Aboriginal culture and ensure that our services are open and accessible to Aboriginal peoples.

### Focus Area

We will ensure respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, families and their communities through creating opportunities for learning about and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, which is reflected in all our policies, programs and services.

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline	
(1) Create a culturally safe environment at OzChild for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, children, young people, carers and families.	» Complete a cultural audit of all OzChild locations in conjunction with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	NOV	2017 2018
	» Display a statement of Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Custodians on the OzChild website and on email signatures.	Senior Manager Marketing & Communications	JULY	2017
	» Prominently display items that recognise and reflect cultural sensitivity and welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Island flag (including the symbolic description).</li> <li>– Acknowledgement Plaques identifying the Traditional Owners/Custodians of the local area of each location.</li> <li>– Displaying and promoting locally sourced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks, stories and connections.</li> <li>– Subscriptions to the Koori Mail and other significant media are available in reception areas and meeting rooms as relevant.</li> <li>– Other items and statements that demonstrate OzChild's commitment to Reconciliation.</li> </ul>	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	JULY	2017 2018

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline	
<b>(2)</b> Demonstrate respect and organisational understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their cultures and cultural protocols.	» Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country that is provided to OzChild staff and shared on the OzChild website.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	SEPT	2017 2018
	» Ensure OzChild engagements use our cultural engagement guideline and protocols.	Senior Manager Marketing & Communications	JULY	2017 2018
	» Develop a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships.	Senior Manager Marketing & Communications	SEPT	2017
	» Invite an Elder from the local Aboriginal community to provide a Welcome to Country at significant events, including OzChild's carer dinner.	Senior Manager Marketing & Communications	JULY MAY	2017 2018 2019
	» Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all important internal and external meetings.	Chief Executive Officer or most senior person present	JULY	2017 2018
	» Encourage staff to include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all meetings.	Chief Executive Officer	JULY	2017 2018
	» Strengthen references to and mitigation of cultural safety in our risk management framework.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	JUNE	2018 2019
	» Review OzChild's policies and procedures to be inclusive of Aboriginal culture, cultural safety and cultural protocols that are in line with the Taskforce 1000 report findings and recommendations.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	JULY	2017 2018
	» Ensure our brand proposition reflects our commitment to reconciliation.	Senior Manager Marketing & Communications	JULY	2017
	» Develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety Indicators and Measures for OzChild.	Executive Director of Services	JULY	2017



## RESPECT ▼

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline	
(3) Improve OzChild staff and organisational understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.	» Develop an Aboriginal community profile for OzChild's support services.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	OCT	2017
	» Establish a resource library at each location of Aboriginal books, tools and resources to increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.	Managers at each site	JULY	2018 2019
	» Investigate opportunities to work with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants to develop cultural awareness training.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	NOV	2017
	» Create and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness development strategy for our board and staff which defines cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of our business and considers various ways cultural learning can be provided (online, face to face workshops or cultural immersion).	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	APRIL	2018 2019
	» Deliver Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness training for all our board, management, staff and carers.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	JUNE	2018 2019
	» Ensure that all direct service-delivery staff receive training in cultural safety and culturally informed practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities.	Executive Director of Services	JUNE	2018
	» Develop a database of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples learning and development opportunities and training providers and make accessible to our staff.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	NOV	2018
	» Promote cultural awareness at OzChild events.	Chief Executive Officer	JULY	2017 2018
	» Ensure that Elders and community leaders are invited to attend 'lunchtime yarnning-up sessions' to share local stories.	Managers at each site	OCT	2017 2018
	» Ensure that staff are involved in culturally significant site tours run by Traditional Owners/Custodians.	Managers at each site	NOV	2017 2018

