



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

INNOVATE

Innovate

Reconciliation Action Plan

June 2019 to June 2021



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Message from Reconciliation Australia

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I am delighted to see Tamworth Family Support Services continue its reconciliation journey and to formally endorse its third Innovate RAP.

Through the development of an Innovate RAP, Tamworth Family Support Services continues to play an important part in a community of over 1,000 dedicated corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have formally committed to reconciliation through the RAP program since its inception in 2006. RAP organisations across Australia are turning good intentions into positive actions, helping to build higher trust, lower prejudice, and increase pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



Reconciliation is no one single issue or agenda. Based on international research and benchmarking, Reconciliation Australia, defines and measures reconciliation through five critical dimensions: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance. All sections of the community—governments, civil society, the private sector, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities—have a role to play to progress these dimensions.

The RAP program provides a framework for organisations to advance reconciliation within their spheres of influence. This Innovate RAP provides Tamworth Family Support Services with the key steps to establish its own unique approach to reconciliation. Through implementing an Innovate RAP, Tamworth Family Support Services will strengthen its approach to driving reconciliation through its business activities, services and programs, and develop mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

We wish Tamworth Family Support Services well as it embeds and expands its own unique approach to reconciliation. We encourage Tamworth Family Support Services to embrace this journey with open hearts and minds, to grow from the challenges, and to build on its successes. As the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation reminded the nation in its final report:

“Reconciliation is hard work—it’s a long, winding and corrugated road, not a broad, paved highway. Determination and effort at all levels of government and in all sections of the community will be essential to make reconciliation a reality.”

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Tamworth Family Support Services on its third RAP, and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Karen Mundine'.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

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Our Reconciliation Action Plan

From the President of the Board – Jane Kibble



Tamworth Family Support (TFSS) takes the vision of Reconciliation Australia seriously. We believe in a just, equitable and reconciled Australia and we work towards that in a number of ways. Our organisation provides a range of facilities and programs that are designed to engage with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Tamworth and its environs, such as the Coledale Community Centre and Community Hub, and Dhiyaan Supported Playgroup. Also, of importance is our commitment to the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our organisation and to providing an environment in which our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and clients feel valued, acknowledged and listened to.

We are striving to ensure that our workplaces and work practices reflect our work towards reconciliation. In the spirit of reconciliation, we would like to thank everyone, who has worked towards our goal "thriving communities and endless possibilities"

From the CEO – Belinda Kotris



The Tamworth Family Support Service Reconciliation Action Plan has sought practical ways to bring about real and lasting change in the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians recognise the injustices of the past and together plan a new way forward.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan is an important way for us to set measurable goals and commit ourselves to achieving these outcomes in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities.

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Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Our Vision for Reconciliation

A reconciled Australia will be a place where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values of family and community, and connections to community and country are valued. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will be thriving, and feel that they have endless possibilities. All Australians will hold a deep cultural understanding, and they will respect and value diversity. Service providers will be fair and equitable, confident and capable of providing a culturally-safe and welcoming service for all community members. All organisations will have Reconciliation Action Plans in place; provide leadership on reconciliation and work collaboratively to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

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Our Vision

As an Organisation:	Thriving Communities, Endless Possibilities
Children’s Services:	Nurturing children, enriching communities
Family Services:	Promoting opportunities for children and families
Homelessness Services:	Supporting people to build positive futures

Our Mission:

We work toward achieving our organisational and service visions through our purpose, which is to:

- Strengthen and improve social and personal well-being for individuals, families and communities;
- Promote access, equality and social justice; and
- Deliver services of quality and value.

Our Core Values:

TFSS is supported by our core values of Diversity, Integrity, Community, Leadership and Partnerships which guide the way we work, make decisions and provide services.

We define these values as:

Diversity	To accept and appreciate differences
Integrity	To always act with honesty and professionalism
Community	To have a sense of responsibility and contribution
Leadership	To utilise our position to drive change
Partnerships	To work collaboratively to deliver the best outcomes

Our Core Business

- To support disadvantaged children, young people, individuals and families so that they can enhance their independence, safety, self-esteem and /or quality of life within the community.
- To build strong communities and social capital/undertaking community development, so that communities are well informed, resourced and connected and equality and diversity are embraced.
- To promote education in Australia and/or the relief of poverty in Australia.
- To provide counselling for families.
- To provide practical assistance or related support to disadvantaged families to cope better with stress and crisis situations.

