

Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan

May 2022 – May 2025





Starlight Story

Artwork by Jenna Lee

Starlight's Healthier Futures artwork was created by Jenna Lee, Larrakia descendent and Senior Artist from Indigenous creative agency Gilimbaa. It is used in our RAP to represent the Starlight story and a lasting celebration of Starlight's commitment to Australia's First Peoples. Strong in body, mind and culture, the shooting star at the core of the artwork represents Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children as well as all Australian children, radiating positivity and resilience. As the child shines brighter all those around them can shine too. Flying high, the sky is the limit and the child finds strength and pride in culture – happier and healthier.



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Young Indigenous Creatives Design for Starlight



In 2022, Starlight is honoured to have worked with IndigeDesign Labs on a refreshed set of Indigenous design motifs and cultural patterning for our Healthier Futures Initiative.

Led by award-winning Aboriginal designer Leigh Harris, IndigeDesign Labs provide hands-on industry experience to young Indigenous creatives studying in years nine to twelve.

"While traditional storytelling is the most common form of expression for Indigenous artists, I want to show young people there are other options for using their cultural creativity in employment." Leigh Harris

Through creating unique and modern Indigenous designs that speak to the narratives of commercial clients, IndigeDesign Labs highlights alternative career pathways for young people interested in creative industries.

While nurturing cultural creativity, IndigeDesigns mentors are also instrumental in developing broader wellbeing and key life skills to support participants' success outside of the program.

Starlight wishes to thank the IndigeDesigns team for their brilliant work in producing our vibrant, modern, and playful Indigenous design motifs.

Group mentor Jamaylya Ballangarry-Kearins with some of IndigeDesign Labs' emerging creative artists



Vision For Reconciliation



Starlight's vision for reconciliation is that awareness, acknowledgement and respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures is part of everyday life in an equitable and inclusive Australia.

At Starlight, our mission is to brighten the lives of seriously ill and hospitalised children and young people. Our hope is that every child, including all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, experience a happy childhood. A happy childhood is associated with greater social connectedness, enhanced sense of self, and healthy life behaviours. This is why happiness matters.

Within our Stretch RAP we will move toward the realisation of our vision in 3 key areas:

- 1. Making a positive impact on the wellbeing and happiness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in hospital and community.** In particular, our Starlight Healthier Futures Initiative positively re-frames the healthcare experience of First Nations peoples in rural and remote communities. This leads to improved wellbeing and access to healthcare. Longer-term, we envisage that this improvement in health leads to greater education and employment opportunities, and longer-term healthy life behaviours.
- 2. Promoting reconciliation internally and externally.** This means our team, the health professionals we partner with, our corporate partners, donors and the families who access our programs deepen their understanding of First Nations peoples, cultures and histories. Not only does this ensure our programs will be more inclusive, this will have a positive ripple effect in the broader community leading to greater respect and pride for First Nations peoples and cultures.
- 3. Strengthening our inclusive recruitment practices, and implementing new, creative and effective retention strategies.** Not only will this advance equity and equality in employment outcomes but Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children will be under the care of happier and healthier team members.



Message From the CEO



At Starlight we are committed to a more equitable Australia and to ensuring we can all contribute to the reconciliation of our Nation.

Starlight's Vision is for everyone to experience a happy childhood. Why?.....because happiness matters.

Our Mission is to brighten the lives of all seriously ill and hospitalised children and young people. And this includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Every day we see the impact Starlight has on the wellbeing and resilience of seriously ill children, young people, and their families. This positive impact is provided in every children's hospital and through every Starlight Program. It is amplified in remote communities where engagement with health care is so critically important.

Starlight's Healthier Futures Initiative supports children in more than 140 remote communities across Australia - communities such as Wadeye, Yirrikala and Barunga in the Top End and Alpururulam in Central Australia.

In all we do we act respectfully and in consultation with First Nations people and communities. We are particularly proud of our collaborations which have seen us innovate in partnership with communities to develop solutions which are culturally appropriate and relevant. We have outlined two such initiatives in the case studies we have included as part of this Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan.

I am incredibly proud of the way everyone at Starlight is committed to reconciliation. It is something we consider daily and weave into everything we do. This sentiment is captured in the stories we have included from two of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Starlight team members recounting their experience of working at Starlight.

Many ideas have been driven from our team as we embrace reconciliation. Recently we rolled out an important initiative which sees us now refer to all our Starlight Express Rooms and Offices with their traditional First Nations names. We also have Welcome to Country acknowledgments in all our locations.

At Starlight we believe happiness matters. We want to contribute to an Australia where it matters for all children. We know a child's ability to be happy can be impaired by serious illness. It can also be impaired by discrimination and feeling vulnerable or marginalised.

To be authentic in our commitment to happiness we must also be committed to equity and inclusion. Starlight's commitment to reconciliation is an important part of who we are and how we work every day.

I would like to thank everyone who has been part of our journey to date and those who will support us into the future as we implement our next three-year Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan.

What I look forward to most is the prospect of living in a more equitable, respectful, and inclusive Nation. And the hope Starlight has made a positive contribution to this outcome.

