

May 2026 NEWSLETTER



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and work, the Yuwibara people, and pay our respect to their Ancestors, Elders, and future leaders.

A welcome message from our CEO



Adrienne Barnett

Hi everyone -

I hope that some of us had the opportunity to reflect during National Reconciliation Week (27 May - 3 June every year), with this year's theme "All In", being a call for all Australians to commit wholeheartedly to reconciliation every single day.

The date for Reconciliation Week commemorates two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey - the successful 1967 referendum, and the High Court Mabo decision respectively. We all have a role to play when it comes to reconciliation, so we can build relationships and communities that value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, cultures, and futures.

When people say "Australia isn't a racist Country", it is very frustrating as many of us recall the failure of the 2023 Referendum for a National Voice, Governments' continuing failure to reach Closing The Gap targets by not listening to the community's solutions, ignorant and racist commentary on social media platforms, and current speculation around the possibility of Pauline Hanson becoming an Australian Prime Minister. No wonder we get disheartened.

We need our non-Indigenous allies to take a stand and speak up when they encounter racism and ignorance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but we must be mindful of a quote from Sufi mystic and poet, Rumi: "You can beat 40 scholars with one fact, but you cannot beat one idiot with 40 facts."

May was also Domestic Violence Prevention Month and staff attended the Centre for Family and Domestic Violence Research's annual Forum at the Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre, as well as hosting a "Boots Up" community event for our men to have some hard conversations around how they can work to reduce the amount of family and domestic violence in the community. We again call out to our men to be accountable and help each other when it comes to keeping our families and children safe. We all likely know or will know someone who is directly impacted by domestic and family violence, and we all can play a role in breaking the cycle. This can begin by following the three Rs - Recognize, Respond and Refer. (read more about the 3 r's in page 7 of this newsletter)



[Marabisda Inc.](#)

[marabisda](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Piccaninny Kids Colouring in Competition



Winner receives a prize



Drop off to 2/17 Macalister Street



BONUS: each child receives a gift upon entering!

Winner to be drawn on July 8th

BYY Playgroup



June 4th

9:30am-11:30am
Queens Park



contact: Drene
0432 322 361

Mackay NAIDOC Business Awards



Register your
business now!

program spotlight!

MEET THE TRADING TRACKS TEAM



MANAGER



BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT
OFFICER

POSITION VACANT
APPLY NOW!



BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT
OFFICER

Trading Tracks

Trading Tracks supports the growth and long-term success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses in the Mackay and Issac Region by strengthening capability, building confidence, and increasing economic participation across local communities. We deliver support through workshops, one-on-one engagement, and connections to specialist providers and opportunities, ensuring Indigenous businesses are linked with the right networks, resources, and support at the right time



business success story



In May, as part of Small Business Month, Trading Tracks was proud to host this month's The Yarnz Network event alongside VEX Group. As a proudly Indigenous-owned business based in Mackay, VEX Group delivers engineering, fabrication, crane hire, project management, and labour solutions across the mining, construction, and industrial sectors. VEX Group continues to lead with strong values, placing community, people, and culture at the centre of everything they do. They are active supporters of community initiatives and regularly give back through sponsorships and local partnerships. This includes supporting Queensland Trading Tracks, sponsoring this month's Yarnz Network event, and proudly funding MARABISDA Inc's Birth Certificate Program, helping families access essential identification documents. Their continued growth, leadership, and commitment to community impact is a strong example of Indigenous business excellence in our region. To learn more about VEX Group and the work they are doing, visit vexgroup.com.au

How can you help PTSD in Kids & Teens?

- Be available to listen
- Show affection in their own way
- Stay active together
- Encourage relaxing activities
- Practice breathing or mindfulness

Source: Trauma Assist 19th Edition Digital Magazine

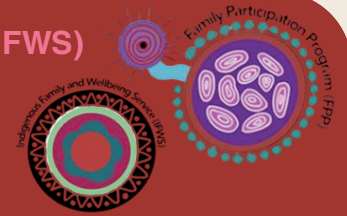
QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“We are all visitors to this time, this place. We are just passing through. Our purpose here is to observe, to learn, to grow, to love...and then we return home”

program updates



INDIGENOUS FAMILY WELLBEING SERVICE (IFWS) FAMILY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM (FPP)



Hi everyone

My name is Sonetta Fewquandie and I am the family Services Manager for the Indigenous Family Wellbeing Service and the Family Participation Program.

I have been working at Marabisda for 10 years this August, but as many of you may know I have been working with the community for the past 35 years in many roles.