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- To case manage and/or advocate for disadvantaged individuals and families.
- To provide community information or education to raise awareness of issues, services and activities.
- To build and maintain community service system networks, to improve the level of information exchange and service coordination and enhance the effectiveness and utilisation of services.
- To coordinate and promote the use of service facilities to the community.
- To plan, develop and support community-building events.
- To advocate on community issues and related social justice issues affecting local communities.

Key messages

Tamworth Family Support Service Ltd. [TFSS] is a non-government, community based organisation. TFSS has been delivering services to families in the Tamworth region for the past 37 years. The organisation encompasses eleven different sites within the Tamworth and surrounding communities and has 21 funded programs that deliver services within the New England area.

As part of its 2016-2018 RAP commitment, TFSS aimed to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s access to our service, and to achieve an increase in employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to 15% of all staff by June 2018, this target was achieved by Jan 2018. [RAP target 3.1] TFSS currently have 91 staff across all programs, of whom 18 [19.78%] identify as Aboriginal and 1 staff member who identifies as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Tamworth Family Support service (TFSS) values all employees and recognises that it is important to continually encourage and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. TFSS have a Recruitment and Selection policy in place with procedures to ensure that the engagement of new employees is conducted in a way that offers equal opportunity without discrimination.

All TFSS employees are provided with induction into the organisation and as part of this process employees are provided with information about the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and encouraged to complete a cultural awareness self-assessment. An internal committee – the RAP Working Group (RWG) oversees the implementation of the RAP across the organisation.

TFSS want to ensure that:

- The RWG have strong consistent representation from all streams of the organisation
- Clients continue to be responded to in a positive and culturally appropriate manner
- All new TFSS staff are inducted to the RAP document and complete a self-assessment
- All TFSS staff are informed about the current RAP deliverables

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- RWG members feel encouraged and confident to bring ideas or concerns to the RAP meetings and contribute to the TFSS Express (monthly staff newsletter)
- RWG members receive media and communications training to build their confidence
- RWG are committed to sharing cultural information and upcoming events
- RWG raise awareness of TFSS's RAP in the community and community engagement is encouraged
- Learnings are discussed and changes implemented and reviewed
- Different options for cultural awareness training and different delivery methods are available
- The aims and objectives of the Aboriginal Homelessness Accord are addressed through our service standards and programs
- An Aboriginal ambassador is identified and engaged by TFSS

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Tamworth Family Support has 12 office sites which are located in the following areas:



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Why did we develop a Reconciliation Plan (RAP)?

TFSS initiated its first RAP in 2014, and over the past four years we have seen significant development across our organisation. Through a range of activities, both within our organisation and in the wider community, we have provided a range of cultural education and learning opportunities as well as participating more strongly with community-led cultural celebrations. We are still working towards some of our targets and we have certainly improved meaningful engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with which we work. Importantly, two significant outcomes of the work to date include that we have increased the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees across our service and have seen a greater uptake of our services by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients. We are reviewing and renewing our RAP for a third consecutive two-year period and in the coming years TFSS intends to build on the previous successes and extend our organisation's commitment to reconciliation by; continuing to enhance the confidence of our staff to provide culturally safe service delivery.

Our 2019 – 2021 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) reflects Tamworth Family Support Services' (TFSS) deep commitment to the process of reconciliation. Over the last four years we have extended our reach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and connect our programs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations across Tamworth, and increased our visibility across a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days of celebration.

One of our many achievements over past 4 years is our ability to attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, surpassing our target of 15% employment and sustaining this since January 2018. TFSS provides a range of cultural awareness and education opportunities to staff annually to ensure they are working in a culturally competent way.

TFSS has endeavoured to make our organisation more welcoming for staff, clients and community members by; placing culturally appropriate signage in all office spaces, displaying Aboriginal artwork and desk flags at all TFSS sites, and including an Acknowledgement of Country on our email signatures.

This RAP document demonstrates our journey which is shared by all, recognising and embracing the strength, cultures and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It instils an intense sense of pride and inspires a sense of unity and purpose that transcends the bounds of language, culture and nationality. Our vision of 'thriving communities, endless possibilities' underpins our values which in turn aim to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by providing fair and equitable opportunities, allowing us all to move towards positive change.

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Our RAP has enabled us to deliver TFSS mission and has helped us to develop stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through:

- Additional consultation,
- The development of new collaborative relationships with Aboriginal organisations,
- The provision of further opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate more fully in TFSS programs and services.

