

RIGHTS IN ACTION

A newsletter for ACT children and young people about their rights and wellbeing



Reconciliation Day artwork created by Ngunnawal, Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi artist Lynnice Church.

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Jodie

Welcome!



Barb

Welcome to our very special edition of Rights in ACTion! This month we worked with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People Advocate, Barb Causon, to bring you a newsletter focused on the Voice to Parliament referendum and Reconciliation.

You might like to use this newsletter to help you speak to other people about the Voice, or Reconciliation, or to learn more for yourself. There are also some ideas of things to do at home or at school to learn more about Reconciliation.

To contact Jodie:

ACTKidseact.gov.au

To contact Barb:

atsichildrenyoungpeople@act.gov.au

Glossary

This newsletter has some words you might not understand. This page has a list of the hard words and their meanings.

Colonisation

Taking control of an area or a country that is not your own, especially using force, and sending people from your own country to live there.

Constitution

Set of rules about how a country is run.

Referendum

A vote that asks a question about laws that Australian voters can answer either yes or no to.

Reconciliation

The process of all Australians learning about each other and our history and working towards healing the impact colonisation has on First Nations Australians.

Sovereignty

The right to make decisions about land, law and people.

Did you know...

There are more than 250 Indigenous languages in Australia and more than 700 dialects (a dialect is a version of a language. They can be quite different from each other but are related... like siblings!).

AIATSIS

'Language is part of our songlines, stories, spirituality, law, culture, identity and connection...'

Lynnice Church,
Artist

Wattle seed and thyme damper

First Nations people have cooked with local ingredients for thousands of years. You can try to use native ingredients in your own cooking too! Try this recipe from [SBS food channel](#), which we have simplified for you. It uses wattleseeds, which are from Acacia, or wattle trees. You can buy them online.

Ingredients

- 900g self-raising flour, sifted
- 2 tbsp wattle seeds
- 2 tbsp thyme leaves (fresh or dried)
- 1 tsp salt
- 500 ml (2 cups) full-cream milk
- Butter and golden syrup, to serve

Method

- Preheat the oven to 200°C
- Lightly grease a baking tray.
- In a bowl, combine the flour, wattle seeds, thyme leaves and salt.
- Make a well in the centre and pour in the milk.
- Combine everything into a smooth and slightly moist dough.
- Put the dough onto a floured bench and knead until the dough is smooth (kneading means to gently fold it and push it together a few times).
- Shape the dough into a round loaf.
- Use a knife to draw an "X" on the top.
- Sprinkle a little bit of flour on top of the loaf.
- Bake for about 35-40 minutes or until the loaf has a golden crust and sounds hollow when tapped.
- Serve with butter and golden syrup.



MEET BARB CAUSON



In this special edition newsletter, we meet Wiradjuri woman Barb Causon, who is the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People Advocate. Barb's role is part of the new Office for ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People. Her team support First Nation's families who are dealing with issues relating to the well-being of their kids. We had a yarn with Barb to hear more about the work she does and the things she cares about.

What got you interested in this line of work?

Before taking on the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Advocate, I had a long career in the Commonwealth Public Service working in roles directly related to Indigenous Affairs. Throughout 2018 and 2019, I chaired the Our Booris Our Way (OBOW) review of our children in the ACT child protection system. I also previously chaired the OBOW Implementation Oversight Committee, which continues to check how the recommendations from OBOW are being done.



What is important about what you do for children and young people?

I asked for real change in systems that are not working well for our children and young people, and their families. We need to make sure that Government listens to the voices of our young people about their needs and wishes and do our very best to support them.

We need to ensure that our children and young peoples' rights, including their cultural rights, are protected at all times.

How can children and young people get in touch with you?

We are always happy to talk to any child or young person or family member about issues concerning them and we can provide information on other services that may also be of assistance. You can either call 0422 284 840 or send an email to atsichildrenyoungpeople@act.gov.au. We look forward to sharing a new website with you soon.



Nicole, Barb, Jillian and Jaimie



OFFICE FOR ACT ABORIGINAL
& TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

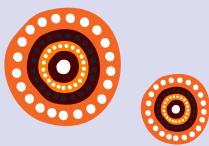
KEEPING OUR KIDS STRONG
IN FAMILY & CULTURE

WHAT IS THE VOICE TO PARLIAMENT?

This year Australians who are 18 years old or older will vote in a **referendum** to decide if the **Constitution** will be changed to recognise First Nations peoples and include a First Nations Voice to Parliament. There will be a lot of people talking about this, so here are some facts to help you understand what is being decided.

