



Brisbane Youth Service
New Futures for Young People



Connection

Reconciliation Action Plan

July 2019 – June 2021

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan



BRISBANE
YOUTH SERVICE
NEW FUTURES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Message from our Patron

– Steve Renouf

Message from our CEO



I am always encouraged to see community commitment to Reconciliation and inclusive programs and practices, so I am very happy to endorse Brisbane Youth Service's Reconciliation Action Plan.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young peoples are a large and important part of the Brisbane Youth Service community with their own unique challenges and issues, so it is important that BYS staff and programs are culturally sensitive and inclusive.

The RAP reflects what BYS is and what they want to be – a culturally aware organisation which celebrates and acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures as they work to achieve new futures for young people.

I am proud to live in a country that is home to the oldest surviving Indigenous peoples of the world. I respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's first people and as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and work.

Brisbane Youth Service has been supporting vulnerable young people in Brisbane for 40 years. Each year almost one quarter of the young people we assist identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. For this reason, it is essential that we continue to grow our knowledge of the culture and history of the First Australians as we strive to offer service responses based on respect and understanding.

I thank the members of the RAP Working Group for their commitment in leading the development of this RAP and the Board of BYS and members of our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community for their contributions.

Our Vision for Reconciliation

Brisbane Youth Services' vision for reconciliation is a just society which respects the history, rights, cultures and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are committed to delivering services and programs for young people which work to close the unacceptable gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other Australian's health and wellbeing.

Guided by our organisational vision to create 'New Futures for Young People', we look toward a future where all Australians have equal opportunity to reach their full potential.

Our Values, Mission and Strategy

Our Purpose

To enable vulnerable young people and families to navigate life challenges and thrive in the community.

Our Commitment

To promote a just society for young people.

Our Values

Respect – Optimism – Accountability – Resilience

Our Vision

New futures for young people.

Our Strategy

Leadership

We will advocate with and for young people to enable new futures.

Quality

We will provide services that enhance the safety, health & wellbeing of young people and their children.

Partnering

We will enhance outcomes for young people and improve financial resilience.

People

We will build a capable, engaged and effective workforce.

Sustainability

We will meet the current and emerging needs of young people.

Our Business

With our vision to provide 'New Futures for Young People', BYS has been operating in Brisbane since 1977. In that time, we have helped tens of thousands of disadvantaged and homeless young people and their children. We assist young people aged 12 – 25 years to find and maintain appropriate housing, address physical and mental health issues, establish successful relationships and networks and provide them with pathways to education and employment.

BYS values its skilled and committed workforce employing up to 80 staff. Currently BYS employs 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and our RAP is committed to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in our staff group.

BYS offers a range of free, confidential services for young people and families including:

- Crisis and transitional housing
- Tenancy support
- Parenting and family support
- Specialist young women's services
- Health services – including a free medical clinic
- Mental health support including access to psychologists
- Drug and alcohol support
- Information and referral
- Emergency relief
- Visiting services including Centrelink and the Law Right (formally the Homeless Persons Legal Service)
- Street Outreach

We assist young people who live in and around Brisbane and operate from five office sites including:

- Fortitude Valley
- Carina
- Windsor
- Sandgate
- Stones Corner

Each team at BYS uses a client-focused and strengths-based approach when working with young people. This means we place the young person at the centre of our work. Each response is tailored to the young person who directs the pace, scope and extent of their support plan. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people participate in all Brisbane Youth Service programs and represent approximately 24 per cent of the young people we support.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

1 in 4 young people who access BYS identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. We have a responsibility as an organisation to ensure that our programs and services meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in culturally appropriate ways. Our RAP sets clear and measurable goals and provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young peoples an opportunity to be a part of this journey. Our RAP sits alongside Brisbane Youth Service's current strategic plan and guides us to work more inclusively in the key theme areas of 'outcomes', 'partnering', 'capability', 'reputation', 'growth' and 'sustainability'. Brisbane Youth Service has revised and renewed our commitment to Reconciliation and are proud to launch our new Reconciliation Action Plan which demonstrates this commitment.