Louise Baxter
Chief Executive Officer

Message from Reconciliation Australia



On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I congratulate Starlight Children's Foundation on its formal commitment to reconciliation, as it implements its first Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), its third RAP overall.

Formed around the pillars of relationships, respect, and opportunities, the RAP program helps organisations realise the critical role they can play in driving reconciliation across their work and area of expertise. Through the creation of this Stretch RAP, Starlight continues to contribute to the ever-growing community of RAP organisations that have taken this consideration and goodwill and transformed it into action.

Starlight's previous two RAPs have been characterised by thoughtful and considered action for reconciliation. Highlights include its Indigenous Visiting Artist project, in which First Nations artists visit their local Starlight Express Room to create engaging artwork with children and young people, increasing accessibility to and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through its work. Starlight has also shown an aptitude for finding creative and innovative solutions to obstacles on its reconciliation journey. When clinicians in Far North Queensland needed help giving an extra health screening to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander three-year-olds, Starlight threw a children's party

with Cherbourg Health Service and invited the whole community. When COVID-19 threatened its operations, it pivoted to online channels. These initiatives speak to Starlight's genuine and engaged approach to its commitments so far, and its willingness to go the extra mile for reconciliation.

Joining the Stretch RAP cohort for the first time, Starlight is planning on testing and challenging itself to push further on its journey. It is building its relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, aiming to collaborate with over 20 First Nations organisations a year to help create and deliver its programs. Starlight will also update its two-year Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Volunteer Engagement Strategy and continue to grant 9 per cent of its annual Starlight Wishes to First Nations young people. Together, these initiatives signal Starlight's readiness to embed and expand reconciliation further into its work and across its sphere of influence.

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Starlight on this Stretch RAP and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

About Starlight

Starlight's vision is a future where every child has a happy childhood.



Since 1988, we have worked closely with health professionals to develop programs that have a positive impact on seriously ill and hospitalised children, teenagers and their families around Australia.

From a single Starlight Wish granted in our very first year, Starlight is now Australia's broadest reaching children's charity and an integral part of the Australian healthcare system. With a permanent presence in every paediatric hospital in Australia and offices in Perth, Darwin, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, Starlight has a national reach with local impact.

Starlight's hospital and community-based programs embrace the principles of positive psychology. Our programs bring positive distraction from the pain, fear and stress of hospital and treatment helping children and young people feel happier, more confident and resilient.

While doctors take care of a child's medical treatment, Starlight is there with the positive distraction that helps kids and families get through

the toughest times. Starlight Express Rooms are located in every paediatric hospital in Australia. Our Starlight Express Rooms are bright, medical-free places filled with fun, music, games and laughter where children and their families can reconnect. Captain Starlight brings the fun and happiness to children in our Rooms by providing socialisation, play and creativity.

Through our Healthier Futures Initiative, Starlight works with healthcare teams to visit remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Captain Starlight entertains and engages with children during their health care visits, providing positive distraction, so more kids participate in the vital health checks they need. This initiative is an integral part of healthcare in remote communities across the Northern Territory, Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland.

With teenagers representing over a third of all hospital admissions in Australia, our Livewire program plays a vital role helping young people cope with the stress and isolation of serious illness. Livewire runs creative workshops for young people in hospital and

helps them build valuable social connections through a fun, safe and supportive online community.

A Starlight Wish gives children and young people something positive to look forward to, supports family connection and creates valued family memories. Starlight Wishes provide valuable respite for families and help children and young people feel more positive, resilient and hopeful.

Starlight is considered an essential service, and this was especially apparent during the pandemic. As restrictions escalated, our programs were needed more than ever. Our innovative nature meant we were "match fit" for the disruptions and challenges seen over 2020 and 2021. We quickly implemented necessary changes in line with evolving health protocols to continue our support for children and young people. The pandemic also allowed us to fast-track some innovative projects in the area of digital program delivery.

We're delighted to report that in 2020, a year with significant disruptions, we delivered over 400,000 positive experiences to children and young people around Australia. This was done with the support of the community, including our corporate partners and individual donors, who we work closely with to ensure they see the positive impact of their generosity.

At Starlight, our impact and accountability are key, so all our programs are underpinned by ongoing research and evaluation. We work closely with health professionals to understand the ever-changing models of healthcare to ensure we continue to meet the needs of seriously ill children, teenagers and their families.

Starlight is an integral part of care delivered in the paediatric healthcare system... because happiness matters.

Starlight employs 337 team members nationally, with 8 who identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person (2.4%). We also have 270 volunteers who help with our Program delivery. Historically, we have not collected data on how many of our

volunteers identify as being an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, however this is one of our deliverables in this RAP.

As one of the most trusted charities in Australia, we have a far-reaching sphere of influence. This includes:

- Seriously ill children, young people and their families
- Health professionals
- Ambassadors, donors and supporters
- Volunteers, including our Board Members
- Team members and their families and friends



Starlight's RAP Journey

Developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is a comprehensive process and requires careful consideration. At Starlight, what are we uniquely positioned to contribute? How can our work as an organisation ensure everyone becomes an advocate for reconciliation even when they leave the workplace? And what progress have we already made?