The major achievements of the last four years have been the opportunity to provide internal training for our staff over a range of settings from classroom-style cultural education to site visits and participation in community activities. The additional investment that we, as an organisation, have made in community celebrations such as NAIDOC, National Reconciliation Week and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Day has increased our profile and promoted positive relationships with the Aboriginal communities across the towns that we operate in.

Who is in involved in our RAP?

TFSS RAP is developed and reviewed by the RAP working Group [RWG] in consultation with other Aboriginal Organisations, TFSS Champions and staff.

The RWG meets at least bi-monthly to plan activities, review progress against the RAP, and work together to ensure that the organisation is doing everything it can to meet our objectives

The RAP Terms of Reference [TOR] requires a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 8 members and must be made up of at least 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The RAP TOR is updated bi-annually in line with the term of the RAP.

Over the lifetime of the RAP, a collection of staff and board members have played a part in its development and facilitation.

Past RWG members have included the following:

- Yvonne-Kent Local Aboriginal Elder, Board Member
- Sara Byrnes Community Development Worker [RAP Chair]
- Joanne Stead Management Committee Member [RAP Secretary]
- Julie Green Children’s Services Manager
- Donella Urquhart Quality Coordinator
- Athol Munro Youth Worker
- Charmane Holm Team Leader Women and Children’s Refuge

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- Sue Snook Family Services Manager
- Katie Thompson Indigenous Locational Supported Playgroup Coordinator
- Kellie Tulzac Domestic Violence Disclosure Support Worker
- Daniel Wilson Case Worker
- Danielle Arnall Reconnect Case Worker
- Trish Heffernan Team Leader Youth Refuge
- Marianne Smith Aboriginal specialist
- Zach Turnbull Case Worker [RAP Chair]

Current RWG members

- Aunty Yvonne Kent Local Aboriginal Elder, Board Member
- Joanne Stead Board Member [RWG Secretary]
- Sheree Allen Case Worker [RWG Chair]
- Jenee Smith Assistant Community Hub worker
- Daniel Wilson Case Worker
- Katie Thompson Aboriginal Locational Supported Playgroup Coordinator
- Emily Williams WDVCS Case Worker Armidale /Inverell
- Ashleigh Lang Indigenous Locational Support Playgroup worker
- Isabella Shearman Aboriginal Specialist Worker

Who champions our RAP?

The RAP champions that drive internal engagement and awareness of the RAP across TFSS are:

Belinda Kotris - TFSS CEO,

Senior Manager Corporate Services

Senior Manager Operations

- Manager Service stream 1
- Manager Service stream 2
- Manager Service stream 3
- Manager Service stream 4
- Manager Service stream 5
- Manager Service Stream 6

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Learnings from our 2016-2018 Innovate RAP

TFSS has actively implemented our engagement strategy with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities in which we work. The RAP has provided an opportunity to make cultural training available to staff, connecting and sharing information with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and taking a lead in local events within the community to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories.

Most importantly, our self-evaluation survey and training feedback reflects that TFSS staff feel positive and are interested to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Over time, staff confidence has increased with the greater number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff providing an opportunity for non-Aboriginal staff to seek advice and guidance and to ask questions regarding providing a quality culturally appropriate service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. There is a stronger interest in gaining more cultural education.

Challenges from our 2016-2018 Innovate RAP

Developing and facilitating the Tamworth Family Support Service's [TFSS] second Reconciliation Action Plan in 2016 – 2018 proved to be an insightful journey.

Through out the lifetime of our second RAP we experienced a number of challenges as a working group including:

- Trying to involve all staff at any one time in the cultural awareness training staff while ensuring that service delivery is not compromised. It proved unworkable to have 100% of staff involved due to the number of staff and locations
- Being able to pitch cultural awareness training at the right level for individual staff members due to differences in cultural confidence.
- RWG have raised awareness of the RAP internally however we still need to share the RAP objectives effectively with external stakeholders
- To ensure that there is an understanding that Aboriginal events need to be attended by both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non- Indigenous Staff
- Connecting with supplier networks due to limited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses in the region. [Ref RAP Target area 3.2]
- Changes in RWG members meant that meetings had to be held monthly to ensure that actions were reported and targets were being met. [Ref RAP Target area, Relationships 1.1].

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- While the information is accessible to all staff, there was a period of disruption until new RAP members could be nominated and appointed to their positions.
- One of the biggest challenges faced by the RWG was timeframes due to the demands of delivering quality consistent service to our target group.