Our previous RAP provided many learning and growth opportunities for Brisbane Youth Service. We learnt that:

- The RAP needs to be embedded into how we operate and conduct our business and cannot be "owned" by only a few staff members.
- Staff change, but our commitment to Reconciliation remains constant.
- Relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are vital, and we will give special effort and commitment to enhance these.
- Cultural awareness training is most effective when it is included in staff induction and ongoing professional development opportunities.

Some of our growth came through challenges. We are committed to ensuring that our second RAP is more successful than our first. We aim to:

- Ensure our RAP is informed by young people and provide opportunities for them to lead and inform our RAP.
- Fully implement our RAP by ensuring our actions are achievable and measurable.
- Gain commitment across the organisation through broad representation on our RAP committee.

We know that our RAP will continue to guide us in the right direction. If we are doing a good job, we can expect that:

- Board members, staff, students and volunteers will have a strong knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's histories, cultures and current issues.
- Staff, students and volunteers will participate in events and activities that share and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.
- We will develop and maintain strong relationships with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Our policies and procedures and other documents and publications are culturally appropriate.
- Reconciliation guides BYS staff, students and volunteers on a journey of acknowledgment, discovery and genuine connection with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our Journey Towards Reconciliation

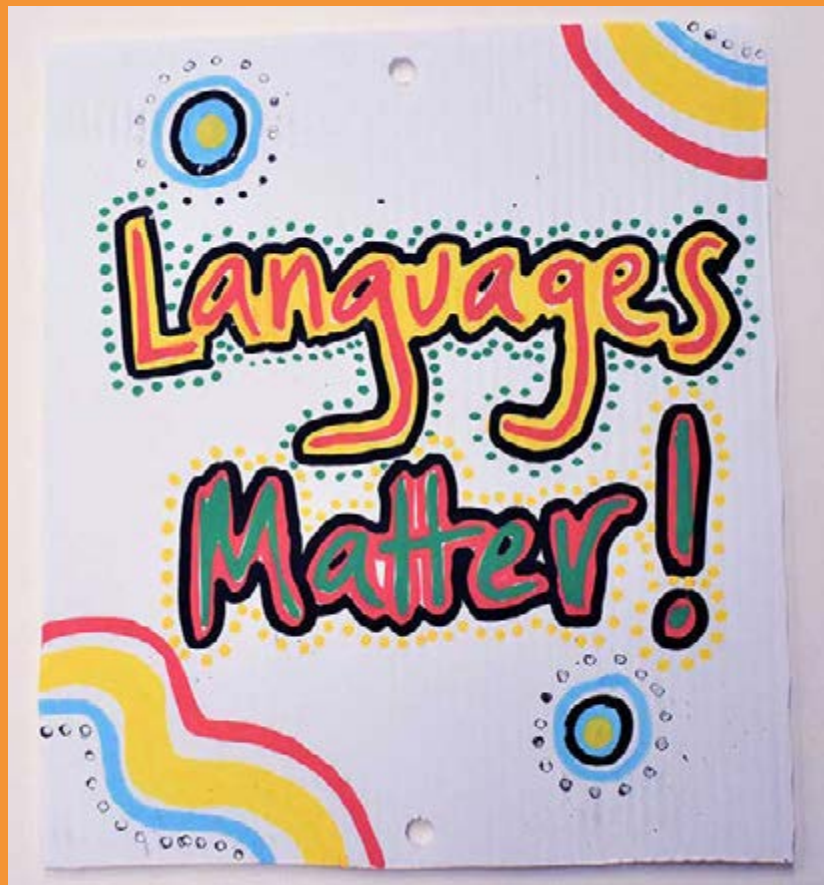
Brisbane Youth Service has taken steps towards reconciliation which we are proud to share with you.

