

# Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan

July 2022 – July 2025



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

ELEVATE

LIFE  
WITHOUT  
BARRIERS



# Artwork Story

## Empowered Voices

Life Without Barriers empowers the voices of people and communities that matter most – the children and communities who need support and to be the change they seek. The artwork looks at the core idea of breaking down barriers. The circles (barriers) are positive steps towards achieving empowerment and growth towards a better future.

'Empowered Voices' artwork created by Keisha Leon (Waanyi and Kalkadoon), Lisa Sorbie Martin (Moa and Murry Islands, Torres Strait Islands), and Gilimbaa.

Community-centric Grassroots

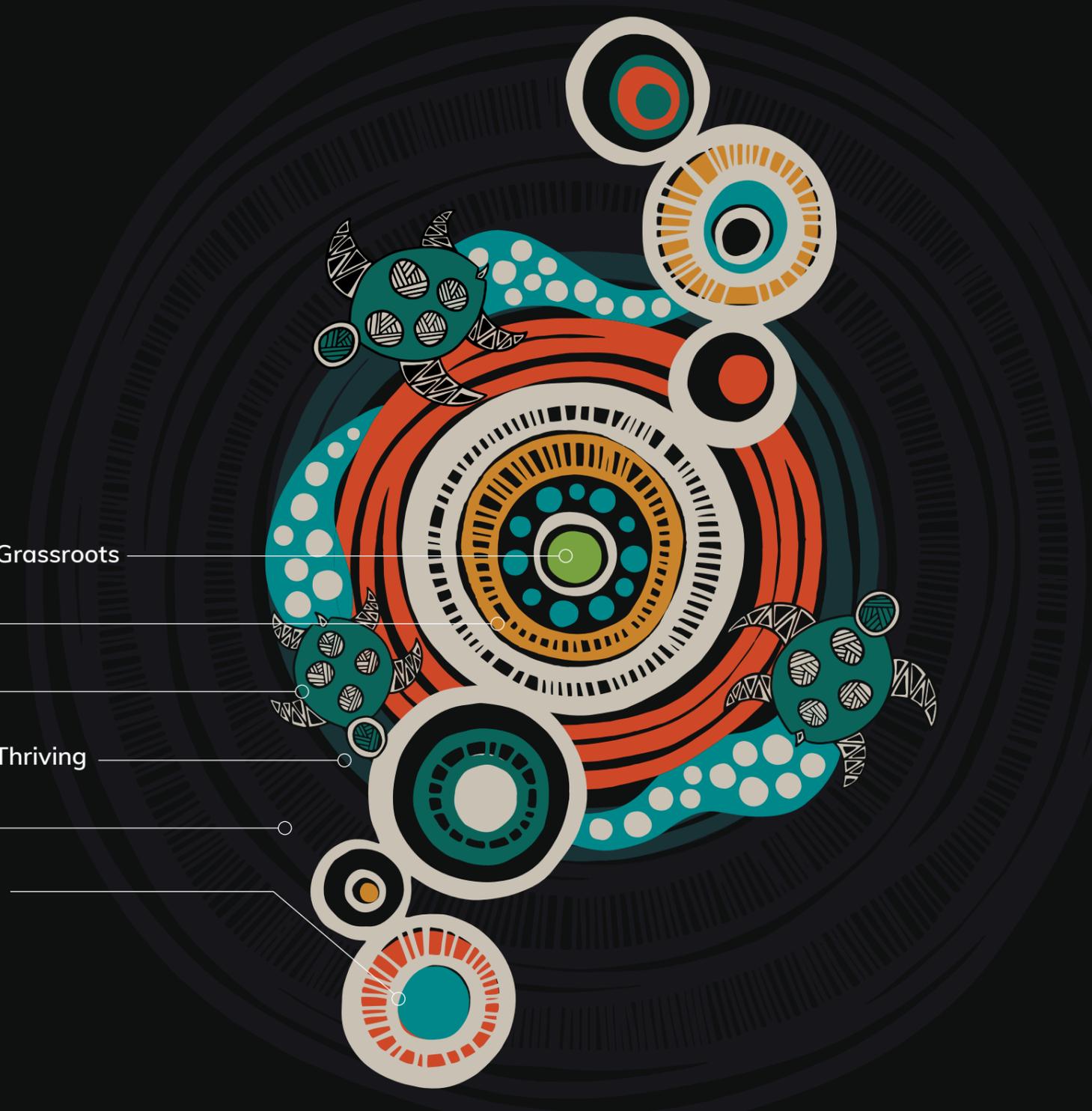
Growth and Values

Children's Voices

Empowered Voices Thriving

Future for Hope

Pathways to Future



## About the Artists



### Keisha Leon

Keisha Leon is an artist and designer who uses narratives to reflect her own experiences. Keisha connects conceptual designs with social outcomes to change the narrative for the future. Keisha is a proud Waanyi and Kalkadoon woman who builds her design around her connections to her continual navigation of her identity and life.



### Lisa Sorbie Martin

Lisa Sorbie Martin is a Torres Strait Islander. Her family bloodline comes from Murray Island and Mua Island. Sorbie is her traditional Torres Strait Island name meaning 'wild water cherry'. Sorbie is an artist and designer who creates visual art, textile design, wearable art, ceramics and public art. She is also a cultural educator and creative innovator, bringing culture and creativity together in any community through storytelling in art making. Connecting both Indigenous and non-Indigenous story, cultural meaning and/or environment are certainly her strengths, leaving a legacy of history and culture.

## Artwork Breakdown



### Community-centric, Grassroots

At the centre of everything Life Without Barriers does (green), is grassroots passion and values (grey ring), and the diverse communities (blue) they support.



### Values and Growth

At the centre of what Life Without Barriers does are their values which they embody to advocate for and empower the voices of community at policy levels to community led cultural connections at the local level. The bands represent the growing and strengthening of their impact, connections and empowered communities. When people's voices are heard, and services provide equitable solutions that empower people, there is a synergy of connection that unites and further strengthens voices and progress. The rings grow outward to represent growth and louder empowered voices.



### Empowered Voices Thriving

These rings represent the empowered voices of the communities, people and future generations. As they grow, they become louder and more impactful towards influencing positive change.



### Voice of Children

The Turtles symbolise the children. The Turtle eggs (blue) are their voices being heard. Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented by the markings of zigzag patternations. The cross-hatching showcases the weaving techniques of ancient basket weaving and Island mats. These are culturally significant objects which signify our journey in life, community and holders of knowledge and stories.



### Pathways to Future

The journey pathway represents the present, where we are now. It shows Life Without Barriers working towards change to ensure a hopeful future for people, communities and future generations. The past and future will guide everything they do. By acknowledging our shared history, traditions and First Nations people and challenging what we do today, we can co-create a brighter future.



### Future for Hope

The darker rings represent the future. They are the strength and growth for First Nations voices and the people Life Without Barriers supports who are at the centre of everything they do. There is a brighter future to look forward to, and although there is still a long way to go, we will continue to work together to achieve self-determination, inclusion and equity. There is a vision. There is hope.

# Acknowledgement of Country

Life Without Barriers acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this country and their connection to land, water and community. We pay our respect to them, their cultures and customs and to their Elders past, present and emerging. We believe that reconciliation must live in the hearts and minds of all Australians.

We are committed to an ongoing journey towards truth telling and reconciliation. We recognise and value the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, carers, people we support, peak bodies, organisations, their leaders, and communities across Australia as we continue our reconciliation journey together.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this document may contain images, voices and videos of deceased persons.



Smoking Ceremony  
at Mt Annon NSW,  
NAIDOC Week,  
2018 – Because  
of Her, We Can.

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## Life Without Barriers – Elevate CEO statement



**Karen Mundine**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I congratulate Life Without Barriers on its formal commitment to reconciliation, as it implements its first Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), its fifth RAP overall.

Progressing to an Elevate RAP is a truly momentous occasion for any organisation. It signals a readiness to step into a leadership role, to guide and galvanise the RAP network, and to set the standard for reconciliation activities across its industry. Underpinning this is the potential of Elevate RAP partners to create far-reaching, systemic and transformational change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across their sphere of influence, and beyond.

Life Without Barrier's new Elevate RAP has taken this expectation and gone the extra mile, choosing brave, substantive action that will

have a profound impact on the lives of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities for years to come. The social purpose organisation has recognised the cycles of trauma that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, and by extension their communities, face in contemporary Australia – in particular the disproportionately high rates of First Nations children in the child protection system. It acknowledges its own role in this system, and consequently its ambitious Transformation Project aims to drastically reduce this over-representation in out of home care.

By 2031, Life Without Barriers will progressively step away from offering out-of-home services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, transferring those services instead to First Nations-controlled organisations. Its plans to achieve this are comprehensive and wide-reaching: it will rely on two-way, genuine partnerships with the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) and other First Nations organisations to ensure a sustainable and successful transition. In doing so, Life Without Barriers will be placing decision-making about Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander children where it belongs – in their communities.

It is a very appropriate time for Life Without Barriers to commit to the actions in this Elevate RAP. At the beginning of 2021, Reconciliation Australia released its State of Reconciliation in Australia report, which found that the reconciliation movement is at a tipping point, and that Australia needs to move from 'safe' to 'brave' in order to realise the promise of reconciliation.

This Elevate RAP, and Life Without Barrier's considered and wide-reaching plans for the next three

years and beyond, encapsulates the kind of brave action needed to help our nation move past this tipping point. Not only is Life Without Barriers the first not-for-profit to join the Elevate cohort, but it is also truly ground-breaking in the commitments it has made and will stand as testament to what brave action for reconciliation can achieve.

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Life Without Barriers on this brave, ambitious and far-reaching Elevate RAP and look forward to following its reconciliation journey.



## Message from our Chair and Board Director



Greg Ridder  
Chair

Natalie Walker  
Board Director

**We acknowledge the Awabakal people as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which Life Without Barriers’ national office resides. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging on all the lands on which our employees and carers live.**

This Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan has the full support and endorsement of the Life Without Barriers Board and we will actively lead and contribute to the responsibilities and deliverables all of which reflect our commitment to reconciliation.

Life Without Barriers is a national not-for-profit organisation with more than 11,000 employees and carers living and working across Australia. Our purpose is deeply embedded in who we are together – an organisation that partners with people to change lives for the

better. This purpose guides the commitments within this Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan and every action we take, as employees and as individuals.

The exceptionally disproportionate disadvantages experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in addition to the wise practice, resilience and solutions that come from their communities, are the responsibility of us all to understand through truth telling and to address through recognition and committed action. We will not ignore the injustice and inequality

born from a lack of constitutional recognition and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, nor will we ignore the sustained intergenerational trauma of colonisation. The result is an immediate need for all Australians to work together to promote reconciliation for the benefit of children, young people, individuals and families.

It is for this reason, Life Without Barriers sought to be accountable through an Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan, which we believe deepens our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for the future.

Through this plan and stepping up to the Transformation Project, the Board shows our continued commitment to reconciliation. We support the wisdom, efforts and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander leadership, peak bodies and community-controlled organisations, and our employees to influence the systemic barriers faced by Australia’s First Peoples in areas where disadvantage overshadows opportunity, justice and inclusion. The greatest of these is the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the child protection and youth justice systems, which continue to instil long-term impacts in every aspect of life across generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ families.

The Board believes we can change the course for emerging generations by listening to the voices and leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We believe this is possible because of our enduring commitment to partner and to maintain long term

partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This Reconciliation Action Plan reflects our commitment for the future.

We welcome the partnership with Reconciliation Australia, whose expertise and leadership we will continue to embrace into the future. They have inspired us to be courageous and imaginative about the change and impact we can have together. We thank you for walking this journey with us.

On behalf of Life Without Barriers we also extend our gratitude to Keisha Leon, Lisa Sorbie Martin and Gilimbaa for the artwork ‘Empowered Voices’, which tells a powerful story of inclusion, courage and partnering, as we seek a better future together.



## Message from our Chief Executive



*Claire Robbs*

**Claire Robbs**  
Chief Executive

For the path towards reconciliation to be paved with true intention, we must hear the truth and speak the truth about our shared history, and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' fundamental right to self-determination. It is through these actions that we can strive to heal centuries of injustice.

Life Without Barriers is a collective of people brought together through shared values founded on recognition and respect for each person's rights. We acknowledge that every day we bear witness to the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples not being realised and the distressing disadvantage they face in every social justice area in Australia.

The commitments we make in this Reconciliation Action Plan determine that we will not be complicit to these injustices. Whilst recognising the trauma our nation's

history has caused, we believe we can endeavour to reconcile and become a nation that celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures as part of our whole nation's story and future. Our commitment shows our belief in heeding profound calls to be guided by the wisdom and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to honour these relationships by acting with integrity.

We will be responsive and courageous when needed, the need for courage being most evident in the deeply troubling over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the child protection system. We believe that by sharing our resources, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities can strengthen what has been made fragile by generations of trauma and harm. Over the next three years we will work in partnership with

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to understand the most effective way we can walk together and create a positive future for their children and families.

We will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enterprise and contribute to creating meaningful employment opportunities within our organisation and encourage other sector employers to do the same. We will strengthen our own workplace culture, so it is safe, culturally appropriate, with a zero-tolerance to racism.

This Reconciliation Action Plan will live within the thousands of voices, hearts and minds of our Life Without Barriers' community and guide our actions and decision making over the next three years. My personal commitment as Chief Executive of Life Without Barriers and as a member of our community, is that I will lead by example.

## Our Vision for Reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is a nation where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children, young people and families, prioritising self-determination to strengthen connection to culture, community and country.

Our vision is founded in determination and aspirational direction for the next steps in our reconciliation journey. It defines our short and long-term actions and will guide the decisions we make along the way. It inspires a conviction to live our values, successfully realise our commitments, and infuses the power and energy to boldly serve the people we support, and to lead with purpose.

Our vision will radiate from what is in the hearts and minds of our people; it speaks to the journey we are undertaking, the injustices we are seeking to right, and the opportunities we are looking to leverage.

**“ We are grateful to our partnership with SNAICC to understand the most effective way we can support and invest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led solutions so children can grow up safe and cared for by family, community and in culture, connected to their languages and country. ”**

*Claire Robbs, Chief Executive, Life Without Barriers*

## Our Purpose

**Our guiding principle is our founding purpose – to partner with people to change lives for the better.**



*Catherine Liddle,  
Chief Executive Officer  
SNAICC – National Voice  
for our Children*

**“ The future of decision-making about the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is community-controlled. Our communities are the experts. We know that culturally appropriate services designed, led and delivered by our services, get better outcomes. ”**



# Our Values



## WE ARE COURAGEOUS

Our courage is forged through optimistic determination. It is our way of being bold and generous in all our relationships and endeavours. Courage is our excitement and our perseverance as we steer steadfastly towards our purpose.



## WE ARE RESPECTFUL

We value every person we partner with and honour one-to-one connections. Respect is our human currency; it means we behave authentically and with integrity.



## WE ARE RESPONSIVE

We are thoughtful and responsive because we believe we can be considered in our thinking while adapting at speed. We listen and respond to people's expectations and choices – getting things done swiftly and thoroughly, every time.



## WE BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are everything. They are how we connect, form trust and understand what people expect and are seeking from us. Relationships are what we bring to every intention, every action and every partnership.



## WE ARE IMAGINATIVE

Imagination gives us eternal optimism and creativity to be unrestrained in how we seek to partner and solve problems.



## Our Business

**Life Without Barriers is one of Australia’s largest social purpose organisations. We have a compelling and proud history, spanning 25 years, one that defines our focus and determination for the future.**

Founded in Newcastle, New South Wales in 1995, we have grown from a small group of individuals, united by imagination, courage and resolve, into a national organisation, supporting 22,000 people, 8,000 employees (420 of whom are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people), and 3,000 carers across 400 communities.

Life Without Barriers provide services to vulnerable and marginalised people who are supported through 94 locations across each of the states and territories: children, young people and families, people with disability, those with mental health needs, older people who wish to remain

in their homes, people who are homeless, refugees and people seeking asylum.

Our purpose – to partner with people to change lives for the better – was intentional 25 years ago and throughout this time, we have remained an organisation that is hopeful and resolute to what can be achieved through partnerships. It sounds simple, but with our values at the forefront of everything we do, we strive to honour the relationships we have with diverse peoples, organisations, sectors, and governments by acting with respect, responsiveness, imagination, and courage.

