

Relationships Australia Victoria's Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities in Victoria



Relationships Australia Victoria (RAV) commits to holding self-determination at the heart of all interactions, partnerships and services with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. RAV acknowledges the cultural strengths, knowledge and connectedness to Country that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold, and commits to supporting their inclusion and understanding at every opportunity moving forward together. We are committed to enabling culturally safe and supportive environments and services across all our centres and service locations within Victoria.

1. RAV acknowledges and recognises:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of Australia;
 - the loss and grief held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples caused by dislocation from traditional lands, loss of lives and freedom, and the forced removal of children;
 - the ongoing harm done to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities by past government policies and practices.
2. RAV will ensure ongoing development of Aboriginal cultural awareness and competency in RAV senior management, staff and its Board through regular training and learning opportunities.
3. RAV will promote and develop strengths-based practices with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and families, that are:
 - developed in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations;
 - trauma-informed and culturally responsive to the ongoing harm done to families and communities by past practices and policies, and the cumulative impact of disadvantage on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families of low income, poor health, inadequate housing, and inappropriate and inaccessible support services.
4. RAV will promote the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with its services by promoting and ensuring culturally safe access to and within all of RAV's services.
5. RAV will support and highlight strengths-based practices in the delivery of relationship services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
6. RAV will develop and continue to support collaborative working relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and services in Victoria. We will encourage opportunities to deliver culturally informed counselling and dispute resolution services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients at Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, where appropriate, and when supported by the client and community.
7. RAV will develop and implement policies and procedures that demonstrate respect for Aboriginal culture and leadership by ensuring that the following are supported and in place (where determined and agreed).
 - A Welcome to Country will be held at all formal RAV events and activities.
 - An Acknowledgment of the Traditional Owners will be read out at all RAV meetings. This includes manager meetings, staff team meetings, the full RAV staff meeting, planning days and Board meetings.
 - The display of the Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Islander flag at all RAV centres including the display of both flags at the reception desk/counter and in all meeting rooms at RAV's centres.
 - Ensuring all policies and procedures, plans, promotional material and course program content is relevant to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
 - Involvement of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in event planning and delivery.
 - Celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage wherever appropriate.
 - Actively participate in NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week events and activities.
8. RAV will encourage opportunities for education, training and employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at all sites across Victoria.
9. RAV will demonstrate its commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by ensuring that the organisation's Quality Management Committee guide the Statement of Commitment work and provide advice on RAV's staffing policies and organisational practice to be more culturally appropriate and accessible.

