

Goolum Goolum Early Years January/February 2024



Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the country we live and work on - Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Jupagulk and Wergaia peoples and pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

We would also like to use this space to welcome everybody to the New Year (can you believe it's the end of February already!) and to our first Goolum Goolum Early Years team newsletter for 2024.

In this newsletter we have shared with you

- Information relating to Closing the Gap & Harmony day – Both days of which are acknowledged on Thursday March 21st
- Delkaia Aboriginal Best Start update
 - Including some fantastic work shared by Warracknabeal 3yr old Kindergarten & the naming process for Horsham's new Kindergarten
- Playgroup dates and activities for Term 1 2024 in both Horsham and Stawell.
 - We have a strong focus on Cultural connections, social engagement and meaningful learning for Playgroup in 2024.
 - We would like to actively encourage all teachers and educators in the Horsham and Stawell districts to print and share our playgroup posters, and to display in their centers

Michelle Cameron Early Years Team Manager
michelle.cameron@goolumgoolum.org.au

Tori Power Best Start Facilitator
tori.power@goolumgoolum.org.au

Renae Podolski wayipungitj & Black Cockatoos Playgroup
renae.podolski@goolumgoolum.org.au

Phoebe Tucker wayipungitj & Black Cockatoos Playgroup
phoebe.tucker@goolumgoolum.org.au

Goolum Goolum Early Years Team





CLOSING THE GAP

"Closing the Gap acknowledges the ongoing strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in sustaining the world's oldest living cultures.

Closing the Gap is underpinned by the belief that when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a genuine say in the design and delivery of policies, programs and services that affect them, better life outcomes are achieved. It also recognises that structural change in the way governments work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is needed to close the gap.

All Australian governments are working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their communities, organisations and businesses to implement the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap at the national, state and territory, and local levels."

To visit the Closing the Gap website, and view further information about Closing the Gap Targets, National Agreements and Priority Reforms – please click [here](#)



HISTORY OF HARMONY DAY

Harmony Day was first celebrated in Australia in 1999, but its roots go back hundreds of years. In 2017, researchers published evidence in the journal "Nature" that the ancestors of Aboriginal Australians landed there from Southeast Asia about 65,000 years ago. No one knows exactly how they got there, and although the distance was shorter than it is today due to large expanses of frozen water, some speculate that they still had to undertake a sea voyage of at least 45 miles, perhaps, according to the Australian Museum, in rafts made of bamboo! These first settlers were the original indigenous Australians and lived in harmony with the land for centuries.

you can find more information about Harmony Day – from an Early Childhood perspective – by clicking on this [link](#)



Upcoming Dates of Importance

March and April

- 21st March – Closing the Gap Day
- 21st March – Harmony Day
- 25th April – ANZAC DAY

Victorian Aboriginal Education Association
– VAEAI

Is the peak Koorie community organisation for education and training in Victoria.

They work for community to build success in education & training.

To find the latest VAEAI news, and access to the link for the Koorie Education Calendar head to their website:

www.vaeai.org.au



Delkaia Aboriginal Best Start



Delkaia Aboriginal Best Start News

Dalki Muwill (Hi all),

Each Newsletter, I will aim to share examples of the work that Educators are doing in our LGA's, towards embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in their programs, practices, and physical environments. This important work not only improves outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children, but it educates all Australians on the rich culture and history of our Nation's First Peoples.

On the following pages, I have recorded summaries of two projects implemented within our LGA. The first - A project which was recorded as part of the Best Start Program, in the naming of the new Horsham Kindergarten

The second - is some incredible work that has been shared with us, by Warracknabeal Memorial Kindergarten (3yr olds) after its implementation.

Future examples shared can be observations I have made or have been shared with me, by the wider early years community.

I hope you enjoy reading about them as much as I have enjoyed learning about them.

These ideas are larger projects that took time to plan and implement. The learning and relationships that occurred as a result of these projects was meaningful and will have an ongoing influence on the early years landscape for years to come. However, not all change ideas need to be big actions. Most change ideas in the Best Start space are quick and simple to execute. I look forward to sharing some examples of these in future newsletters



Delkaia Aboriginal Best Start



But first: Why do we have a Best Start Initiative?

Why is it important to share examples of our work towards embedding our Nation's First Peoples perspectives and culture in our early years settings?

