

Let's Yarn Together!

Edition 2 – March 2023

A Message from Our Reconciliation Committee Chair

Welcome to the second edition of the 'Let's Yarn Together' newsletter! Where has the year gone already!

This newsletter is a way in which we seek to do this, share ideas on how we can all participate and be a good ally to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples we work with. Right now, we're gearing up for a big year, with a referendum to be held later this year. History is calling, where we can be a more unified and reconciled Australia!

Leonie Patterson

Reconciliation Committee Chair and Executive Manager, Cultural Safety and Partnerships



Leonie pictured in Parliament with Dean Parkin – Director, From the Heart

Events and Dates of Significance

26 January – Sorry Day / Invasion Day

Australia's story did not start on 26 January 1788. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have called this continent home for over 65,000 years.

Leonie recently shared her reflections on 26 January with staff, in a article posted on our intranet. It included a poem by Nola Gregory, a Kija/Bardi woman with family ties in Turkey Creek and Broome, titled **Silently Contemplating**. Nola is understood to be the only First Nations person to have had her poetry read in both the Federal and State parliaments.

Many people acknowledge and feel strongly, that the choice of 26 January, is not an appropriate date to hold national celebrations.

Anglicare NT is committed to reconciliation, and as part of our **Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan** and commitment to enhancing cultural safety, this year staff were provided with the option to change the date to celebrate the public holiday on another date. The response and feedback from staff showing their support was immense, with 21% of staff participating and choosing to change the date.

National Reconciliation Week Theme Announced – 'Be a Voice for our Generations' 27 May to 3 June

The theme for National Reconciliation Week (NRW) 2023 is 'Be a Voice for Generations'.

This year's theme urges all Australians to use their power, words and their vote to create a better, more just Australia for all of us; it encourages all Australians to be a voice for reconciliation in tangible ways in our everyday lives – where we live, work and socialise.

In coming weeks we'll be sharing NRW resources and getting ready to promote and take part in NRW events internal and external to our organisation.

Silently Contemplating

As I sit here silently thinking
Of all that you went through
How could I go and celebrate
With everything I now knew
It would be like a slap in the face
To my Ancestors who were stolen
It just does not seem right now
And it's hard sitting here withholding

There's a stirring within the spirits
Of our old people in their dreaming
This date means nothing to them
It has absolutely no meaning
Cause they have always been here
In this land of great renown
And I can hear them crying out
We don't recognise this crown

And you may sit in judgement
Of the way my people feel
Out there adorned in your colours
But to us it is all surreal
We yearn to see bold leaders
For this date has to be changed
It's time for it to be repealed
And our people to be engaged

So pardon me if I sit here
Silently I am contemplating
Surely there is another date
For us ALL to be celebrating
It's not that hard to change it
For a day we can all agree on
One that's not so de-grading
Call the Elders from beyond

Nola Gregory 22 January 2023 ©

Our People

Introducing Dave Jones

Dave is the Executive Manager, Shared Services and our new Reconciliation Committee Co-Chair, who joined Anglicare NT in May 2022, after relocating from Melbourne.

With qualifications in accounting, Dave has an extensive background in the not-for-profit and commercial sectors.



"I look forward to joining the amazing Reconciliation Committee team at Anglicare NT as a significant personal step in my continued learning of how to become a stronger ally to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Joining Anglicare NT and moving to this beautiful Larrakia country in mid-2022 has significantly raised my awareness of the obligation to work on achieving true reconciliation, supporting the Voice referendum, and embracing the Uluru Statement from the Heart. History is Calling!"

Introducing Sherasitta Wurrarama



Sherasitta was born and raised in Numbulwar community and has worked in the East Arnhem Children's Services - Numbulwar Saltwater Playgroup since 2015.

"First, I was a mother at the playgroup with my daughter. We went every day because she loved all the different activities and playing with the other children.

When my daughter went to preschool, one of the playgroup workers asked me if I wanted a job. She told me all about Anglicare NT and the different training, like how children grow and what activities they need to help them develop.

The Anglicare worker told me that I would also get to meet other playgroup workers from Ngukurr and Milngimbi once a year in Darwin at our Annual Training, and about the people working in East Arnhem Children's Services and they were good people to work with. This gave me the confidence to say yes to the job and do an interview.

I love working here and have made good friendships with my team. We have lots of opportunities to learn new things and grow our skills, this makes work more interesting and is important

for my future. What I love most about this job is working with children and families, I feel so very proud when I see the children learning new things and going on to preschool. What is special about our playgroup is that the literacy centre workers come and teach the children Wubuy (Traditional language of the Nunggubuyu people), they sing songs, listen to stories, and learn about skin names, clan groups and totems. I would like to see more activities in my community where young people can learn from the old people because it is important to know that knowledge down their future."

Recent Developments

We say YES!

On 18 February, the Anglicare NT Board (pictured here) formally endorsed support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart (USFH) and the referendum for constitutional recognition of a 'Voice to Parliament' for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



On 23 March, Leonie, as Chair of Anglicare Australia's (AA) National First Nations Committee joined with senior leaders from faith-based organisations (Anglicare Australia, St. Vincent De Paul, the Salvation Army, Unity Care Australia, Baptist Care Australia, and Catholic Social Services Australia), to meet with political leaders in Canberra, to urge them to support the Voice to Parliament.

It was an historic day! At the beginning of the day, leaders participated in a yarn with Pat Anderson AO (Co-Chair of the Uluru Dialogues) and then met with various political leaders following. They were present in parliament when Prime Minister, the Hon. Anthony Albanese announced the proposed question for the upcoming referendum to be held later this year.



Reconciliation Efforts Ramp Up at headspace

headspace Darwin have recently updated their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Hall of Fame, which is situated in our waiting area. It displays profiles of inspirational Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the community as well as historical NAIDOC week posters for us to reflect on. Our Aboriginal Community Engagement Worker, Grace Bidner, has been developing closer relationships with Stars and Clontarf groups across Darwin and Palmerston, to promote headspace and provide education relating to social and

emotional wellbeing. Grace is working in partnership with the YMCA and young people in the Palmerston area, to co-design a mural in a shared space between the YMCA Drop-in Centre and headspace Palmerston.

headspace recently supported two trainee placements, through a partnership between Anglicare NT and the Indigenous Allied Health Australia, Robert Rainger and Tannwyn Lewis (pictured below), who completed their Certificate III in Allied Health Assistance at the end of 2022. Well done Robert and Tannwyn!

We look forward to what the future holds for you both!



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network Yarns

Since our last newsletter, Leonie has facilitated two staff yarns with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff meeting in Alice Springs on 3 November 2022 and online on 16 February 2023. These discussions provide an opportunity for staff to get to know other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, as well as stories and ideas on how Anglicare NT can be a strong organisation that is culturally safe, and that our practice and programs are informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives and expertise.

Staff talked about the Reconciliation Committee and how to get involved, the flexibility and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate, proxies, and professional development experiences like these aligning to our Learning and Development Framework and our RAP. Staff also spoke to a face to face gathering with all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in 2023 – as referenced in our Terms of Reference wouldn't that be great to meet other people in other teams, not just to meet and share information but to also include a program for professional development!

One of the recent recommendations proposed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff is to ensure that active and deep listening is included in cross cultural training.

Do you have an idea, a story, an event, and / or a staff member that you would like us to showcase?

Are you interested in being part of the Reconciliation Committee? Send an email to:

reconciliation@anglicare-nt.org.au

Anglicare NT acknowledges and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of this country. We pay our respect to Elders, past, present and emerging. We accept the invitation from the Uluru Statement from the Heart to walk together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to create a better future for all Australians.