- Selection and appointment of a respected and high-profile Patron for Brisbane Youth Service – Steve Renouf
- Employee cultural awareness training sessions
- At induction, staff complete the “Share Our Pride” package on Reconciliation Australia website
- The Recognise team held an educational forum with BYS staff and young people about Constitutional recognition
- Acknowledgement of Country is given at our internal meetings and at Brisbane Youth Service functions and events, and when staff speak in public settings
- A Welcome to Country is given by a Jagera and/or Turrabul person at any significant Brisbane Youth Service event
- Brisbane Youth Service displays artwork created by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young peoples
- Educational sessions have been held with young people about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures
- Brisbane Youth Service has facilitated young people’s participation in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander celebrations
- Brisbane Youth Service engages and leads young people in inclusive behaviour, acceptance and understanding of all cultures
- Employment packages now include the statement, “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons are encouraged to apply” and we advertise employment opportunities with agencies that specifically recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.
- BYS has partnered with Aboriginal Employment Strategies (AES) to strengthen employment opportunities at BYS
- Brisbane Youth Service has two identified positions for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people

Our RAP Committee

The BYS RAP Committee is made up of a team of staff who work across a diverse range of BYS program areas:

- RAP Chairperson: Laura Christie – Housing and Tenancy Support Manager
- Katie Bond – Intake and Intervention Worker – is a Kabbi Kabbi, Wakka Wakka, Jagera, Wulli Wulli and Yemen Goori woman - her bloodline, cultural, community and songline connections expand the entire area of the SEQ country. Brisbane and Cherbourg are her homes.
- Kyara Kliendiest – Housing Support Worker – a Wiradjuri woman from Riverina in Wagga Wagga, NSW.
- Tanya LeFebvre Drug & Alcohol Intervention Worker – Wiradjuri woman from Trangie, NSW.
- Bonnie Lawton – Housing Support Worker – Aboriginal Woman from Kubja country in western Queensland.
- Rachel Tanerau-Love – Intake and Intervention Worker – a Yorta Yorta woman.
- Erin Field – Hub Intake and Intervention Manager
- Neti Read – Young Women and Young Families Manager
- Simone Gott – Quality Practice & Development Co-ordinator
- Di Mahoney – Service Delivery Director



Relationships

Relationships are a core part of our work with young people at BYS. They allow us to work alongside young people to create new futures. We will nurture our relationships with elders, community, staff and stakeholders. We are committed to growing trusting relationships with Australia's First Peoples and to be guided by their wisdom and knowledge.

Focus area: Participation and engagement in cultural events and activities.

Action	Deliverables	Responsibilities	Timeline
RAP Working Group (RWG) actively monitors RAP development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting.	<p>Undertake 4 meetings per annum to monitor and report the RAP. Convene RAP meetings with members from across the organisation. Ensure 75% attendance by members</p> <p>Establish Terms of Reference for the RWG.</p> <p>RWG oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP</p> <p>Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented on the RWG.</p>	RAP Committee Chairperson	<p>July & Oct 2019 Jan, April, July Oct, 2020 Jan & April 2021</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>July 2019 – July 2021</p>
Strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander services to build referral pathways.	<p>Identify and approach Indigenous services to discuss opportunities for greater integration</p> <p>Negotiate four new Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's)</p>	Service Delivery Director, Intake and Intervention Manager, Housing and Tenancy Manager	<p>July 2019</p> <p>Dec 2019</p>
Engage the BYS patron to participate in significant BYS organisational activities	Patron attends at least 1 community activity per annum Patron attends relevant cultural activities at BYS	Communications Coordinator, CEO	July & Nov 2019, 2020

Action	Deliverables	Responsibilities	Timeline
<p>Enhance relationships between Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and Non- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people to promote understanding of culture</p>	<p>Develop minimum 2 activities per year that enhance cultural awareness amongst BYS clients.</p>	<p>RAP Chairperson Hub Intake & Intervention Manager</p>	<p>July & October 2019, 2020</p>
<p>Celebrate and participate in National Reconciliation Week (NRW) by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians</p>	<p>Organise at least one internal event for NRW each year. Register all NRW events via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website. Support an external NRW event. Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.</p>	<p>RAP Chairperson</p>	<p>May 2020 May 2021</p>
<p>Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes</p>	<p>Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement. Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.</p>	<p>Service Delivery Director</p>	<p>July 2019 Sept 2019</p>
<p>Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation across our business and sector</p>	<p>Develop and implement a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders. Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders.</p>	<p>Service Delivery Director, Communications Co-ordinator</p>	<p>October 2019</p>



Respect

BYS respects Australia's First Peoples ways of 'being, knowing and doing'. In our work we value and honour the identities, cultures and traditions of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples. We will journey towards healing and reconciliation together with respect.