A RAP is a formal commitment to ensuring everyone is part of this journey, and a potent opportunity to invite, listen to and embed the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are also very proud that two Starlight Ambassadors are First Nations people: playwright Wesley Enoch and footballer Sam Thaiday.

Our RAP is championed internally by our Executive Sponsor, Susan Henry, who is Head of People & Culture. Susan drives and champions internal engagement and awareness of the RAP.

Starlight's commitment to reconciliation is embedded in everything we do, and this RAP is a key component of our three-year strategy, "Star Reaching: Connect & Lead." This makes our RAP central to continually extending ourselves as an organisation that contributes to a just and equitable Australia.

Deliverables from this RAP are in each functional team's business plans.

Our RAP development process requires commitment from everyone at Starlight as well as meaningful consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, internally and externally. This is especially true when developing a Stretch RAP. Whereas our last two Innovate RAPs have focused on exploration and building knowledge and capacity, our Stretch RAP is focused on deepening our commitment through tangible targets, further embedding reconciliation initiatives into our organisation.

As part of the RAP planning process, the RAP Working Group (RWG) reflected on the progress made over the last RAPs and identified areas where we can meaningfully "stretch" ourselves. The RWG also noted



any unmet areas from our previous RAP that have been impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 impacted our ability to deliver our programs to the level we had aspired to. It also meant recruitment was on hold during 2020. We have innovated to adapt to the changing circumstances and have increased our reach through digital technology-based programs, for example, our Fun with Captain Starlight livestreams. As we return to growth, our recruitment will increase accordingly.

These actions and deliverables have been carried over to this Stretch RAP, with some alterations to ensure we're extending ourselves to have a meaningful impact on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people we work with.

As part of the consultation and research phase, we utilised aspects of our innovation framework to conduct a scan of the work other organisations are doing through their RAPs, and noted areas we were interested in exploring in the next iteration of our own RAP. These include strategies such as leveraging our sphere of influence to encourage other organisations to implement a RAP, and developing a mentor program for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members.

Our scan was followed by internal consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members, Starlight's National Managers and Executive team. Externally, we invited feedback and sought insights from Starlight's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ambassadors, supporters and community members.

Hospital restrictions didn't stop children from missing out on the joys of Captain Starlight! Early experiments in livestream production helped us quickly perfect our digital offering. This meant children and young people all over Australia, in hospital and at home, had access to our entertaining and engaging content.

This was especially beneficial when it came to important events such as NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week. With an online offering, more children were able to participate in fun activities which helped them learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. Livestreams included:

- Livestream with the CEO of Reconciliation Australia, Karen Mundine. Karen read the book *Finding Our Hearts* after her family approached us, as she was an Aunty to a child who experienced the joy of Starlight while in hospital.
- Damper making with Captain Starlight, live from the Starlight Express Room in Perth Children's Hospital
- Aussie Animals with Cory Tutt, 2020 NSW Young Australian of the Year and the founder of Deadly Science
- DJ Hour with Troy Benjamin
- Showcase from the Aboriginal Centre for Performing Arts, Queensland
- Didgeridoo with Stan Moylan from Newcastle, New South Wales
- Showcase from Djiri Djiri Dancers, Victoria
- Dance Lesson with Wala Connections

Starlight's RAP Working Group Members

Susan Henry, Head of People & Culture, NSW – Executive Sponsor

Tegan Reidy, Philanthropy Advisor, NSW – RAP Working Group Co-Ordinator & Relationship Lead

Jesse Butler, Program Manager, Arrente Person, NT – Events Lead

Dr Eden Robertson, Research & Evaluation Manager, NSW – Reporting & Insights Lead

Kathryn Tohill, Hub Manager – Creative Collaborations, VIC – Events Lead

Rachel Wald, Digital Engagement & Learning Advisor, NSW – Communications Lead

We acknowledge the contributions of former RAP Working Group Members:

Dylan Van Den Berg, Inclusion & Diversity Advisor, Palawa Person, ACT

Sophia Haworth, Captain Starlight, QLD

Carly Newcombe, Captain Starlight, WA

Angela Smith, Community Campaigns Executive, NSW

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are crucial to developing and implementing a meaningful RAP.

We are grateful for the guidance of our Advisors and Ambassadors:

Dylan Van Den Berg, Inclusion & Diversity Advisor; Palawa Person, ACT

Gaye Doolan, Executive Officer, Cultural Mentor Network

Wesley Enoch AM, Starlight Ambassador & Theatre Director

Melanie Grills, Indigenous Cultural Advisor, AECOM

Amanda Healy, Director, Kirikin P/L

Wade Krueger, National RAP Manager, Sodexo

Shelly Reys AO, CEO, Arrilla Indigenous Consulting

Sam Thaiday, Starlight Ambassador & NRL Player

Angela Young, Director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement, Queensland Children's Hospital





Case Studies

Cherbourg 3rd birthday party

Pre-schoolers receive regular health checks between birth and 18 months, and are generally not screened again until the age of four.

For children with limited access to healthcare services, this is a time when health issues can develop and worsen if left untreated.

