



'Not Long Ago They Came Here' by Leanne Tobin

Mountains Outreach Community Service Incorporated Reconciliation Action Plan

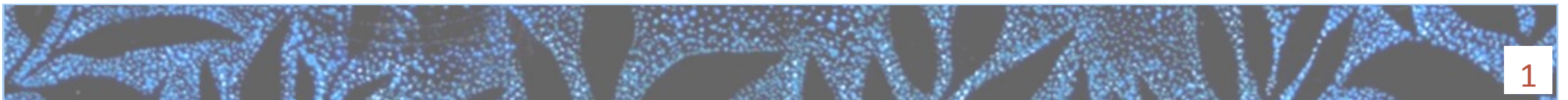
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We acknowledge the Darug and Gundungurra people as the Traditional Custodians of the land we live and work on.



Mountains Outreach Community Service Incorporated

Reconciliation Action Plan

First edition produced by MOCS May 2014

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Our Business

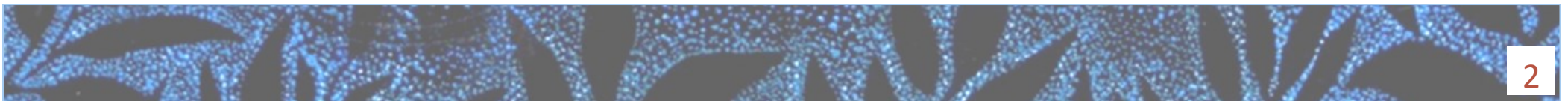
Mountains Outreach Community Service Inc. (MOCS) is a community based non-government organisation in the Blue Mountains. Our core business is to enhance the resilience of Blue Mountains children, their families and communities and to reduce the impact of social and economic disadvantage and build social inclusion. We run a wide range of services and projects including Blue Mountains Occasional Child Care, Mountains Mobile Minds, Parenting Young, Mid-Mountains Community Hub, Paint the Blue Read early literacy project, Aboriginal Artists in Blue Mountains Schools project, supported playgroups and community development initiatives. MOCS employs 11 permanent part-time staff and 8 casual early childhood educators. We have a role in educating families and the community about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and have published three resources as part of this, plus we have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources and play equipment which we use regularly in our early childhood programs.

We currently employ 1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff member. Our geographic reach is the Blue Mountains Local Government Area

Introduction to Our RAP

In developing a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), Mountains Outreach Community Service commits to completing the following actions over the next 12 months to ensure we are well positioned to implement effective and mutually beneficial initiatives as part of future Reconciliation Action Plans. Our future RAPs will identify relationships, respect and opportunities actions specific to our business and our sphere of influence.

This Reflect RAP will allow our organisation to focus on building relationships both internally and externally, and raise awareness with our stakeholders to ensure there is shared understanding and ownership of our RAP within our organisation. Development of our future RAPs will involve consultation with staff across our organisation including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or stakeholders to achieve our vision for reconciliation.





The Story Behind Our RAP

We are developing a RAP because we want to build on the 20 year history that MOCS has in supporting the reconciliation process in the Blue Mountains. We have worked closely with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents including Darug and Gundungurra people and over the years we have built key partnerships with local Aboriginal organisations, groups and individuals and worked together on many projects. Core values of our organisation are:

- *We respect the knowledge, culture and custodianship of the Aboriginal communities of the Blue Mountains*
- *We value diversity, and advocate for social justice, equity and social inclusion*

Our organisational strategic plan includes the core objective: *Work with the Blue Mountains Aboriginal community on reconciliation and other projects*. The work of our RAP will be carried out across all MOCS projects as we have a core commitment to educating families and the local community about reconciliation and about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights and issues. We believe that many small steps across multiple platforms is how sustainable attitudinal change is built. *Work to increase Blue Mountains community understanding and respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, communities and issues by supporting/initiating projects, activities or events* is on the work plan of 5 staff members.

The internal driving force behind the RAP is MOCS Manager, Lyn Bevington. The RAP Working Group members with Lyn are Sophie Corbett, Brighter Futures Family Worker and Parenting Young Facilitator; Elaine Cameron, Financial Administrator; Kerry Knibbs, BMOCCS Co-ordinator and community Elders Aunty Carol Cooper and Aunty Jacinta Tobin.

In August 2013 ten permanent staff worked together at MOCS Annual Planning day to develop our draft RAP. This draft was then circulated to all staff, Aboriginal community partners Aunty Carol Cooper and Aunty Jacinta Tobin and the MOCS Management Committee for comment. This feedback was then incorporated into the final Plan. Also in August, two staff members attended training on working with Aboriginal families and communities in the Blue Mountains and *Reconciliation and Community Work* was the focus of MOCS 2013 Annual General Meeting held in October.





Our Partnerships & Current Activities

Our community partnerships include Blue Mountains People for Reconciliation and Blue Mountains ANTaR, Mara Mob Aboriginal artists group, Blue Mountains Aboriginal Culture and Resource Centre, Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal Healthy for Life, Aboriginal Community Development officer at Blue Mountains City Council, Ngroo, National Parks and Wildlife Service Indigenous Rangers and the Gundungurra Tribal Council Aboriginal Corporation. MOCS is a foundation member of Blue Mountains People for Reconciliation and MOCS Manager Lyn Bevington is the current convenor of this group.

Our current activities/initiatives include convening the monthly Blue Mountains ANTaR meetings and supporting actions from this meeting such as organising the Recognise forums on constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. With a group of community agencies we run an annual Sharing the Journey Elders Lunch and we support local NAIDOC Week activities. We lead Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists in Blue Mountains schools collaborative project and co-organise the bi-annual Women's Spirit Event and bi-annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Diggers recognition event. We regularly invited local elders and Aboriginal community members to our playgroups and other activities including Reading Week and the Parenting Young retreat. Annually, as part of Children's Week, we hold a bushwalk for families that is led by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ranger. Also our Occasional Care service employs Darug teacher, Aunty Jacinta Tobin once a year to run a workshop with the children.