My passion is our Indigenous families and working toward keeping our children out of the child protection system. Our staff work tirelessly to support our referred families through offering the Circle of Security Program (Parenting), Women's Group, access to a Domestic Violence Program (Weaving Stories) and Alcohol and Substance support.

Our staff are highly experienced and can offer support to families who are involved with the Department of Child Safety. We advocate for our families on a high level and Marabisda being recognised for our professionalism can work with the department in making the right decision for our families.

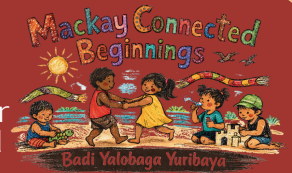
We receive a large number of referrals, and this can be quite sad, but we will continue to work with our families to empower them to make better choices for their families.

Let's put our children first and keep them safe.

S. Fewquandie



MACKAY CONNECTED BEGINNINGS



Hi Families,

Our team has had a wonderful month connecting with our little ones, families, and Community. This month, we stood alongside the family of Kumanjaji Little Baby at a vigil held at the Fishbones on River Street, to honour and remember a beautiful little girl who now walks in the Dreamtime. Our playgroups continue to be well attended, and we absolutely love seeing our little learners come along each week to play, learn, connect, and grow. We also spent a lovely morning celebrating the incredible women in our Community at our Mother's Day Event, recognising the important role that mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, and caregivers play in growing our children and families strong. Our team enjoyed attending Under 8's Week celebrations at Mackay West State School and Eimeo Road State School, where we hosted a slime activity for children and families. Slime is a fantastic sensory tool for young children, supporting brain development, fine motor skills, creativity, language growth, and self-regulation. The children engaged so beautifully in this activity, and it was wonderful to see so much laughter, curiosity, and joy.

Thank you to all of our families and Community for another fantastic month of connection, learning, and support. We look forward to continuing to support you and your little ones as they learn, grow, and thrive.





PICCANINNY KINSHIP & FOSTER CARE



- Piccaninny are currently sitting at a count of
- 44 Kinship Carers
 - 49 General Carers
 - 95 Kids

Meet our newest Kinship Carer Support Worker, Tiomee Ramsamy!

Our new office open day is on the 5th of June at 10:00am & we will have some training from QFKC coming up for carers, more details to come!

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Our team in Delegated Authority, are open to receive referrals again. In the up-and-coming this month we will be having T2A training with the Dept of Child Safety. We are connecting with Penny and Shaniqua from FACESS – Family and Children Emerging Support Services



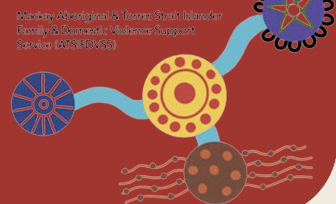
FACESS – Family and Childrens Emerging Support Services – Empowering First Nations Families: Your Trusted Community Support in Mackay, Whitsunday, and Isaac

ABORIGINAL TORRES STRAIT ISLAND DOMESTIC FAMILY VIOLENCE PROGRAM (ATSIDFVSS)

This month is Domestic & Family Violence Prevention Month, an annual initiative dedicated to raising community awareness and promoting vital support services.

Our DV program participated in the Indigenous Domestic & Family Violence Forum at the MECC, with our very own Lyndon Francis as MC

We also hosted our own “Boots Up” event, a yarn with males in community who may have been victims to Domestic Family Violence to help them heal & move forward



TRADING TRACKS


This month's Yarnz Network sponsored by VEX Group brought together local businesses, community members, and industry representatives for a morning of connection, collaboration, and conversation. A big thank you to Ryan, Matty, and the entire VEX Group team for sponsoring and hosting such a successful event and for continuing to support Indigenous business development across the region.



Mackay NAIDOC Business Awards
–
Registrations are now open register your Indigenous business now!



Marabissda Programs

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Piccaninny Kinship & Foster Care</p> | <p>Piccaninny's Kinship & Foster Care workers support with Recruitment of both Foster & Kinship Carers, initial & ongoing training, assessment of carers, high quality carer support, home visits and family contact</p> |
| <p>Indigenous Family Wellbeing Service</p> | <p>IFWS help Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander families to access culturally responsive support to improve their social, emotional, physical & spiritual wellbeing</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SELF REFER HERE</p>  |
| <p>Family Participation Program</p> | <p>FPP works as a team with you and your family when Child Safety is involved to help give you a voice & choice about your children. They support & guide you to be involved in the decision-making process for your children</p> |
| <p>Delegated Authority</p> | <p>Delegated Authority aims to improve the outcomes for and address the disproportionate representation of Indigenous children in the child protection system</p> <p>They walk alongside families, creating family time & connection plans, aiming to support children & parents in developing positive long term relationships</p> |
| <p>ATSIDFVSS</p> | <p>ATSIDFVSS supports families to overcome trauma and develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to regain control of their lives, families have access to specialised counselling, training in life skills & links to health, legal & specialist services</p> |
| <p>Mackay Connected Beginnings (Badi Yalobaga Yuribaya)</p> | <p>Badi Yalobaga Yuribaya empowers families, early childhood and health services to work together so Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enter school ready to learn. They are comitted to closing the gap in educational outcomes by supporting confident, capable young learners</p> |
| <p>Trading Tracks</p> | <p>Trading Tracks mission is to build strong, sustainable Indigenous businesses by increasing economic participation and supporting long-term success. The program focuses on developing capability, facilitating accss to the right supports, and empowering Indigenous enterprises to grow within their local communities</p> |