As a working group we have endeavoured to overcome these challenges by raising staff awareness across the organisation in relation to RAP deliverables promoting initiatives through the TFSS Express, gaining more support from management level down with community events/ activities, placing the RAP as a standing agenda item for all TFSS team meetings, opening up better two way communication through senior management meetings to allow RWG to put forward proposals in relation to achieving targets.

Successes from our Innovate RAP in 2016-2018

TFSS Management encourages and enables the RWG to grow and expand their working group in the community, to take the lead in inducting staff to the RAP and identifying the need for cultural training, and gives the RWG a leadership role in this area.

TFSS Staff are encouraged and very comfortable to participate in events and TFSS keeps staff informed of all the events.

- Sept 2016 TFSS hosted a morning tea for Aboriginal Elders at the Youthie. This was well attended and accepted in the community as a positive initiative. It provided an opportunity for Elders and youth to engage in a positive and cultural way
- TFSS hosted a Close the Gap event in March 2017 and 2018 with many local community services and members supporting the event.
- In December 2017 local Elder and a proud Gomeroi woman, Aunt Yvonne Kent welcomed stakeholders and services to the Safer Pathways program launch.
- As of May 2018, all services groups within TFSS had a representative on the RWG. Currently 3/4 services groups are represented on the RAP working group. [REF 1.1 Relationships]
- A tailored Acknowledgement of Country guide specific to TFSS was developed and each staff member was provided with a copy. Acknowledgements of Country or Welcome to Country (as appropriate) have been integrated into all public and internal meeting agendas.
- An Aboriginal staff member retains a Team Leader position
- A number of opportunities were provided for staff at TFSS to participate in external cultural training and celebrations in the region, in particular Tamworth and Gunnedah.

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- Staff worked with community members, Elders and groups such as Len Waters, Shaun Allan, Galala Land and River Care, and the Gomeroi Dance Company, and participated in cultural education activities including: Stories Under the Stars, Boundary Rock tour, National Reconciliation Week tree planting and Aboriginal Cultural Awareness
- All TFSS sites have been provided with and display a statement of Acknowledgement in our offices as well as the three flags at the front desk.
- 98% of staff completed cultural self-assessment during their induction and orientation process. Members of the RWG sit with staff and introduce them to the RAP document. Staff complete a cultural competency self-assessment to determine their level of knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Once a staff member has completed the self assessment their need for further knowledge and skill development in relation to cultural awareness is prioritised and training or skill development arranged
- All new staff are given the RAP Working Group contact details and encouraged to contact RWG members with any questions or concerns they may have. TFSS Staff are also shown where all RAP documents can be accessed on the TFSS shared drive and are encouraged to read all relevant policies and procedures
- Evaluations completed after the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness training resulted in 100% of staff reporting that they had an increase in skills, knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal people, and 80% reporting an increase in knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services in the region.
- Staff reported that they felt the training had better equipped them to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
- TFSS RAP working group have worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and businesses to host community events and to provide cultural education for staff to support positive outcomes. However, TFSS still have to establish strong relationships and ongoing partnerships [REF 1.2]
- On the 28 of May 2018 Local Elders attended and welcomed the community to Country at a Reconciliation Day event hosted by TFSS. The event was supported by staff, from other businesses and service organisations. There was also participation by local students and teachers and artists.
- TFSS was a silver sponsor for the annual NAIDOC Week event in 2017-2018
- TFSS staff participated in NAIDOC community activities and TFSS nominated Aunty Yvonne Kent in July 2018 for an award as an inspirational local woman – “Because of Her We Can”
- TFSS organised events and activities contributing to local calendars of events for National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week in 2016, 2017 & 2018 and all service streams were encouraged and represented either through their own stall or through volunteering.