1901

In 1901 Australia began using a set of rules about how the country is run and how the Government works. These rules are called the Constitution. It can only be changed if the people of Australia agree to the changes. They do this by voting in a referendum.



2023

This year Australians are being asked to decide if the Constitution should be changed in this way, to create an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, or First Nations, Voice to Parliament.

2017

The Uluru Statement from the Heart was created in 2017. It recommended the changes to the Constitution that would mean the **Federal Government** would have to ask and listen to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people when they make decisions about things that affect them. This proposed change is being called the Voice to Parliament.



Lots of other countries have rules to make sure there are First Nations Voices in their parliaments. If Australians vote yes to changing the Constitution, the Voice would mean:

1. There would be a group of First Nations people that could advise the Government on issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,
2. A process will be run to set up the group of First Nations people who will form the Voice to Parliament.

Once something is part of the Constitution, another referendum is the only way to take it out.

Do you have questions, or want to tell us what you think? Go to www.hrc.act.gov.au/ytf

Uluru Statement from the Heart

During discussions about the Voice to Parliament referendum, you may hear people talk about the Uluru Statement from the Heart. The Uluru Statement made recommendations about ways to improve the lives of all Australians and address the challenges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians can face. This page gives you some information about what the Statement says but there is also a [website dedicated to the Uluru Statement that has a lot more information.](#)



A message

In 2017, 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives met at Uluru to sign the Statement from the Heart. It is a message to people throughout Australia to create a better future for everyone. It was written after a series of meetings across Australia.

Sovereignty

The Statement describes the **sovereignty** that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes have had over their lands for tens of thousands of years. In the It describes sovereignty as a spiritual relationship with the land, mother nature and with the ancestors.

Never ceded (given up)

This sovereignty has never been given up and is seen in the Statement as existing alongside the sovereignty of 'the Crown' which began 250 years ago.

Challenges

The statement describes the high number of First Nations adults and young people in jail, and families who have been separated. The statement also says that children and young people are our hope for the future.

The solutions

The Statement says that these challenges could be addressed if the Consitution allowed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to make more decisions about how their communities are run, and to advise the Government on First Nations issues. For this to happen, the Constitution would need to say that First Nations people can make more decisions about issues facing their own communities.

A fair system

The Statement aims for a fair system that allows for all Australians to explore our history in a truthful way. It wants a fair country that values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and creates a better future for all children.



Ways to celebrate Reconciliation

Reconciliation is about all communities in Australia learning more about each other, about our history, and about the impact of **colonisation** on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is about respecting the cultures, rights and experiences of all Australians.

Reconciliation Day is part of National Reconciliation Week and is a time for all Canberrans to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.

There are many fun ways you can learn and celebrate during Reconciliation Week.

The sixth annual [Reconciliation Day event in Canberra](#) will be held on Monday 29 May 2023 at the National Arboretum, Canberra.

From panel discussions to art and crafts and storytelling, to live entertainment, stalls and exhibitions, the event will offer a family-friendly and engaging program that creates a welcoming environment, encouraging all members of the community to attend and participate.

Event Details

Date: Monday 29 May 2023

Time: 10am - 3pm

Location: [National Arboretum Canberra](#)

You might also like to experience:

- [National Museum of Australia - Indigenous Collection](#)
- [National Library of Australia - Indigenous Collection](#)
- [National Gallery of Australia - Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander art](#)
- [Aboriginal Dreamings Gallery](#)
- [Burrunjui Aboriginal Corporation - Art Gallery](#)
- [Canberra Museum & Gallery - Possum-Skin Cloak](#)

[Reconciliation Australia](#) also has colouring pages you can do, like the one on the next page...

How will you get involved in reconciliation this week?



"Here in Australia we're fortunate enough to have one of the richest and oldest continuing cultures in the world. This is something we should all be proud of and celebrate."