We partner broadly with the aim of establishing sector alliances to harness the power of collective influence to challenge traditional ways of doing things. This is an approach that began with the courageous families who founded Life Without Barriers who were not willing to accept that any person should be denied an opportunity. We have an enduring and respected commitment to social justice issues and human rights and to disrupting the foundations of long-standing systems and barriers, so people we support can achieve their goals with dignity and maximise their life opportunities free from discrimination and disadvantage.

We are at the front line, living, working, hearing the stories and lived experiences of the people and communities we support.

We understand the totality of the challenges faced by them, and particularly by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – challenges that are deep, complex and systemic. We respect the unique rights that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold as the original peoples of this land, including the right to a distinct status and culture, self-determination, and the connection to land, sea and community, which provides the spiritual and cultural basis of their communities.

We particularly identify the distressing over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems and their families who, as our country’s First Peoples, continue to experience the structural drivers that result in their children

and families encountering child protection systems. We feel a strong sense of responsibility to do our part in this continuing crisis. We realise that change cannot be achieved through internal service responses alone or by being passive in our capacity to influence the community services sectors, social institutions, policy, legislation and governments to drive system transformation and sector reform across the child and family service sectors.

We are ready to give the best of what we offer into the future. We will galvanise our extensive resources, influence and networks and elevate our leadership responsibility with an agile and generous spirit knowing that the future cannot be left to chance. We recognise that everything we do today has an impact on tomorrow and we

acknowledge that the challenges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia are facing, can be positively impacted by acting now, collectively, systematically and courageously.

## Our Partners

1. Aboriginal Medical Service Redfern New South Wales
2. AbSec – NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation
3. Awabakal Ltd New South Wales
4. Cahoots Western Australia
5. CareerTrackers
6. Central Queensland Indigenous Development
7. Curijo New South Wales
8. City of Stirling Western Australia
9. Curtin University Western Australia
10. Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-Operative Ltd Victoria
11. Derbarl Yerrigan Aboriginal Medical Service Western Australia
12. Gilimbaa Queensland
13. Gittaba Queensland
14. Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service New South Wales
15. Larrakia Development Corporation Northern Territory
16. Link-Up (New South Wales) Aboriginal Corporation
17. Link-Up (Queensland) Aboriginal Corporation
18. Marcus Lee Design New South Wales
19. Mirrabooka Shopping Centre Western Australia
20. Muloobinbah Aboriginal Corporation Western Australia
21. Naala Djookan Healing Centre Western Australia
22. National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
23. NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation New South Wales
24. Nyamba Buru Yawuru Western Australia
25. Nyungar Birdiyia Western Australia
26. Orange Aboriginal Medical Service New South Wales
27. Piccaninny Foster and Kinship Care, Queensland
28. Position Promo
29. Purple House Northern Territory
30. PwC's Indigenous Consulting New South Wales
31. Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak
32. Reconciliation Australia
33. Reconciliation Queensland
34. Reconciliation South Australia
35. Reconciliation Tasmania
36. Reconciliation Western Australia
37. Saltwater Country Inc. Western Australia
38. SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children
39. Life Without Barriers membership of State and Territory Family Matters Leadership Groups, Nationally
40. Supply Nation
41. Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre
42. Tauondi Aboriginal Community College South Australia
43. Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation New South Wales
44. University of South Australia
45. Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Association
46. Victorian Aboriginal Children and Young People's Alliance
47. Maxima



We are ready to give the best of what we offer. We will galvanise our extensive resources and elevate our leadership responsibility with an agile and generous spirit knowing that the future cannot be left to chance. We recognise that everything we do today has an impact on tomorrow and acknowledge that the challenges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia are facing, can be positively impacted by acting now, collectively, systematically and courageously.

Participants at the Waltja Aged and Disability Festival connect with family and community.

# Our RAP Journey

Life Without Barriers has been deeply involved with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities for twenty-five years through the provision of services Australia-wide. Our reconciliation journey has culminated in 12 years of cultural highlights, continuous learning-by-doing and always aiming to improve. From inception, our journey in the child, youth and family sectors has focused on addressing child removal that continues to leave a legacy of trauma and loss which affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today – we see this first-hand with the children, adults, families and communities we support.



Life Without Barriers employees and carers join with community to put our commitment to reconciliation into action and learn by doing, 2019.

We established our first RAP in 2009, developing relationships with Reconciliation Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, ACCO's, non-government organisations and communities, to provide leadership and advice for the children, adults and families we support. We also sought to expand our knowledge of, and embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wisdom, and to learn more about the criticality of identity, belonging and culture as well as the role Elders play in the lives of their children. We then extended this RAP between 2010 and 2012, embarking on our second RAP between 2012 and 2015, and a Stretch RAP from 2016 to 2019.

During these years, we engaged with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leads, Elders and designated representatives to promote and recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and carers to provide culturally safe and responsive care to children. We implemented longer-term strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's health and wellbeing, addressing impacts of trauma and ensuring cultural safety. During the period of the Stretch RAP, we focused on children's education and, where possible, their reunification to family and kin, embedding children's rights in their case and cultural support plans, as well as in the organisation's business plan.

## Public Discourse

Our public statements about reconciliation and engagement in public discourse on issues of importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, include:

- The announcement of our partnership with SNAICC – National Voice for our Children in September 2020, and our public commitment to progressively stepping away from providing out-of-home care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by 2031.
- Co-sponsorship of a panel discussion on the 2019 NAIDOC week themes: Voice, Treaty, Truth and the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Employees and a Board member were privileged to listen to panel members Dr Jackie Huggins, Professor John Maynard, and Sean Gordon, Gidgee Group.
- Published Statements
  - An Uluru Statement from the Heart position statement featuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.
  - Victorian Treaty Statement of Support, proclaiming our support for the advancement of treaty.
- Support for the Recognise Campaign by incorporating their aims on our website, intranet, and cultural training documentation.

## Partnership with Cornell University, United States of America

Since 2016, Life Without Barriers has adopted the CARE practice model across Child, Youth and Family Services. CARE was developed by the Residential Child Care Project – Cornell University. During 2022 and 2023, Life Without Barriers, in partnership with Cornell University, will fund and support an action research project on CARE implementation in the Northern Territory, to follow the research topic – Cultural Adaptation of the CARE model in the Northern Territory. A Darwin-based university will conduct an ethics review on the project. A primary goal of the action research is to identify means by which to adapt the CARE model in the Northern Territory to be respectful, inclusive and culturally safe, and to support true partnership with local communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, children, families and key stakeholders. The learnings from this project could be transferrable across Australia including other non-government agencies using CARE and could lead to community led program responses for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

## Challenges and Learnings

We are extremely proud of our RAP progress and our long-term commitment to reconciliation. During the past twelve years, we have addressed the five dimensions of reconciliation through our three RAPs as well as numerous commitments beyond our RAP responsibilities. In collaboration with internal and external partners, we continue to learn and adapt to challenges and our learnings have evolved over time.

One of our major challenges since 2017 is that our workforce has doubled in size as has the number of people we support. The current need in the community drives the range of areas where we offer services that are the same communities in which employees and carers live and work. This connection to community gives us depth of understanding and connection to each other. We recognise our experience as members of the communities and as a quality service provider offering services for many people who may face barriers now or in the future. Whilst there are advantages to scale including a footprint in all states and territories, we have learned there is also a greater vigilance required to address challenges and improvements.

Some of our challenges relate to our approach to cultural learning, recruitment and retention, addressing racism and evolving anti-racism strategies, and data management, which we have taken for granted through systems and methods that have historically served us well, which, over time, have become less effective.

## Cultural Learning

During the period of the Stretch RAP, we refreshed and trialled several approaches to cultural learning: on-line and face-to-face workshops, cultural immersion and responding to a suite of cultural needs. However, recent surveys of cultural learning have highlighted that whilst these experiences did present many learning opportunities for participants, they did not articulate a clear learning path particularly for non-Indigenous employees to build their cultural capability, or cultural safety responsibilities.

The recent Reconciliation Australia Leadership Survey, 2021 drew attention to differences in understanding by non-Indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in relation to cultural capability and cultural safety. Non-Indigenous employees believed that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees felt culturally safe in the workplace whilst a higher percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees did not feel culturally safe or that the whole-of-organisation demonstrates cultural capability.

Whilst this seems to reinforce the need for additional cultural awareness for non-Indigenous employees, we recognise that cultural capability and cultural safety are not about increasing cultural awareness for non-Indigenous employees but about including cultural capability and cultural safety in the Cultural Learning and Cultural Capability Framework and embedding them and other cultural learning into online and face-to-face learning, practice, policies, and systems to build workforce capability.

Our Cultural Learning and Cultural Capability Framework includes a focus on Truth Telling; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Self-determination; Intergenerational Trauma; Structural and Institutional Racism; Strategies to Challenge Workplace Racism, Cultural Safety Responsibilities, and Cultural Capability. The suite of learning modules provides a sustainable approach to cultural learning, and a clear learning path focused on building cultural capability and creating culturally safe environments, services and workplaces.

Aligned with greater cultural safety and cultural learning across Life Without Barriers and a more targeted approach to racism and anti-racism strategies, we will have a substantive focus on building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and investing in workforce development. This two-fold approach within our workforce overall will enable a renewed focus on employment opportunities and experiences for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, improve attraction and retention, drive outcomes and build a safer and more inclusive organisation.

## Addressing Racism

Whilst we pride ourselves in responding to racism in the workplace, the legacy of the Black Lives Matter movement that racism is structural and institutional, prompted conversations with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leads who confirmed the need to review our current systems to address racism. Meeting with the Leads was a reminder that racism is a business issue because it affects the performance of our organisation, and it is more than individual prejudice.

These conversations culminated in a renewed organisational commitment to improve the cultural capability of the Life Without Barriers system, by consideration of actions to address individual, structural and institutional racism through an Executive approach and to cascade collective responsibility across the organisation. This includes fortnightly Chief Executive and quarterly Board updates to leaders across Life Without Barriers to highlight areas of pressure or concern, a roundtable approach to developing a suite of responses, and a restorative process to address issues in our complaints and grievance process.

We are also committed to leading agenda items through our partnership groups such as the Children in Care Collective, Alliance 20 and the Child, Youth and Family Chief Executive Alliance to address structural and institutional racism and cultural safety within the child protection system overall, particularly the non-Indigenous workforce.

## Data Integrity

Life Without Barriers' Strategy 2025 makes a series of commitments to be more accountable, transparent and to measure our impact, which includes making greater use of data and to ensure it is accessible.

We have created new tools which allow us to analyse and communicate what the data is telling us, so that decision-makers can use that information to inform their activities, and to be transparent to the broader community about what we are achieving through our RAP.

We have developed an approach to measure the impact the RAP will have and the changes we hope to see. We will also measure the impact of the Transformation Project. This will entail measures specific to the project over the whole project horizon. These measures will provide valuable learnings for Life Without Barriers, Reconciliation Australia, the partner organisations and the sector more broadly, as we undertake this first-of-its-kind journey.

We have invested in a Manager of Impact and Insights who will report to the National Reconciliation Strategy Group every three months. This dedicated role is working closely with the Executive and senior leaders to ensure our data is structured in a way that ensures our results are consistent and measurable.

## How Stretch RAP Learnings Informs Our Approach to the Elevate RAP

The learnings from the Stretch RAP, the process toward the Elevate RAP and our partnership with Reconciliation Australia and SNAICC have enabled us to think more broadly in relation to our scale, reach, influence and advocacy power to achieve our ambitious transformation commitment. Whilst we recognise that the power of our scale, partnerships, and collaboration achieves collective impact internally, and improves Life Without Barriers at its core, working successfully together with our multi-stakeholders and sector partnerships and with governments, change can occur at a faster pace which will inform the RAP.

Life Without Barriers and the child, youth and family service sectors will be more effective as expertise and resources are pooled, learning is fostered, common issues such as the over-representation of children in child protection systems and complex systems issues can be tackled collectively, and mutual accountability to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can be fostered.

In reporting on the Stretch RAP, we focused on activity and monitored outputs, which did not measure the impact of our work. In this RAP, we will focus on impact measures that identify what we want to achieve across the three-year period of the RAP. This will differently connect our work with the people we support, and employ, as well as communities, child, youth and family sectors and governments. It will provide flexibility and will enable us to communicate what we want to achieve in a way that is meaningful for SNAICC, sector partnerships, governments, Reconciliation Australia and RAP Partners.

Whilst we have prided ourselves in responding to racism in the workplace, the Black Lives Matter movement prompted conversations with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leads who confirmed the need to review our current systems to address racism. Meeting with the Leads was a reminder that racism is a business issue because it affects the performance of our organisation, and it is more than individual prejudice. These conversations culminated in a renewed organisational commitment to build on the cultural capability of the Life Without Barriers' system.

## Journey to Elevate RAP

**In 2019, during a whole-of-organisation reflection on our reconciliation journey, there was a decision to make application for an Elevate RAP and assume a leadership position to advance national reconciliation. The Board endorsed PWC Indigenous Consulting (PIC) to lead a broad consultation across the organisation to propose next steps in our reconciliation journey.**

PIC facilitated workshops, focus groups and interviews that culminated in strong support for Life Without Barriers to demonstrate leadership in national reconciliation.

Following endorsement by the Life Without Barriers Board's Practice Governance Committee, a RAP Co-design Workshop was held with equal representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous employees. The recommendations from the RAP Co-design Workshop were presented to one of Queensland's RAP Working Groups which led to workshops in six Life Without Barriers' locations. Each workshop developed opportunity statements, actions, deliverables, timeframes,

responsibilities, and a governance structure, built on the foundation of the three RAP pillars.

We then embarked on a roadshow, facilitating over 20 sessions in multiple locations across Australia with participation from over 300 employees, carers, stakeholders, and designated agencies, which generated an early Statement of Commitment.

The initial Co-design group reconvened at the end of 2019, which culminated in the first draft of the RAP. PIC also facilitated two workshops focusing on children in out-of-home care, with the shared view that the stark over-representation of Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander children and young people in child protection systems is an urgent issue that Life Without Barriers could significantly and positively influence in the new RAP.

What commenced as an internal consultation, concluded with the involvement of external stakeholders that included Elders in Far North Queensland and Brisbane locations as well as Link-Up Queensland. In the Northern Territory, representatives from Aboriginal Employment Strategy, Group Training Northern Territory, Larrakia Nation Corporation, and Territory Families – Northern Territory Government were involved

in the consultation. In Western Australia, Elders attended the consultation whilst employees at the Tasmania Aboriginal Centre, Hobart joined the consultation team.

In December 2019, we submitted a Draft Elevate RAP and Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children, Youth and Families to Reconciliation Australia.

However, 2020 was a challenging year because of the COVID 19 pandemic, which delayed further development of an Elevate RAP. Life Without Barriers needed to divert resources to other functions as part of the covid-response, which included maintaining core

services to the 22,000 people we support, ensuring contingency plans for essential services and keeping everyone safe and well-supported.

In 2020, PIC was re-engaged to work with the Board, Chief Executive, and Executive Directors to explore the transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care to family, kin, community and culture.

A strategy that was identified during this consultation process was the opportunity to collaborate with key stakeholders, including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families directly affected.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled-organisations in the out-of-home-care sector.
- Commonwealth, State and Territory governments.

- Mainstream non-government organisations who benefit from the current child, youth, and family systems.

As a part of the exploration process with our partners, we identified the important role played by SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children (SNAICC) as the National Peak to address and challenge the complex levers and drivers that contribute to the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems.

In 2020, Life Without Barriers engaged with the former Chief Executive Officer, SNAICC about embarking on the development of an Elevate RAP. This meeting was the beginning of a journey that helped guide Life Without Barriers thinking and project development on a legacy for the next generation and the partners we would need to work with to create the steppingstones and actions of our RAP.

At the end of 2020, our people united to re-focus on our reconciliation journey. These conversations led to several recommendations which formed a robust foundation to support an application for an Elevate RAP and included the transition of:

- The reconciliation portfolio from Diversity and Inclusion to a stand-alone portfolio within Strategy and Engagement, aligning RAP initiatives with the intent of Strategy 2025.
- The leadership of the portfolio from a National Manager to an identified National Director position to support Life Without Barriers leaders to work in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to lead a new RAP.

- The National Reconciliation Steering Committee to the National Reconciliation Strategy Group that would deliver on:
  - The Elevate RAP and Transformation Project, a key component of the RAP.
  - Provide guidance and steer the RAP across the three-year period to ensure we achieve our commitments.

In 2021, SNAICC welcomed an incoming Chief Executive whereby a further series of meetings were held to refine the early work and partnership that would support and guide the development of the Elevate RAP with SNAICC as the key partner. This work included meetings with the SNAICC Chief Executive and employees and eventually the Board of SNAICC for endorsement of the Draft Elevate RAP.

