

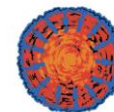
Celebration of Diversity
Design by Jilalga Murray

Sorry Day Guide 2019 for Schools

“On our pathway towards reconciliation, Sorry Day on 26 May is an important moment to remember the past policies of forced child removal. Here, we reflect on the sad and painful history of the Stolen Generations and recognise moments of resilience, healing and the power of saying Sorry”

[Reconciliation Australia, 2017](#)

RWA respectfully acknowledges and pays tribute to the Whadjuk Peoples
– the traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work.



ReconciliationWA

Sorry Day Guide 2019 for Schools

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ReconciliationWA

History Behind Sorry Day

The Western Australian Story

National Sorry Day is held each year on May 26. It was on this day in 1997 that the Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of First Peoples children from their families was tabled in Federal Parliament.

Titled the Bringing Them Home report, it acknowledged with unquestionable evidence the forced removal of thousands of First Peoples children from their families and communities.

Sorry Day was born out of key recommendations made by the National Inquiry into the Separation of First Peoples children from their families in the Bringing Them Home Report that was tabled in Federal Parliament on 26th May 1997.

At the request of the National Sorry Day Committee, the Australian Parliament passed a motion in 2010 recognising 26th May as National Sorry Day, and as a day to be commemorated annually, as a way of achieving greater healing for the Stolen Generations.



History Behind Sorry Day - Continued

The Western Australian Story

The first Sorry Day was held in Sydney on 26th May 1998, and has been commemorated nationally on 26th May each year since then, with Australians from all walks of life participating in memorial services, commemorative meetings, survival celebrations and community gatherings, in honour of the Stolen Generations.

It is a time for all Australians to reflect on the profound grief and trauma experienced by First Peoples, particularly members of the Stolen Generations. This grief and trauma is still played out in community today.

Importantly it is an opportunity to celebrate and connect with the strength and resilience of First Peoples, and to reaffirm our shared commitment to healing and reconciliation. We believe strong relationships foster respect and create opportunities.

<https://bringingthemhomewa.com/sorry-day/>



The Stolen Generations

It's estimated that between 10% to 33% of First Peoples children were taken from their families between 1910 and the 1970s, affecting most First Peoples communities in Australia.

These children were forcibly removed from their families and communities through race-based policies set up by both State and Federal Governments. They were either put in to homes, adopted or fostered out to non-Indigenous families.

They suffered a huge amount of grief and trauma; losing their connections to family, identity, land, language and culture. Grief that continues today. These children have become known as the Stolen Generations.

If people don't have the opportunity to heal from past trauma, they may unknowingly pass it on to others. We call this the passing of intergenerational trauma. Their children may experience difficulties with attachment, disconnection from their extended families and culture, and high levels of stress from family and community members who are dealing with the impacts of trauma.

<https://healingfoundation.org.au/>





Hosting an Event

We believe your School should contribute to the truth telling of the Stolen Generations which is a part of our shared history. Outlined below are some considerations when planning a Sorry Day event or activity:

Consider the landscape

1. Decide on the type of event that the school can organise.

Have you run an event like this before? How was it received?

Reconciliation is a journey, and every person/school is at a different place.

Your event should reflect your school's journey. Schools beginning their journey may focus on developing a greater understanding of the impact of our nation's historical legacy on First Peoples – at the beginning of your journey much of your activity generates symbolic activity.

Further along the journey, a school may plan actions to promote deep healing; like an acknowledgement of past policies that have caused harm to First Peoples and a commitment to grow a community which ensures that historical injustices are not repeated. This can be readily activated by calling a special school assembly, including it in school newsletter and utilising social media. This step change requires substantive effort and resource.



Hosting an Event

Outlined below are some considerations when planning a Sorry Day event or activity

Respectful relationships

2. Protocols

Welcome to Country and/or Acknowledgment of Country

Department of Education schools should refer to the Welcome to Country (WTC) and Acknowledgment of Country protocols located on the Department's website. A WTC is a very important ceremony - it comes as a service and as such is billable.

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Displaying names and images

Schools are encouraged to discuss and collaborate with your community to explore what is and what is not appropriate to use. If pictures and names are displayed it is good practice to place a visual/audio warning for First Peoples viewers that there may be images or names of deceased people.

