

WODEN COMMUNITY SERVICE INC.

Reconciliation Action Plan 2010 – 2011





Our Vision for Reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is to assist to build a diverse and cohesive community that welcomes all its members and recognises the value that each member provides to our community.

We acknowledge the original ownership and custodianship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their continuing cultures and the valuable contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to our contemporary society.

We acknowledge the hurt, dislocation and disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as a result of colonisation. Woden Community Service will seek to help redress some of that disadvantage through our programs. We also acknowledge the advantages and benefits that can result from reconciliation, and how this can enhance our programs.

Our Business

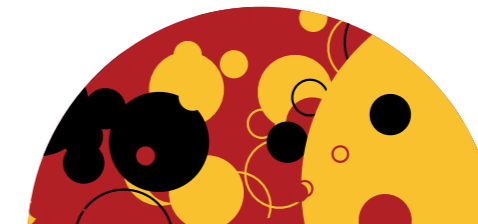
Woden Community Service Inc. (WCS) is one of six regional community services within Canberra. WCS is a not-for-profit organisation that has been providing a broad range of services to people who live or work in Woden Valley since 1969. Programs are funded by both the ACT and Australian Governments. WCS provides a range of services to people living in the ACT, particularly on the Southside of Canberra. These include:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Disability support | Support for individuals and families |
| Housing assistance | Older persons programs |
| Children's services | Community transport |
| Youth services | Volunteers |
| Community development | Financial support |

WCS plays an active role in developing, supporting and maintaining the social and cultural diversity of the Woden community, and works to build a vibrant community that recognises and utilises its resources.

Our vision is to support, develop and celebrate our community's strength.

WCS currently employs over 130 permanent staff with over 60 volunteers. As at 30 June 2010, WCS did not have any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff.



Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

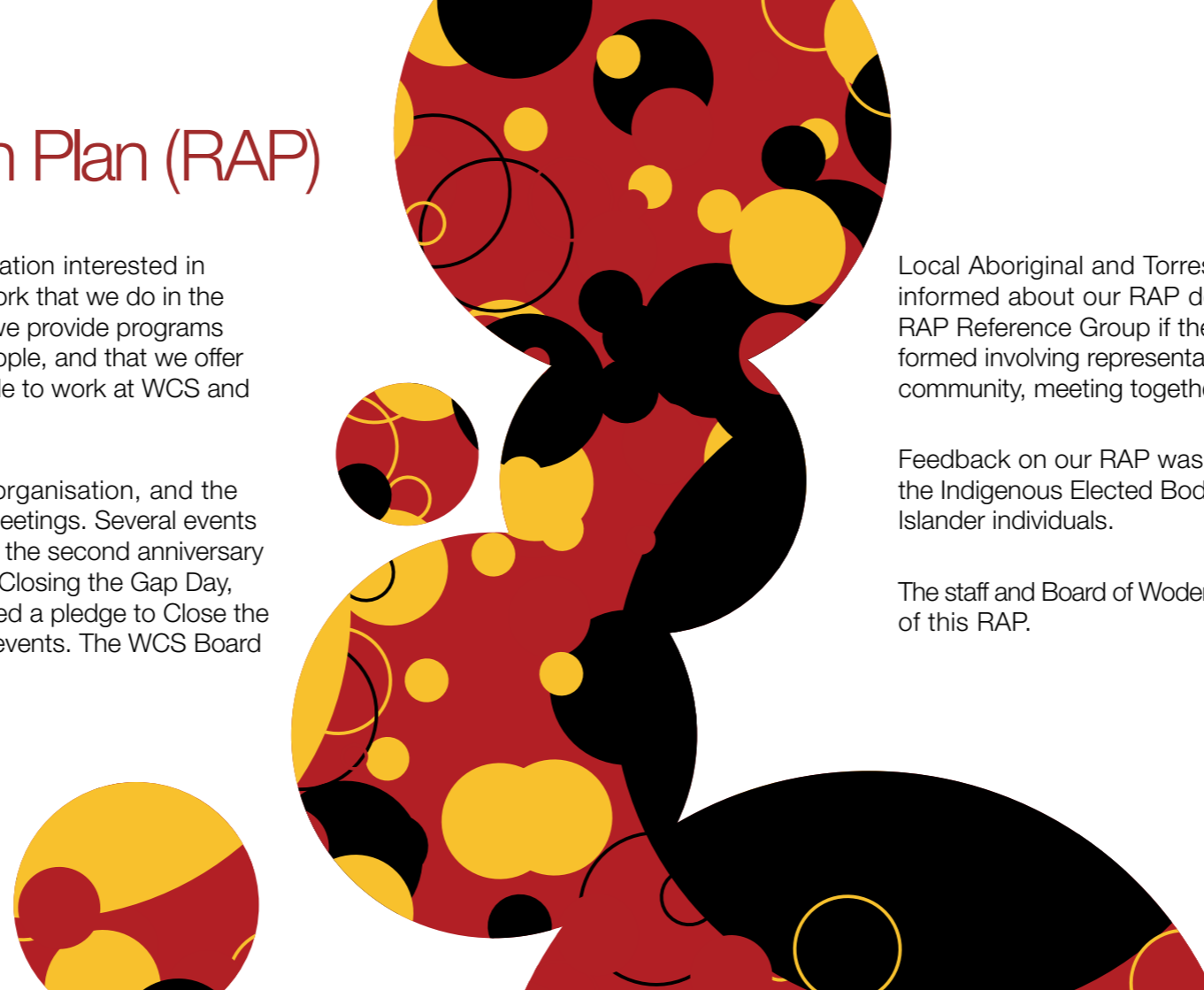
Our RAP was developed by staff throughout the organisation interested in progressing reconciliation in a practical way through the work that we do in the local community. This, our first RAP, seeks to ensure that we provide programs that are relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and that we offer opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to work at WCS and to share in the life of our community.