"Australian early childhood educators have a responsibility to value and promote greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being. This is enshrined in both Australia's Education and Care Services National Law and the National Quality Framework"

Taken from: **Exploring Indigenous ways of knowing and being (earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au)**

Please also consider this quote from page 6 of the Marrung Education plan 2016–2024, explaining the vision of the plan:

"Victoria will be a state where the rich and thriving culture, knowledge and experience of our First Nations peoples are celebrated by all Victorians; where our universal service systems are inclusive, responsive and respectful of Koorie people at every stage of their learning and development journey; and where every Koorie person achieves their potential, succeeds in life, and feels strong in their cultural identity".

Published by the Department of Education and Training Melbourne July 2016

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You can access the entire document here: **[Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan 2016–2026.pdf](#)**

Our ethical and professional responsibility to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and culture, in our programs, is supported not only by legislation, but also professional frameworks and teaching standards.



Delkaia Aboriginal Best Start

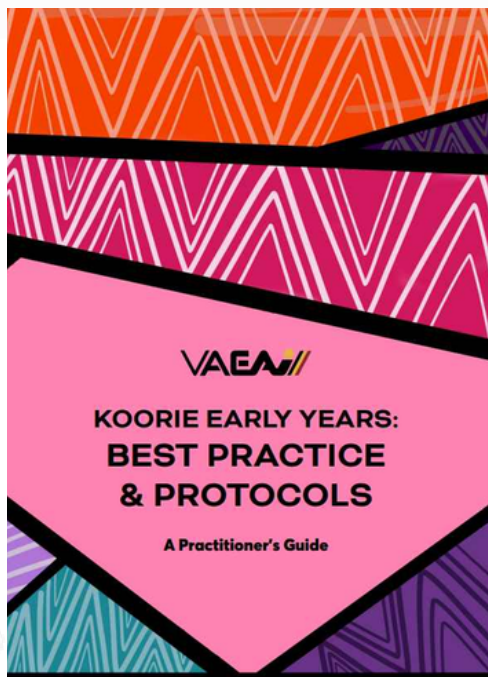


Another, more specific resource, talks about the model for teaching Aboriginal perspectives, by outlining the importance of starting with your local Koorie community. Please click below for the updated version for 2024

Koorie Early Years Best Practice & Protocols: **A Practitioners Guide** – VAEAI

Protocols are important!
Wherever possible, you will want to preference teaching culture relevant to the lands your service is on. If you're not sure what to do or where to start, ask for help. You can ask me, our wayipungitj staff Phoebe and Renae, and reach out to the KESO's in your region for advice and guidance. You can also approach your local Land council for support and guidance.

Note: We will be having a more in depth discussion around the updated and revised protocols in our next newsletter



Click below to further explore how our professional standards and frameworks, support the work we are all doing, to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in our services

- The Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016 – 2026 [here](#)
- The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) – [here](#)
- The Early Years Learning Framework V2 – [here](#)
- Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Australian Professional Standards for Teachers – [here](#) & [here](#)



Delkaia Aboriginal Best Start BANI MANYA



The first example, I'd like to share is related to a project, to name a new Kindergarten site, using Wergaia Language.

This was a change idea created and managed by Aida Anderson, Pedagogical leader for EMERGE Early Years Services in Horsham.

It was a multi-step project in consultation with Traditional Owners, via Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) & local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, to establish a name in language for a new Kindergarten site.

The following is a summary of the processes Aida followed:

Aida met with our local Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO), within the Department of Education, regarding who to speak to about getting a consultation process happening, to which she then worked to draft letters of invitation, to a Community Gathering, to discuss a name for the new site.

Feedback on the invitation was sought from the Delkaia Aboriginal Best Start (DABS) Facilitator at Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative, and KESO's at DET.

Together, they worked to identify key stakeholders to invite to the consultative process, including representatives from GGAC, BGLC and other respected community members.