Clinicians supporting First Nations communities in Far North Queensland identified a need to provide an additional health screen for children at three years of age, creating the opportunity for important early intervention and specialist referral when needed. However, participation and attendance in health checks was a challenge.

We were approached to see if we could come up with a creative solution to help increase attendance at these checks, and to connect families with local health services in a positive way to continue their health checks in the future. A party was organised and all children in the Cherbourg and surrounding districts turning three in 2020 were invited.

Working with the Cherbourg Health Service and Queensland Health, we combined the fun of Captain Starlight and the playfulness of a birthday party, with wellness checks for all children from the district who had either turned three, or would turn three in 2020.

After all, everyone loves a party!

The party was a real community event with the Police, Fire and Ambulance services in attendance. The kids loved exploring the vehicles and of course testing out the sirens.

Cherbourg Radio was there to do an outside broadcast and interview Captain Starlight, and we were entertained throughout the event by a local duo. One of the local duo members was a community Elder and a member of the Cherbourg Health Action Group who fully supported the planning and delivery of the event.

Early detection and prevention can help identify illness before it becomes serious.

The third birthday party was a fantastic opportunity to do this, with seven wellness stations for each child to attend. When the children arrived at the party, they received a party passport which they got stamped after visiting each station. After visiting all the wellness stations, they were given a birthday present: a Hasbro playdough kit. The gift was decided with the help of the Cherbourg Health Action Group. We presented them with a few gift options, and they gave the playdough the green light. Judging from the children's reactions, it was a popular decision!

There were also goodie bags for the parents and siblings, and stalls where parents could get information about local support services.

In collaboration with Professor Aunty Kerrie Doyle – Associate Dean, Indigenous Health School of Medicine, Western Sydney University, we set up a simple voting system to evaluate how children and families felt about the event. Every adult we asked rated the event as "Yes, it was deadly."

Feedback from the health professionals involved on the day was overwhelmingly positive.

"I think it's making the community aware as much as anything else of what's out there and also how we can help, but also to actually make them comfortable with those services as well."

Word has already spread, and we have been approached by a paediatrician in Wagga Wagga NSW who is eager to bring the event to his community. We will work with this paediatrician to host another party and then evaluate both experiences to see if this is something we could offer more broadly.



Case Studies

Indigenous Visiting Artist Project

We are committed to raising cultural competency, not only within our team, but externally too. By offering children and young people in our programs creative, engaging experiences to participate in which celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, we are helping to increase awareness and respect in the wider community.

Our Indigenous Visiting Artist project has been a part of our popular Arts in Health initiative around the country.

The project sees Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and creatives attending their local Starlight Express Room to create multimodal artworks with the children and young people there. Works range from music, live performances and painting and are a celebration of cultures and inclusivity, with art styles varying significantly between different communities and countries.

The artworks produced are centred on storytelling, conveying knowledge of the land, events and beliefs of First Nations people. They are a powerful

and engaging way of encouraging a deeper understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



Perth

Kylie Ricks Graham, an Aboriginal Noongar Artist and owner of Boomerang Art & Design, ran four popular workshops over November and December in 2020. Fifty children attended and an exhibition of the work was proudly displayed in the Starlight Express Room in the Perth Children's Hospital.

Kylie specialises in sculpture and design, and her workshops saw her create air-dried clay sculptures, and a large painted fabric that shared culture and language with the Perth Children's Hospital community. The children also had the opportunity to create mini sculptures representing Nyoongar people, flora, fauna, food sources and medicinal sources. They also created an aerial view of Nyoongar Boodja (Nyoongar Country) before settlement came.

Adelaide

In March 2021, we hosted a festival of local First Nations talent showcasing two artists, Mali Isabel and Ahli Atomalia Emu (formerly Amanda Angel-Rodomi).

They worked on a large-scale window installation that celebrated culture. 39 children worked on their own individual pieces, which were showcased together as one large collaborative artwork.

Transparencies of the artwork were displayed in a large window in the main space of the Women's and Children's Hospital, overlooking the play equipment and making it highly visible. This provided a much-needed positive distraction as the play area was temporarily out of bounds due to COVID-19.



Newcastle

Our plans to welcome Chloe Sumner from Baarka Arts to the Starlight Express Room in John Hunter Children's Hospital have been put on hold due to lockdown restrictions in NSW.

Once visitors are allowed to return to the hospital, Chloe will commence this project, which will see her creating an interactive workshop for both our Captain Starlight and Livewire programs.

Darwin

COVID-19 saw delays to the project, but in November 2021, we were able to start a month of engaging workshops for the children in Royal Darwin Hospital. These resulted in an audible collection of stories, jokes and music created by the children.

Richie Fejo is a comedian who won the Deadly Funny competition in 2021. Richie ran a popular comedy workshop, teaching the kids techniques for how to create their own content and jokes.

Local artist and children's book author and illustrator, Paul Seden, ran two story creation workshops. The inspiration was to bring together imagination and creativity, and saw the children write their own short stories which formed a wonderful collection.

Our third guest was June Mills, an Elder who is both a musician and puppeteer, using her local language to create. June ran a special puppetry workshop with the children and created a music piece inspired by the children and their artworks.