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- TFSS held Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Day celebrations in August 2016, 2017 and 2018. It was an opportunity for TFSS to show support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children Celebration activities including the “Morning Dreamtime Story Telling” were well received and supported by the community.
- TFSS supported the NRW event in Quirindi and Tamworth 2017 2018
- Client surveys were conducted in May 2017 and 2018 and the total amount of surveys received over the 2-year period was 231. The surveys that were completed by Aboriginal clients indicated that an average of 91.5 % of Aboriginal clients were satisfied with the service provided, 86% felt culturally respected and 84.5 % felt that they achieved their main goal or reason for attending the service.
- TFSS developed and distributed a RAP newsletter for the past two consecutive years.
- Aboriginal client engagement with TFSS has increased. Based on Central intake data over the past four years we have seen our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander client numbers increased from 156 (per annum) in January 2015 to 245 in January 2018.
- On the 2 May 2018 Aunt Stella Lamb welcomed community members to the Domestic violence night.
- Feedback from a stakeholder survey May 2017 and 2018 included statements that “TFSS is at the forefront of our regions welfare industry with compassionate and motivated staff” and “TFSS is great at collaboration - they are community focused - and the needs of the community and individuals are high priority.”
- TFSS office spaces have been equipped with culturally appropriate signage, artwork and symbols of welcome. RWG Members are easily identified for all staff to approach. All service streams have an RWG representative.
- Staff are encouraged and supported by management to attend key events associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days of significance, such as National NAIDOC Women’s Conference.

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Relationships

Promote respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and other communities consistent with TFSS vision.

Tamworth Family Support Service (TFSS) has a unique culture and this is expressed through its values of Diversity, Integrity, Community, Leadership and Partnerships.

Relationships are critical to the work we do. At TFSS we work intensively with families and community members who are vulnerable, struggling and looking for assistance. The effectiveness of our work is based on our ability to build trust, rapport and respect through collaborative relationships. Additionally, our relationships with other organisations, including our funding bodies and our partners in delivery, are integral to providing high-quality, holistic and timely services to our clients.

Our new RWG is going to focus on strengthening and building on existing relationships and developing ongoing partnerships.

A planned and coordinated approach is used when consulting and working with stakeholders and feedback gained is used to improve practice. Over the past year staff continued to support the values of the organisation, to improve their work practices, to achieve better outcomes for clients and the community as a whole.

Our organisation has a planned co-ordinated approach when consulting and working with stakeholders. TFSS encourages collaboration with other services and agencies to enable us to support our target group and to make a valuable contribution to the lives of people in the community, TFSS operates in a professional, equitable and inclusive manner and all TFSS staff members are guided by our RAP and TFSS Service Standards.

Tamworth Family Support Service [TFSS] is an equal opportunity employer and it continues to implement an effective system to recruit, develop and support staff.

Our relationships enable us to have meaningful engagement and conversations with our clients and the communities that they belong to. A greater rapport and stronger relationship with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities enables us to provide services that are better tailored to individual needs.

We acknowledge that the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients have grown significantly and understand that we have a responsibility to provide a service that not only meets their needs but is culturally appropriate and helps the client to achieve their goals. TFSS will evaluate and utilise client feedback to improve service delivery.

TFSS look forward to strengthening relationships throughout the term of the RAP 2019-2021

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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
1.1 Maintain an active RAP Working Group (RWG) to coordinate and monitor the development and implementation of TFSS's RAP.	RWG Chair	June 2019	The RWG oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.
	RWG Chair	Bi-monthly June, August, October, December 2019 February, April, 2020	RWG meetings are held at least every two months.
	Quality Assurance Officer	June 2019, 2021	The RWG terms of Reference [TOR] is reviewed and updated inline with the term of the RAP
	RWG Chair Quality Assurance Officer	December 2019, 2020	The RWG consistently comprises of representatives from each service stream including executive level.
	RWG Chair Quality Assurance Officer	December 2019, 2020	The RWG is made up of no less than three Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff members and can include external stakeholders

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	RWG Chair	July 2019,2020,	Display a current list of RWG members at each TFSS site to enhance relationships between TFSS RWG, staff community members and service users.
1.2 Develop stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations	RWG Community Development Worker	August 2019, 2020	TFSS will strengthen partnerships by participating in community events and staff cultural training with a minimum of 4 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services.
	CEO RWG Chair	June 2019,2020 December 2019, 2020	Gain feedback from existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners and leaders at least every six months.
	Community Development Worker RWG	November 2019, November 2020	Continue to cross-promote Aboriginal service providers, information and events. With an aim to establish new working relationships
	RWG Chair	October 2019	Meet with at least 4 local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop MOU.