## Our Governance Structure

Our RAP governance structure focuses on cultural respect and accountability through inclusion, and shared decision making of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, carers and those we support in our child, youth and family, disability and aged care, homelessness, refugee and mental health services. The governance structure – National Reconciliation Cultural Respect Steering Committee – was established in 2009 to govern commitments in our initial RAPs. In 2016, we refreshed the membership and structure for the Stretch RAP and launched the National Reconciliation Steering Committee to meet commitments required by the Stretch RAP.

We have again refreshed the governing body – National

Reconciliation Strategy Group – and group membership to reflect the work and journey ahead with a new RAP.

Since the inception of our first RAP in 2009, the national governance group and the state, territory, national and regional RAP Working Groups (RWGs) continue to comprise of equal representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous members. This model of governance embeds leadership at the highest level of governance, creating accountable and engaged leaders, shared ownership and allowing communication to be dispersed to state, territory, national, and regional RWGs, and subsequently to the people we support and those who support them.

**National Reconciliation Strategy Group** is responsible for governing the effective and timely delivery of Elevate RAP commitments.

### RAP Champions:

Chief Executive Claire Robbs and National Director Reconciliation Robert Russell

### National Reconciliation Strategy Group Members

#### Co-chair

Claire Robbs – Chief Executive  
Robert Russell – National Director Reconciliation

#### SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children:

Adele Cox – National Sector Development Manager

### Executive Director

Brad Swan – Strategy and Engagement  
Celina Cross – People and Culture

### Director

Loretta Perry – Values  
Carly Jacobitz – Child, Youth and Family  
Dale Murray – Education

### State Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Support, Leadership and Child, Youth, Family

Shannon Mackie – New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander State Leads

Leoni Lippitt – Queensland  
Damien Mick – Northern Territory

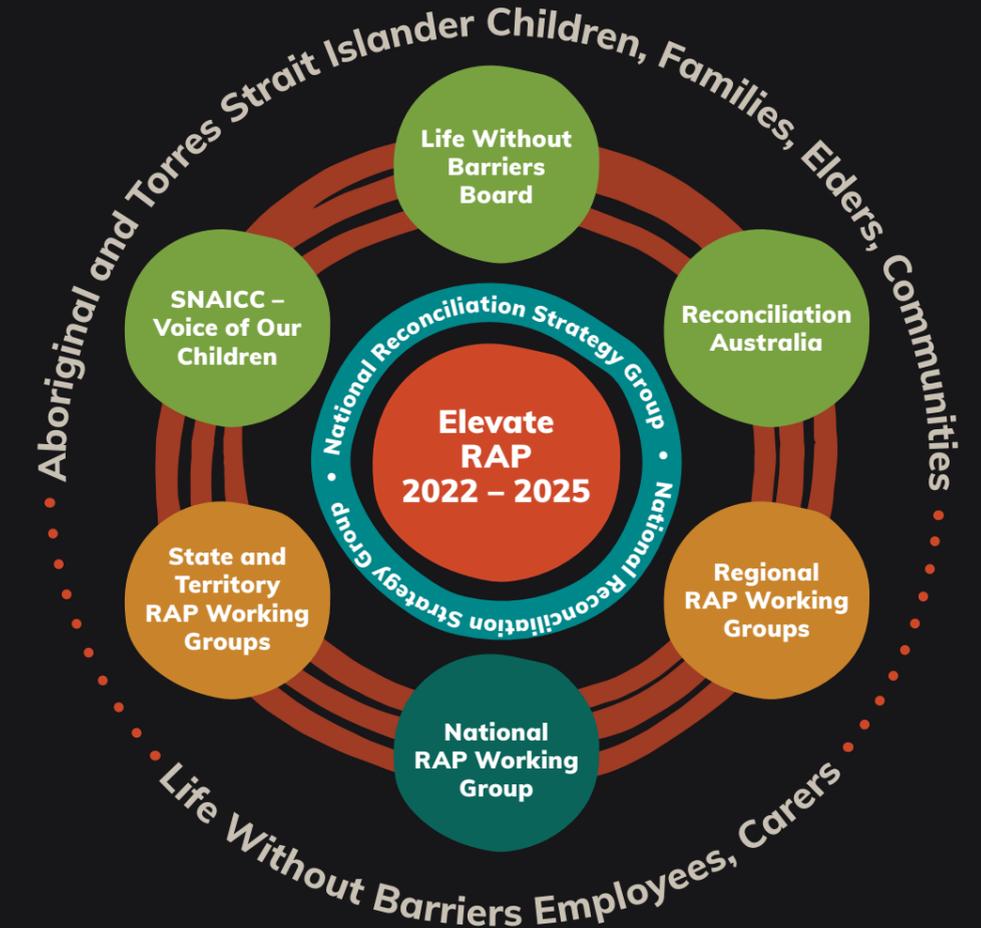
## RAP Governance

We are all connected • We are working together  
Empowering voices

### Reconciliation Working Groups (RWGs)

**State, Territory and National RWGs** are co-chaired by state and territory directors and the respective State Lead Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives in the six states and in the Northern Territory. The National Director Reconciliation and a National Manager chair the national RWG. RWGs report to the National Reconciliation Strategy Group every three months.

**Regional RWGs** are co-chaired by Regional Directors and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior leaders. These 12 RWGs can include carers, people we support and external stakeholders or Elders who contribute to deliverables and achievements at a local level. RWGs report to the State and Territory RWGs every three months.



# Our Journey Highlights

2009

- **Reconciliation Action Plan 2009 – 2010**
- National Cultural Respect Steering Committee.
- Best Business Supporting Aboriginal Employment, Northern Territory.
- Return to Country: Aboriginal adult males return home to Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands.

2010

- **Reconciliation Action Plan 2010 – 2012**
- Therapeutic Residential Service: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, Queensland.
- Warmum House, partnership with Warmum community: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adult males, Kimberley, Western Australia.
- Sydney Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Team: Out-of-home care services for children, and young people.
- Cultural Respect and Cultural Safety Workshop, all States and Northern Territory.

2011

- Memorandum of Understanding Goomburrup Aboriginal Corporation, Western Australia: Services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we support.
- Bail Houses, Kununurra, Broome Western Australia: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples bailed from Courts, remain on country.
- Partnership Riverland Aboriginal Men's Support Group, Personal Helpers and Mentors Scheme: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Woodcarving Project, Riverland, South Australia.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Fund, Northern Territory.

2012

- **Reconciliation Action Plan 2012 – 2015**
- Partnership Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations: Indigenous Employment Program.
- Ngangkari Healers, Anangu Ngangkari Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation: Healing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, carers, employees, South Australia and New South Wales.
- Racism Stops With Me Campaign.

2013

- Recognition by Reconciliation Australia, Parliament House: Leader of Reconciliation in community sector.
- Childcare creches, Minjilang Croker Island, Lajamanu Northern Territory (returned to community control in 2018).
- Ngaanthu-ngay-wi Bayan: Women's Refuge, Cooktown Queensland.

2014

- Collaboration with UrthBoy, Josh Pyke: young people co-write and produce Someone Else's House (song).
- Coming Home: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults with disability reconnect with family, Kowanyama, Far North Queensland.
- Royal Botanical Garden's Cranbourne Annex and Hartwell Primary School: 100 students welcomed on Boon Wurrung Land, Victoria.
- HEARING Inc/ Live Longer: 200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families attend sporting clinics, Riverland South Australia.

2015

- Partnership Lajamanu Community, Life Without Barriers, Melbourne University: Graduation Ceremony: community members graduate with 3a Education to provide pre-school learning to their children, Lajamanu Community, Northern Territory.
- Enrolments at Minjilang and Lajamanu creches increase to 130 children.
- Ngalang Boodja-Noongar Employment Enterprise Development Aboriginal Corporation: engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foster carers.
- Memorandum of Understanding: Orange Aboriginal Medical Service.

2016

- **Reconciliation Action Plan – Stretch 2016-2019.**
- Reconciliation Australia invited Life Without Barriers to participate as Corporate Partner with Waltja Tjutanku Palyapayi Aboriginal Corporation: Waltja Aged and Disability Festival, Ross River, Alice Springs.
- Partnership with Social Leadership Australia: High Impact Cross Cultural Leadership Program: cultural immersion of 31 leaders – including the Life Without Barriers' Chair of Board – participated in a four month program, and co-designed and implemented 31 projects in 31 locations.
- Creating Brighter Futures/nyuntumpa nintiringanyi (Pitjantjatjara): For You to Learn About, developed for school children, Challa Gardens Primary School, Adelaide.

2017

- Laura Dance Festival: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, foster carers and employees (100) attend Laura Aboriginal Dance Festival, Cape York.
- Partnership with Veolia: scholarship program, two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students committed to full-time study (Medicine and Engineering).
- Partnership with CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship Program: Placement of 6 interns.
- Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – Life Without Barriers Practice Approach.
- Partnership Lake Macquarie Toronto Library: Improving Aboriginal Literacy Program.

2018

- Partnership Thikkabilla Vibrations: Cultural connections Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.
- Launch of A Soft Landing: Story of out-of-home experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in foster care.
- Next Step: Creation, artwork by 6 young people mentored by Elders Stradbroke Island, Queensland; now hanging in Queensland Parliament.
- The Life Without Barriers Story: Documentary featuring Life Without Barriers Reconciliation journey.

2019

2020

2021

- Co-sponsorship of Panel: NAIDOC week themed Voice, Treaty, Truth and the Uluru Statement from the Heart.
- Position Statement of support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart.
- Partnership with Goldfields Aboriginal Language Centre: Values translated into Ngaanyatjarra, Noongar, Pittjantjarra and Wangkatja languages.
- Partnership Group Training Northern Territory and Charles Darwin University: providing work experience for trainees studying Community Services.
- AHRI Awards: Stan Grant Indigenous Employment Award.
- Statement of Support, Treaty, Victoria.

- COVID-19 Messaging: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, clients, carers, communities.
- Partnership Kubingui Youth: Support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families: children returning to school post COVID lockdown.
- Partnership with Traditional Owners, Noongar Whadjuk: Traditional ceremony to named Leederville meeting rooms after Noongar six seasons, Western Australia.
- Westerman Jilya Institute for Indigenous Mental Health: Support of psychology scholarships, South Australia.
- Northern Territory Arts Access Award – Unbroken Land: Winner projects category award; young people with disability, Alice Springs.

- Gittaba Cultural Program, Boomi Hegarty, Wakka Elder: Celebration of partnership, 15 years – reconnecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with culture.
- Share of RAP Experience: Cahoots and NSW Health Pathology.
- Big Rivers Creative Industry Summit: Two Aboriginal young women: graphic designer/own business/Upa Girl; launch of My Grandmother's Lingo, young woman is studying to become a linguist, both live with disability.
- SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children: Historic partnership.



Participants at the Waltja Aged and Disability Festival presenting an exquisite artwork they created for Life Without Barriers.



## Community Stories

### Possum Skin Cloak

The possum skin cloak was crafted by the Life Without Barriers National Cultural Respect Steering Committee members and is a deeply symbolic representation of our reconciliation journey which has included the governance of two Reconciliation Action Plans. The cloak also marks the transition of the National Cultural Respect Steering Committee to the National Reconciliation Steering Committee in preparation to govern the Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan.

The cloak's central motif is the sun – 'the giver of life' – with the sunrays representing the states. Each member of the National Cultural Respect Steering Committee chose their totem or personal symbol to represent themselves and their experience through their time with the National Cultural Respect Steering Committee. The totems and symbols are linked by lines and meeting circles representing travel and various gatherings attended by the members around the country. The cloak hangs in the National Board Room, Newcastle.

Mitch Mahoney is a Boonwurrung and Barkindji artist who guided the making of the cloak. Mitch lives on Wanaruha country in the Hunter Valley, New South Wales.

### Looking back at Waltja

Waltja Tjutangku Palyapayi Corporation (Waltja) won the 2014 Indigenous Governance Awards. Life Without Barriers was invited by Reconciliation Australia to become Waltja's 'corporate partner' with the intention of working together to establish mutually beneficial goals as an integral part of our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan.

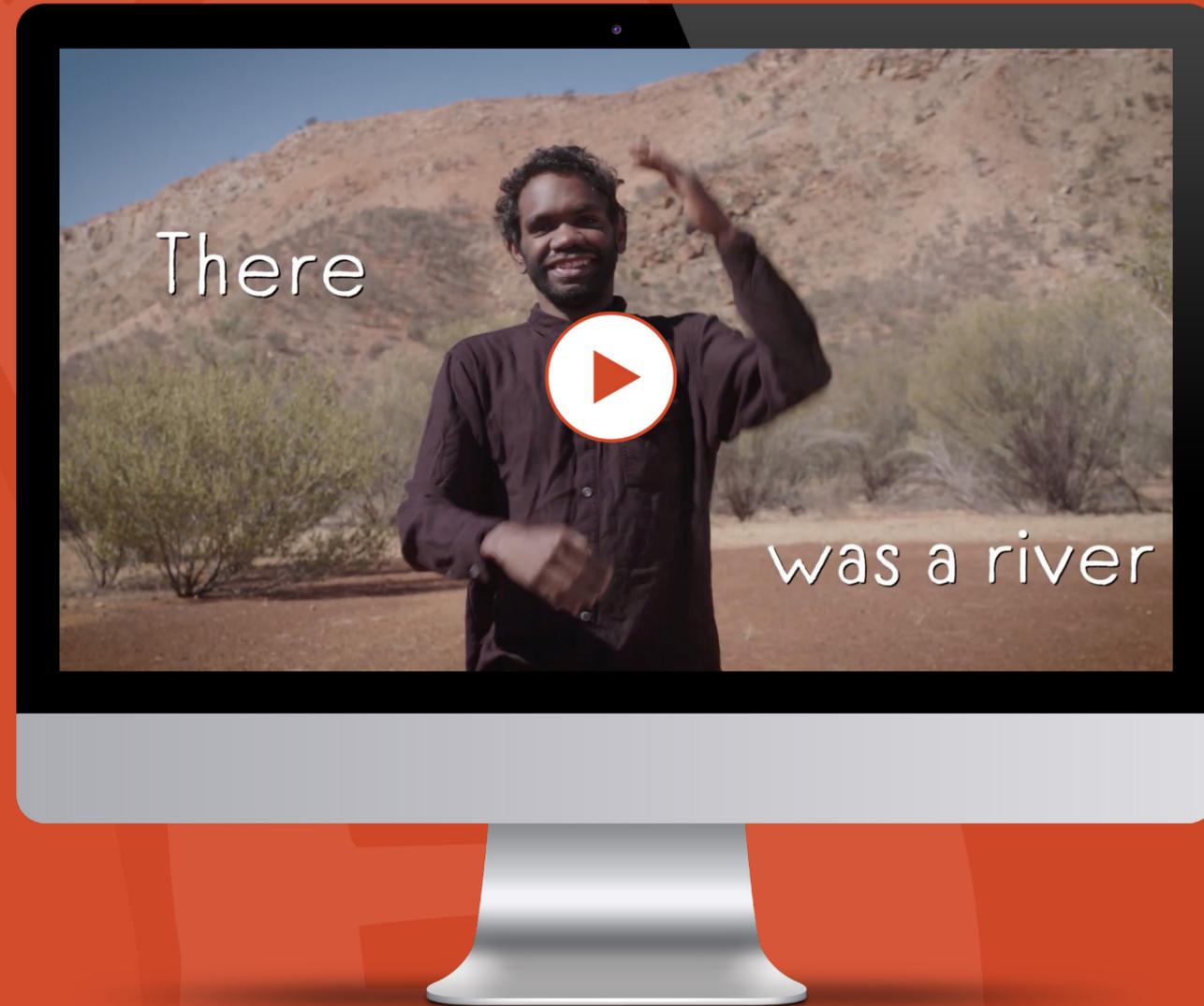
The partnership with Waltja resulted in the 2016 Waltja Aged and Disability Festival that saw more than 170 Aboriginal people from remote parts of Central Australia come together to reconnect with families and friends at the Ross River Campground, Alice Springs, Northern Territory.

Some of the thirty young people Life Without Barriers supports enjoyed the opportunity to camp out under the stars, while others attended the festival during the day. The real highlights for them were spending time with family, getting to know the different communities and being part of community life.

Tracy Barrell, OAM, a Bundurra woman of the Gundungurra nation was the Ambassador of the festival. Tracy is a dual Paralympian, mother of two children, and a strong advocate for people living with disability.

