



FRSA's Reconciliation Action Plan 2010-2013

Our Vision for Reconciliation

FRSA's vision for reconciliation is that we recognise, respect and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities in all of our efforts to enhance the wellbeing, safety and resilience of Australian children, families and communities. To achieve this we will:

1. Promote understanding and respectful relationships by working with and valuing the lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
2. Support and highlight positive practice in the delivery of family and relationship services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities;
3. Demonstrate our respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and leadership by supporting the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in decision making;
4. Acknowledge the ongoing harm done to families and communities by disrespectful and disempowering social policies and practice;
5. Increase training, employment and professional development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in the family services sector; and
6. Work collaboratively with our member organisations and related social service sectors to address disadvantage and enhance the wellbeing, safety and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

FRSA has developed this Reconciliation Action Plan to give life to the vision and aims articulated above. In doing so we have clearly stated our commitment to reconciliation, identified the actions that we can take to make a difference to closing the gap and set targets that can be used to measure our progress. We have sought feedback on this action plan from our member organisations, funding bodies and other stakeholders. Within our member organisations feedback has been received from staff who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and staff who are non-Indigenous. We have also consulted with other peak groups, national networks and government agencies with relevant interests. In implementing this plan, FRSA will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to tap into the resilience and strength of their culture and people.

Our Work

Family Relationship Services Australia (FRSA) is a national peak body for community organisations who work to strengthen the wellbeing, safety and resilience of families, children and communities across Australia. FRSA has member organisations ranging in size from very large organisations that work across multiple state/territory jurisdictions to very small organisations that are focused on providing services to a local area and/or specific population group. Many of our member organisations deliver services that are funded by the Federal Government as part of the Family Support Program and/or the Family Law System. FRSA works in partnership with member organisations and with the Federal Government to enhance service delivery and inform public policy. In a Workforce Mapping Survey undertaken in 2009, organisations estimated that 6% of their Family Relationship Services Program-funded workforce identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Relationships		The wellbeing, safety and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities must firstly be enhanced through respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous people, this is fundamental to all of our work.				
		Focus area 1: Promote understanding and respectful relationships by working with and valuing the lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people				
Action	Responsibility	Priority	Activity	Timeline	Measurable Targets	Progress Report
1.1 FRSA values, fosters and strengthens respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community leaders and organisations.	FRSA Board, Executive Director and Staff	A	FRSA has regular contact with organisations such as SNAICC.	Ongoing	FRSA has regular contact (at least once every 6 months) with other peak bodies and identified community leaders to gain input on our work including events and submissions. This contact is reported to the Board quarterly.	FRSA is working with SNAICC to deliver cultural competency training. We have also met to discuss areas of shared policy interest. They supported our 2010 conference and we supported theirs. The 2010 National Conference also included Aboriginal leaders – Tom Calma, Esme Bamblett & Tim Goodwin. This is in contrast to previous years when we have struggled to secure a keynote. The 2011 conference needs to have Aboriginal leaders as keynotes as well as regular presentations and content by Aboriginal practitioners.
1.2 FRSA invests in the ongoing development of cultural competency in our staff team through training and learning opportunities.	Executive Director	A	Identify local cultural events and Reconciliation Australia lectures.	By end 2010 then ongoing	All FRSA staff to attend at least one training event every 2 years and at least once a year visit a Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander specific service or learning event.	All FRSA staff attended the Cultural Competency Training Pilot (2 days in March). Staff are also encouraged to identify other relevant training they would like to do & to get involved in local cultural events.

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<p>1.3 FRSA supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency training for practitioners working in family support services through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting training opportunities; • Connecting training providers and practitioners; • Working with training providers and universities; • Encouraging investment in training (by funding bodies, service providers, corporate sponsors, philanthropic donors and communities); • Recognising the value of ongoing skills development; and • Understanding and working to address barriers to training – particularly for smaller organisations and those in rural/remote locations. 	FRSA Board, Staff and Member Organisations	A	<p>Research Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research institutes in Universities across Australia.</p> <p>Identify pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to enter the family relationship services sector or for current workers to attend professional development opportunities (add to website).</p>	2010 - 2013	<p>Training opportunities are promoted through our website, newsletters and program of events.</p> <p>The FRSA National Conference is used to promote the importance of developing cultural competency and access to training.</p> <p>FRSA supports the inclusion of cultural competency training in the Workforce Development Plan for the Family Relationship Services Sector.</p>	<p>FRSA & SNAICC Joint Cultural competency training will increase availability.</p> <p>Training board on the website is used to advertise training – also features in the e-bulletin.</p>