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline	
<b>(4)</b> Provide opportunities for staff and carers to engage in community events (NAIDOC Week and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander significant events and activities).	» Produce a local annual calendar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community events and activities which is placed on the OzChild website.	Executive Director of Services	JAN	2018 2019
	» Ensure each site maintains a calendar of local events which is collated organisation-wide (including Board) calendar.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	JULY	2017 2018 2019
	» Communicate and centrally promote all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' celebrations and events, throughout OzChild.	Senior Manager Marketing & Communications	JULY MAR	2017 2018 2019
	» Actively promote, attend and participate in community activities (e.g. Aboriginal Children's Day, Close the Gap Day, Mabo Day, Anniversary of the Apology to the Stolen Generation, Coming of the Light, International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, etc.).	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	JULY MAR	2017 2018 2019
	» Provide opportunities for all staff and carers to participate in key cultural activities celebrated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (Close the Gap, NAIDOC Week, film nights).	Managers at each site	JULY MAR	2017 2018 2019
	» Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their communities during NAIDOC Week.	Chief Executive Officer	JULY	2017 2018
	» Ensure that each OzChild site proactively supports, identifies and engages in local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community's celebrations and events.	Managers at each site	JULY MAR	2017 2018 2019
	» Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events and celebrations, particularly NAIDOC Week.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	NOV	2017 2018
	» Sponsor a table for staff and community members at local and/or statewide annual NAIDOC Balls.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	JULY	2017 2018



# RESPECT ▼

## RAP CASE STUDY 2

**Working with the Aboriginal community in a respectful and culturally appropriate manner**  
**Working respectfully with Aboriginal staff members**



**Opening Statement:** Koorie parents and children engaging in playgroup often live in vulnerable family settings which may be unsafe for young children.

### INTRODUCTION

Family A has four Koorie children and have been engaged with the Portland Koorie playgroup facilitated by OzChild for ten years. The OzChild Aboriginal playgroup leader and non-Aboriginal playgroup coordinator have partnered to deliver a very successful Koorie playgroup for three years. Both staff members have worked closely with Family A over many years. In the last 18 months the parents' relationship broke down leaving the four children oscillating between both parents in two home settings. Drug and alcohol issues may be present and a lack of a supervised routine by both parents have resulted in an unstable and unsafe environment for the four children.

### PROBLEM

The playgroup coordinator (non-Aboriginal) on regular home visits to reengage the mother in playgroup with the four year old became concerned about the safety and wellbeing of the children. It came to her attention that the 11 year old was out on the streets in the early hours of the morning unsupervised, the two middle children had irregular attendance at kindergarten and school, and that the youngest child was at risk socially and emotionally and displaying extreme behavioural problems. The coordinator reported her concerns at a team meeting and recommended contacting Child Protection for the children's safety and wellbeing, as this situation had been ongoing for some time.

The Aboriginal staff member cautioned that the Aboriginal community has trust issues with Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) historically from the forced removal of children from

their homes, and insisted that the Aboriginal community always looks after the welfare of their children within their local community. In her other role in a Family Support program at Dhauwurd-Wurrung Aboriginal Cooperative, the Koorie playgroup leader indicated she was working closely with the mother to support her and the children, and that notifying DHHS was not an option. A Team decision was made to leave the situation under the guidance of the Aboriginal community and family support programs.

Both staff members became unsettled with the situation. In her monthly supervision session with the Playgroup Team Leader at OzChild, the Aboriginal staff member disclosed that she felt the coordinator was not being culturally respectful of the Aboriginal community and their way of working with at-risk families. The OzChild Assistant Manager was brought in to meet with the two staff members and Team Leader individually.

### OUTCOME

By working through the problem within OzChild's supervision process, the differences of opinion between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff were resolved, with both playgroup staff being able to discuss the issue and arrive at a mutually satisfactory agreement. The family then continued under the Aboriginal Family Support Program. The OzChild staff concerned were able to rebuild their working relationship by respecting each other's culture and position on the matter.

### CONCLUSION

At a later stage, the Aboriginal staff member did decide to notify Child FIRST about Family A because of her increasing concerns for the wellbeing and safety of the four children. The problem, which was flagged by OzChild, was eventually able to be acted on by the Aboriginal community in a way that was culturally acceptable.

The experience highlighted to the OzChild team involved the importance of respect and understanding of Aboriginal culture, and the need to be guided by Aboriginal traditions within the context of Aboriginal Family Services. The experience resulted in increased respect among OzChild staff, and understanding of potential cultural conflicts which need to be resolved in a collaborative manner.



## OPPORTUNITIES ▼

OzChild is committed to providing services that are accessible to members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. To achieve this, we will actively work towards increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and suppliers. In addition we will ensure that all our staff and volunteers receive training and other professional development opportunities to develop their Aboriginal cultural awareness and to develop culturally safe practices.