Waltja participants presented Life Without Barriers with beautiful artwork they created at the festival.





### Recognition in the Arts

Central Australian Arts Group Unbroken Land 2020, in partnership with the performing arts charity organisation Incite Arts – Alice Springs, won the ‘Projects’ category at the Northern Territory Arts Access Awards for a short film *There was a river* that tells the story of a river flowing through the red hills.

*There was a river* honours its diverse audience throughout the film. It is written in English and the Indigenous dialect ‘Arrernte’ and features Auslan, closed captioning and audio descriptions.

Eight of the performers are supported by Life Without Barriers, two of whom wrote the short film with the stArts withD Performance Ensemble.

The Award recognises a project which has demonstrated outstanding leadership in accessible and inclusive arts practice and the contributions of individual artists who have been working to improve accessibility and inclusion in the creative arts, across all genres of creative endeavour.



### Rhondie’s Return to Country

Rhondie was separated from his family, community and country as a young child. Rhondie is supported by Life Without Barriers and in 2014, Rhondie’s life changed after he took his first trip home to Kowanyama, Queensland.

Rhondie’s subsequent trips have been further enriched through camping on county and being welcomed home with a special fire, a water blessing and Ochre ceremony in his honour.

“We cannot truly measure the impact of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; however, my experiences with Rhondie implore me to become even more determined to do whatever I can to reconcile Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with their family, kin, country and cultural practices.” said Asher Meadows, Life Without Barriers Operations Manager, Disability, Far North Queensland.



### Strengthening connection to Country, Family and Culture

Annie Moors is a Yurrwi / Milingimbi woman and emerging visual artist supported by Life Without Barriers. Living in Darwin, Annie’s artistic practice predominantly relates to her Yolngu culture, family and country of Yurrwi / Milingimbi in North-East Arnhem Land.

This mentorship program gives Annie an immersive experience, enabling her to access artistic practices specific to her kinship, clan, totems and country, including the significance of ceremony, dreaming stories, and where designs and motifs specific to the Garrawurra family of the Liya-gawumirr clan originate.

The residency program is proudly supported by The Australia Council for the Arts, and facilitated in partnership with Milingimbi Arts and Culture, Arts Access Darwin, Darwin Community Arts and Life Without Barriers.



### Indigenous Psychology Program Scholarships

The inaugural Dr Tracy Westerman Indigenous Psychology Scholarship Program was developed in recognition of the unheard voices of bereaved parents and communities. The hope of The Western Jilya Institute is that the students, and the future Dr Tracy Westerman Aboriginal Psychology Scholarship recipients, will be instrumental in addressing the high rates of mental health and suicide amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Life Without Barriers is honoured to have jointly funded several of the scholarships in South Australia in partnership with the Westerman Jilya Institute for Indigenous Mental Health.

The scholarships are already having an incredible impact on the lives of 13 talented and motivated students. Having seen first-hand the struggles Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples face, the recipients are all highly motivated to use their educational opportunities to effect change.



### Demonstrates Strong Leadership in Reconciliation

“Life Without Barriers partners with Reconciliation Western Australia through organisational membership, attendance at key events including the annual *National Reconciliation Week Breakfast* and *Walk for Reconciliation*.

More recently, Life Without Barriers has demonstrated leadership through delivery of a case study as part of Reconciliation WA’s *RAP Ready* program – powerfully articulating their leadership and program commitments to reduce the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care who they support and partnering with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

Life Without Barriers are active recruiters of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and work to make a real difference in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people every day. Reconciliation WA acknowledge and appreciate the Life Without Barriers’ support.” Jody Nunn Chief Executive Officer Reconciliation Western Australia

The students at Adelaide’s Challa Gardens Primary School participate in a program of activities revolving around Hip Hop. The program is part of Life Without Barriers’ Creating Brighter Futures’ arts-based program, also referred to as the *nyuntumpa nintiringanyi*, which means ‘For You to Learn About’ in the language of the Pitjantjatjara people. The program combines Aboriginal culture and hip hop and aims to strengthen community and promote self-expression through movement, music and art.



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# Our Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children, Young People and Families

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## Our Commitment

Life Without Barriers will progressively step away from providing out-of-home care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by 2031.



Young Aboriginal girl in care draped with a traditional cloak by an Elder as part of a Welcome to Country ceremony, 2018.

**Life Without Barriers is committed to Closing the Gap Campaign which reinforces the need for large scale systemic reform, and a paradigm shift in Australia’s approach to truly empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The National Agreement on Closing the Gap (2020) includes 17 targets and outcomes.**

**The primary target from the Closing the Gap strategy that is related to Life Without Barriers’ transformation Project is Target 12, which is to “reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45% in 2031.” This Closing the Gap target is aligned with the Family Matters campaign to end the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 2040.**



Life Without Barriers will partner with SNAICC, the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children – the primary agreement maker with the Commonwealth government, and the lead of Family Matters – to achieve our commitment to broad and sustainable changes. We will work with SNAICC to develop the first National Partnership Agreement between SNAICC and a non-government organisation that outlines the roadmap for reform with the Coalition of Peaks, non-government agencies and government departments across states and territories.

*The SNAICC Board Chair and Chief Executive identified this as a historic moment that has the potential to influence systemic change across Australia.*

Life Without Barriers’ commitment to the transformation project is informed and guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that commenced with the consultation process, supported by PIC during 2019 – 2020 and will continue to be led and supported by SNAICC throughout our partnership.

There can be no more significant a project nationally than the need to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the out-of-home care systems and investing in a range of participation mechanisms that support effective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak body, service, family and child participation.

The drive and advocacy by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their leaders over many years have created a clear roadmap for Life Without Barriers and the child, youth and family service sectors to advocate for systems reform through the:

- Full implementation of the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.
- Amendment of laws, policies and procedures which discriminate against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- Development of cultural safety and competence across the child and family service sectors.

- Implementation of national standards for legislative and policy reform (with legislative reform remaining the responsibility of individual jurisdictions), that affirm the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to self-determination.
- Investment in early intervention and prevention support across the spectrum provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities.

The advocacy element of the transformation project will contribute to the reform agenda including:

- A child protection system with a focus on keeping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children safe in their family and community.
- A change in focus from child protection intervention to family support.
- Legislation and policy changes to strengthen the application of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.
- A system grounded in self-determination and focused on healing.

- Strengthening oversight functions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations.
- A focus on connection to culture.

As a national, independent organisation, Life Without Barriers has an influence that extends beyond one jurisdiction, which is unique to only a handful of services in Australia. Our reach and commitment to action, will and has already influenced other agencies to consider what more they can do at Board and Executive levels to transform the way vulnerable and at risk Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are cared for across Australia.

The transitioning of service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to community-control by Life Without Barriers, the largest out-of-home care provider in Australia, is the primary systemic change that the transformation project will achieve and addresses a gap in the national reconciliation movement given that such an ambitious project has never been done before at this size or scale on a national level.

Aligning to SNAICC's strategic plan, we will lead the sector to "shift our focus to be outcomes oriented, public facing, evidence based, collective, transformative and sustainable."

## Walking Together Toward a Better Future

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children continue to be removed from family and kin at disproportionate rates, disrupting their connection to community and culture. The children represent 37% of the total population of children who have been removed from their parents – a staggering 20,077 children – but represent only 6% of the total population of children in Australia.

A worrying 81% (16,287) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care are at serious risk of permanent separation from their families, cultures and communities. Most of the children are unlikely to return to their family or kin and only 42% of the children live with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander carer. There is an urgency required to achieve change

due to the increasing numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children coming into out-of-home care and not being reunified, and concerningly, being permanently placed. Without immediate action, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care is projected to double by 2029.

Life Without Barriers is taking a leadership position in the child, youth, family and human services sectors. This reflects our deeper commitment and strategic approach to disrupt this trajectory and the structural drivers which are deeply rooted in Australia's colonisation and result in children and families encountering child protection systems: poverty, socioeconomic disadvantage, and transgenerational trauma.

Some of the ways Life Without Barriers will address the structural

drivers of disadvantage relate to our three strategic pillars: Provide great services; Influence systemic barriers; Impact future generations.

We will provide great services that include: ensure children and their families participate in and have control over decisions that affect them; improve safety, wellbeing and transition from care outcomes; and we will be accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

We will partner to influence systemic barriers. Our internal strategic focus areas include: strengthening family and education outcomes for children and the establishment of two strategic governance groups that will work to the Executive and report to the Board on these key initiatives.

We will drive impact for future generations through collaboration

with the Chief Executive Alliance and the Children in Care Collective to ensure we harness a coalition of services willing to lean in to create the legislative and system changes needed to impact structural drivers of disadvantage.

The Chief Executive Alliance and the Children in Care Collective is focused on exploring bold child protection solutions that require responsibility to be shared between organisations and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, particularly in high-need locations with serious workforce challenges; and developing effective interagency approaches, accountability, public reporting and internal accountability mechanisms.

The recently released document – Safe and Supported: the National

Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2021-2031 was developed by the Australian Government, and state and territory governments, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives and the non-government sector. This framework includes a five year Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander implementation plan with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children experiencing disadvantage and addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the out-of-home care sector, which is one of four focus areas – Life Without Barriers’ sphere of influence.

We will walk alongside SNAICC to advocate across commonwealth, state and territory governments

and with our non-government partners to focus on the following key actions:

- Greater self-determination and delegation of legislative authority to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations.
- Increasing the proportion of child protection and family support services delivered by ACCOs.
- Contribute to building a sustainable and skilled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce in child protection and family support services.
- Contribute to a coordinated data and research approach across the service system.

- Ensure the full implementation of the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.

- Embed the voice of the child and young person in program and policy design.

Life Without Barriers will contribute to this far-reaching transformation, and the radical organisational innovation it will require on a scale far beyond current models of service reform, and the organisational solutions that must be assembled around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ rights, expertise and cultural authority.



## Core Principles of the Family Matters Campaign

Life Without Barriers will transition Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to community control and leverage our strong partnerships across the child, youth and family sectors in jurisdictional areas.

We will create pathways for sector partners to contribute to creating positive change in this reform agenda.

We will work collaboratively and in accordance with the following six core principles of the Family Matters campaign so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children can grow up safe and cared for in family, community and culture.

1. Applying a child focused approach.
2. Ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children.
3. Protecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s right to live in culture.
4. Pursuing evidence-based responses.
5. Supporting, healing and strengthening families.
6. Challenging systemic racism and inequities.



Graduates of the 3A training course at Lajamanu, Northern Territory. Life Without Barriers partnered with the University of Melbourne and the local community to deliver training in the Abecedarian Approach (3A). The crèche was transitioned from Life Without Barriers to community control in 2018.

## Share Learnings

Life Without Barriers will share the learnings throughout our journey with SNAICC and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Coalition of Peaks, which will generate a range of positive benefits. These influences include the prioritisation by mainstream child, youth and family organisations who provide out-of-home care services to decrease the rate of over-representation of children in out-of-home care by 2031 and build on a shared commitment to elevate government and sector transformation.

Life Without Barriers provides secretariat support and leadership on influential groups across

Australia including Alliance20, Children in Care Collective and the Child, Youth and Family Chief Executive Alliance. Life Without Barriers is also a member of all State and Territory Peaks and have employees who are representatives on Boards across the country. Our partnerships are strong and well-formed over many years, and we have dedicated roles such as the Executive Lead for Partnerships. The net impact of these connections is that we can share our learnings broadly across multiple forums. We can learn quickly from others, and we can cascade information and experiences rapidly. We already ensure that the reconciliation agenda is a focus across these multiple platforms.

## Challenge Barriers

Life Without Barriers is the largest provider of out-of-home care services in Australia and one of only a small number of organisations in this sector that has a national footprint.

This size and scale mean that the impact of our transformation project will have a significant effect on national statistics. Equally, because of our size, both government and non-government organisations are watching closely. Since the public announcement of our partnership with SNAICC, they have committed to walking alongside Life Without Barriers and to play their part in the reform agenda.

Life Without Barriers will bring the power of our unique capabilities to the partnership with SNAICC and

challenge barriers to the reform agenda – capabilities founded in relationships, connections, influence, advocacy and bringing people together to ensure a collective capability. Life Without Barriers has relationships and partnerships with national child, youth and family and disability services leaders, commonwealth, state and territory governments, service regulators and corporate Australia.

We also have the courage to acknowledge our complicity in the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems and to take steps to adapt our organisation and to use our influence to advocate for change to the service systems we benefit from. Such ambition is not without risk.

## Risks and Community Barriers

There is a lack of acceptance by parts of the Australian community regarding the destructive impact of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their cultures that could pose barriers to our capacity to influence this with our partners.

We will use our influence and reach to scale opportunities in the child, youth and family sectors for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous colleagues to facilitate open conversations about Australia's history and the resulting intergenerational trauma experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today. We will co-contribute to speaking

opportunities for our Chief Executive and Executive Directors with the Chief Executive and Executive of SNAICC and other organisations to disseminate strong messages to the broader public. This will include championing the need for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be involved at every decision-making level regarding service delivery to their children within the government, non-government and community service sectors.

We will engage in deeply provocative conversations with non-Indigenous partners to acknowledge collective responsibility, changes required at a deep level, and to develop a revitalised view of how we can right the wrongs that have occurred in the intervening years since the beginning of colonisation.

## Address Racism in Sectors and Governments

We will lead the establishment of Alliances, Chief Executive and sector forums with a focus on core topics including structural and institutional racism and how we can collectively find paths to address racism, white-privilege, personal and professional complicity and discrimination.

We will learn from our own and international experiences and contribute to the academic discourse with Cornell University and the Menzies Institute, Darwin Northern Territory on how to break down structural and institutional racism, being led by local communities about what could work at a place-based level.

We will formalise regular conversations with government and the non-government sector – as part of our National Partnership Agreement and Transition Plan – about governance structures that impact appropriate cultural care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. We will advocate for increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in decision making positions to influence and guide cultural practice and care.

We will facilitate place-based consultation, founded in our expertise in the below service streams to address over-representation and underpinning drivers of disadvantage that fall within areas of joint responsibility between the commonwealth, state and territory governments and their sectors relating to:

- Disability and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- Housing and homelessness.
- Domestic and family violence.
- Respond within areas of joint responsibility to spotlight and work towards remedying structural and institutional racism that contributes to the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in service systems.

### Respectfully Partnering

Life Without Barriers will not rush ahead to do what we think is best but rather we will be lead by and walk alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

The steps to walking with community have already commenced. Our first step was to meet with SNAICC and on numerous occasions since 2020 to listen and learn. This began with Chief Executive meetings with the former SNAICC Chief Executive and ongoing partnership discussions in 2021 with the incoming Chief Executive, SNAICC.

At a senior Executive level, we have connected each month with SNAICC leaders to shape our thinking and learning.

We are developing a National Partnership Agreement with

SNAICC, and this will cascade to state and territory agreements with local peak bodies to map the steps and approach we will take in each location. This will include working with government, state and territory peaks and local community-controlled organisations. Once we have identified the footprint of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who can transition within short, medium and longer-term time frames, we will work with community-controlled agencies to be guided by them in line with the roadmap for transition.

### Embed Self-determination in the Transformation Project

We will adopt an outcomes-based partnership approach, focusing on strengths, and shared decision-making to proactively transform

internal and external systems and structures, and identify and remove barriers that do not support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to exercise their right to self-determination.

Our project commitments include ensuring self-determination in partnership agreements, confronting racism and promoting cultural safety, building workforce capability, checking in with partners to hear their experience, all of which are enablers of self-determination.

We will be accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders to listen to their experience of the partnerships, and we will stay connected and achieve milestones together for the life of the transition project, and beyond.

We will transfer power and resources to community.



Participants in Life Without Barriers' Next Step Aftercare Program created this artwork which is now hanging in Queensland Parliament. It is titled *Creation*, the work of six Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. It was created during mentoring sessions with Elders on Stradbroke Island, Queensland.



The Gittaba cultural program was further developed to include a program for young women. Strong Spirit Woman, led by Life Without Barriers' State Lead, Leoni Lippett, a Torres Strait Islander woman, progresses young women's cultural knowledge, involvement in cultural activities and women's business.