These workshops have proven to be such a positive experience for the children and young people we support, that we have plans to continue this project. Next up are individual workshops in the Starlight Express Rooms in the Sydney Children's Hospital and The Children's Hospital at Westmead. We're also planning a shared exhibition across the Sydney Children's Hospital network.



Team Member Profiles

Jesse Butler



I'm originally from South Australia and now reside in Darwin, NT. I'm an Arrrente person and Adelaide will always be home, but I love living in different places. I moved to the top end from Melbourne in May 2021 to take over as Program Manager of Starlight in the NT.

My background is in the Arts. I trained at Adelaide College of the Arts as an Actor and graduated in 2009. I worked in the industry for over 10 years as an actor/writer/director and a bit in-between including living, working and travelling in Europe for 18 months.

I worked as a Captain Starlight for nearly five years at Monash Children's Hospital in Melbourne. I became one of the first Captain Coaches, which saw me coach team members in all aspects of the role, including performance skills. I then had the opportunity to take up a role in Darwin.

Moving from a performer to a Manager of the Captain Starlight program has been a challenge so far, especially when it comes to life in an office. However, managing the Captains in Darwin and remotely in Alice Springs has been amazing!

Having experience working in the Captain Starlight program gives me a unique perspective when it comes to managing the team and the program. My favourite part of my role is being able to actively

help the program to be the best it can be. Getting the best out of my team members and the program is an exciting challenge and requires building strong relationships, as well as identifying how we can improve what we do!

Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) are pretty commonplace now. As I write this, Starlight is about to release its third RAP. I've been asked to contribute towards ours in the past and as an Aboriginal person it's great to be involved, even if it's just to have my opinion heard.

Starlight's commitment to truly connecting with First Nations peoples is second to none. Seeing first-hand some ways we do this, by flying to remote communities to see children, and working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and their families in and out of hospital, is amazing. The commitment to employing and supporting First Nations peoples and organisations is a huge step towards greater equality.

A RAP that is genuinely there to connect with First Nations peoples and culture, and make a difference in the lives of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sick children and their families is something Starlight has and takes very seriously. It's appreciated by mob all over the country - including myself!



Team Member Profiles

Kyle McIntyre

I currently live in Sydney with my mother, my sister and our cat Mr Zoey. While my mob is the Ngadjuri tribe in South Australia, I've always lived around the Pyrmont / Ultimo area – it's where I call home. Living in the one place for so long, it's hard not to!

I've worked since I was 14 years old, starting as a cleaner at KFC to working in a medical centre doing everything from cleaning to answering the phone.

School wasn't right for me. When I left, I was put onto a company called MEGT which gives Indigenous Australians the opportunity to move straight into a traineeship or apprenticeship. I was given the choice of Starlight, and I accepted it without hesitation.

I'm in Starlight's Ground Control team, where I work as a Co-ordinator. I've been here for two years. I'm now coordinating the Captain Starlight and Livewire programs in Sydney Children's Hospital, and the Livewire program in The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

Working at Starlight has been so amazing, I love being able to support the programs and see the kids we're brightening the lives of first-hand when I'm in the Starlight Express Room. It shows me what we achieve working for such a wonderful organisation.

In 2020 I was a finalist in the NSW Training Awards for the "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year" award. My nomination was such a surreal feeling and a great opportunity to be acknowledged outside of my traineeship for all the effort I have put into my role. Watching the ceremony online with all my family there to see my name pop up as a finalist was an amazing experience.

I'm also studying for my Certificate IV in Business Administration to pursue a career in accounting, having recently finished my Certificate III. I want to keep striving for a bright future.

Starlight's RAP shows me how hard everyone in this organisation works to show they care about the Indigenous culture of Australia. It's amazing to see how many people now acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land we're on in meetings and events. No matter where we look now, there's always so much respect given to the Indigenous Owners.

Relationships

Meaningful and positive relationships are at the heart of everything we do at Starlight. Our programs and initiatives are designed to connect people through shared experiences. Deepening relationships that are built on trust and respect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will ensure that, together, we can continue our work towards reconciliation.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to continuously improve guiding principles for engagement.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	National Programs Manager/Programs Managers
	Review, update and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	November, 2022	Relationships Lead/s - RAP Working Group
	Establish and maintain at least three formal two-way partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or organisations.	July, 2023	National Programs Manager
	Collaborate with 20+ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations each year (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled health services, councils, services and research organisations) to create program experiences, undertake research and evaluation and reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.	August, 2022 August, 2023 August, 2024	National Programs Manager
	Establish and maintain two relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Performing Arts organisations or communities to support our Sourcing & Attraction and Growth & Development goals.	September, 2023	HR Talent Manager
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Promote Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources to all staff.	May, 2022 May, 2023 May, 2024	Events Lead/s - RAP Working Group
	RAP Working Group members to participate in a minimum of two local, external NRW events.	27 May- 3 June, 2022, 2023, 2024	Coordinator -RAP Working Group
	Encourage and support team members and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May- 3 June, 2022, 2023, 2024	Exec Sponsor – Head of People & Culture
	Organise internal NRW events, including at least one organisation-wide NRW event, each year (one for each location, which is 17 events).	27 May- 3 June, 2022, 2023, 2024	Events Lead/s - RAP Working Group
	Register our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May, 2022, 2023, 2024	Events Lead/s - RAP Working Group
	Provide a week-long series of activities in our Starlight Express Rooms (which are in all major children's hospitals) to celebrate NRW to encourage engagement with the children and young people who access our programs.	May, 2022, 2023, 2024	National Programs Manager
	Promote and share our events through Starlight's social media channels.	May, 2022, 2023, 2024	National Marketing & Communications Manager