Aunty Sonetta's Recipe

SOYA SAUCE PORK

Ingredients:

- 4 X trays pork spare ribs
- 1 x brown onion
- 4 x teaspoons garlic (raw tastes better)
- 5 x teaspoons ginger (raw tastes better)
- 1 x large red capsicum
- 4 x medium size washed white potatoes
- 1 x small bottle 'old cathay soya sauce' (Chinamen Head)



Method:

1. Cut spare ribs into small strips. (approx. 1 cm wide)
2. Cut up onion, garlic and ginger
3. Cut up potato and capsicum in medium size bites
4. Place onion, garlic and ginger in the frying pan
5. Fry in a little oil until onion is soft
6. Put in cut up spare ribs
7. Add enough water to just cover pork. Cook on medium until pork is almost tender.
8. Add soya sauce to the colour you prefer.
9. Add potatoes. When almost tender add capsicum and stir through.
10. Keep adding soya sauce for the taste you want and colour
11. Serve with rice. Feeds 6 to 8 people.

Check out our new brochure designs!



What have we been up to?

Mackay Connected Beginnings Mother's Day Event

Mackay Connected Beginnings was proud to host a special Mother's Day event at Andergrove Community Centre, bringing together families for a beautiful morning of connection and celebration. The event was filled with fun activities, laughter, and shared moments enjoyed by all who attended. Gift packs were provided as a small token of appreciation to honour our Indigenous mother figures and the important role they play in our families and community. It was a wonderful opportunity to come together, celebrate, and show gratitude for the strong women who nurture and support our mob every day.



Trading Tracks Yarnz Network @ VEX

Trading Tracks Yarnz Network, hosted by VX Engineering, brought Indigenous businesses together for a meaningful opportunity to connect, share, and support one another. The gathering created a welcoming space for yarns, relationship building, and strengthening connections across our local business community. It was wonderful to see so many businesses come together to celebrate collaboration and community. We thank VX Engineering for hosting this event and for their support in creating space for Indigenous businesses to connect and grow together.



Eimeo Road State School Under 8's Day

Our Family Wellbeing, Family Participation, and Mackay Connected Beginnings teams were proud to attend Eimeo Road State School's Under 8's Day alongside local children and families. It was a fantastic day filled with fun activities, laughter, and plenty of opportunities to connect with the community. Our team enjoyed spending time with the children and families, joining in the celebrations and sharing in such a special event. We thank Eimeo Road State School for having us and for creating such a wonderful day for families to come together and celebrate our young ones.



MEGA Marabinda x ATSI CHS Youth Program Cent Sale

Marabinda and the ATSI CHS Youth Program were proud to host our Mega Cent Sale, which was a great success and brought together a wonderful turnout from across the community. It was fantastic to see so many people attend, take part, and enjoy the day together. The event was filled with excitement, connection, and community spirit, making it a truly memorable occasion for everyone involved. We sincerely thank everyone who came along and supported the event—we appreciate the ongoing support from our community.



Mackay Connected Beginnings NAIDOC Photoshoot

Mackay Connected Beginnings have just commenced their NAIDOC Baby Show photoshoot, with the first round of photos taken at North Wall Beach this Monday. It was a beautiful day at the beach & all the bubs looked unbelievably cute in their outfits. We can't wait to see the end result!



Why going outside is the Cheapest Therapy....

Just 2 hours per week in nature can significantly improve wellbeing!

This is due to our nervous system evolving in natural environments and vitamin D supporting serotonin & dopamine production

Source: Trauma Assist 19th Edition Digital Magazine

NATIONAL DOMESTIC FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION MONTH

THE 3 R'S:

Recognize

Recognize the signs of domestic and family violence as it can be physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, financial, on-line, digital or resource restrictive. All types of violence have a commonality: power and control. The Power and Control Wheel is a helpful tool to understand the lived experience of those who live with family and domestic violence.