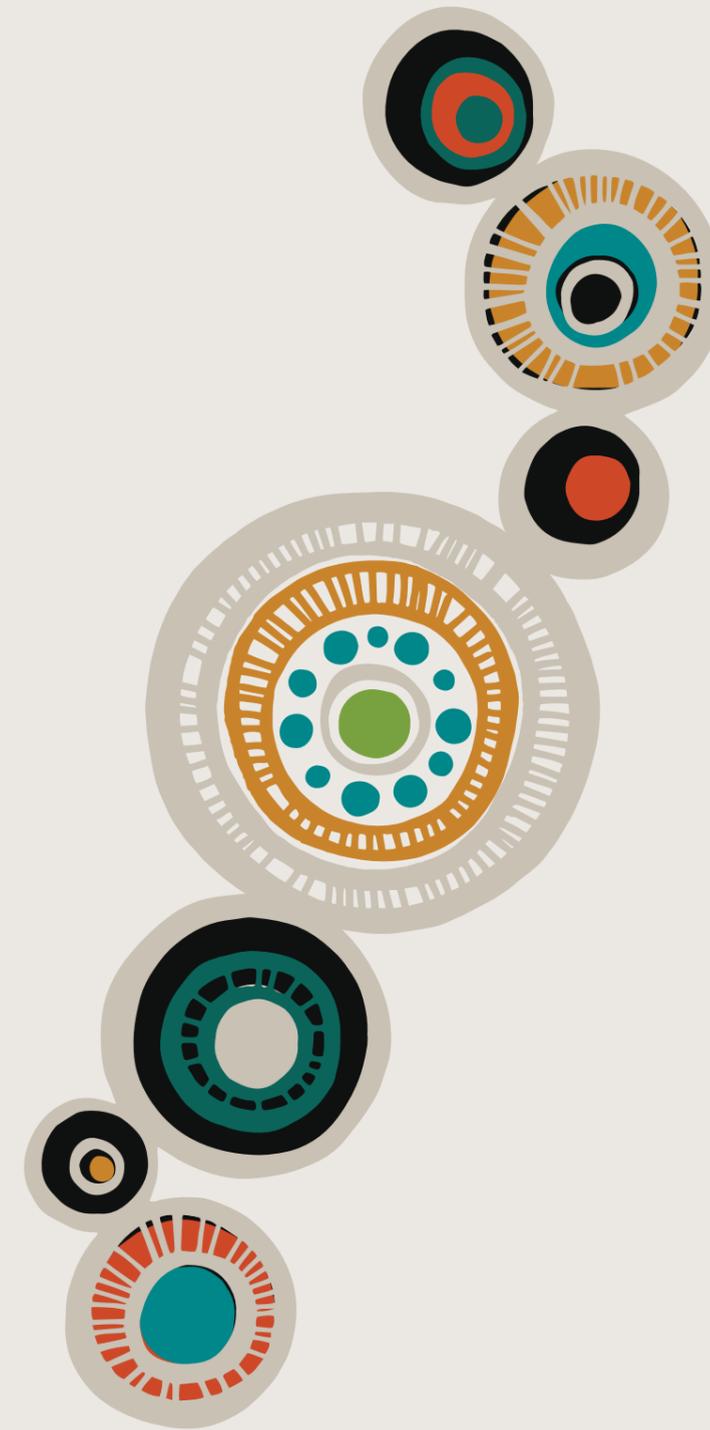


Uncle Boomi, Wakka Wakka Elder, at a cultural camp for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young men, as part of the Gittaba cultural program, Queensland.



Clea North, a Bidjera woman, is an Education Consultant within the Life Without Barriers Education Unit, Queensland. Clea works directly with young people, carers, case workers and schools to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to stay in school and is a strong advocate for students who are excluded from school.

# Transformation Project Implementation Plan



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Our transformation project is founded upon the Family Matters Building Blocks. These Building Blocks are an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led framework for co-design, led by SNAICC and spearheaded by a group of eminent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders from across the country. Further to this, they are supported by an alliance of over 150 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous organisations.

Family Matters, led by SNAICC is the national campaign to eliminate the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children across Australia. Family Matters members identified the building blocks as key areas where change is required to address bias in systems which results in the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems.

These building blocks are:

1. All families enjoy access to quality, culturally safe, universal and targeted services necessary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to thrive.
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children.

3. Law, policy, and practice in Child and Family welfare are culturally safe and responsive.

4. Governments and services are accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

As signatory to the Family Matters Campaign and a member of the Coalition, Life Without Barriers is committed to responding to each of the six core principles of the campaign. We are also committed to positive change across each of the four building blocks to transform child protection systems so Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children can grow up safely connected to family, community and culture. The decision to structure the RAP through the Family Matters Building Blocks is founded on the alignment between our transformation commitment,

requirements of signatories to the campaign and the reform agenda led by SNAICC.

The partnership with SNAICC provides a shared and significant national footprint, and an ability to work closely with numerous and diverse state and territory partners, including Elevate Partners and others in the RAP Network committed to reconciliation, and priorities in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. We will work with Reconciliation Australia to identify Elevate and Stretch RAP partners who are willing to engage in this important work and host an event to outline “the why, the how and the ask” of them. This will be an opportunity for Elevate and Stretch RAP partners to consider how they can align resources, both goodwill and financial, to address capacity

building across communities throughout Australia.

Given that our transformation commitment is to progressively step away from providing out-of-home care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and to reduce children’s over-representation by 2031, should a community-controlled organisation choose to not transition aspects of Life Without Barriers’ work, and there are no other options for transition, Life Without Barriers is committed to providing services to ensure that no gap in care is left for any child. However, we will continue to explore the most appropriate bespoke solution suitable to the community-controlled organisation to enhance opportunities to transition children, being guided by the expertise of the community-controlled sector.

Based on our preliminary data, our first areas of focus for transitioning children are Queensland, New South Wales and the Northern Territory. This will ensure we can learn from trial sites at the start of our journey and be guided by local wisdom on what works and what needs to change.

Our transformation project is aligned to Reconciliation Australia’s three pillars of Relationships, Respect and Opportunities and the Five Dimensions of Reconciliation. Our call to action particularly speaks to – Equality and Equity, and Institutional Integrity –, and is a blueprint for dedicated sector focus on handing back care and control of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

children to their own people through system disruption, innovation and sector reform. Our commitment will ensure that our approach to a nationally reconciled Australia contributes to the efforts of other Elevate and Stretch RAP partners.



#### CareerTrackers Gala Event

Life Without Barriers partners with CareerTrackers to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interns. Since 2019, we have hosted nine CareerTrackers’ interns, who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students and employed three after their placement in both corporate and operational business.



## Five Dimensions of Reconciliation

### Unity

The Transformation Project will initiate many new and diverse partnerships that will result in recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and the rich history of Australia's First Peoples particularly in the non-government sectors, corporate Australia and state and territory governments.

This outcome will further the reconciliation conversation which will contribute to the national identity, and our future together, a future founded in our shared history.

### Race Relations

The Transformation Project will strengthen genuine relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous peoples. The success of our commitment is founded in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous cultures, rights and experiences and working together for a shared future.

The project will support discussions on race relations, equality and equity so that partnerships can grow and change and are free of racism which will deepen trust and respect between partners.

### Equality and Equity

The Transformation Project is founded in the unique rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and participation in decisions across the spectrum of child and family welfare to ensure genuine responsiveness to needs, and decisions in the best interests of their children. The commitment to transition children to community-control will ensure they grow up strong in family, kin, and culture, and experience choice, and control and equal opportunity in all aspects of their lives.

### Institutional Integrity

The Transformation Project will generate multi-partnerships with joined up responses including with Reconciliation Australia, Elevate and Stretch RAP partners.

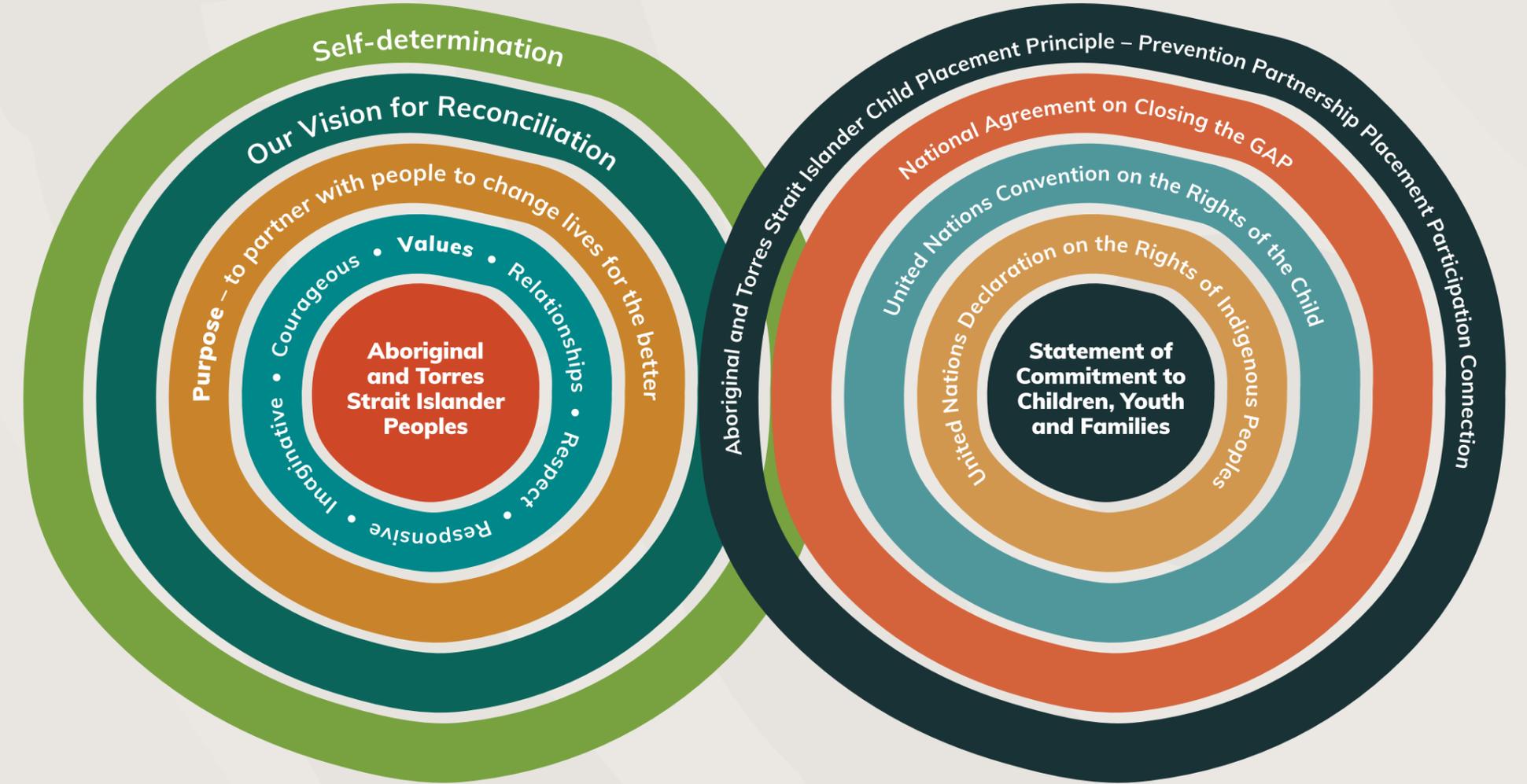
The multiplicity of these external political, corporate, not-for-profit and community partnerships and our internal relationships across Australia will be leveraged to actively support reconciliation which will result in mainstream partners' accountability to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

### Historical Acceptance

The Transformation Project invites a deeper understanding of the past wrongs and the complicity by, and work ahead for the human service sectors to do their part to address these, and the continuing impacts we still see today in child protection systems.

We will engage and collaborate with multi and diverse partners including Elevate and Stretch RAP partners to work together to right the wrongs that the child, youth and family sectors have benefitted from and towards a just, equitable and reconciled Australia.

## Determinants of Transformation Project



## Family Matters Building Block 1

All families enjoy access to quality, culturally safe, universal and targeted services necessary for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to thrive.

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
1. We will influence and advocate for investment by government to reorient the child protection system to family support and early intervention and prevention services.	Plan a strong advocacy approach with SNAICC and the child youth and family service sector partners for a system that no longer focuses on removal but is realigned to focus on supporting families to care safely for their children in culture and community.	December 2022	Chief Executive
	With the support of the child, youth and family sectors, influence governments to change policies and mechanisms that can enable the redistribution of resources from non-Indigenous, non-government and government services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations to deliver place-based prevention and family support solutions to reduce over-representation.	December 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	Partner with state and territory peaks, including Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak and AbSec, NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation, to lobby government for new investment opportunities to reorient the child protection system to prevention services to reduce over-representation.	August 2023 Review December 2023 2024	
	Partner with the Community Services Industry Alliance and Peak Care, Queensland and Association of Children's Welfare Agencies NSW, to further support advocacy work with government in relation to investment opportunities to reorient the child protection system to reduce over-representation.	August 2023 Review December 2023 2024	
	With SNAICC, and aligned with campaign initiatives, join the call to expand the delegation of authority to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations for statutory child protection functions through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with the Queensland government to support their new legislative amendments about Delegated Authority.</li> <li>Engage with Central Queensland Indigenous Development and Refocus Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation, and key agencies who are currently trialling the initiative in Queensland.</li> <li>Partner with the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency and the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, Victoria to learn what has been successful in the establishment of delegated decision making so Life Without Barriers can contribute to these outcomes in other jurisdictions.</li> </ul>	March 2023  May 2023 Review December 2024  November 2022	

## Family Matters Building Block 1

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
2. We will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples lead our practice and direction to improve culturally safe and targeted services.	With community, establish a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Advisory Panel to provide governance relating to culturally safe services and the wellbeing and transition of children to family, kin and/or ACCOs.	November 2022	Executive Director Child, Youth and Family
	With community, establish State and Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Advisory Panels to provide information to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Advisory Panel relating to culturally safe services and the wellbeing and transition of children to family, kin and ACCOs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish the Northern Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Advisory Panel.</li> <li>Establish each of the State Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Advisory Panels.</li> </ul>	September 2022  September 2022 September 2022	
	In partnership with SNAICC and CREATE Foundation, establish national, state and territory level child voice initiatives designed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to improve culturally safe services and transition processes.	February 2023	
3. We will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children receive care that is culturally safe, secure and founded in connection to family, kin, culture, community and country.	Through the promotion, guidance and direction of the senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Practice Lead, foster a shift from a welfare to a rights-based paradigm across Life Without Barriers Child, Youth and Family Services in all states and territories which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of training modules and their implementation. Provide learning and development opportunities for case work employees and their managers.</li> <li>Establishment of a Community of Practice on a rights-based approach.</li> <li>Practice Lead will support case reviews to identify practice challenges and develop strategies to address them.</li> </ul>	August 2023	Executive Director Child, Youth and Family
	Embed the Cultural Governance and Accountability Framework across Life Without Barriers Child, Youth and Family Services. The framework will guide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy, case management practice, programs and initiatives and aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage and promote the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families, designated agencies and local communities in participatory decision making relating to children.</li> <li>Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership at all levels of the organisation.</li> <li>Strengthen accountability and transparency to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities we serve.</li> </ul>	December 2022	

## Family Matters Building Block 1

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
3. We will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children receive care that is culturally safe, secure and founded in connection to family, kin, culture, community and country.	Embed the practice requirements of the six core principles of the Family Matters Campaign in case management practice through training, supervision, policies, procedures and practice guidelines.	July 2023	Executive Director Child, Youth and Family
	Ensure case management practices for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children comply with the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Placement Principle (ATSICPP) through the intersectionality of the elements: <b>1. Prevention</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include birth parents and family in the care and wellbeing of their child/ren.</li> <li>• Include children's connection to culture and community in case and cultural support plans.</li> <li>• Engage ACCOs to provide family support services.</li> </ul> <b>2. Partnership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include independent representative ACCOs in significant decisions about children.</li> <li>• Ensure ACCOs approve permanent care decisions, including whether a permanent care order (or similar) is pursued through court proceedings.</li> <li>• Delegate case management and guardianship functions and powers to ACCOs where possible.</li> </ul> <b>3. Placement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure Life Without Barriers follows the placement hierarchy of the ATSICPP.</li> <li>• Prior to placement, non-kin carers to demonstrate commitment and capacity to support family, and children's connection to their culture and country.</li> <li>• Prior to placement, ACCOs to participate in placement decision-making.</li> </ul>	December 2022	
		March 2023	
		July 2023	