As OzChild further develops programs and models of service delivery it is important that we look for opportunities to partner with Aboriginal organisations for sector development including, for example, offering secondments to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander service staff and seeking to second our own staff into Aboriginal services where it is mutually beneficial.

### Focus Area

We will partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to actively increase opportunities for consultation, engagement and participation with OzChild.

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline	
<b>(1)</b> Investigate opportunities within OzChild to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities.	» Engage proactively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment agencies and consultants to develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Retention strategy.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communication	NOV	2017
	» Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communication	OCT	2017 2018
	» Collect information on our current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment opportunities.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communication	OCT	2017 2018
	» Ensure HR recruitment procedures and policies and procedures explicitly and proactively encourage the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, so that there are no barriers to employees and future applicants participating in our workplace.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communication	JULY FEB	2017 2018 2019
	» Actively promote employment opportunities and vacancies in culturally appropriate media.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communication	JULY	2017 2018
	» Establish Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander engagement role/s that support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, student placements/internships and secondments;</li> <li>– Culturally safe practice; and</li> <li>– Existing and develop new relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations.</li> </ul>	Executive Director People, Culture and Communication	FEB	2018 2019



# OPPORTUNITIES ▾

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline	
<b>(2)</b> Effectively engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	» Engage with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bodies (e.g. Supply Nation and Aboriginal Chambers of Commerce) to develop a database of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business for OzChild.	Chief Operating Officer	JULY	2017 2018
	» Investigate membership of Supply Nation.	Chief Operating Officer	AUG	2017
	» Review OzChild procurement processes to ensure they are inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Chief Operating Officer	OCT	2017 2018
	» Engage a minimum of one commercial relationship each year with an Aboriginal and /or Torres Strait Islander business.	Chief Operating Officer	DEC	2017 2018
	» Educate staff about using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Chief Operating Officer	SEPT	2017 2018
<b>(3)</b> Actively work toward becoming a culturally competent organisation.	» Actively encourage staff to identify opportunities to work towards building culturally competence in partnership with ACCOs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	NOV	2017 2018
	» Develop an organisation wide cultural practice framework.	Executive Director of Services	DEC	2018
	» Actively support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as appropriate to specific services, to engage with OzChild services and activities, and ensure their cultural safety.	All Program Managers	JULY	2017 2018
	» Establish budgets to support various cultural competency initiatives.	Chief Executive Officer	APRIL	2018 2019
	» Allocate resources including staff to achieve our cultural competence goals.	Chief Executive Officer	JULY APRIL	2017 2018 2019
	» Undertake an internal cultural competency audit through our annual online staff survey to measure RAP learnings on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	FEB	2018 2019
	» Identify and record cultural competency outcomes demonstrated within OzChild.	Executive Director People, Culture and Communications	FEB	2018 2019



# TRACKING PROGRESS

## and reporting ▼

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline	
<b>(1)</b> Report on OzChild Reconciliation Action Plan implementation from 2017 to 2019.	» Report on RAP progress each year in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	Chief Executive Officer	SEPT	2017 2018
	» Develop and implement an OzChild Report Card on Cultural Activity and work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.	Chief Executive Officer	MAR	2018 2019
	» Investigate participating in the RAP Barometer when invited.	Chief Executive Officer	MAY	2018
<b>(2)</b> Monitor progress of the Reconciliation Action Plan implementation at least twice a year.	» Review and make changes to the OzChild Reconciliation Action Plan where appropriate and agreed to by OzChild and Reconciliation Australia.	Executive Director of Services	SEPT	2017 2018
			MAR/SEPT MAR	2018 2019
<b>(3)</b> Report on the Reconciliation Action Plan progress to the OzChild Board.	» Provide report about RAP initiatives and outcomes to OzChild Board at least annually.	Chief Executive Officer	NOV	2017 2018
<b>(4)</b> Report on Reconciliation Action Plan progress in OzChild annual reporting.	» Communicate OzChild Reconciliation Action Plan outcomes to all stakeholders through annual reports published, emailed and shared on our website.	Chief Executive Officer	NOV	2017 2018
Review, refresh and update RAP	» Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.	Executive Director of Services	NOV	2018
	» Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review and feedback.	Executive Director of Services	JAN	2019
	» Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.	Executive Director of Services	JUNE	2019

## MORE INFORMATION



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*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners  
and Elders past, present and future, of all  
the lands on which OzChild operates.*



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