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Enhance existing strategies to encourage team members to drive reconciliation outcomes, such as: • Include our Healthier Futures Initiative in our Get Connected opportunities. Our Get Connected program allows office-based team members to spend a half day each quarter connected to a Starlight program. • In consultation with First Nations team members, investigate and guide the team in a yarning circle approach to meetings to promote respect for a First Nations values approach. • Include more Healthier Futures stories via Programs Unplugged, which is a monthly Programs update broadcast to the team nationally.	April, 2023 April, 2024 April, 2025	Coordinator – RAP Working Group
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly through Starlight's social media and communications channels (People@Starlight, Reconciliation@Starlight on Stella, National Team Meetings and Teams chat), and website.	September, 2022 September, 2023 September, 2024	National Marketing & Communications Manager/Digital Engagement & Learning Advisor.
	Include traditional place names for each Starlight location on website.	July 2022	National Marketing & Communications Manager
	Attend a minimum of two Leadership Gatherings hosted by Reconciliation Australia annually.	Review July 2022, 2023, 2024	Coordinator – RAP Working Group
	Ensure all key brand documents, stationery and templates display our commitment to reconciliation, "Starlight Children's Foundation acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work, live and play. Starlight is committed to providing inclusive and culturally appropriate programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, their kinship groups and communities."	July, 2022	Marketing Coordinator – Marketing & Communications
	Share at least two stories per quarter on Starlight's social channels and other media featuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young peoples, representing their unique and diverse cultures.	March, July, October, December 2022, 2023, 2024	Social Media Lead – Marketing & Communications
	Implement strategies to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	December, 2023	National Partnerships Manager
	Collaborate with three RAP and other like-minded organisations (one each year) to implement ways to advance reconciliation.	November, 2022 November, 2023 November, 2024	Relationships Lead/s – RAP Working Group
	Encourage other organisations within our sphere of influence to implement a RAP.	December 2022 December 2023 December 2024	Head of People & Culture
	Offer guidance to organisations on developing a strong RAP.	December 2022 December 2023 December 2024	Head of People & Culture
	Develop and communicate both an internal and external communication plan for Starlight's Stretch RAP.	May, 2022	Communications Lead – RAP Working Group
	Invite team members to share what they have learnt from NRW / NAIDOC Week events and cultural competency learning opportunities to share what they have learnt with their family and friends. Collate and distribute this information via Teams channel.	May, July, 2022, 2023, 2024	Coordinator – RAP Working Group
	Encourage and enable all team members to engage in reconciliation initiatives and innovations for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young peoples we work with.	June, 2022 June, 2023 June, 2024	National Programs Manager

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Continuously improve HR policies and procedures concerned with anti-discrimination.	June, 2022 June, 2023 June, 2024	HR Talent Manager
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members and / or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to continuously improve our anti-discrimination policy.	April, 2022 April, 2023 April, 2024	HR Talent Manager
	Annually review and update our anti-discrimination policy.	June, 2022 June, 2023 June, 2024	Head of People & Culture
	Provide ongoing education opportunities for senior leaders and managers on the effects of racism.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	Head of People & Culture and HR Talent Manager
	Senior leaders to publicly support anti-discrimination campaigns, initiatives, or stances against racism.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	Head of People & Culture
	Promote educational resources for all team members on the effects of racism.	December, 2022	HR Talent Manager



Respect

Respect and inclusivity are fundamental to Starlight's approach as an organisation. Starlight is the broadest reaching children's charity in Australia – working with children and young people of all ages, illnesses and injuries, in hospital and in the community. Through our Reconciliation Action Plan, we continue to deepen our understanding of and appreciation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, taking steps to enhance and expand our organisational practices accordingly. By acknowledging the past, we can work towards a united future as Australians.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	May, 2022	Positive Psychology Advisor
	Consult and learn from local Traditional Owners and / or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the implementation of a cultural learning strategy.	September, 2022	Positive Psychology Advisor
	Implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our team.	November, 2022	Positive Psychology Advisor
	Commit all RAP Working Group members, People & Culture managers, executive team and all new team members to undertake formal cultural learning. This may include an immersive on-country experience, face-to-face workshops or a virtual learning opportunity.	July, 2023	Positive Psychology Advisor/RAP Working Group
	100% of all team members to undertake formal cultural learning. 100% of all team members undertake online cultural competency training 100% of People Managers to participate in face-to-face cultural competency training - All programs team members (55) working on our Healthier Futures Initiative undertake face-to-face cultural learning, specific to the local community where they work	November, 2024	Positive Psychology Advisor/Head of People & Culture
	Identify opportunities to partner with cultural mentors to guide our teams working in specific communities.	July, 2023	National Programs Manager
	75% of all Programs Volunteers to undertake online cultural competency training.	December, 2022	National Volunteer Manager