Respond

You can do your part as an active bystander by responding appropriately to abuse. Try to remain calm and pay attention to your body language. You may not have all of the answers – and that's okay. It's important to consider your own safety first, as well as the safety of others when you feel that a situation may escalate and become violent or dangerous. In an emergency, it is appropriate to call 000

Refer

Refer to agencies and resources. There are many resources available, both local and national, to help people who use violence and victims. Including:-

- **1800RESPECT – 1800 737 732**
- **MensLine Australia – 1300 789 978** – Supports men and boys who are dealing with family and relationship difficulties. 24/7 telephone and online support an information service for Australian men.
- **13 Yarn – 13 92 76** – The first national crisis support line for mob who are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping. They offer a confidential one-on-one yarning opportunity with a Lifeline-trained Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Crisis Supporter.
- **Men's Referral Service – 1300 766 491** – This service from No to Violence offers assistance, information and counselling to help men who use family violence.



BOOTS UP

Boots Up is a community led, culturally safe, trauma informed Domestic and Family Violence prevention and early intervention initiative focused on men as victim survivors delivered during Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Prevention Month. The program aims to raise awareness, reduce stigma, strengthening help and support seeking behaviour connecting men to coordinated support services.



The initiative integrates evidence based prevention practice, indigenous healing frameworks and community partnerships to achieve measurable reductions in DFV

Men experiencing DFV face significant barriers to disclosure and support including stigma, masculinity norms, fear of disbelief and a lack of culturally safe spaces for disclosure. Early intervention has consistently shown to reduce harm escalation, system involvement and long term social and economic costs

Boots Up! is responding to these barriers through community engagement, prevention and identification education, trauma informed healing and direct service pathways.

This event is proudly hosted by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family and Domestic Violence Support Service at MARABISDA.

Marabisa Word Search

PROGRAM THEME: FAMILY WELLBEING

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W | A | B | T | C | E | F | Y | U | T | B | O | P | M | Y |
| E | R | Y | I | O | M | E | A | U | O | A | B | F | X | Q |
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| F | U | M | W | D | C | G | B | V | L | I | U | M | P | E |

- GROWTH
- CONNECTION
- FAMILY
- CHILDREN
- LOVE
- IMPROVEMENT
- TOGETHERNESS
- DEVELOPMENT

Understanding matters

Did you know...

Mackay Connected Beginnings works alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families, and Community to help our little ones grow strong, healthy, connected, and ready for school. By bringing together early learning, health, and family support services at the local level, Connected Beginnings helps create stronger connections, culturally safe support, and positive outcomes for children and families in their early years.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY?

May 27–June 3

National Reconciliation Week

[EVENT CALENDAR](#)

The Neighbourhood Hub – Play & Grow

June 11
9am–11am

[Register Here](#)

FREE Mabo Day Event

67–69 Celeber Drive,
Andergrove
June 3
10am–1pm

For families & children 0–5yrs
Call (07) 4842 0600 to RSVP

PROVIDED BY BADI YALOBAGA YURIBAYA
(MACKAY CONNECTED BEGINNINGS)

Mackay & surrounding support services

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD HUB:

providing family programs, volunteer opportunities, crisis support, early childhood management, financial well-being services, food donations, educational workshops, support for multicultural communities and newly arrived migrants

PH 4957 2626

ATSICHS:

ATSICHS Mackay Ltd is committed to providing holistic health care to raise the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ATSICHS Mackay Ltd Service Area.

PH 4957 9400

BRAVEHEARTS:

Our Mission is to provide a coordinated and holistic approach to the prevention and treatment of child sexual abuse.

PH 4953 6600

TOGETHER STRONG CONNECTED CARE:

is a free, culturally safe, community-based initiative targeting Type 2 Diabetes for Aboriginal, Torres Strait, and Australian South Sea Islander people

PH 0477 365 283

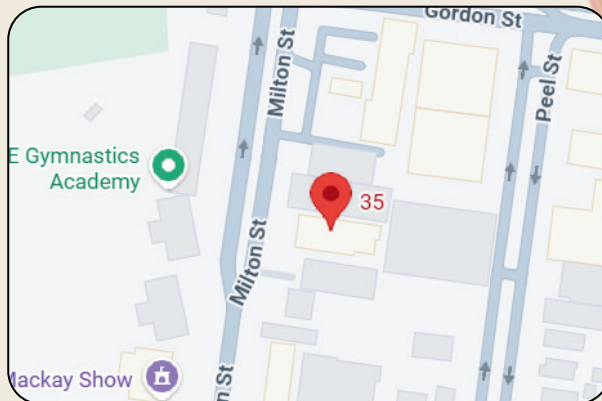
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