

Reconciliation in action

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We continue to have conversations and engage in activities that support reconciliation and strengthen relationships with community

Recent results from the Workplace RAP Barometer are timely as we take the next steps to draft our 2023-2026 Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan. All Gowrie SA staff are invited to participate in the RAP Barometer Survey and the results give an insight into the impact of our existing RAP initiatives and identifies areas where we can plan for further learning. Our results were very good in comparison to two years ago and against other organisations with a Stretch RAP.

We have been working closely with our Gowrie SA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group to secure funding to support a Kurna history project. This project involves working with a Kurna Elder to conduct interviews with Aboriginal Elders to identify significant Aboriginal sites and stories along the area of Karrawirra Pari that connects the suburbs of Thebarton and Underdale where our two sites are located. We are thrilled to have secured partial funding from the City of West Torrens to carry out interviews and document and map these stories to support the growth of community awareness about Kurna land. Lynne, our CEO, and Uncle Ivan-Tiwu Copley have been developing this project over several months. Uncle Ivan, who has lived and worked in the area for many years, will support the gathering of key stories, mapping locations of campsites, waterholes and scar trees, as well as significant Kurna families and events. We look forward to sharing the progress of this project with you.

Mel has also taken the Cultural Practitioner role virtual. Mel continues much of the work that she was previously doing on site, supporting educators to embed reconciliation into their planning for children and holds regular zoom drop in sessions for all staff.

A cultural review of our policies has been finalised with the help of Nik&Co. Their overview has updated language and terminology and added contemporary perspectives.

100% of surveyed staff agreed that Gowrie SA has a genuine and strong commitment towards reconciliation and First Nations stakeholders

Workplace RAP Barometer 2022

Celebrating stories, cultures and languages

To recognise Indigenous Literacy Day both the Underdale and Thebarton Children's Program shared literature about reconciliation and celebrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors. Our Little Library for families at Underdale was transformed into a reconciliation library.



Caring for Country

Thebarton kindergarten children have been visiting Narnungga Urban Forest, Tulya Wardli (Bonython Park) and Morialta in their bush kindy sessions. Our bush kindy children have been active protagonists in threading their learning back into the research that occurs in their kindy room, including exploring and recreating sculptures in the Thebarton garden.



Career immersion day for Aboriginal students

In collaboration with the Department for Education Workabout Centre, our professional learning team held a career immersion day for Aboriginal students. On this day, students were provided an overview of Gowrie SA, took part in an observation tour of our Children's Program and heard from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff about their study and career pathways. Students also participated in practical sensory focused learning experiences.



Supporting the cultural learning of others

Our professional learning team was contacted by a southern suburbs community centre and asked to facilitate sessions around Kaurna history, knowledge and understandings, unpacking bias and cultural competency. In collaboration with Aboriginal facilitators, staff spent time discovering and reflecting on their own culture, what it means to be culturally competent when working with children and families and how to ensure the environments are welcoming and inclusive. The centre was also supported to plan a community library and resources collection for their children's programs, with a focus on diversity and inclusion.

Celebrating the partnership between Elders, educators and children in nurturing a love of culture

Uncle Ivan-Tiwu Copley and Renee Kemble, Gowrie SA Educational Leader - Infant and Toddler Programs, delivered a presentation 'Nurturing a Love of Cultures', at the Early Childhood Australia conference. This presentation was developed by Uncle, Renee and Rachel, Team Leader in our Banksia room, from a published article of the same name written by Renee and Rachel. The presentation aimed to make visible the relationships we foster with Elders who continue to make significant contributions to our learning and deepen our spiritual and emotional connections to culture and history.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group

We are fortunate to receive cultural guidance and advice from members of the Gowrie SA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group: Ivan-Tiwu Copley, Eddie Peters, Karri Tamaru Smith, Nicole Gollan, Rodney Welch, Rosemary Wanganeen.

More information about our reconciliation activities can be found in our [Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2020-2023](#), on our [website](#) or by following us on social media [@GowrieSA](#)



Gowrie funding to support reconciliation

In partnership with Reconciliation SA and others, Gowrie SA contributed funding towards the 2022 Reconciliation Education Activities Grants.

Our own NAIDOC week grants were awarded to three South Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services for their NAIDOC week celebrations. This funding was put towards a NAIDOC Ball, community celebrations and activities.

Support for a Voice to Parliament

We welcomed Eddie Synot, a Wemba Wemba First Nations public lawyer and researcher who has worked with the Uluru Dialogue since 2018, as guest speaker at our recent Annual General Meeting. Eddie provided an insight into how we have arrived at this pivotal point in history and the support that exists in community for a Voice. He encouraged us to keep having conversations - the more conversations we have, the more informed people are to support a successful referendum. Gowrie continues to support the Uluru Statement by working to support staff understanding, sharing information about the campaign on our social media channels and supporting children to understand the historical importance and relevance of the Statement.



Supporting staff to attend significant events and cultural learning

Gowrie SA HR Advisor Amy spoke at the Reconciliation Australia 2022 National RAP Conference 'Brave Together' in Sydney. Amy joined a breakout panel to discuss: Beyond the tick-a-box: stories of RAP innovation. Amy shared our RAP journey over the last 12 years, what we have achieved and our challenges along the way. It was wonderful to share our experiences with organisations just starting their RAP journey and those wanting to move 'beyond the tick-a-box'.

Some of our staff attended the World Indigenous People's Conference on Education. It was such a special occasion to attend an international event, here on Kurna land, with a wonderful welcome by Karl Telfer and Yellaka.

Gowrie SA CEO Lynne continues to participate in the Reconciliation Australia RAP leadership gathering, as well as the Reconciliation SA RAP Industry Network. Lynne and Mary were also invited to attend the Lord Mayor's NAIDOC luncheon, and were thrilled to see Uncle Ivan awarded the NAIDOC Award for 2022 at the event.

We continue to offer 'Cultural Respect and Safety' two day training facilitated by Beyond and Associates annually to new staff and staff undertaking a refresher. This year 20 staff participated in this training. The impact of this training, and other RAP initiatives in the organisation, is revealed in our Workplace RAP Barometer results on the next page.



Workplace RAP Barometer 2022*

RELATIONSHIPS AND EMPOWERMENT



more Gowrie SA staff, in comparison to other workplaces with a stretch RAP, are interested in being involved with activities that support reconciliation / cultural understanding



98% of staff agree there are opportunities to get involved in reconciliation activities at Gowrie SA

100%

of staff say:

- the current relationship between First Nations staff and other staff is good
- the relationships between First Nations people and other Australians is important
- Gowrie SA has a genuine and strong commitment towards reconciliation and First Nations stakeholders

RESPECT AND CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

100%

of staff say

- it is important to undertake truth-telling processes, to acknowledge the past
- it is important for Gowrie SA to provide days off for Sorry Business

97% of staff have positively improved their behaviour regarding First Nations peoples and cultures after undertaking cultural learning training



More Gowrie SA staff engage in informal cultural learning, self-learning about histories of First Nations Australia, and attend cultural events in their own time, in comparison to other workplaces with a Stretch RAP



Compared to previous years, more staff believe it is very important to learn about past issues of European colonisation and government policy for First Nations Australians

The majority say they are confident they could engage with First Nations people in a way that is culturally respectful



3/4

have a high level of knowledge about the histories of First Nations peoples in Australia

OPPORTUNITIES

89%

of staff say their ability to do their job benefits from First Nations cultural learning



76% of staff are aware that we have a First Nations employment strategy and believe the strategy is effective at achieving its goals