Focus Area 2: Support and highlight positive practice in the delivery of family and relationship services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities

Action	Responsibility	Priority	Activity	Timeline	Measurable Targets	Progress Report
2.1 Support the dissemination and implementation of resources that support good practice in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.	Deputy Director and Communications Officer	A	FRSA disseminates information on resources and includes them in the resource review which is distributed to all members and interested parties on a monthly basis.	2010 - 2013	FRSA disseminates information on useful resources for service providers on a monthly basis.	Resources are included in the Resource Review/ Resource Directory and Virtual Library. Perhaps an annual 'special edition' could focus on these resources?
2.2 Enhance the FRSA website to provide information about resources and ways to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities. This could include programs that outline partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities, and highlight positive resources and models already developed. This could also provide a sharing space for ideas and programs.	Communications Officer with advice from FRSA members.	C	Pull out research from resource review and put on virtual library. Develop an online sharing space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers and those who work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	Upgrade website in 2010 then ongoing	FRSA website is enhanced as indicated by feedback from service providers.	Online network of Indigenous Practitioners is up and running but sharing of resources is yet to really happen. There is a need to increase the use of the online facility.
2.3 Include services and programs that work primarily with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in the mix of service visits that are undertaken every year by FRSA staff and Board Members to build understanding and engagement across the FRSA network.	FRSA Board and Staff	B	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned organisations in member visit areas for 2010.	2010 - 2013	At least two visits to services or programs that work primarily with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families are undertaken every year.	In 2010, Aboriginal organisations and services were included in the Linkages & Collaboration Project which involved service visits across 5 communities. In March 2011, FRSA staff visited Gugan-Gulwin Aboriginal Youth Service Open Day in Canberra.

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						Need to incorporate this into regular Board & Staff visiting.
<p>2.4 Actively promote and showcase examples of good and emerging practice, projects and programs that enhance service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and/or promote reconciliation at a local level.</p> <p>This will include identifying practice, projects and programs through our communication with members as well as promotion both within our network and also beyond our network to related sectors and networks.</p>	FRSA Staff	A	<p>Identify National Days for 2010 and put on training board on website.</p> <p>Encourage presentations at FRSA National Conference 2010 that highlight programs that work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</p>	2010 - 2013	<p>Examples of practice, projects and programs are identified and promoted in FRSA's submissions and publications, newsletters, conference presentations, website and other mechanisms..</p> <p>Events such as Reconciliation Day are promoted as opportunities for member organisations to instigate or participate in local activities that promote reconciliation and strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.</p>	<p>The 2010 Conference included substantial content on cultural competency. FRSA will be looking to maintain this in the 2011 conference.</p> <p>Reconciliation Day and NAIDOC Week promoted to members and e-bulletin subscribers.</p>

Respect	Identity and wellbeing are built on the connections between people, culture, land and heritage this is central to our work, it underpins our capacity to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.					
	Focus area 3: Demonstrate our respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and leadership by supporting the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in decision making					
Action	Responsibility	Priority	Activity	Timeline	Measurable Target	Progress Report
3.1 Advocate for new advisory mechanisms to support continuous improvement in service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, children and young people, including (but not limited to) the establishment of a National Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Service Delivery in the Family Support Program.	FRSA Board, Staff and Membership with advice from RAP Reference Group	A		2010 – 2011	An Advisory Group (or alternative) for the Family Support Program is established and/or other mechanisms are developed to support continuous improvement.	Yet to be done

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<p>3.2 Incorporate guidance for event planning in the FRSA policy manual to ensure that FRSA events include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to country • Acknowledgement of traditional owners • Content relevant to reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service delivery • Involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in event planning and delivery • Celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage (where appropriate) 	Executive Director	B	<p>Conduct Welcome to Country and other cultural activities during FRSA National Conference and Senior Executives Forum 2010. Ensure that conference information goes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. Invite a representative from SNAICC to join FRSA Conference Reference Group. Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups who can perform at FRSA National Conference 2010.</p>	By November 2010	FRSA's National Conference and other events demonstrate respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.	<p>All of this was done for the 2010 Conference and will be done for 2011 – though we have alt. Representation than SNAICC.</p> <p>Policy manual yet to be updated.</p>