Dr Tom Calma AO, Co-Chair Reconciliation Australia

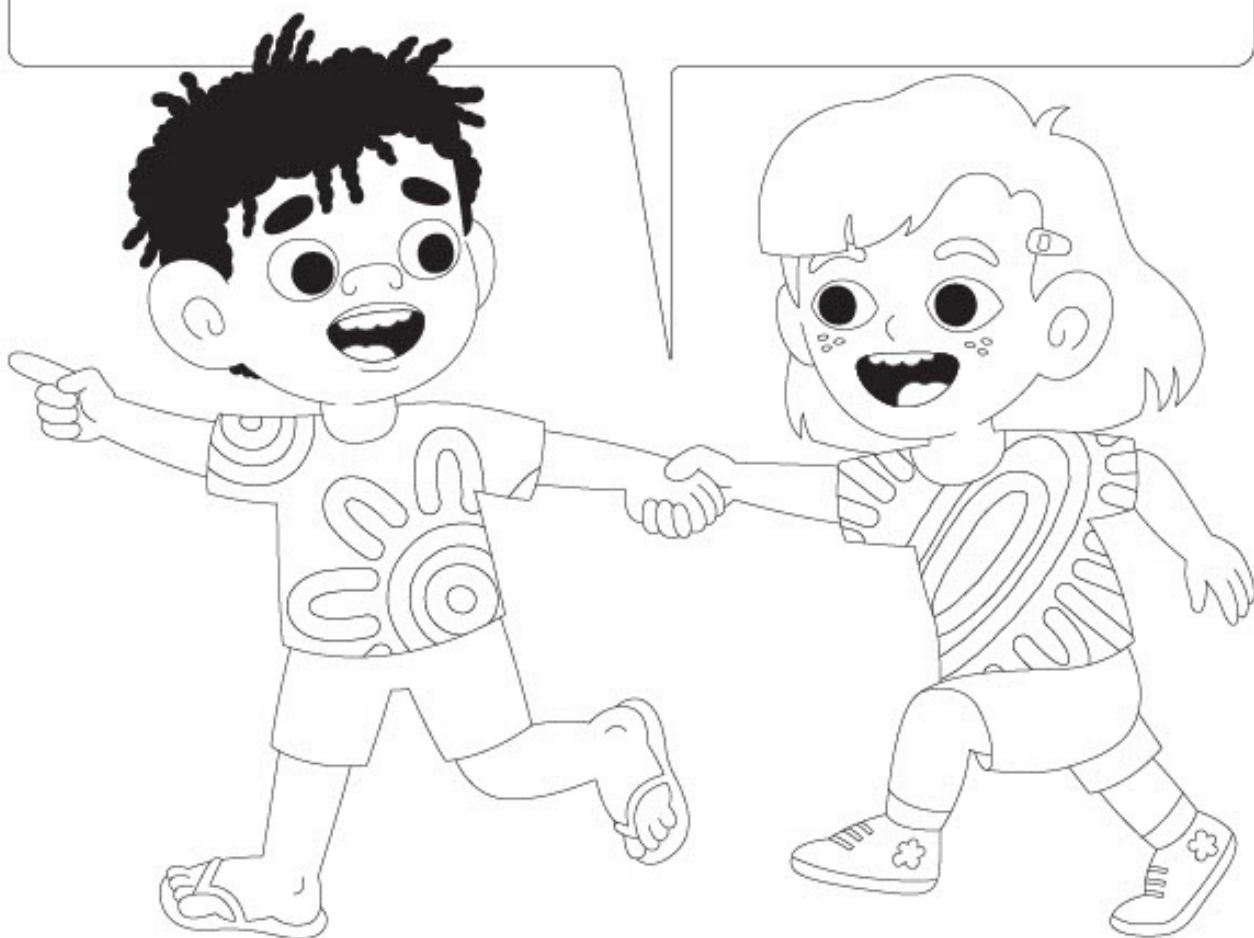
NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK 2023

27 MAY — 3 JUNE

BE A VOICE FOR GENERATIONS...

WHAT WILL YOU SAY?

Use the speech bubble to share your Voice for Generations. You can write or draw a picture about what you think a reconciled future would look like. Finish the activity by colouring in the characters below.



DEALING WITH RACISM

Children and young people we have spoken to about racism told us that it increases when there are stories in the media, or cultural celebrations (like Reconciliation Week) at school. Here are some tips for what to do if you see or experience racism.

Remember -- racism is never ok! We can all help to stop it, but you do not have to do that alone.

Call it out

Name the things you witness or experience as racism. It lets the perpetrator and witnesses know it is not ok and helps educate people who may be ignorant.

Report it

You can report racism to a few different places. We can help you decide on the best place and support you.
actkids@act.gov.au
or
atsichildrenyoungpeople@act.gov.au

Support

Supporting the person targeted by the racism is important. It also lets others know what happened is not ok and that you do not accept it.

Educate

There are lots of resources so you and others can learn more about racism. Check out an interactive video on [Bystander Action](#) or [10 tips to remove hate from the debate](#)

It is the job of adults to protect children from racism, but we know that we do not always get it right. It is important for you to **only** take action yourself **if you feel safe to do so** and to ask for help if you need to.



Mihini, who is in Year 3, sent us this awesome drawing of her family travelling the world. It is her dream to travel with her family. Thank you for sharing this with us
Mihini!

Do you have something you dream of doing?

Send us pictures, poems or suggestions for our newsletter any time!
actkids@act.gov.au