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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
	CEO RWG Chair Aboriginal Specialist worker Quality Assurance Officer	January 2020	Review and update our engagement plan for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders
1.3 Actively participate in National Reconciliation Week activities by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.	CEO	27 May – 3 June, 2020, 2021	Support a minimum of one external National Reconciliation Week event
	Aboriginal Specialist worker	27 May – 3 June 2020, 2021	Organise one or more internal events for NRW each year.
	RWG Chair	27 May – 3 June, 2020, 2021	Register our NRW events via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.
	RWG Chair	27 May – 3 June, 2020, 2021	Ensure our RAP Working Group (RWG) participates in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.
	RWG Secretary	27 May -3 June 2020, 2021	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources to all staff

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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
	RWG chair	May 2020,2021	Invite an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person to an NRW event to share their stories or experience
1.4 Communicate RAP to internal and external stakeholders to promote cultural awareness and reconciliation.	Quality Assurance Officer	Monthly August 2019-July 2020	Provide RAP updates to managers through management meetings
	Service stream Managers	October 2019	Provide RAP target updates to staff through team meetings.
	Aboriginal Specialist Worker	October 2019	Share our RAP with External stakeholders via email
	RWG Secretary	September 2019	Place RAP documents in TFSS reception areas and on TFSS website
	Quality Assurance Officer	June 2019, 2020	Ensure that all new staff are provided with an orientation specific to RAP within one month of commencing employment with TFSS

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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
	Quality Assurance Officer	September 2019, 2020	Report RAP progress and key issues against the strategic plan
	RWG Chair	October 2019	Ensure that staff have access to a list of all TFSS's current relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations
	RWG Chair	February 2020	Review and update our strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders
1.5 Promote positive race relations through anti – discrimination strategies.	RMG Chair	May 2020	Conduct a bi-annual review of HR policies and procedures to identify any existing anti-discrimination provisions. Provide feedback to Quality Assurance Officer
	Quality Assurance Officer	July 2020	Update HR policies and address any barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation identified through RWG policy review.

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Relationships

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
	RWG Chair	August 2019	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy and make changes as required.
	Quality Assurance Office	August 2019	Upload the anti-discrimination policy to employment hero and ensure that it is read and acknowledged by all TFSS staff
	CEO	Sept 2019, Oct 2019	Educate TFSS senior leaders on the effects of racism.

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Respect

TFSS recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia and Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and work. TFSS recognises the depth of knowledge and rich cultural heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the value that their perspectives and ways of knowing contributes to our lived experience of our own community. Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures is important to TFSS because of the value that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities bring to the work that we do. Incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander understandings of wellness, cultural health and social obligation, strengthens our practice and outcomes across our services.

TFSS fosters a relationship of respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and seeks to increase awareness of colonisation's impact on the interconnected value and belief systems of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is hoped that through respect, and consideration, we will identify and minimise cultural stigma and stereotyping, fostering a relationship of respect between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous employees, service users and community members. TFSS acknowledges that respect is more than a courtesy, it is a recognition of the importance of traditional heritage for all Australians.

All TFSS Staff are provided with a RAP induction by the RWG members and are asked to complete a self-assessment tool to assess their cultural competency. This information is used to plan and provide opportunities for further skill development and education.

Proposed cultural training is reviewed by the RWG and management to determine the best and most appropriate means of training delivery to ensure that it is accessible to individual staff member's needs.

TFSS continues to seek feedback from staff to see if there has been an enhancement of their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures as a direct result of providing cultural awareness education and training. Results have indicated that there has been an increased appreciation of local Aboriginal cultures and an associated increase in individuals' knowledge, experiences and interest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

As a working group we are proud to see the increasing numbers of staff over time that have become more involved and aware of the importance of these events. Themes from feedback evaluations include increased respect, awareness, sensitivity, acknowledgement, empathy and understanding.

TFSS continues to encourage staff participation in local celebrations to demonstrate our commitment to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and as an effort to strengthen our relationships and partnerships.

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Respect

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
2.1 Engage employees in understanding the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, to ensure there is a shared vision	RWG Chair	June 2019, 2020, 2021	Provide all staff with a copy of TFSS's "Acknowledgement of Country" during their RAP induction.
			Ensure all staff feel confident to open a meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country
	RWG Chair	November 2019, 2020	Annually review and update our cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.
			Review and update our list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships annually
	RWG Chair	June 2019, 2020	Utilise our relationship with the Tamworth LALC as a resource and link to key contacts when organising a Welcome to Country and protocols to maintain respectful partnerships.
Quality Assurance Officer	August 2019, February 2020, July 2020	Conduct a site audit to ensure that a Statement Acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land is displayed prominently at all sites	

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Respect

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
	Aboriginal Specialist Worker	September 2019, 2020	Invite a Traditional Owner of the land into our office to explain the significance of "Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country"
	Aboriginal Specialist Worker	May 2020, 2021	Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country at significant events, including NAIDOC week.
2.2 Continue to expand our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, languages, cultures, collective identity, aspirations and successes, by engaging employees in cultural learning opportunities.	Human Resource Officer	May 2020, 2021	Continue to implement a cultural awareness strategy which defines cultural learning needs of employees and considers various ways cultural learning can be provided (online, face to face workshops or cultural immersion.
	Human Resource Officer	October 2019, 2020	Review and update the cultural awareness training strategy annually
	CEO	December 2020	Provide all RWG members, RAP champions, HR managers and other key staff with opportunities to participate in cultural training.