## Family Matters Building Block 1

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
3. We will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people receive care that is culturally safe, secure and founded in connection to family, kin, culture, community and country.	<b>4. Participation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure views of the child, parents and family members are considered by decision-makers, including healing support and recorded in case planning documents.</li> <li>• Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family-led decision-making, family group conferencing, mediation or similar family participation as early as possible and for all significant decisions and recorded in case planning documents.</li> </ul> <b>5. Connection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a Cultural Support Plan for children where Life Without Barriers has case management. Advocate with governments in jurisdictions where they hold case management to develop Cultural Support Plans. Cultural Support Plans to be implemented and reviewed according to Life Without Barriers' policy.</li> <li>• Provide a Leaving Care Plan for children exiting care and young people transitioning to adulthood where Life Without Barriers has case management. Advocate with governments in jurisdictions where they hold case management to develop Leaving Care Plans. Leaving Care Plans to be implemented and reviewed according to Life Without Barriers' policy.</li> <li>• Specify safeguards in relation to permanency of care provisions that maintain connections to family, community, culture and country.</li> </ul>	July 2023	Executive Director Child, Youth and Family
		December 2022 Review May December 2023 2024	
	The Aboriginal Practice Lead will review all case plans on development to ensure they reflect the five elements of the ATSICPP.	December 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	Develop a tool for assessing the suitability of plans to achieve the five elements of the ATSICPP and report on it publicly.	December 2022	

## Family Matters Building Block 1

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
3. We will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children receive care that is culturally safe, secure and founded in connection to family, kin, culture, community and country.	Socialise the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Client Voice Strategy that provides an overarching framework in the form of principles and success factors that set the foundational direction for the development of initiatives. Ensure we are guided by the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children both internally and at the broader health and human services level, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation with the State and Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Advisory Panels, employees, family members, designated agencies and communities to seek input into the strategy.</li> </ul>	November 2022	Executive Director Child, Youth and Family
	Publish the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Client Voice Strategy on the Life Without Barriers website and make it available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations where we have an existing or future partnership.	December 2023	
	Share the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Client Voice Strategy broadly through relevant internal and external digital channels to provide community services organisations with access.	March 2023	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement Deliverable
	Include young people in the development of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Client Voice Strategy Implementation Plan through the Young People Advisory Groups.	March 2023	Executive Director Child, Youth and Family
	Young People’s Advisory Groups will meet each quarter with relevant State Directors and State Leads to hear from children about their experience of culturally safe services, their social and emotional wellbeing and transition process.	August November 2022 February May August November 2023 2024 February May 2025	
	Participate in the trial of Family Matters Reflective Practice Tool to reflect how Life Without Barriers is maintaining commitments to each of the six principles outlined in the Tool.	August 2022 Review December 2022	

## Family Matters Building Block 1

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
3. We will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people receive care that is culturally safe, secure and founded in connection to family, kin, culture, community and country.	Expand Life Without Barriers’ family inclusion program – FISH – into an additional NSW jurisdiction each year for the duration of the RAP.	March 2023	Executive Director Child, Youth and Family
	Review and adjust practice tools and frameworks to ensure they are aligned with the six core principles of the Family Matters campaign and the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Placement Principle.	January 2023	
	Ensure the involvement of SNAICC in the review of the current practice framework (CARE) in the Northern Territory (research project).	August 2022	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement
	Provide specialist advice and training to Life Without Barriers’ workforce through My Learning Modules to ensure pre-school children have access to Early Childhood Education as part of their case plan.	November 2022	Director Education State Director Child, Youth and Family
	Provide specialist advice and training to the Life Without Barriers’ workforce through My Learning Modules that supports children and young people’s transition into school and across grades.	October 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	Provide specialist advice and training to the Life Without Barriers’ workforce to support young people leaving school through education partnerships, for example AIME’s Imagination Program.	October 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	On request, provide ACCOs with specialist advice on aspects of children’s education including education-based trauma informed approaches and practice.	October 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	Provide access to books and media (via the Travelling Suitcases/Backpacks) in language that foster retention and revitalisation of language for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children within the Hook into Books campaign.	September 2022 2023 2024	

## Family Matters Building Block 1

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
3. We will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people receive care that is culturally safe, secure and founded in connection to family, kin, culture, community and country.	Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Hook into Books campaign to strengthen literacy, storytelling and languages.	September 2022 2023 2024	Director Education State Director Child, Youth and Family
	Partner with ACCOs to identify traditional language programs for children and include in education, case and cultural plans.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	The Education Unit will promote Narragunnawali RAP resources with schools where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are enrolled. These promotions will engage employees who support children through a series of webinars and Community of Practice/s.	November 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
4. We will lead and influence the mainstream community service sector to embed systems that deliver improved outcomes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.	Make the Life Without Barriers' Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children, Youth and Families and our RAP commitments public by publishing them on Life Without Barriers' website and promoting via external digital channels.	August 2022	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement
	Publish key documents on Life Without Barriers' website as a source for others, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.</li> <li>Life Without Barriers' policies, practice guidelines, tools and the Cultural Governance and Accountability Framework.</li> </ul>	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Provide support (data and information, investment in local solutions, workforce development, policies and programs, system coordination) to five community-controlled organisations each year identified by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander state and territory peaks to contribute to capacity building initiatives as determined by the ACCOs.	September 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Maintain a record of the agencies we engage with and showcase this through media platforms to ensure we promote the opportunity to share resources and journey stories.	September 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	

## Family Matters Building Block 1

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
4. We will lead and influence the mainstream community service sector to embed systems that deliver improved outcomes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families	Publish outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care on the Life Without Barriers' website.	September 2022 Review December 2022	Executive Director Group Risk, Performance and Impact
	Co-design a plan with the child, youth and family sector leaders to promote culturally safe and respectful practice in child-related services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce development.</li> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and participation in decisions to ensure genuine responsiveness to needs, and decisions in the best interests of the children.</li> <li>System coordination between child, youth and family service sectors and governments to enable transparency of information.</li> <li>Shared access to location-specific data and information to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to build the community-controlled sector.</li> <li>Strengthening governance and accountability to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Coalition of Peak Organisations and their services.</li> </ul>	August 2023	Chief Executive
	Lead a collaboration with the child, youth and family sectors to identify models to share with ACCOs on current: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best practice and fit-for-purpose models for children and families with complex needs.</li> <li>Health and wellbeing approaches including in relation to intergenerational trauma.</li> <li>Therapeutic engagement and support services for children and their families.</li> </ul>	August 2023	

## Family Matters Building Block 2

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations participate in and have control over decisions that affect their children.

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
5. In partnership with SNAICC and community, we will influence systemic change.	Co-design a national partnership agreement with SNAICC which will formalise the public announcement of the partnership.	August 2022	Chief Executive
	Include key national actions and time frames as an addendum to ensure accountability measures in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander National Partnership Agreement.	August 2022	
	Consult with SNAICC to identify resources – for example, recruitment/secondment of employees to SNAICC, investment in solutions that support the project, system coordination and other identified resources – that Life Without Barriers will provide to ensure SNAICC can support the work of the Transformation Project.	August 2022	
	Support the Family Matters campaign through our commitment to influence and advocate for change, which includes public facing sector leadership, resourcing and financial support.	December 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	With SNAICC and the support of the child, youth and family service sectors, advocate for changes to the legislation, policy and practice that reflect the priority to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection systems including the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full implementation of the five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.</li> <li>• Amendment of laws, policies and procedures which discriminate against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.</li> <li>• Development of cultural safety and cultural competence across the child, youth and family service sectors.</li> <li>• Implementation of national standards for legislative and policy reform (legislative reform remaining the responsibility of individual jurisdictions) that affirm the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to self-determination.</li> <li>• Investment in early intervention and prevention support across the spectrum provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities.</li> </ul>	December 2022 Review December 2023 2024	

## Family Matters Building Block 2

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
5. In partnership with SNAICC and community, we will influence systemic change.	Through the leadership role in the National Chief Executive Child Youth and Family Alliance, the Children in Care Collective and participation in the State and Territory Family Matters leadership groups, we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align agendas to prioritise the Family Matters campaign, Safe and Supported, the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Implementation Plan and the Closing the Gap targets.</li> <li>• Increase participation in this work across the non-government child, youth and family sectors.</li> <li>• Influence partners to share their RAP commitments (where they already exist) and for those sector agencies who do not have a current RAP, support them to commit to strong and bold targets aligned to these key areas of focus.</li> </ul>	December 2022 Review December 2023 2024	Chief Executive
	Make a public commitment to prioritising the safe reunification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with their families, or kin where possible.	August 2022	
	Co-design a National Roadmap with SNAICC and relevant ACCOs with individual plans for each jurisdiction to guide the transfer of direct services to the community-controlled sector.	September 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	Publish and report against the National Roadmap on Life Without Barriers' website and through external digital channels.	December 2022 Review December 2023 2024	

## Family Matters Building Block 2

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
6. We will ensure our priorities and actions are led by the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, support self-determination and the resourcing of services.	With SNAICC, and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Advisory Panel, oversee the National Roadmap and State and Territory Cultural Advisory Groups.	October 2022 Review December 2023 2024	Chief Executive
	Extend our Partnership Agreements with state and territory Peaks, ACCOs and governments to outline key steps and expectations that can be measured by accountability to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement
	In partnership with ACCOs and Life Without Barriers State and Territory Directors and other Life Without Barriers teams, build a strong network of allies starting in Queensland to support the transformation projects and the broader reform agenda. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refine the process developed for Queensland and proceed to New South Wales to commence the process.</li> <li>Support the process currently underway in Northern Territory.</li> </ul>	August 2022  November 2022  August 2022 Review December 2022 2023	
	In partnership with ACCOs, and the Life Without Barriers' State Director and teams, build a strong network of allies in New South Wales to support the transformation projects and the broader reform agenda.	August 2022	
	In preparation for the transition of children and in partnership with ACCOs, review current partnerships to ensure the community-controlled sector's lead, participation in, and control over the transition of their children from beginning to end.	December 2022	
	Develop a Terms of Reference for the review of current partnerships and include the following parameters and data sets in the scope of work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Location of children in care with Life Without Barriers.</li> <li>Numbers of children supported in each area.</li> <li>Current level of partnership (e.g., MOU, informal).</li> <li>Partnership deliverables and key contact.</li> <li>Current services delivered by ACCOs and any gaps in service delivery.</li> <li>Views of ACCOs of children transitioning to them and actions to support transition.</li> </ul>	December 2022	

## Family Matters Building Block 2

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
6. We will ensure our priorities and actions are led by the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, support self-determination and the resourcing of services.	Make available Life Without Barriers' practice related policies, tools and resources to support ACCO participation in the planning and transfer of care for children.	March 2023	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement
7. We will lead and influence the child, youth and family service sectors to ensure improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families through children's transition to family, kin or ACCOs.	Co-design a comprehensive plan with national child, youth and family sector leaders to support their Boards and Executive teams in any decisions to step away from direct service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide annual public statements on the benefits of the existing system which includes revenue, resources and ways of doing business that will be impacted. Share learnings from across the sector on what works, barriers and opportunities for future success.</li> <li>Include in annual public statements, impacts on agencies that step away from providing services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and the outcomes for ACCOs, children, young people and families.</li> <li>Outline the steps that have been undertaken and the pathway for other entities who may wish to commence a similar journey.</li> </ul>	August 2023	Chief Executive
	Formally document and publicly share learnings from the Transformation Project in an open-source Child, Youth and Family team's site and make available to support others in the child, youth and family sector, governments and regulators to embark on their own RAP journey.	February 2023 Review December 2023 2024	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement
	Encourage and support services to host their resources and journeys on the Child, Youth and Family Teams site to build a library of material that can be accessed by ACCOs and other non-government organisations.	February 2023 Review December 2023 2024	

### Family Matters Building Block 3

Law, policy and practice in child and family welfare are culturally safe and responsive.

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
8. We will influence networks to contribute to the reform agenda, challenging structural and institutional racism and be champions for change.	Make public the Life Without Barriers commitment on structural, and institutional racism and challenging racism when we see or experience it in the sector, laws, policies, procedures, or individual or service sector behaviours.	August 2022	Chief Executive
	Invite the Child, Youth and Family Chief Executive Alliance to develop a minimum of 2 collective statements of commitment and joint media releases each year for the duration of the RAP to share their response to progress relating to the reform agenda including progress on structural, and institutional racism and responses to change.	August 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	Partner with the Children in Care Collective to engage in public submissions on key topics and statements to government to champion change when opportunities arise e.g., state reviews of legislation and regulations.	September 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	Improve the cultural capability of child protection systems through co-designing a national plan with SNAICC to address structural and institutional racism through place-based solutions and embedding cultural safety.	May 2023	
	Co-design a national plan with SNAICC and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies that will support the child, youth and family service sectors to influence laws, policy, and practice.	May 2023	
	Partner with Reconciliation Australia to hold an annual event each year for the duration of the RAP with Elevate and Stretch RAP partners to seek collective support and ideas to advance the Five Dimensions of Reconciliation.	October 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	With Reconciliation Australia's support, promote the RAP with Elevate and Stretch RAP partners and influence them to contribute to Closing the Gap targets to prevent the entry of children into the child protection system.	December 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	Promote the development of a RAP with the Child, Youth and Family Alliance, JobLife, Children in Care Collective, Alliance 20, and Association of Children's Welfare Agencies.	August 2022 Review 2023 2024	

### Family Matters Building Block 4

Governments and services are accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
9. We will ensure greater accountability and transparency to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	With SNAICC and the support of the child, youth and family service sector, we will make a public statement to call for a Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in all jurisdictions.	November 2022 Review December 2023 2024	Chief Executive
	Make a public commitment that Life Without Barriers will only engage in initiatives and consultation where the participation principles are adhered to by partners.	November 2022	
	With SNAICC, we will establish national participation principles which embed self-determination in all processes to give the community-controlled sector control over the planning and transition of their children to ACCOs or family or kin.	February 2023	Executive Director Child, Youth and Family
	We will advocate to all state and territory governments to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation principles are adhered to in the development of any policy, procedure or practice relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.	February 2023 Review December 2023 2024	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement
	Include in our data capture associated with the full implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle, the following metrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcome of placement hierarchy.</li> <li>• Number of children with disability.</li> <li>• ACCO participation in placement decision.</li> <li>• Number of children on permanent care orders (and those with ACCO participation).</li> <li>• Number of children with a Cultural Support Plan.</li> <li>• Number of children transitioning from mainstream sector care, and/or transition of case management and/or guardianship functions to ACCOs.</li> </ul>	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement  Executive Director Child, Youth and Family
	Share the data measurement capability of Life Without Barriers with ACCOs to address the data gaps identified by SNAICC for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children including children on permanent orders.	September 2022	

## Family Matters Building Block 4

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
9. We will ensure greater accountability and transparency to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Support SNAICC with resource options – recruitment/secondment of employees to SNAICC, access to Life Without Barriers’ resources and any other recommendations that will make a difference – to establish strong peak bodies and a community-controlled sector.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	Chief Executive
	Partner with Reconciliation Australia to conduct an annual event with Elevate and Stretch RAP partners to consider how they can align resources, both goodwill and financial, to support community-controlled organisations to address capacity building aligned to Closing the Gap targets and the Family Matters campaign, across communities.	October 2022 2023 2024	
	Formally document and publicly share learnings from the Transformation Project to support others in the child, youth and family sectors, governments and regulators to embark on their own RAP journey.	July 2023 Review December 2023 and 2024	
	Conduct an annual event with Reconciliation Australia and Elevate and Stretch RAP partners with an interest in Life Without Barriers’ Transformation Project, and commitment to expanding on or inclusion of Closing the Gap and Family Matters targets in their repertoire of reconciliation commitments.	October 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Map existing resource opportunities through tertiary institutions and formalise two partnerships that align to capacity building projects identified by community-controlled organisations to support the transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to ACCOs.	June 2023	
	Invest in justice reinvestment projects: for example, Life Without Barriers’ Bail Program, Broome, and Life Without Barriers’ Driver Training Program, Kalgoorlie, W.A. and differently resourced options where there are fewer community-control organisations or where community is seeking such an alternative, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philanthropic or redirection of child protection funding to trial programs in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities where there are areas of poverty, high child removal and intergenerational trauma with the intention of reinvesting in prevention and family support initiatives.</li> <li>Trial the successful evidence-based program: Life Without Barriers’ “Youth Choices” where there is high removal or incarceration of children.</li> <li>Partner with ID Know Yourself (lead Aboriginal mentoring service in NSW) and share the experience and learnings from the Youth Advocate Program, NSW with a view to trialling this work with ACCOs.</li> </ul>	March 2023 Review December 2023 2024	Chief Executive Executive Director Strategy and Engagement

## Impact Measures

To measure the impact of this RAP, Life Without Barriers has designed an approach to measurement, which reflects the unique nature and broad ambition of the RAP.