Focus area 4: Acknowledge the ongoing harm done to families and communities by disrespectful and disempowering social policies and practice.						
Action	Responsibility	Priority	Activity	Timeline	Measurable Target	Progress Report
4.1 FRSA works to recognise and respect the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities when undertaking policy or program analysis and developing recommendations.	FRSA Board and Staff	C	Contact RAP reference group with any new policies or program analysis.	Ongoing	FRSA publications and submissions include reference to the unique needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.	Need to do more here
4.2 Develop a statement for use in FRSA publications that acknowledges the ongoing harm of former and current policies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	Executive Director	B	Research other statements and start developing a draft statement for circulation.	2010	A suitable statement is developed and included in publications and submissions.	Yet to be done

Opportunities		Our work is enhanced by the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, organisations and communities; opportunities for leadership can be increased through training, employment and ongoing skills development.				
		Focus area 5: Increase training, employment and professional development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in the family services sector.				
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5.1 Convene and support an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioner network.	FRSA Staff and Membership	B	Develop online network and promote to sector.	2010 - 2013	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioner network is convened (subject to resource availability).	An online Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioner network has been established. FRSA is also resourcing Sharon Payne to support the Aboriginal FDR Practitioner Network which meets monthly by teleconference. We have also talked with both groups about an event for Aboriginal practitioners – looking at this for 2011-12 funded project.
5.2 Adapt employment practices that maximize opportunities for the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at FRSA.	FRSA Board and Staff	B	Review the FRSA employment contracts and policy and procedures manual.	2010 – 2013	Employment practices are reviewed and practical strategies adapted.	Yet to be done
5.3 Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioner involvement in the FRSA National conference and other events.	FRSA Staff	B	Review travel subsidy structure for FRSA National Conference 2010.	2010 – 2013	Practitioner involvement is demonstrated through delivery of workshops and attendance at events.	Working with Aboriginal families was a priority for travel subsidies in 2010 and will be again in 2011.

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5.4 Encourage member organisations to provide opportunities to close the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander unemployment and non-Indigenous employment rates.	FRSA Board, Staff and Membership	B	Identify resources that members could use to increase the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	2010 - 2013	Identify and share strategies for increasing or enhancing employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Yet to be done

	Focus area 6: Work collaboratively with our own member organisations and related social service sectors to address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage and enhance the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families					
Action	Responsibility	Priority	Activity	Timeline	Measurable Target	Progress Report
6.1 Develop and maintain supportive partnerships with relevant organisations including (but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SNAICC; • Reconciliation Australia; and • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned organisations working with families. 	FRSA Board and Staff	B	Regular contact with supportive partnerships and relevant organisations such as SNAICC, Reconciliation Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations	2010 - 2013	Partnerships develop and grow.	Working closely with SNAICC on Cultural Competency Training.

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6.2 Support economic development by utilising and promoting products, services and initiatives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and businesses.	FRSA Staff and Reference Groups	C	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander products for FRSA National Conference including: bags, speaker gifts etc.	2010 - 2013	Purchase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander products and services for FRSA events, including gifts for speakers. Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers for use by FRSA, members and anyone else who wants to support economic development.	This was done for all previous conferences and will be done again in 2011.

		Tracking progress and reporting			
Action	Responsibility	Priority	Activity	Timeline	Measurable Target
RAP developed in consultation with members and stakeholders, approved by Reconciliation Australia and publicly celebrated.	FRSA Staff in consultation with the RAP Reference Group	A	Staff begin implementation strategy.	March 2010	RAP on FRSA website and Reconciliation Australia's. RAP publicly launched and celebrated. RAP distributed to members and stakeholders.
RAP implementation monitored regularly.	FRSA Staff and FRSA Board with advice from RAP Reference Group			6 monthly commencing August 2010	Executive Director to report to the Board and RAP Reference Group.
RAP reported on annually.	Executive Director – Reporting to the FRSA Board and Membership			June 2010 and annually	RAP Report sent to Reconciliation Australia and publicly celebrated on both the FRSA and Reconciliation Australia's websites. Actions have been performed and targets measured.
RAP refreshed annually.	FRSA Staff			March 2010 and annually	Refreshed RAP sent to Reconciliation Australia, accepted and publicly celebrated on both FRSA and Reconciliation Australia's websites.