In This Together

By Colleen Mack
Women and equity officer

National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is a time to learn and reflect on our shared histories, cultures, and achievements in Australia.

The NRW 2020 theme is In this together.

Karen Mundine, CEO of Reconciliation Australia said that this year's theme focus is the importance of everyone's role to, "…collectively build relationships and communities that value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures."

Each year we celebrate NRW from 27 May to 3 June.

The week includes two significant dates for reconciliation, the 1967 Referendum and the High Court Mabo decision.

The referendum changed the Australian Constitution to count Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the census and it also gave the Australian government the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

On 3 June 1992, the High Court Mabo decision recognised that Australia was not terra nullius, that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had rights to the land before non-Aboriginal people arrived and that these rights can still exist today.

The meaning for NRW is founded in sorrow due to our colonial history of land dispossession, language loss, violence and racism.

We are still on a journey to reach a time when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will have the same life and health expectancies, the same chances and choices as non-Aboriginal people and a quality of life that is not determined by race.

It is telling that one of the four main groups of people who are at high risk from COVID-19 is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, 50 years and older, with one or more chronic medical conditions.

We still have a way to go.

Celebrating NRW in your school or TAFE college is one way to help continue our journey towards equality and equity.

Reconciliation Australia's vision of reconciliation, "…is based and measured on five dimensions: historical acceptance; race relations, equality and equity; institutional integrity and unity."

There is a range of materials to help celebrate NRW in your schools.

For more information and resources visit:

- Reconciliation Australia - bit.ly/2WsWpOp
- Narragunnawali Curriculum Resources - bit.ly/2SyoO4l
- Share our pride - bit.ly/35sXWIh
- SBS - bit.ly/2W0SrNN
- Reconciliation 1967 referendum - bit.ly/2z2WaRX
- Mabo Day - ab.co/3fhlmor and bit.ly/2KW6dL8
- SBS classroom resources - bit.ly/2z41Xqq



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