We will measure the impact of the Transformation Project by focusing on the Project’s two goals, namely that Life Without Barriers:

- Steps away from providing out-of-home care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by 2031.
- Influences the sector to adopt and implement the priority reforms at the centre of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and the Family Matters campaign to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care by 45% by 2031.

In each case, a *measure of success* will be developed to assess the achievement of these goals. However, to assess the impact more broadly, we will use the four Building Blocks which provide the foundation for the Family Matters campaign for reform. For each Building Block, Life Without Barriers has identified a critical ‘Impact Area’ which we are seeking to deliver or influence through the commitments in our RAP.

We will measure impact across two levels:

1. Impact at the Life Without Barriers level – that is, the outcomes that children and families experience and who we directly influence.
2. Impact at the sector level – that is, the outcomes that children and families across child protection systems experience.

These measures recognise that the ambition of our RAP extends beyond Life Without Barriers’ direct control and aims to influence change across the service sectors.

Each of the quantitative measures will also be complemented by insights of progress against those impact areas, including case studies, interviews and storytelling.

The approach will comprise of:

- A series of measures drawn from internal data, including for example rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care, rates of children supported by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers, as well as our internal data around cultural support planning, health and wellbeing and education outcomes.
- New data sources which we may seek, include: surveys of

children we support, carers or employees seeking to understand their experience of services and understanding of and accountability to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

- Existing data sets which provide a sector-wide picture of the experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families within the out-of-home care system, including data from the Productivity Commission, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The impact measurement approach will also detail how this data will be recorded and reported throughout the duration of the RAP, including commitments around being transparent and providing public reporting on the outcomes.

## Achievements by the Completion of the Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan, 2025

**The historic undertaking of the project will achieve sector alliance and joint responsibility to embed long-term sustainable systemic change, with the following milestones achieved by the completion of the Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan in 2025:**

- Establishment of the first National Partnership Agreement with SNAICC – setting timelines, resources, commitments and steps for 2022 – 2025 and across the ten-year timeline and how our contribution to the project will be determined as the project matures.
- Identification of priority states and territories to focus our energy between 2022 and 2025. The priority locations include New South Wales, Queensland and the Northern Territory.

- Creation of state and territory roadmaps that highlight areas where we have existing high numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care, local ACCOs, capacity of ACCOs in those areas and local timeframes over the period 2022 – 2025.
- In partnership with SNAICC and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peaks, plans finalised for the preparation and transfer of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to community-controlled organisations.
- Work with Governments in priority areas to ensure alignment to the transition plan and support in terms of resources.

- Establishment of partnerships with at least four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and planning commenced for transfer of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- The first transfers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from Life Without Barriers to community control.
- Invitation and opportunity for SNAICC Chief Executive and Life Without Barriers Chief Executive to publicly share commitment, learnings and opportunities across the sectors and with corporate partners.
- Work with Elevate and Stretch RAP partners to identify opportunities for collaboration on Closing the Gap targets and this important reform agenda.

- Co-ordinating Chief Executives, peak bodies and the not for profit and non-government sectors to share resources and commit at Board and Executive level to align to the work of SNAICC and the Family Matters campaign and to step away from providing out-of-home care services.
- Channelling of resources to SNAICC and partners to support the reform agenda.
- Work with sector partners and governments to advocate for sector reform focused on strengthening and changing legislation and systems reform in out-of-home care and the full implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.

- Public advocacy to seek, increase or redirect funding to strengthen families, family support, prevention and early intervention to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care.

We will have established University and research partnerships to build on existing evidence and amplify our learnings to further influence government thinking, funding and sector reform activity.

### **The longer term aims of the project are that by 2031:**

- The number and percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children Life Without Barriers support in foster care is reduced and this aligns to a reduction in the number of children in care nationally. The target for this reduction will vary across each state and territory

and be formally established in year one in partnership with SNAICC as the national lead, each of the state and territory peaks and governments to ensure a smooth and sustainable transition and effective capacity building of the ACCOs.

- 100% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have a connection to culture and are proud of their unique identity – either through transition to family or ACCOs, cultural planning or kinship care – included in the Impact Measurement Framework.
- Care of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Life Without Barriers has been successfully transferred to community control where possible in each state and territory, included in the Impact Measurement Framework.

- The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations who care for their children, families and communities has increased and their capacity and expertise are recognised as the priority approach to care in Australia.
- Significant reduction in the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the out-of-home care system and that entering the care system is the last option and used only in exceptional circumstances. The target for this reduction will vary across each state and territory and be formally established in year one in partnership with SNAICC.
- Elevate and Stretch RAP partners are strongly connected to Closing the Gap targets and the Family Matters campaign and have driven the reform agenda in

partnership with non-government agencies, ACCOs, peaks and government. We will work with Reconciliation Australia to identify Elevate and Stretch RAP partners who are willing to engage in this important work and host an event to outline “the why, the how and the ask”. This will be an opportunity for Elevate and Stretch RAP partners to consider how they can align resources both goodwill and financial to address capacity building across communities throughout Australia.

We are on track to meet our obligations under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

# Relationships, Respect, Opportunities, Governance

Our RAP actions and deliverables show our continued commitment to our reconciliation journey under the three pillars of Relationships, Respect and Opportunities which are founded upon strong Governance.



**Relationships**



**Respect**



**Opportunities**



**Governance**

## Relationships

Respectful relationships are founded on an understanding of reconciliation. With our breadth of relationships and our capacity to grow and strengthen these, we will put our relationships and resources to work to promote and pursue outcomes of reconciliation.

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
<b>1. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).</b>	National Reconciliation Strategy Group members will participate in five external events across each of the states and territories to ensure we have broad national coverage to promote and celebrate National Reconciliation Week.	June 2023 2024 2025	Chief Executive National Director Reconciliation
	Provide employees with information about National Reconciliation Week.	May 2023 2024 2025	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement
	State and territory RAP Working Group members to participate in three external NRW events in each state and territory.	June 2023 2024 2025	National Director Reconciliation
	Support employees to participate in one external NRW event in each state and territory.	May 2023 2024 2025	
	Partner with internal and external stakeholders to host an organisation wide NRW event and seven state and territory-based events.	May 2023 2024 2025	
	Register NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May 2023 2024 2025	
<b>2. We will communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.</b>	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly through a policy position statement and share via media channels each year of the RAP.	February 2023 2024 2025	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement
	Develop a communications strategy to provide employees, carers, people we support and external stakeholders with information relating to reconciliation.	August 2022	National Director Reconciliation
	Develop resources that support leaders to publicly speak out and promote reconciliation at internal and external events, including through our: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social policy position and commitment to the Elevate RAP.</li> <li>Promotion of reconciliation leveraging our national footprint.</li> </ul>	November 2022	
	Develop a national reconciliation brochure that highlights the events and activities in all jurisdictions to promote reconciliation; and publish on Life Without Barriers' website and promote through communication channels.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement National Director Reconciliation

## Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
<b>3. We will continue to build relationships that foster our own and others' understanding of reconciliation.</b>	Chief Executive will engage with senior leaders in an online forum on the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Employees will be invited to walk together to build a better future through genuine partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to share their contribution on internal and external communications channels.	August 2022	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement National Director Reconciliation
	Convene a Call to Action Day to harness our collective power and action to drive reconciliation outcomes through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees choosing either the institutional, structural or collaborative reforms in the RAP and building on an activity as part of their plan for change and sharing via internal and external digital channels.</li> <li>Supporting employees to consider using their own personal social media accounts to influence their own networks.</li> </ul>	November 2022 Review May 2023 2024 2025	
	Develop a Life Without Barriers RAP Pack that includes information and supporting documents to assist employees and carers to drive reconciliation outcomes in their teams and RAP Working Groups as part of a movement for collective action.	February 2023	
	The Life Without Barriers RAP Pack will include a virtual site where employees and carers can post positive stories of change they are making in their quest to drive reconciliation outcomes.	February 2023	
	Convene a 'think tank' of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous leaders across Elevate and Stretch RAP partners, SNAICC and Life Without Barriers to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map the existing resources and investment we can collectively harness to drive reconciliation outcomes to showcase the impact of capacity building with aligned resources, and</li> <li>Share outcomes via internal and external digital channels.</li> </ul>	May 2023 Review May 2024 2025	
	Through annual reviews, ensure members of the 'think tank' act as a sounding board to enhance pathways and extend thinking beyond the non-government arena into a whole of community approach to local solutions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families and communities.	May 2023 Review May 2024 2025	

## Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
3. We will continue to build relationships that foster our own and others' understanding of reconciliation.	Engage all employees in our reconciliation journey through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National and local specific communications and engagement every three months for the duration of the RAP.</li> <li>Promotion of the Regional, State and Territory RWGs every three months for the duration of the RAP.</li> </ul>	August November 2022 February May August November 2023 2024 February May 2025	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement National Director Reconciliation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roadshow to the twenty Senior Leadership Team meetings twice every year for the duration of the RAP.</li> </ul>	September 2022 April September 2023 2024 April 2025 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	In partnership with the National Reconciliation Strategy Group, develop a plan to engage with external stakeholders to positively influence and drive reconciliation outcomes.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Identify and collaborate with two small/medium organisations to support their development of a RAP.	November 2023 Review December 2024	
	Identify seven RAP organisations in states and territories and collaborate on projects to advance reconciliation.	November 2022 Review December 2023 2024	

## Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
3. We will continue to build relationships that foster our own and others' understanding of reconciliation.	Support and attend Reconciliation Australia's quarterly leadership gatherings and annual RAP conference.	September October 2022 March June September October 2023 2024 March June 2025	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement National Director Reconciliation
	Establish a joint site for members of the Child, Youth and Family Chief Executive Alliance to share collateral including RAP work, resources, strategic plans and to build on the work we are doing nationally.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Child, Youth and Family Chief Executive Alliance to assist three smaller agencies each year in their reconciliation journey and map a plan of support.	September 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	The Leadership Links is a forum of 100 leaders which is chaired by the Chief Executive. Each of the leaders will connect with one to two local organisations to promote the development of a RAP and to advance reconciliation as part of our "Profile a Partner" approach.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	Chief Executive
	We will provide media profiling of these organisations to encourage others to actively engage in the Reconciliation Australia RAP journey.	September 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement National Director Reconciliation
Identify opportunities to showcase the work Life Without Barriers is undertaking on our reconciliation journey to positively influence external stakeholders to commence work on their initial RAP.	November 2022 Review December 2023 2024		

## Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
<b>4. We will build a strong understanding of anti-discrimination and anti-racism strategies and promote positive race relations internally and in the public sphere.</b>	Address structural and institutional racism and invest in cultural safety strategies, commencing with a cultural audit to inform anti-racism and cultural safety improvements.	August 2022	Executive Director People and Culture
	Establish a community roundtable to co-design the Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy informed by the cultural audit.	August 2022	
	Implement and communicate the Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy across Life Without Barriers.	April 2023	
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and advisors to continuously improve our Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy.	December 2023 Review December 2024	
	Provide ongoing education opportunities for senior leaders and managers on the effects of structural and institutional racism and strategies for continuous improvement.	October 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	Senior leaders to publicly support anti-discrimination and ant-racism campaigns, initiatives and stances against racism, internally and in the public sphere.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Review the Life Without Barriers' Complaints and Grievance Policy and prioritise those discriminated against.	August 2022	
	Develop a restorative process in the Complaints and Grievance Policy that addresses issues of racism.	October 2022	
	Review all policies and procedures to ensure alignment with Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy.	October 2022	
	Ensure the inclusion of State Leads Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives in the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural audit</li> <li>Development of the Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy</li> <li>Development of restorative process in the Complaints and Grievance Policy, and</li> <li>Review of all documents to ensure alignment with Anti-Discrimination and Racism Policy.</li> </ul>	August 2022 September 2022 October 2022 December 2022	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement  National Director Reconciliation
Host an event with Elevate and Stretch RAP partners to share experiences of responding to discrimination and racism and publicly share learnings via media and internal and external digital channels.	September 2023		

## Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
<b>5. We will collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to strengthen mutual capacity to achieve collective impact.</b>	Meet with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders in each state and territory to review and continuously improve principles for engagement to ensure working together is about mutual capacity and collective impact.	August 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement
	Review, update and implement the engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, ACCOs and peak bodies.	August 2022 2023 2024	National Director Reconciliation
	Establish and maintain fourteen formal two-way partnerships each year for the duration of the RAP with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or organisations.	December 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	Conduct an individual meeting with each of the fourteen partners to ensure principles of self-determination are evident in the partnership agreement and that the relationship is led by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners.	June 2023	
	Provide pro-bono technology support to an ACCO each year for the duration of the RAP.	September 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director Technology and Innovation
	Provide the following support to two ACCOs each year for the duration of the RAP to expand their service delivery into the National Disability Insurance Scheme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to information about systems and processes, and technical practice expertise related to operating within the National Disability Insurance Scheme.</li> <li>Connect the ACCOs to the Life Without Barriers Disability engagement team and through them to the Alliance20 work in the sector.</li> <li>Share practice, assurance and learning and development supports with the ACCOs.</li> </ul>	August 2022 Review December 2023 2024	Executive Director Disability Services

## Respect

With an organisational footprint that reaches across Australia and brings us alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we are committed to ongoing learning that recognises and values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights, self-determination, cultures, histories, knowledge and wisdom. We will embed opportunities for employees to celebrate our shared history, build their cultural knowledge, cultural capability and cultural safety responsibilities.

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
<b>6. We will increase cultural capability, create culturally safe workplaces and be accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</b>	Implement the Self-Determination Framework focusing on the domains of: People; Systems; Country; and Accountability.	August 2022	Executive Director People and Culture
	Implement the Cultural Learning and Cultural Capability Framework which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Truth Telling; Impacts of Colonisation; Intergenerational Trauma; Structural and Institutional Racism; Self-determination; Cultural Safety, and Cultural Capability.</li> </ul>	August 2022	
	Identify clear learning pathways for employees at different levels focusing on building cultural capability and cultural safety in the workplace.	November 2022	
	Executive, National Reconciliation Strategy Group and State and Territory RAP Working Groups and senior leaders will engage in three face-to-face or three on-line learning modules relating to cultural capability and cultural safety.	August 2022	
	Non-Indigenous employees working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children will engage in assessment modules that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify/articulate cultural competence standard.</li> <li>Assess current cultural capability against standard.</li> <li>Identify individual learning interventions from the assessment.</li> <li>Ensure all employees will have individual learning plans.</li> </ol>	September 2022 2023 2024	
	By end of 2023, deliver (b) through to (d) for at least 50% of the identified population and by end of 2024, for 90% of the employee population.	December 2023	
	Include cultural capability feedback through the employee's business-as-usual supervision by the line manager six times per year in accordance with the Supervision Policy and review progress each year for the duration of the RAP.	November 2022 Review December 2023 2024	

## Respect

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility	
<b>6. We will increase cultural capability, create culturally safe workplaces and be accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</b>	80% of employees will participate in online cultural capability learning by end of 2022 and this will increase to 90% by end of 2023 and sustained through 2024.	November 2022 Review December 2023 2024	Executive Director People and Culture	
	30% of Leaders (15% of employees) will participate in face-to-face cultural capability learning in 2022 (this includes 80% of leaders at the Director level) – to be increased to 60% of leaders in 2023 and 90% of leaders in 2024.	November 2022 December Review 2023 2024		
	Support a culturally safe workforce through the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in decision making roles and across more teams/functions through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in leadership (decision making) roles (defined as roles no more than two levels below Executive) by 10% each year for the duration of the RAP.</li> <li>Increase by 10% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders each year for the duration of the RAP.</li> <li>Increased representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in corporate functions. Increase by 10% in at least two different functions in each year for the duration of the RAP.</li> </ul>	November 2022 Review December 2023 2024		
	Review cultural capability of the workforce through annual surveys and targeting additional cultural learning initiatives to specific demographics (teams or locations or levels) of concern.	November 2022 Review December 2023 2024		
	Pilot a cultural capability and cultural safety program for refugee and asylum-seeking people to increase their knowledge of and responsibility to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	August 2023		Executive Director Child, Youth and Family National Director Reconciliation
	Host an annual cultural immersion activity with Board, Executive and National Reconciliation Strategy Group members, and invite Reconciliation Australia and Elevate Partners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite two partner agencies to the immersion event to extend the reconciliation network and build capability of other organisations.</li> </ul>	November 2022 2023 2024		Chief Executive

## Respect

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
<b>7. We will demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by observing cultural protocols.</b>	With SNAICC, review Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country cultural protocols to ensure currency of cultural protocols.	September 2022	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement National Director Reconciliation
	Communicate and distribute Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country cultural protocols to inform employee's understanding of purpose and significance behind cultural protocols.	October 2022	
	Display twenty one Acknowledgment of Country plaques in our office/s or on our buildings.	December 2023	
	Invite local Traditional Owners to provide fourteen Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant internal events each year for the duration of the RAP, including but not limited to National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC events.	December 2022 2023 2024	
	Provide an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocol at the commencement of all meetings.	December 2022 2023 2024	
	Provide an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocol at all public events.	December 2022 2023 2024	
	Partner with Traditional Owners and Custodians to develop and translate an Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners and Custodians in local traditional language for each state and territory-based location.	April 2023	

## Respect

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
<b>8. We will engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures by celebrating NAIDOC week.</b>	Promote NAIDOC Week activities and highlight the importance of the year's theme in the Chief Executive Leadership Links and the Life Without Barriers communiqué pre and post NAIDOC Week.	June 2023 2024 2025	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement National Director Reconciliation
	Support National Reconciliation Strategy Group, state, territory, national and regional RWGs to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	June 2023 2024 2025	
	Support employees to participate in a NAIDOC Week event each year.	June 2023 2024 2025	
	Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to support a national NAIDOC event and seven external NAIDOC Week events (one per state and territory) each year, including co-hosting the event.	June 2023 2024 2025	
	Review policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees participating in NAIDOC Week.	June 2023 Review December 2023 2024	Executive Director People and Culture
<b>9. We will make our offices more welcoming to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</b>	Develop a guideline and checklist of requirements for offices to make them more welcoming to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	August 2022	Executive Director Corporate Services and Finance National Director Reconciliation
	Undertake audit of each office and monitor additional actions required by respective offices to ensure we meet targets, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledgement of Country Plaques.</li> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags.</li> <li>Naming of offices.</li> <li>Naming of rooms in offices.</li> </ul>	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director Corporate Services and Finance National Director Reconciliation

## Opportunities

We will use our resources to provide opportunities for access to education, employment, career pathways and leadership programs and to culturally safe and appropriate supports. We will continue to grow and maintain an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, extending opportunities through our supplier and business activities to impact economic and social outcomes.