Our RAP Working Group includes staff from across the organisation, and the development of the RAP was discussed at monthly staff meetings. Several events were held to involve all staff including a commemoration of the second anniversary of the Apology to the Stolen Generations and an event for Closing the Gap Day, where individual staff and the organisation as a whole signed a pledge to Close the Gap. A significant number of staff attended each of these events. The WCS Board has actively supported the development of our RAP.

Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and groups were informed about our RAP development and invited to participate by joining our RAP Reference Group if they had the capacity to. A RAP Reference Group was formed involving representatives from the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, meeting together with the Working Group.

Feedback on our RAP was provided by ACTCOSS, the Aboriginal Justice Centre, the Indigenous Elected Body, ANTaR ACT, and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals.

The staff and Board of Woden Community Service are committed to the implementation of this RAP.



Relationships

Building a vibrant and resilient community in which everyone is welcome and their talents and contributions are recognised and celebrated.

Focus area 1:

Establish and maintain a dialogue and mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in the ACT.

Focus area 2:

WCS is accessible to and acknowledges the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
1.1. Get to know our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community with a view to building mutually beneficial relationships.	Director Team Leaders	September 2010	Identify local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, Traditional Owners, Elders and community leaders.
		September 2010	Eight letters sent along with our RAP and encouraging collaboration, skills and knowledge sharing.
		October 2010	Extend invitations to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to attend and participate in Woden Valley Community Festival.
		March 2011	Meet with the ACT Indigenous Elected Body.
		August 2011	Two mutually beneficial relationships established.
1.2. Create a database of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional contacts	IT Manager Director	February 2011	Shared drive file developed and all relevant staff trained in its use.
	Team Leaders Program Managers	April 2011	WCS staff contact identified to assist with managing each relationship.
1.3. Accept invitations from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to actively participate in their events, projects and celebrations.	Director Team Leaders Program Managers	August 2011	Two WCS staff members accept each invitation received.
			WCS staff will actively encourage those who use our services to attend, where appropriate.
1.4. Make and maintain contact with local organisations actively involved in reconciliation.	Director Team Leaders RAP Working Group	March 2011	Contact is made and maintained through supporting the work of ANTaR ACT and the ACT Journey of Healing Inc.
		August 2011	Contact is made with another RAPping organisation, e.g. YWCA or ACTCOSS, and maintained through sharing a cultural development opportunity annually.

Relationships continued...

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
2.1. Make Woden Community Service accessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	Director	October 2010	Benchmark the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who currently access our services.
	Team Leaders		
	Program Managers	November 2010	Seek feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people currently using WCS services about the accessibility and quality of services.
	RAP Working Group	August 2011	Work with two local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and the Reference Group to identify how to make WCS services more accessible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
		August 2011	Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing our services by 50%.
2.2. The needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are embedded into our organisation.	WCS Board	July 2010	Our strategic plan and budget reflects our commitment to reconciliation and closing the gap.
	Director Team Leaders Program Managers	August 2011	Explore potential service partnerships with two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

Respect

Understanding and awareness of the experiences, beliefs and practices of people within our community enables the development of stronger relationships, appropriate services and active engagement in practical reconciliation.

Focus area 1:

Building our practice of reconciliation through understanding, celebrating and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their cultures.

Respect continued...