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6. Demonstrate respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Increase team member's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	November, 2022	Coordinator – RAP Working Group
	Annually update and communicate the cultural protocol document (tailored for all local communities we operate in), including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	November, 2022 November, 2023 November, 2024	Coordinator – RAP Working Group/ Communications Lead – RAP Working Group
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year, including: - First National Team Meeting of each year (2022–2025) - RAP launch (2022–2025) - CapFest / Ignition - National Reconciliation Week Events (national & local) - NAIDOC Week Events (national & local)	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	Coordinator – RAP Working Group
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	Coordinator – RAP Working Group
	Team members and senior leaders provide an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at all public events.	November, 2022 November, 2023 November, 2024	National Manager
	Display Acknowledgment of Country plaques in all five Starlight Offices and in our 11 Starlight Express Rooms.	June, 2022	National Programs Manager/Program Manager – Ground Control
	Investigate more impactful ways for representing an Acknowledgement of Country on the Starlight website, confirming our understanding and commitment.	July, 2022	Digital Product Lead – Marketing & Communications
7. Increase understanding of how to respectfully discuss the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through a fundraising lens.	Develop a training strategy to support the fundraising team to support them in understanding the unique fundraising context for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	June, 2023	Head of Marketing & Fundraising
	Provide training to the fundraising team to support them in understanding the unique fundraising context for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	June, 2024	Head of Marketing & Fundraising
8. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	RAP Working Group members to participate in at least one external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July, 2022, 2023, 2024	Coordinator – RAP Working Group
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	April, 2022 April, 2023 April, 2024	HR Talent Manager & HR Advisor
	Support all staff to participate in at least one NAIDOC Week event in their local area.	First week in July, 2022, 2023, 2024	Head of People & Culture/Events Lead – RAP Working Group
	In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, support two external NAIDOC Week events each year.	First week in July, 2022, 2023, 2024	Relationships Lead – RAP Working Group/ Events Lead – RAP Working Group

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Increase representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young peoples and their Starlight Stories in our marketing collateral.	Annually identify three new stories about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families connected with Starlight's programs and build representation in Sharing Impact.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	National Marketing & Communications Manager
	Use these Sharing Impact assets to share our Healthier Futures Initiatives with our donors and supporters.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	National Marketing & Communications Manager
	Use these Sharing Impact assets in our social media posts, in a broader context so we're using consented images of First Nations families we support in the context of other programs, not only our Healthier Futures Initiative.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	National Marketing & Communications Manager

Opportunities

Along with our focus on improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young peoples, Starlight is committed to identifying further opportunities to make a positive contribution to reconciliation. We are committed to diversifying our suppliers, providing meaningful employment opportunities and pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as ensuring we retain team members through an inclusive, supportive and culturally safe workplace. Diverse teams have been proven to achieve better outcomes, with increased collaboration, better decision making and high performance.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members to consult on our recruitment, retention and learning and development strategy.	May, 2022	HR Talent Manager
	Review and update a three-year Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	July, 2022	HR Talent Manager
	Advertise all role vacancies to effectively target and reach suitable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates.	Ongoing Review October 2022, October 2023, October 2024	HR Talent Manager/ Talent Sourcing & Attraction Team
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	June, 2022 June, 2023 June, 2024	HR Talent Manager
	Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander paid team members to take on management and senior level positions by ensuring at least two team members participate in leadership development programs (i.e. People Managing at Starlight and Basecamp for Leaders).	Ongoing, Review February 2023, February 2024, February 2025	HR Talent Manager
	Recruit nine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander paid team members. Inclusive of two Trainees, two People Manager or Specialist roles, and five other team members, and always ensure we maintain a minimum of 2.5% (9) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander paid team members.	December, 2024	HR Talent Manager/ Talent Sourcing & Attraction Team

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<i>cont.</i> 10. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Consult with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members to identify appropriate support (retention) initiatives, e.g. a mentoring program or peer support network.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	HR Talent Manager/ Head of People & Culture
	Identify alternative employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (including but not limited to: Elder-in-Residence, external performance experts, workshop facilitators, etc.)	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	HR Talent Manager/ Head of People and Culture
	Annually arrange for at least one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander guest to engage in a paid capacity with each Starlight Express Room in the hospitals where we operate. This will be a great initiative for inclusion for Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander children, as well as sharing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures with all children.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	National Programs Manager
	Annually identify and commit to three programs-based collaborations (paid opportunities), including engaging with at least two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. For example, artists in residence, storytelling, dance groups.	November, 2022 November, 2023 November, 2024	National Programs Manager
11. Provide meaningful volunteering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Review and update a two-year Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Volunteer Engagement Strategy in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors.	March, 2023	National Volunteer Manager
	Undertake a baseline data survey of current Programs Volunteer team members to better understand the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participating in our volunteer programs.	November, 2022	National Volunteer Manager
	Research targeted advertising opportunities to attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteers, e.g. First Nations publications, community groups, local councils.	November 2022	National Volunteer Manager
	Annually review policies, processes and procedures to remove barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteers.	June, 2022 June, 2023 June, 2024	National Volunteer Manager