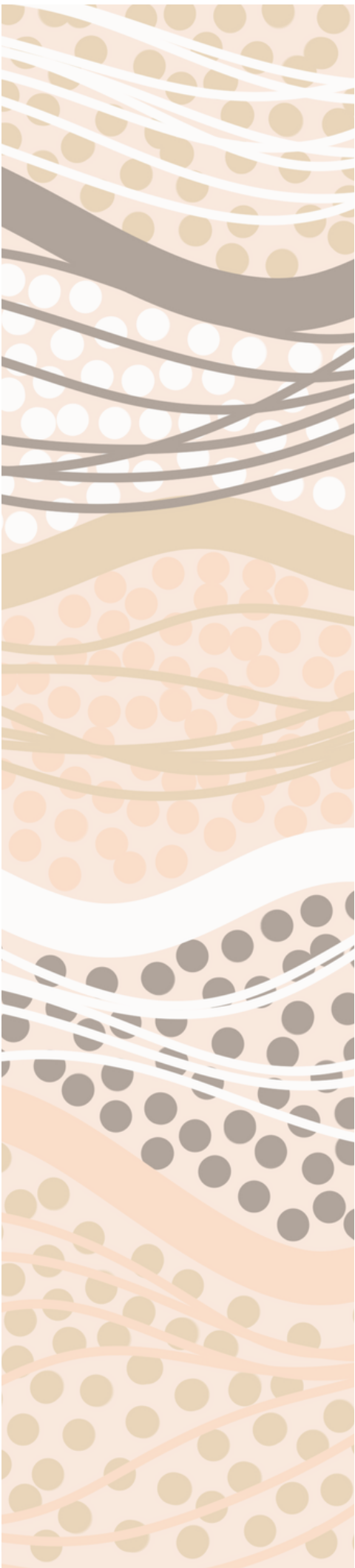
During the consultation, attendees discussed options for names & potential themes & meanings, which were then taken back to Barengi Gadjin Land Council Language Committee for approval. BGLC Language Committee then put forward a selection of name options based on previous discussions. The name agreed upon by attendees and endorsed by BGLC was **"Bani Manya"** which translates to **"small hands"**

Emerge Early Years Service would like to thank Barengi Gadjin Land Council for gifting this special use of Bani Manya

The above ideas are larger projects that took time to plan and implement. The learning and relationships that occurred as a result of these projects was meaningful and will have an ongoing influence on the early years landscape for years to come. However, not all change ideas need to be big actions. Most change ideas in the Best Start space are quick and simple to execute. I look forward to sharing some examples of these in future newsletters.

See next page for photos!





Look what's happening in ... **WARRACKNABEAL**



Hanna is the Educator for the 3-year-old group at Warracknabeal Memorial Kindergarten. Below is a summary of some things they have been doing in their Kinder!

The Educators have worked with the children to explore both current and historical Aboriginal Art, via books, physical works, and natural objects they could touch.

Working alongside Aboriginal artist **Emma Stenhouse**, the children were given the opportunity to experience Aboriginal cultural perspectives and storytelling through Art.

Emma shared her own works with the children as well as teaching them techniques and symbols, used traditionally by her own mob, alongside her own techniques.

The children were given time and opportunity to explore and paint freely, advancing in their skills over time.

The artworks were proudly displayed at the local General Store in Warracknabeal, with the following quote by Hanna

"The children began to explore storytelling and how we can express our ideas through art itself. Enlightened by solo expression and parallel workings, the whole cohort had agency while layering the works. Throughout the process children were inquisitive observing others, as well as freely using different tools, layer by layer to create the finished piece. Learning about how we view the world and how we connect with others creates a sense of belonging in our community. Using natural resources in the classroom helps us stay curious about how to care for our environment and working with an array of materials invites us to explore the texture, light and shade and beauty of each item".



If you are thinking about investigating Indigenous arts within your program, you can access the following article from
VAEI: [But-can-they-paint-dots-2021-1.pdf](#)





Recently I (Phoebe) completed a PD webinar from **Koori Curriculum** hosted by Jessica Staines, called **“Embedding Aboriginal Perspectives”**. I would highly recommend this webinar for all educators.

Some key areas covered include:

- Ensuring Aboriginal resources in the room are functional & can be used by children (not just set up on display for viewing, as if it were in a museum)
- Aboriginal Pedagogy
- Analysis Paralysis: When educators are so worried about doing the wrong thing, that they'd prefer do nothing at all. (We don't want educators to suffer from Analysis Paralysis. We want them to have a go!)
- Using children's interests as a vehicle for learning (eg. sandpit, transport, arts & crafts) and embed Aboriginal Perspectives
- Embedding Aboriginal perspectives every day, not just on significant dates and events

Jess also shared a lot of examples of play spaces & resources in which educators can use to embed Aboriginal perspectives in their every day programs and practices, including: Sandpit, Play dough & Clay, Bush Tucker, Construction, Music & Movement, Dramatic Play & Home Corner, Books and Birth to 2 years.