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Respect

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
	Human Resource Officer	October 2019, 2020	Ensure at least 85 % or at least 72 TFSS staff members participate in cultural competency opportunities, face to face training, cultural workshops and, online training.
	Quality Assurance Officer	June 2019, 2020	Ensure cultural competency self-assessment surveys are completed by 95 % or at least 81 TFSS staff members.
2.3 Participate in and support NAIDOC Week activities.	Quality Assurance Officer	June 2019, 2020	Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.
	CEO	July 2019, 2020	Ensure strong staff representation for internal and external NAIDOC week activities (including involvement in planning and participation on the day of the event)
	RWG Chair Aboriginal Specialist Worker	July 2019, 2020	Host at least one Internal NAIDOC Week event in partnership with Aboriginal community organisations.

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Respect

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
	CEO	July 2019	Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their culture in community activities during NAIDOC Week.
	Senior Manager Corporate Services	July 2020	
2.4 Support and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contributions to the community.	RWG Chair	June 2019,2020	RWG members to identify and develop a calendar of key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance and events.
	RWG Secretary	June 2019,2020	RWG to circulate the calendar of dates and events internally to staff and communicate them via the calendar internally
	RWG Secretary	June 2019,2020	RWG to circulate the TFSS calendar of cultural events to external stakeholders to seek their support
	RWG Chair	June 2019, 2020	Continue to encourage and support all staff to attend external key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance. Such as National NAIDOC Women's Conference.

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Respect

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
2.5 Visibly demonstrate respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in our workplace.	Quality Assurance Officer	September 2019, 2020	Negotiate the consignment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art to display at TFSS office spaces
	Aboriginal Specialist Worker	August 2019, 2020	Ensure that culturally appropriate signage, flags and symbols of welcome are displayed at all TFSS sites
2.6 Assist staff and the community to develop a deeper understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's perspectives and histories, ignite conversation and spark change.	RWG Chair Human Resource Officer	June 2019 June 2020	With appropriate permissions, Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in our media and promotional material.
	Aboriginal Specialist Worker	November 2019, May 2020	RWG host screenings of a curated selection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander documentaries via the Film Club Find out more information about the film club here http://www.sbs.com.au/learn/reconciliationfilmclub

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Opportunities

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have increased access to work and programs

Tamworth Family Support Service [TFSS] will increase the opportunities that we provide into the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Over the past four years we have targeted employment and client engagement outcomes. In our new RAP we aim to build on these successes to date and further embed the vision for creating greater opportunities within all of our staff.

We aim to give greater access to our services by;

- Identifying any barriers, raising awareness about our RAP,
- Providing opportunities through community events to engage individuals and community members who would not normally access our service.

In line with our vision “Thriving Communities, Endless Possibilities” over the coming RAP period we will:

Investigate what additional opportunities we might be able to provide in the areas of traineeships and work placements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students and tertiary students, and professional development for our existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members.

Support the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in decision making that is fundamental to reconciliation.

Over the term of TFSS’s RAP, we have provided our staff with opportunities to build on their understanding of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through internal and external cultural education, site visits and participation in community celebrations.

TFSS management strongly support and encourage all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members to voice their ideas and opinions.

In terms of providing additional opportunities for our clients, Tamworth Family Support Services’ (TFSS) mission is to:

- Strengthen and improve social and personal wellbeing for individuals, families and communities. Promote access, equality and social justice and deliver services of quality and value.
- Strive to ensure that our offices and services are a safe and welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, staff and members of the community.
- Ensure that our service meets clients’ individual needs and that we encourage them to provide feedback which will underpin our ongoing quality improvement cycle.