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Annually update and communicate an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy, internally via our intranet and externally via a statement of commitment on our website.	June, 2022 June, 2023 June, 2024	Head of Finance & Technology
	Identify opportunities to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses e.g. cultural competency training, catering, graphic design.	December, 2022	Head of Finance & Technology
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	July, 2022 July, 2023 July, 2024	Program Manager – Ground Control/ Head of Finance & Technology
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	June, 2022 June, 2023 June, 2024	Program Manager – Ground Control/ Head of Finance & Technology
	Maintain commercial relationships with at least two Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	November, 2023	Head of Finance & Technology
	Procure at least 2.5, 5% and 7% annually of required goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses over three respective years.	November, 2022 November, 2023 November, 2024	Head of Finance & Technology
	Train all relevant team members in contracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses through Supply Nation or an equivalent organisation.	December, 2022	Head of Finance & Technology
	Collaborate with at least one Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander photographer or videographer annually (or as required) to capture content in Community and our Healthier Futures Initiative.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	National Marketing & Communications Manager
13. Appointment of additional Aboriginal /Torres Strait Islander people in our Ambassador program to reinforce our commitment to reconciliation.	Actively grow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in our Ambassador Program, welcoming at least one new ambassador for this RAP's duration.	December, 2024	Public Relations Manager/Head of Marketing & Fundraising
	Engage our First Nations ambassadors to help us promote reconciliation events and initiatives, making good use of their spheres of influence to widen our reach.	April, 2023 April, 2024 April, 2025	Public Relations Manager/Head of Marketing & Fundraising

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
14. Empower team members to positively contribute to the wellbeing and happiness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in hospital and community.	Ensure the Captains Innovation Fund has provision for at least one initiative each year with a focus on bringing joy to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young peoples, as nominated by Captain Starlight.	June, 2022 June, 2023 June, 2024	National Programs Manager
	Create KPIs around team members nominating RAP Innovations for the CEO Innovation Awards and Star Reaching awards.	December 2022	National Managers
15. Increase community understanding of the needs, participation and impact of Starlight's programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.	Ensure program reporting captures and shares data that measures the reach of our programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	September, 2022 September, 2023 September, 2024	National Research & Evaluation Manager
	Participate in one conference each year and / or publish one article with content relevant to the health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, where appropriate.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	National Research & Evaluation Manager
	Share research findings about our Healthier Futures initiative and from the Starlight scholarship with the Lowitja Institute with our health professionals, supporters and relevant institutes.	September, 2022 September, 2023	National Research & Evaluation Manager
16. Ensure access to Starlight Programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young peoples.	Ensure we continue to grant 9% of annual Starlight Wishes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young peoples, and their families.	November, 2022 November, 2023 November, 2024	Wishgranting Manager
	Ensure more than 7.8% of program reach is to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young peoples. This is an increase from 3.1% in 2021.	January, 2023 January, 2024	Head of Programs
17. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	Coordinator – RAP Working Group
	Annually update and communicate the Terms of Reference for the RWG.	March, 2023 March, 2024 March, 2025	Head of People & Culture
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	March, June, September, December 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025	Coordinator – RAP Working Group

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
18. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Embed resource needs for RAP implementation in annual budget.	October, 2022 October, 2023 October, 2024	Coordinator – RAP Working Group/Head of People & Culture
	Embed key RAP actions in performance expectations of senior management and all team members.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	Head of People & Culture
	Embed appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	December, 2022 December, 2023 December, 2024	Reporting & Insights Lead – RAP Working Group
	Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	March, 2022	Head of People & Culture
	Include our RAP as a standing agenda item at senior management meetings.	March, 2022	Head of People & Culture
19. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, 2022, 2023, 2024	Coordinator – RAP Working Group
	Report RAP progress to all team members and senior leaders quarterly.	March, July, October, December 2022, 2023, 2024	Communications Lead – RAP Working Group
	Publicly report against our RAP commitments annually, outlining achievements, challenges and learnings.	September, 2022 September, 2023 September, 2024	National Marketing & Communications Manager
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May, 2022 May, 2024	Reports & Insights Lead – RAP Working Group
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to ensure our primary and secondary contacts are up-to-date so we are receiving important correspondence.	June 2022, 2023, 2024	Coordinator – RAP Working Group
	Follow up with Reconciliation Australia if we have not yet received our unique reporting link to participate in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August 2022, 2023, 2024	Coordinator – RAP Working Group
	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	June, 2025	Coordinator – RAP Working Group
20. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	June, 2024	Coordinator – RAP Working Group

Meeting Captain Starlight in community eases the anxiety and discomfort associated with clinic attendance and can help to develop a better relationship between the child and the healthcare services.

The Captain Starlight program also assists in building the capacity of mobile health professional teams by increasing reach and providing support by entertaining the children."

Physician, NT

Contact

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Starlight
Children's Foundation