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
1. Acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the land.	Board Chair Director Program Managers	November 2010	An Acknowledgement of Country statement is developed in consultation with local Traditional Owners.
		August 2011	An Acknowledgement of Country is given at monthly staff and Board meetings.
		August 2011	An Acknowledgement of Country statement is included in all publications, on our website and in email signatures.
		August 2011	A framed Acknowledgement of Country statement is placed at the entrance of the WCS office and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are invited to an unveiling ceremony.
2. Include a Welcome to Country at the Woden Valley Community Festival.	Woden Valley Community Festival Organising Committee	October 2010	A Welcome to Country is provided by a local Traditional Owner.
3. Celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through the creative arts, maps and flags.	Director Office Manager Team Leaders	August 2011	Maps, flags, artworks and posters are displayed in WCS reception and meeting rooms, and 50% of WCS work sites. All include a full acknowledgement and relevant information about the artists, meaning and story.
		August 2011	A resource collection of music, DVDs and books is established.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
4. Support and promote local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural events.	Director Chair Team Leaders Staff	August 2011	Staff and Board members attend one cultural event each year.
		July 2011	National Reconciliation and NAIDOC weeks are acknowledged in May and July respectively at staff and Board meetings.
		August 2011	Age appropriate activities in Children's Services and Youth Programs are promoted in celebration of National Reconciliation and NAIDOC weeks – e.g. storytelling, mural painting, youth outings, and artwork.
5. Provide cultural awareness training for staff and Board members.	Director Chair Team Leaders Staff	August 2011	All Program Managers, Board members and some staff participate in a full or half day of Cultural Awareness training on an annual basis.
			All new staff members complete Reconciliation Australia's on line cultural awareness training tool – Share our Pride – as part of the induction process.
			Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander guest speakers share their knowledge on a biannual basis.
6. Undertake ACTCOSS's Cultural Awareness Self Assessment Toolkit to determine the level of WCS's cultural competence.	Director RAP Working Group	August 2011	Self assessment is undertaken and areas for action are identified for inclusion in our RAP refresh.

Opportunities

Our vision of supporting, developing and celebrating community strength is underpinned by our ability to develop the skills and experiences of the people involved in our organisation as staff, volunteers and community members.

Focus area 1:

Actively build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through recruitment, training, governance and business opportunities.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
1. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people are employed in our organisation.	Director HR Manager Team Leaders Program Managers	February 2011	Recruitment, retention and professional development strategy developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and/or other organisations which have successfully employed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
		October 2011	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply in all recruitment advertisements.
		October 2010	50% of all vacant positions are advertised in the Koori Mail and National Indigenous Times.
		August 2011	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees increased from 0 to 2.
2. Develop strategy for providing traineeships and work experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	Director Team Leaders	February 2011	Strategy developed for work experience and traineeship.
		August 2011	Two traineeships/work experience placements per year.
3. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people are represented on our Board.	Board	October 2010	One Board position filled.
4. Build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social enterprises and not-for-profits.	Director	August 2011	Support an Aboriginal social enterprise in the ACT through our Financial Support Services.

Tracking progress and reporting

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
1. The RAP Working Group made up of representatives from across all levels of the organisation continues to meet on a regular basis to lead our RAP journey.	Director RAP Working Group	October 2010	RAP Governance framework developed and reviewed annually.
		August 2011	RAP Working Group meets face to face monthly during the year to progress the RAP.
2. Feedback on and input into our RAP is received from external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	Director RAP Working Group	August 2011	RAP Reference Group, comprising external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives, meets three times a year to review progress of the initial RAP in November 2010, March 2011 and July 2011.
			Feedback is incorporated into our annual RAP refresh. Our annual RAP report is presented to our RAP reference group members.
3. Whole of organisation ownership of our RAP.	Director RAP Working Group	August 2011	RAP discussed monthly at all: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • management meetings • staff meetings • Board meetings.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
4. Progress, achievements and learnings in implementing the RAP are shared on a regular basis.	RAP Working Group	August 2011	Report on RAP progress is provided quarterly to the Board who responds with feedback.
		September 2010 and September 2011	Report on RAP progress included in our Annual Report.
		August 2011	Reports on RAP progress are publicly celebrated through our website and newsletter quarterly in December, March, June and September.
5. RAP reported on and refreshed annually.	RAP Working Group	August 2011	RAP Report available on our and Reconciliation Australia websites.
		September 2011	Refreshed RAP available on our and Reconciliation Australia websites.



RAP Contact

Julie Evans: julie.evans@wcs.org.au

Ph: 6234 6813

Susan Henderson: susan.henderson@wcs.org.au

Ph: 6234 6809





**WODEN
COMMUNITY
SERVICE INC.**



**Reconciliation
AUSTRALIA**
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS