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Opportunities

TFSS has implemented an innovative way of thinking in response to improving service delivery and positive outcomes for individual clients.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
3.1 Attract, develop and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	CEO	June 2019, 2020	Retain a minimum of 15% or 13 Aboriginal and /or Torres Strait Islander employees
	CEO Aunty Yvonne Kent	February 2020	Ensure TFSS develops relationships with and creates a list of suitably skilled Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons that are able to sit on TFSS interview panels.
	Human Resource Officer	October 2019, 2020, 2021	Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development.
	CEO	November 2019, 2020	Ensure that at least one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander TFSS staff member holds a management position.
	Quality Assurance Officer Human Resource Officer	June 2019, 2021	Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff receive opportunities for professional skill development and training in keeping with

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Opportunities

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
			TFSS professional development policy
	Quality Assurance Officer	July 2020, July 2021	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures every two years to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participating in our workplace.
	Quality Assurance Officer	March 2019,2020	Collect data on our current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment opportunities.
	Senior Manager Corporate Services	October 2019, 2020	Investigate opportunities to implement internship or traineeship opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our organisation.
	Human Resource Officer	October 2019,2020	Advertise and report on all vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media

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Opportunities

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
	RWG Quality Assurance Officer	September 2019	Annually Review and update TFSS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategy.
3.2 Investigate opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within TFSS	Senior Manager Corporate Services	November 2019, May 2020	Increase TFSS networks with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses
	CEO	February 2020	Develop one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned business.
	RWG Chair	June 2019, 2020	Continue to maintain and update a list of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, and make them available to staff and Board
	Senior Manager Operations	June 2020, Jan 2021, June 2021	Bi- Annual review and update of TFSS Procurement policy to ensure that there are no barriers to procuring goods from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Businesses

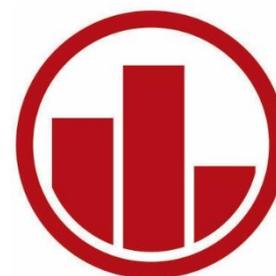
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Opportunities

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
3.3 Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander client numbers	Quality Assurance Officer	July 2019, September 2019, November 2019, January 2020, March 2020, May 2020	Report the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples engaged with the service bi-monthly against the organisational Strategic Plan
	Quality Assurance Officer	January 2020, July 2020	Utilise the report to determine whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement levels are meeting the objectives identified within the organisational strategic plan
3.4 Continue to improve the cultural appropriateness of our service delivery	Quality Assurance Officer	May 2020,	Conduct annual climate survey with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients to assess satisfaction with TFSS services.
	Quality Assurance Officer	May 2020 October 2019, 2020	Evaluate and utilise client feedback to improve service delivery

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Governance, Tracking Progress and Reporting

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
4.1 Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia.	RWG Chair	September 2019, 2020,	Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually.
	Quality Assurance Officer	May 2020	Investigate participating in the RAP Barometer
4.2 Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally.	RWG Chair	September 2019, March 2020, September 2020, March 2021	Provide bi-annual RAP implementation update to Board
	RWG Chair	September 2019, 2020	Provide an annual report on the outcomes of our RAP to TFSS CEO and Board.
	RWG Secretary	June 2019, 2020	Publicly release RAP newsletter annually outlining RAP outcomes.
	RWG Chair	August 2019, November 2019, February 2020, May 2020, June 2020, August 2020	Regularly review achievements against the RAP deliverables and track progress on a spreadsheet
4.3 Review, refresh and update RAP.	RWG Chair	December 2020	Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.

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	RWG Chair	January 2021	Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review and feedback
	RWG Chair	June 2021	Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement

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Governance, Tracking Progress and Reporting

Artwork

A group of students from McCarthy Catholic College along with local artist Jodie Herden developed the artwork that will represent our Reconciliation Action Plan from 2016 going forward. The following is a description of the artwork:

The artwork is a representation of the services that TFSS provides across their footprint. It also represents all the different families and communities that TFSS supports.

The central image is the TFSS logo which represents the whole organisation. The artwork is broken down into sections and the roads leading out represent the roads travelled by the families and the pathways that TFSS offers through support and guidance.

We live in a multi-cultural society and TFSS supports all cultures and backgrounds including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. This is represented in the colours we have used. We wanted to give a holistic view of how TFSS support families and communities.

We wanted the artwork to be eye catching and make people feel happy when they viewed the image.

Please contact Belinda Kotris, TFSS CEO, for further information:

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Acronyms used within this document include:

CEO	Chief Executive Officer	RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
LTD	Limited	RBA	Results Based Accountability
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council	RWG	RAP Working Group
NRW	National Reconciliation Week	TFSS	Tamworth Family Support Service LTD

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