To view all of the webinars available on the Koori Curriculum website, **[please click here.](#)**

Recommended Koori Curriculum Podcasts: Educator Yarns with Jessica Staines

(Available wherever you get your podcasts)

- Educate don't celebrate
- Connecting and working respectfully with aboriginal families and communities
- Getting momentum with your aboriginal programs
- Embedding Aboriginal Perspectives in ECE and Family Day Care



To learn more about the Koori Curriculum and their story, **[please click here.](#)**



wayipungitj (Supporter)



Renae



Phoebe



Hello!
We are the wayipungitj (supporters)
for Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-
Operative & we are based in Horsham

We aim to support both Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander kindergarten
children, their families and their
Kindergarten across the Wimmera
Southern Mallee

wayipungitj – What do we do?

There are 4 Key areas that we work towards, when working alongside Families and Educators:

PARTICIPATION – Supporting access for Koorie children and their families, in funded kindergarten programs, by working together with kindergarten teachers

PRACTICE – Working with Kindergartens and Educators, to assist in creating culturally safe and inclusive practices within their programs.

COMMUNITY – Advocate and engage with Koorie families to help create connections with their local Kinder. As well as supporting Kindergarten services to actively involve the local Aboriginal community and families, in providing input to the kindergarten program.

FAMILY – Creating connections with families, through yarning sessions & social engagement.

Contact Renae Podolski

or

Phoebe Tucker

on

0460 431 066

renae.podolski@goolumgoolum.org.au

phoebe.tucker@goolumgoolum.org.au



Black Cockatoos Playgroup Horsham 2024

All playgroup sessions and related activities are for children aged from Birth to Kinder age

10:00am
12:00pm

What's on in Term 1

- **Thursday 8th February:**
 - First Playgroup for Term 1. Cultural Arts and Crafts @ Kalkee Rd Hub
- **Thursday 15th February:**
 - Picnic and a play at the Botanical Gardens
- **Thursday 22nd February:**
 - Cultural visit with Uncle Ron Marks @ Kalkee Rd Hub
- **Thursday 29th February:**
 - Horsham Aquatic Centre. Morning tea provided.
 - Please RSVP to Renae or Phoebe
- **Thursday 7th March:**
 - Sensory Play @ Kalkee Rd Hub
- **Thursday 14th March:**
 - Nature Walk in Horsham - Walking trail TBC
- **Thursday 21st March:**
 - Structured Risky Play @ Kalkee Rd Hub
- **Thursday 28th March - Last Playgroup for Term 1**
 - Trip to Tiny Goats & Co @ Dimboola (TBC).
 - Morning tea and transport provided.
 - Please RSVP to Renae or Phoebe

Every Thursday of School Term - Kalkee Road Childrens Hub Horsham
Contact Renae or Phoebe @ Goolum Goolum for more info: 0460 431 066
or join our Facebook group: **Goolum Goolum Early Years**



Black Cockatoos Playgroup

Stawell 2024

All playgroup sessions and related activities are for children aged from Birth to Kinder age

PLEASE TAKE
NOTE OF OUR
NEW TIME FOR
2024

10:30am
12:30pm

What's on in Term 1

- **Wednesday 7th February:**
 - First Playgroup for Term 1. Cultural Arts and Crafts @ Stawell Hub
- **Wednesday 14th February:**
 - Picnic and a play at Cato Park
- **Wednesday 21st February:**
 - Cultural visit with Uncle Ron Marks @ Stawell Hub
- **Wednesday 28th February:**
 - Kinder Gym with Stawell Gymnastics Club @ Neighbourhood House.
 - Lunch provided.
 - Please RSVP to Renae or Phoebe
- **Wednesday 6th March:**
 - Sensory Play @ Stawell Hub
- **Wednesday 13th March:**
 - Nature Walk in Stawell - walking trail TBC
- **Wednesday 20th March:**
 - Structured Risky Play @ Stawell Hub
- **Wednesday 27th March - Last Playgroup for Term 1**
 - Trip to Halls Gap Zoo. Lunch and transport provided.
 - Please RSVP to Renae or Phoebe

Every Wednesday of School Term | 46 Leslie street Stawell
Contact Renae or Phoebe @ Goolum Goolum for more info: 0460 431 066
or join our Facebook group: **Goolum Goolum Early Years**