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
10. We will hear the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples we support with disability.	In partnership with Disability Services Advisory Council and First People's Disability Network: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Socialise the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Client Voice Strategy with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, seeking input into processes that impact them and to strengthen the strategy's cultural appropriateness.</li> </ul>	August 2022	Executive Director Disability Services
	Develop the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Client Voice Implementation Plan and include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we support and local advisors in the co-design. The plan will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>define the actions, activities and methods of hearing the voices of people we support.</li> <li>include feedback mechanisms that support the sharing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's needs as well as their experiences and expectations of services.</li> <li>identify disability and culturally appropriate modes of communication and learning and development.</li> <li>Set target dates for activity completion, ensuring adequate resources to successfully execute the strategy.</li> </ul>	October 2022	
	In consultation with the Disability Services Advisory Council and the Disability Senior Leadership Team, oversee the implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Client Voice Implementation Plan.	February 2023	
11. We will connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to address intergenerational trauma.	Partner with the Healing Foundation to enhance access to emotional, social and/or wellbeing supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals with disability that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advice from the Foundation on program options that support connecting with culture, identity, healing and restoring family and kin relationships.</li> </ul>	October 2022	Executive Director Disability Services

## Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
11. We will connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to address intergenerational trauma.	Partner with individuals and relevant stakeholders to develop Cultural Support Plans that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The individual's understanding of the impact of trauma and the appropriate healing pathways for them.</li> <li>Solutions to barriers to individual's equal participation in their social and physical environment.</li> <li>Access to and inclusion in significant cultural events.</li> <li>Connection to family, community and country.</li> </ul>	August 2022	Executive Director Disability Services
	Where an individual declines the development of a Cultural Support Plan, this will be recorded in the client records.	August 2022	
	Revisit the individual's choice to develop a Cultural Support Plan during the annual review process or self-initiated.	August 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
	Ensure NDIS plans access available funding for individual's social, emotional and wellbeing support.	September 2022 Review December 2023 2024	
12. We will improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	In consultation with State and Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leads review the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy to ensure it has a strong overarching strategy to drive outcomes.	August 2022	Executive Director People and Culture
	Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce to 6% by 2024, with an incremental increase each year (5.5%, 5.8%, 6%).	November 2022 Review December 2023 2024	

## Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
<b>12. We will improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.</b>	Promote employment opportunities for current and potential Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees through local and national channels that are recommended by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island employees, external advisors and recruitment partners.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director People and Culture
	Review recruitment policies and procedures to ensure the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in processes relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment.	August 2022	
	Include fifteen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander emerging leaders in the Leadership Program each year for the duration of the RAP to enhance leadership expertise.	August 2022 2023 2024	
	Partner with Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre to provide leadership development to two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders each year for the duration of the RAP.	August 2022 2023 2024	
	Partner with a community-controlled organisation in New South Wales and Queensland to develop an exchange program for reciprocal placements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in community-controlled organisations and non-Indigenous employees at Life Without Barriers.	November 2022	
	Provide ongoing cultural support and supervision options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees which will include external advisors/mentors to complement internal supervision processes undertaken by the line manager.	August November 2022 February May August November 2023 2024 February May 2025	
	Provide senior non-Indigenous leaders with external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural mentors and meet three times each year for the duration of the RAP.	October 2022 April July October 2023 2024 April July 2025	
	Additional entry interview to be offered each year for the duration of the RAP to connect employees with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee support networks and Yarning Circles.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	

## Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
<b>12. We will improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.</b>	Exit interviews to be offered to inform continuous improvement each year for the duration of the RAP to retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	November 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director People and Culture
	Pilot an employee support program with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employee Assistance Provider.	September 2022	
<b>13. We will support the development and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interns and students.</b>	Continue to partner with CareerTrackers and Charles Darwin University to provide three internships each year to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interns.	August 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director People and Culture
	Engage three senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students seeking a career in STEM and provide opportunities for work experience each year for the duration of the RAP.	November 2022 Review December 2023 2024	Executive Director Technology and Innovation
	Partner with Newcastle University to support three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in Life Without Barriers each year to access university courses related to STEM.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Partner with Newcastle University and provide a scholarship to one internal (young person) or external student studying a 3-year STEM degree.	September 2022	

## Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
<b>14. We will increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.</b>	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director Corporate Services and Finance
	Review and update the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Strategy and set revised procurement targets with an increase of 15% per year of the RAP.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Increase number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses by five suppliers each year of the RAP.	September 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Embed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Strategy through coaching relevant employees in each state and territory about contracting business through Supply Nation.	September 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Promote Supply Nation membership to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Promote interest in the development of a RAP to suppliers and businesses and continue to preference procurement from businesses with RAPs.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Maintain Supply Nation membership and pursue opportunities to present at the Supply Nation Connect event.	August 2022 2023 2024	
	Develop a communication strategy to communicate opportunities internally and externally for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and suppliers.	September 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	

## Governance

In keeping with our vision for reconciliation, we will elevate the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations through our RAP governance and leadership opportunities. We will be accountable to the National Reconciliation Strategy Group and the National Cultural Children’s Advisory Panel, as well as through participation in Reconciliation Australia’s opportunities for review and reporting.

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
<b>15. Provide forums for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to directly engage with senior leadership to ensure cultural governance across the business.</b>	Support the Yarning Circle with the State and Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leads by ensuring the attendance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees every three months to build on the national network.	September October 2022 March June September October 2023 2024 March June 2025	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement National Director Reconciliation
	Meet with State and Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leads and designated representatives to hear recommendations from Yarning Circles, including experience of race relations.	October 2022 May October 2023 2024 May 2025	Chief Executive National Director Reconciliation
	Convene state and territory gatherings with State and Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leads, employees and carers once per year to showcase their work, share stories and yarn together.	November 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director Child, Youth and Family
	Embed cultural governance requirements in the National Reconciliation Strategy Group agenda to ensure the following tools and materials are culturally relevant and appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice and programs.</li> <li>Cultural learning and development.</li> <li>Submissions.</li> <li>Recruitment and retention.</li> <li>Policy and procedures.</li> </ul>	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	National Director Reconciliation
	<b>16. We will maintain a tiered structure of RAP Working Groups, each inclusive of equal representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous members.</b>	National Reconciliation Strategy Group, chaired by the Chief Executive and National Director Reconciliation, will meet at least four times each year for the duration of the RAP.	August November 2022 February May August November 2023 2024 February May 2025
State and territory RAP Working Groups, chaired by State Directors and State and Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leads will meet at least four times each year for the duration of the RAP and report to the National Reconciliation Strategy Group.		August November 2022 February May August November 2023 2024 February May 2025	

## Governance

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
16. We will maintain a tiered structure of RAP Working Groups, each inclusive of equal representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous members.	National RAP Working Group (corporate), chaired by Director of Reconciliation and National Manager will meet at least four times each year for the duration of the RAP and report to the National Reconciliation Strategy Group.	August November 2022 February May August November 2023 2024 February May 2025	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement  National Director Reconciliation
	Regional RAP Working Groups, chaired by Regional Directors and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior leaders will meet at least four times each year and report to their respective State and Territory RAP Working Group for the duration of the RAP.	August November 2022 February May August November 2023 2024 February May 2025	
	Maintain equal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the National Reconciliation Strategy Group, state, territory, national and regional RWGs.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Apply a Terms of Reference for the National Reconciliation Strategy Group, state, territory, national and regional RWGs.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	State and Territory RAP Working Groups will report every three months to the National Reconciliation Strategy Group.	August November 2022 February May August November 2023 2024 February May 2025	
	Promote reporting requirements, calendar of meetings and key events for each RAP Working Group through communications channels.	August 2023 2024	

## Governance

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
17. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management for the duration of the RAP.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement  National Director Reconciliation
	Provide appropriate support for effective implementation for the duration of the RAP.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Embed resource needs for RAP implementation for the duration of the RAP.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Embed appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments internally and externally.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	
	Include RAP progress in standing agenda template for all senior management meetings for the duration of the RAP.	August 2022	
	Embed RAP responsibilities in key performance indicators, employee appraisals and supervision for the duration of the RAP.	September 2022	Executive Director People and Culture
18. We will build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP progress, achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.	Given a new data management system, continue to monitor and review the system to maintain data integrity and reporting of RAP commitments and deliverables, internally and externally.	August 2022 Review December 2022 2023 2024	Executive Director Group Risk, Performance and Impact
	Conduct rapid assurance engagement to confirm compliance with targets and mitigate any risk mid-RAP; and report findings to the Board, Executive Directors, National Reconciliation Strategy Group, and RWGs.	December 2023	

## Governance

Action	Deliverable	Time	Responsibility
18. We will build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP progress, achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.	Conduct assurance engagement to confirm compliance with whole-of-RAP targets and to report findings to the Board, Executive Directors, National Reconciliation Strategy Group, and RWGs.	May 2025	Executive Director Group Risk, Performance and Impact
	Report RAP progress each three months to Board, Executive Directors, National Reconciliation Strategy Group and all the RWGs. Include in data capture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children who have been referred to Life Without Barriers who have transitioned to family, kinship care or ACCOs.</li> <li>Partnerships with ACCOs, Peaks, government and non-government organisations and the actions/steps being undertaken during each quarter.</li> </ul>	August November 2022 February May August November 2023 2024 February May 2025	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement National Director Reconciliation
	Report RAP progress each three months to all employees for the duration of the RAP.	August November 2022 February May August November 2023 2024 February May 2025	
	Complete and submit annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2022 2023 2024	
	Participate in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	August 2022 2024	
	Publicly report RAP commitments and achievements as part of the Annual Report.	November 2022 2023 2024	Chief Executive
19. We will continue our reconciliation journey.	Review and update next RAP based on challenges, achievements, impacts and opportunities.	February 2025	Executive Director Strategy and Engagement
	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing next RAP.	February 2025	
	Engage with Reconciliation Australia on the direction and content of next RAP.	February 2025	National Director Reconciliation



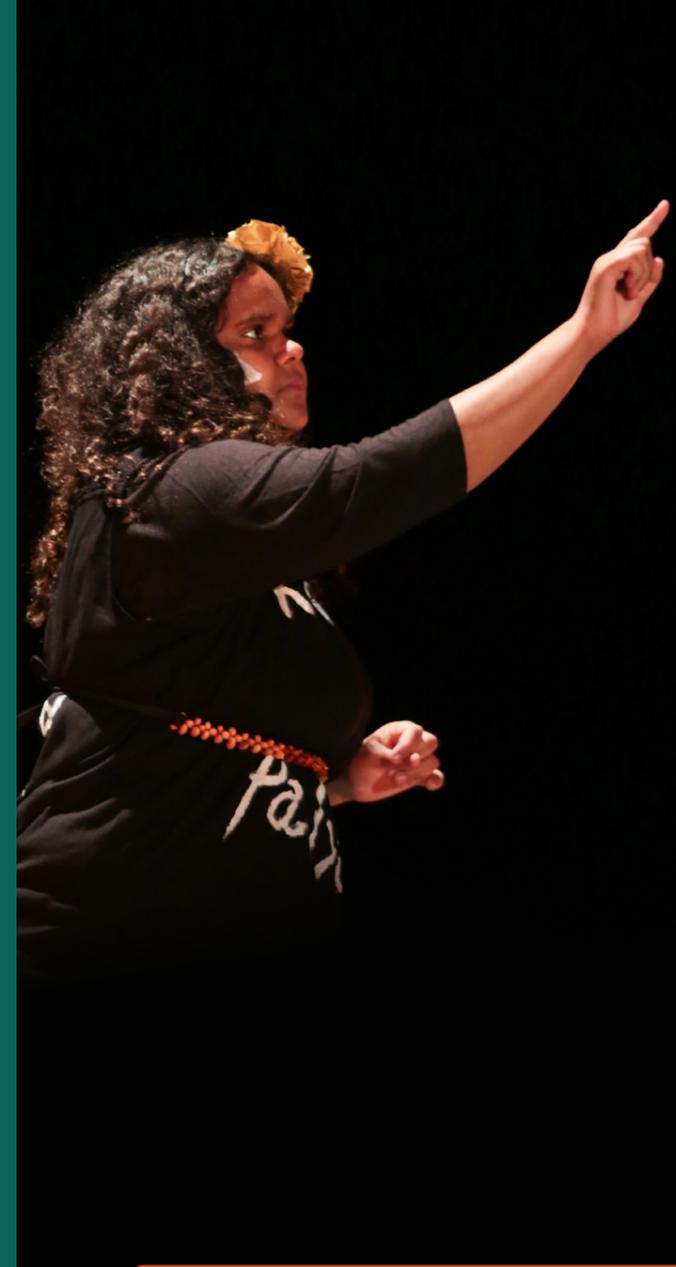
Life Without Barriers named the training room in the Beenleigh office, Queensland in honour of Uncle Boomi – Boomi Hegarty, Wakka Wakka Elder – to celebrate 10 years of the Gittaba Cultural Program – reconnecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with culture.

“ I would like to acknowledge the many contributors to the development of the Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan which has spanned two years: those who progressed an extensive consultation process; drafted and continued to revise the RAP whilst honouring the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we serve and those who serve them; our community and government partners; those who made substantial conceptual and design contributions; and, Life Without Barriers' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leads, employees and carers who were always there to support, encourage and provide cultural guidance.

The numerous processes involved in developing the Elevate RAP have continued to extend a cultural richness to everyone who has participated. These have provided untold opportunities to learn and relearn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their resilience, wisdom and cultures that have enabled the Life Without Barriers community to embrace working together for a shared future that we will not leave to chance.

I would like to thank Reconciliation Australia for walking alongside of Life Without Barriers to support the development of the Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan particularly around enabling Life Without Barriers to understand the influence and power we can bring to a major reform in the child and family sectors we currently benefit from, and for patiently encouraging and bringing out the detail inherent in the complexity and ambition of the Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan. ”

**Claire Robbs**  
Chief Executive



Unbroken Land performers supported by Life Without Barriers in partnership with SWD Ensemble as well as the Alice Springs Disability Sector, Northern Territory present their stage performances about connection to nature, place and belonging.

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