Focus: Organisation wide commitment to cultural awareness training

Action	Deliverables	Responsibilities	Timeline
Engage employees in continuous cultural learning opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements	Ensure 100% new staff, students, volunteers and Board complete 'Share our Pride' at induction	Service Delivery Director, Corporate Services Director	July, Nov 2019, 2020, Feb 2021
	Provide cultural awareness training to 100% of current staff and Board members annually	HR Advisor/ CEO	July 2019 & 2020 Dec 2019
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training strategy for our staff which defines cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of our business and considers various ways cultural learning can be provided (online, face to face workshops or cultural immersion).	HR Advisor	
	Consult focus group to create culturally welcoming spaces and implement recommendations from focus group	Hub Intake and Intervention Manager	July 2019
	Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and artworks in all BYS spaces	Intake and Intervention Manager	July 2019
Invite Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander guest speaker to present at Board meeting annually to grow understanding of emerging issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.	CEO	July 2019 & 2020	

Action	Deliverables	Responsibilities	Timeline
<p>BYS employees understand the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols, such as Welcome of Country and Acknowledgement of Country, to ensure there is shared meaning</p>	<p>Develop an Acknowledgment of Traditional Custodians Policy.</p>	<p>Intake and Intervention Manager / Housing and Tenancy Manager</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
	<p>Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all important internal and external meetings</p>	<p>Service Delivery Director</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
	<p>Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	<p>Service Delivery Director</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
	<p>Develop a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships.</p>	<p>CEO</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
	<p>Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country at significant events, including BYS Annual General Meeting.</p>	<p>CEO</p>	<p>Nov 2019 & 2020</p>
<p>Support employees in BYS workplaces</p>	<p>Update young people's 'rights and responsibilities' to include anti oppressive and anti-racist guidelines.</p>	<p>Quality and Practice Development Coordinator</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
	<p>Update "Unacceptable behaviour policy" and procedures to reflect young peoples 'rights and responsibilities'.</p>	<p>Quality and Practice Development Coordinator</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
	<p>Updated 'rights and responsibilities' is displayed and provided to young people</p>	<p>Intake and Intervention Manager</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
	<p>Develop and implement best practice guidelines and tools for working with young Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander peoples</p>	<p>Quality and Practice Development Coordinator</p>	<p>Dec 2019</p>
<p>Acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance</p>	<p>Develop a calendar of significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates.</p>	<p>Communications Coordinator</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
	<p>Ensure significant dates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are acknowledged in social media posts</p>	<p>Communications Coordinator</p>	<p>July 2019 May, July 2020 May 2021</p>
	<p>Participate in or facilitate two significant events per year</p>	<p>RAP Committee Chairperson</p>	<p>July 2019 May, July 2020 May 2021</p>
<p>Ensure hard copy and electronic publications represent BYS's client base and include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</p>	<p>Ensure website, Facebook and hardcopy documents include content, images and references to young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</p>	<p>Communications Coordinator</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
<p>Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with their culture and communities by celebrating NAIDOC Week</p>	<p>Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.</p>	<p>HR Advisor</p>	<p>July 2019</p>
	<p>Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week.</p>		<p>July 2019 & 2020</p>

Action	Deliverables	Responsibilities	Timeline
<p>Conduct focus groups with young people to inform culturally appropriate service responses and activities.</p>	<p>Undertake 2 focus groups per annum</p> <p>Ensure 50% of young participants identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and that at least 1 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community member participates</p> <p>Discuss ideas and suggestions from focus groups at RAP meetings</p> <p>Ensure at least 1 Board member participates in 1 focus group</p>	<p>RAP Chairperson Service Delivery Director Hub Intake & Intervention Manager Research and Evaluation Co-ordinator BYS Chairperson</p>	<p>Oct 2019 & March & October 2020 March 2021</p> <p>Oct 2019 & March & October 2020 March 2021</p> <p>Nov 2019 Feb & Nov 2020 Feb 2021</p> <p>Nov 2019 & 2020</p>
<p>Improve capturing data of clients</p>	<p>Ensure BYS staff record 100% of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients</p> <p>Ensure BYS client profile is adjusted to assess cultural needs</p> <p>Assess 100% of cultural needs at intake and document in case planning</p> <p>Invite young people to give feedback around staff cultural competency at closure and during annual client survey data collection</p>	<p>Research and Evaluation Coordinator</p> <p>Service delivery staff</p>	<p>July 2019, 2020</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>April 2020,2021</p>



SPEAK
UP!