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Dialogue

Be mindful of the language and terms you use. It would be appropriate to establish preferred language prior to your event. Consult with your First Peoples families and staff regarding protocols and expectations for visiting guests.



Hosting an Event

Outlined below are some considerations when planning a Sorry Day event or activity

Where to start?

3. Who do I need to contact?

The school AIEO will be a great starting point. AIEO's can often assist in contacting the appropriate people to speak at your events.

You might also consider approaching First Peoples within your school community, such as parents and grandparents who may be part of your school yarning group.

Facilitating those discussions will help to make decisions concerning the *who*, *what*, *where*, *when* and *why*, of your planning process.



Hosting an Event

Outlined below are some considerations when planning a Sorry Day event or activity

Collaborate

4. Create a yarning group to share ideas and activities.

Draw on the knowledge and expertise of Aboriginal staff/community.

If possible, invite First Peoples; families, community members and an Elder, connected to your school and networks, to be involved.



Hosting an Event

Integrating a Sorry Day or National Reconciliation Week activation into the school

Planning

5. Make it happen!

Following the research, advice and commitments made during the yarning group process, make a decision on a Sorry Day and/or National Reconciliation Week activation your school can do meaningfully to contribute to truth-telling, justice and healing for First Peoples and all Australians.

Has a whole School event been considered?

Have teaching staff considered an integrated class room learning experience?

Is the broader community invited to participate?

Be inspired to incorporate activities in this guide and the suggested resources for your schools Sorry Day and/or National Reconciliation Week education and activation – when selecting activations, remember to consider your school’s unique position along the pathway to reconciliation.



Hosting an Event

Reconciliation Western Australia recommends schools access the sources below to aid in the development and engagement of Sorry Day resources, activities and events

Research

6. Useful web-sites for planning

The following sites provide detailed information and learning resources for Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week, to support your school to meaningfully and respectfully acknowledge these significant dates:

[Reconciliation Australia- Resources](#)

[Bringing them Home](#)

[SWALSC- Protocols](#)

[Narragunnawali](#)

[SWALC- Kaartdijin Noongar](#)

[Reconciliation WA - NRW](#)

[Healing Foundation- Sorry Day Schools Kit](#)

[Department of Education- Protocols](#)

[Share our Pride](#)



Sorry Day in Schools

Integrate a Sorry Day event or activity into the school's learning program

Whole School

Potential Sorry Day activations

- Acknowledge Sorry Day with a special assembly and flag raising ceremony
- Invite First Peoples to speak at the school
- Invite an Elder to conduct Welcome to Country
- Incorporate Sorry Day themes into Acknowledgments of Country
- [Screening of The Apology](#): The video of the apology to the Stolen Generations made by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd on behalf of the Australian Parliament
- Create a school community artwork to reflect the schools understanding of Sorry Day- invite Parents and the local community to be involved



Sorry Day in Schools

Integrate a Sorry Day event or activity into the school's learning program

In the classroom

Potential Sorry Day activations

- Share stories – Invite a local Elder or First Person to speak at your school and share their lived experiences of the Stolen Generation
- Share music – Music is a powerful way to explore the experiences of the Stolen Generations and can include songs such as:
 - 'Brown Skin Baby (They took me away)' by Bob Randall,
 - 'Took the Children Away' and 'Munjana', by Archie Roach
 - 'The Children Came Back' by Gurrumul and Briggs
 - 'Sorry Song' by Kerry Fletcher
- Share ideas and brainstorm. Your class could brainstorm:
 - What the term 'Stolen Generation' means
 - Why acknowledging Sorry Day is important
 - Explore the term 'sorry';
 - What does 'sorry' mean?
 - When is the word 'sorry' used?
 - Cultural perspectives and uses of the word 'sorry'



Reconciliation in Schools

Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and further learning: Early Learning, Primary and Secondary activities, links and resources for the classroom

All years

[Narragunnawali](#): Register to join Narragunnawali and become part of a dedicated reconciliation community. The Narragunnawali platform is an amazing network of teaching resources compiled by Reconciliation Australia. You will not only find resources that you can use in the classroom, but also links to Professional Development opportunities so you can build staff awareness and understanding of First Peoples and their histories, cultures, and contributions. Each resource is aligned to the EYLF and Australian Curriculum, and PD's are mapped to the NQS and Professional Standards for Teachers.