1. Relationships: Respectful and genuine relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are important to MOCS and its core business activities.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
1.1 Establish and maintain a RAP Working Group as an integral aspect of MOCS	Chair and Vice Chair of RAP Working Group	April 2014	<p>Group will be comprised of a minimum of 3 and maximum of 5 MOCS workers and will include regular consultation with our Aboriginal community partners Aunty Carol Cooper and Aunty Jacinta Tobin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair and Vice-Chair of RAP Committee to be appointed annually Minutes to document meetings Regular item on Team and Management Committee Meeting agendas <p>Meet bi-monthly until first RAP complete and then quarterly</p>
1.2 Continue to work in partnership and build relationships through consultation with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, workers and community members	RAP Working Group, Manager and Management Committee	By 30 June 2014	<p>A list of external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners will be developed and provided to all staff. The protocol for seeking community input will be developed and workers will report on consultation processes at least once a year.</p> <p>At our 2013 Planning Day we identified two objectives to further develop our outreach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To work in partnership with Aboriginal Healthy For Life to run an Indigenous Positive Parenting Program To further develop our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mentors/reference people, including inviting them to our AGM and to join our Management Committee.



Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
1.3 Celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	Hub co-ordinator Playgroup facilitator	27 May – 3 June 2014	<p>A community event will be organised through our Community Hub.</p> <p>We will celebrate Reconciliation Week at the Scout Hall playgroup.</p>
1.4 Raise internal awareness of the RAP	Manager	<p>Dec 2014</p> <p>April 2014</p>	<p>RAP is an agenda item at each monthly team meeting.</p> <p>5 permanent staff have “<i>Work to increase Blue Mountains community understanding and respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, communities and issues by supporting/initiating projects, activities or events</i>” as part of their work plans. In monthly supervision, RAP targets will be reviewed with these workers.</p> <p>MOCS website and Facebook will reflect our RAP commitment</p>





2. Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culture, land and history is important to MOCS and its core business activities.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
2.1 MOCS will create a welcoming environment in our service and investigate cultural development of staff	Manager	June 2014	MOCS will ensure that the environment created in our projects will be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander friendly by the use of posters, equipment, images and words and will be reflected on our website.
		April 2014	Our RAP commitment will be added as part of our staff orientation.
		May 2014	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's " <i>Share our Pride</i> " online tool to MOCS Staff for initial cultural awareness development
2.2 MOCS will raise staff understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	Manager	June 2014	MOCS will develop, implement and communicate a protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country at MOCS services, events, meetings and activities.
2.3 Celebrate NAIDOC Week	Manager	1st until 2nd Sunday July 2014	We will acknowledge NAIDOC WEEK at our playgroups and promote NAIDOC Week events to families via Facebook All staff members will be encouraged to attend the NAIDOC flag raising ceremony, march and community lunch



3. Opportunities: Employment and other opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities are important to the core business of MOCS.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
3.1 MOCS will consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment	RAP Working Group	August 2014	<p>MOCS will scope and develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation and investigate opportunities for funding this.</p> <p>MOCS currently employs 1 Aboriginal person. MOCS has and will continue to capture baseline data on current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to inform future developments, such as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategy</p>
3.2 MOCS will investigate supplier diversity	RAP Working Group	August 2014	<p>MOCS will continue to use the services of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and individuals.</p> <p>MOCS will investigate purchasing equipment and supplies from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and individuals.</p>
3.3 Other opportunities	Manager	June 2014	Through consultation with internal and external stakeholders MOCS will identify other opportunities eg around education and develop a paper with the RAP Working Group. This paper will assist in defining actions for subsequent RAPs for our organisation.

4. Internal Agency Implementation & sustainability: MOCS will build & maintain its capacity to respect & support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, lands and histories within our organisation and our core business activities.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
4.1 Build support for the RAP	Manager	Dec 2014	MOCS will investigate other opportunities for financial and resource support to support the ongoing sustainability of MOCS RAP.
		April 2014	At each staff meeting we will document opportunities for reconciliation engagement and then report on these each month. MOCS will also invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers and community members to give us feedback on our RAP progress.
		April 2015	MOCS will submit an annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire report on our RAP achievements to Reconciliation Australia.
4.2 Review and update Reflect RAP	RAP Working Group	February 2015	RAP Working Group in consultation with our Aboriginal community partners will review actions taken during this RAP and design a plan to build on these for the next RAP

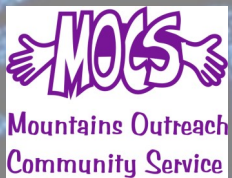


Artist Acknowledgement

‘Not Long Ago They Came Here’ is an original artwork by Leanne Tobin, copyright 2014, and is used in this RAP with permission from the artist. This work depicts the crossing of the British explorers Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson as they came up through the mountains. It is said that they often followed the traditional people’s walking tracks as they pushed the rugged bushland. They did not come unnoticed.

Leanne Tobin is descended from the Boorooberongal and Wumali clans of the Darug, the traditional Aboriginal people of the Greater Sydney region. Leanne works across the arts telling stories of place visually and orally to evoke an environmental and empathetic conscience in others toward the land and its original people. Leanne won the Parliament of NSW Aboriginal Art Prize for her artwork ‘Defending Country’. Leanne has artwork in the ‘Bungaree – The First Australian’ Exhibition and the ‘Institute’ exhibition at Blacktown Arts Centre.





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