Respect

Opportunities

BYS is committed to providing a range of social, economic and well being opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. Opportunities enable young people to build confidence and resilience, develop social connection, participate in their communities and create new futures.

Focus area: We will provide opportunities for staff to develop culturally appropriate advocacy skills

Action	Deliverables	Responsibilities	Timeline
Improve service responses for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people	Review evaluation data quarterly and provide it to the RAP committee and BYS program areas to improve service response for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Service Delivery Director, Quality & Practice Development Co-ordinator, Research and Evaluation Coordinator	July, Sept, Dec 2019, 2020, 2021
Enhance staff capacity to advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people	Develop culturally appropriate training package that addresses advocacy needs of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples Ensure the training is delivered annually for service delivery staff with 75% attendance	RAP Committee Chairperson / Service Delivery Director	Sept 2019 July 2019 & 2020
Provide social support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young peoples	Provide three diversionary and social engagement activities per annum for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young peoples	Intake & Intervention Manager	July & Nov 2019 March, July & Nov 2020 March 2021

Action	Deliverables	Responsibilities	Timeline
<p>Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace</p>	<p>Actively promote Board vacancies to the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community</p> <p>Actively promote job vacancies to the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community</p> <p>Identify recruitment agencies with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus</p> <p>Advertise 100% of vacancies with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment agencies</p> <p>Share job vacancies within existing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander networks</p> <p>Collect information on our current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment opportunities.</p> <p>Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Retention strategy.</p> <p>Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development.</p> <p>Advertise all vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media.</p> <p>Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and future applicants participating in our workplace.</p>	<p>HR Advisor / EMT</p>	<p>Oct 2019 & 2020</p> <p>Oct 2019 & 2020</p> <p>Oct 2019 & 2020</p> <p>Oct 2019 & 2020</p> <p>Oct 2019 & 2020</p> <p>Oct 2019 & 2020</p> <p>Oct 2019 & 2020</p> <p>Oct 2019 & 2020</p> <p>Oct 2019 & 2020</p> <p>Oct 2019 & 2020</p>
<p>Investigate opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within our organisation</p>	<p>Review and update procurement policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers for procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.</p> <p>Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services.</p> <p>Develop at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned business.</p> <p>Investigate Supply Nation membership.</p>	<p>Corporate Services Director</p>	<p>Dec 2019</p> <p>Dec 2019</p> <p>Dec 2019</p> <p>June 2020</p>
<p>Develop new relationships with tertiary institutions to create pathways for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students</p>	<p>Identify and contact key tertiary institutions to explore placement opportunities</p> <p>Negotiate one new Memorandum of Understanding</p> <p>Ensure 10% of students placed at BYS identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people</p>	<p>BYS Student Placement Coordinator</p>	<p>July 2019 Feb & July 2020, Feb 2021</p> <p>Dec 2019</p> <p>Oct 2019 & 2020</p>

Tracking Progress and Reporting

Action	Deliverables	Responsibilities	Timeline
Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally	Monitor RAP progress during RAP committee meetings	RAP Chairperson	July, Sept & Dec 2019 Mar, June, Sept & Dec 2020 March 2021
	Review progress against KPIs bi-annually	RAP Chairperson	July & Dec 2019 & 2020
	Produce report annually on RAP achievements and present to CEO and Board. Promote RAP achievements on BYS website and through BYS social media networks	RAP Chairperson Communications Co-ordinator	Feb 2020 & 2021
	Report RAP progress to Board	RAP Chairperson	July, Sept & Dec 2019 Mar, June, Sept & Dec 2020 March 2021
Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia	Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually.	RAP Chairperson	30 Sept 2019,2020,2021
	Investigate participating in the RAP Barometer.		May 2020
Review, refresh and update RAP	Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.	RAP Chairperson	June 2020
	Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review and feedback.		Sept 2020
	Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.		Nov 2020



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The artworks in the BYS RAP were produced by young people at the 2019 NAIDOC Week Family Fun Day held at Musgrave Park.