Reconciliation in Schools

Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and further learning: Early Learning, Primary and Secondary activities, links and resources for the classroom

All years

- [The Apology](#): Video of the apology to the Stolen Generations made by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd on behalf of the Australian Parliament
- [Racism – It stops with me](#): This site includes a comprehensive list of teaching resources designed for Secondary students and targets issues surrounding race relations. Ensure your school signs up to this campaign.
- The [West Coast Eagles](#) have [condemned racism](#) by launching a campaign to educate and influence change in the community. This has been endorsed by Reconciliation WA
- *‘Let’s talk about the theme of Reconciliation Week 2019’*: Raising awareness of days of national significance: In this activity, students research the context and history of a day or week of significance to the reconciliation movement. They then plan an activity or event to raise awareness of this day or week around their school.



Reconciliation in Schools

Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and further learning: Early Learning, Primary and Secondary activities, links and resources for the classroom

All years

Reconciliation calendar: In this activity, students put together an annual calendar of days of national significance. This calendar can be proudly displayed in their classroom or school and can be actively used as a reminder of upcoming days to be celebrated or commemorated within the school and wider community.

Students then compare this calendar to a timeline to a timeline of when these days were first celebrated/commemorated to deepen their understanding of Australia's First Peoples' history and the history of reconciliation in Australia.

Early Years

Early Childhood Australia [Learning Hub](#), Reconciliation: A comprehensive list of resources and online information for Early Childhood Educators about supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators, cultural awareness, events and celebrations, relationships with families, creating culturally welcoming spaces and more.



Reconciliation in Schools

Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and further learning:
Example Narragunnawali learning activities and links

Primary

- The Aboriginal flag, symbol of strength: Explore the significance of the Aboriginal flag to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.
- Student engagement with RAP development: Given that reconciliation is a collaborative journey, it is important to foster opportunities for all students to be engaged with the planning and implementation of reconciliation initiatives. This activity provides some suggested ideas for student engagement.
- [7 Thoughtful Sorry Day Activities for the Classroom](#)



Reconciliation in Schools

Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and further learning:
Primary years reconciliation activities, links and resources for the classroom

Primary

Cool Australia:

Reconciliation Australia and Cool Australia have teamed up to create new teaching resources designed to support inquiry into the histories and cultures of Australia's First Peoples.

The teaching resources harness the power of the *'Who We Are: Brave New Clan'* films, which follows the lives of six exceptional young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as they share stories about their communities, history and cultures in contemporary Australia. The teaching resources are divided into three primary school units; People, Culture, and Country/Place.

Each unit contains classroom-ready lesson aligned with the organising ideas of the Australian Curriculum's cross-curriculum priority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures. Each lesson contains engaging activities, factsheets, teacher background information, tips and assessment ideas.



Reconciliation in Schools

Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and further learning: Secondary years reconciliation activities, links and resources for the classroom

Secondary

Cool Australia:

There are three lessons targeting the various Secondary year levels relating to reconciliation and sorry day. Each is mapped to the Australian Curriculum.

1- Story of Our Rights and Freedoms – Human Rights in Our Community: In this social action lesson, students will consider actions that they can take in their local community to ensure that human rights are enjoyed by all people.

2- Story of Our Rights and Freedoms – The Struggle for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Rights and Freedoms. Students will use visible thinking routines and scaffolded discussions to interpret and analyse each source.

3- Paul Kelly, Stories of Me: (Analysing and Evaluating Response) After viewing the documentary Paul Kelly – Stories of Me, students explore how personal context shapes interpretation of texts, how reading critically into a text can deepen and extend its meaning and how public perception of texts are represented in critical reviews.



Reconciliation in Schools

Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and further learning: Secondary years reconciliation activities, links and resources for the classroom

Secondary

- Stolen Generations Testimonies [Website](#): Students can learn directly from stories of First Peoples affected by Australia's policies of removing children from their families.
- [Tom Calma's Response](#) to Kevin Rudd's Apology.
- Bringing Them Home – [A Human Rights Educational Resource for Teachers](#): A great resource compiled by the Human Rights Commission.
- TED-X talk by Sheila Humphries, '[My stolen childhood and a life to rebuild](#)': This talk by Sheila Humphries is a useful resource for Secondary School teachers.
- SBS documentary - [Is Australia racist?](#): Presented by Ray Martin, this documentary put survey findings into action through a series of hidden camera social experiments, capturing the experience of racism through the eyes of those who have suffered it.
- SBS series - [You are here](#): Explore award winning NITV documentary series through our in-depth classroom resources. Plan lesson content around 'We Don't Need a Map', Occupation: Native, Connection to Country and interactive film K'gari using SBS Learn clips and teacher notes.



National Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation Week- Grounded in Truth: ‘Walking forward together with Courage’

National Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia. The dates for NRW remain the same each year between the 27th May and 3rd June.

These dates commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey, being the successful 1967 referendum and the High Court’s Mabo decision. The 2019 theme for National Reconciliation Week is: **‘Grounded in Truth: Walk Together with Courage’**

This generative theme supports the Race Relations Dimension of reconciliation and welcomes opportunities for truth-telling, justice and healing; the imperatives for progressing the journey of reconciliation, meaningfully.



National Reconciliation Week

Ideas to bring National Reconciliation Week into your school's calendar

- **Movie Night:** Learn more about the experiences of First Peoples' history and culture through film and create an event your school looks forward to. Many suitable options for your school community can be found at [Share Our Pride](#).
- **Food!** Whether you host a BBQ or 'bring a plate to school day', schools can explore reconciliation gastronomically. Experiment with using native plants to cook, such as lemon myrtle or bush tomato, and learn more about the local connection between First Peoples' traditional food sources, consumptions and climate/resource availability.
- Create a [Reconciliation Action Plan](#) (RAP) to powerfully express your school's commitment to a reconciled Australia! Jump on the Narragunnawali site to access their tool to assist schools in developing RAP's and positive relationships to advance reconciliation between First People and all Australians.
- Embed First Peoples knowledges (such as the Noongar Six Seasons) into the schools daily operations and ethos.



What is on in the community?

Sorry Day 2019: 26th May

Bringing Them Home WA will hold a Sorry Day event, find details by searching [@bringingthemhomewa](https://www.facebook.com/bringingthemhomewa) on Facebook



National Reconciliation Week: 27th May – 3rd June

Reconciliation Western Australia will be holding their Annual Walk for Reconciliation on Friday the 31st of May.

The Walk for Reconciliation will begin with a Welcome to Country in Wardang Park – next to RAC Arena and conclude in lot 10 (the grassed area opposite the digital tower in Yagan Square). The event is non-ticketed, open to the public and will run between 12pm-2pm. There will be cultural activations along the route and at the finish location. Official promotion to commence soon.

What is on in the community?

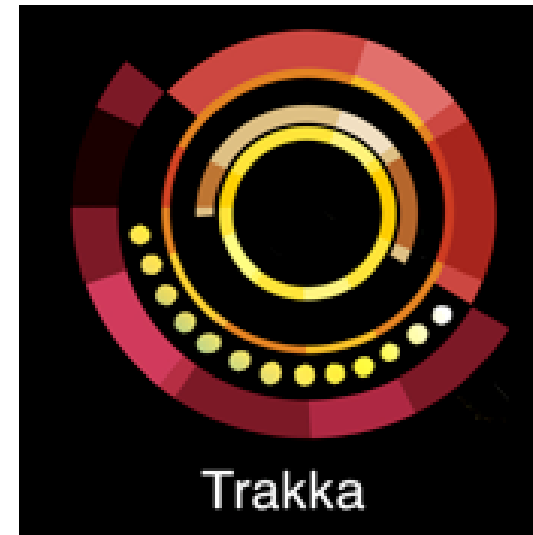
NAIDOC Week: 27th May – 3rd June



VOICE.TREATY.TRUTH

‘Let’s work together for a shared future.’, Visit the NAIDOC site for this year’s activations inspired by the Uluru Statement of the Heart, including [NAIDOC Teaching resources](#)

Download Trakka: Keep up to date with First Peoples cultural events and places near you!



Trakka

“Get connected with local Aboriginal culture”

info@trakkaapp.com.au
www.trakkaapp.com.au
Facebook @trakkaapp

Contact Us

Reconciliation WA is a
member based organisation.

We welcome you to join the
Western Australian Reconciliation Movement.

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**Supporting your school's
reconciliation journey**



ReconciliationWA

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Celebration of Diversity

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