

Yamatji On-Country

2024

Yamatji On-Country Call to Action Statement

Nothing about us, without us.



Yamatji Marlpa
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



Introduction

First Nations peoples of the Mid West, Gascoyne and Murchison regions of Western Australia want to achieve real change in our communities. We seek to be self-determining, and to take our rightful place in leading the decision-making processes that impact us.

The **2024 Yamatji On-Country Call to Action Statement (CTA)** seeks genuine commitment and offers an open invitation to government at every level to work with First Nations peoples and corporations from across our communities, to achieve this change.

The CTA addresses **seven key areas of focus**.

1. Systemic Change (introduced in 2023)
2. Racism
3. Housing & Accommodation
4. Police & Justice
5. Education
6. Employment, Training & Economic Development
7. Health & Wellbeing

Through the CTA we seek to:

1. amplify the urgent need for real action and change across our communities,
2. mobilise collective change for the betterment of ourselves, our families and our communities; and,
3. strengthen collaborative partnerships with all community Stakeholders who have shared interests in and across the Midwest, Murchison and Gascoyne regions.

This updated 2024 statement consolidates the Calls to Action made by First Nations community members – including young people - attending the annual Yamatji On-Country Meetings on:

- Wednesday 4 and Thursday 5 September 2024
- Wednesday 20 and Thursday 21 September 2023
- Wednesday 12 and Thursday 13 October 2022

It aims to specify to governments our priority issues and actions to create change. It can also be used as a resource and tool by Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) when planning their programs, applying for funding, or advocating for change.

The **2024 Yamatji On-Country Call to Action Statement** represents a consolidation of the 2022, 2023 and 2024 actions identified and co-designed by community members and young people on Day 1 of the three Yamatji On-Country meetings, and then presented to government and invited guests on Day 2.

At the 2024 On-Country meeting, community members expressed frustration at not receiving a more comprehensive, whole-of-government response to the 2023 Call to Action statement. While community members learned of progress on some of the CTAs* through Day 1 and 2 presentations, the community seeks greater accountability and more detailed reporting, to better allow for both community and government to:

- Identify benchmarks and measure progress
- Identify gaps in service delivery and program support
- Identify where Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) and community members can have greater input into the review and co-design of new and existing services.

The **seven key areas of focus of the Calls to Action often** intersect and interact, and therefore - for greatest impact - should not be addressed in isolation.

For additional insight into the community and youth discussion and decision making, and some of the progress made on the 2023 CTA, please review the 2024 Yamatji On-Country Report.

About the Yamatji On-Country meetings

The annual Yamatji On-Country meetings are coordinated by Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) in response to a request from its Yamatji Regional Committee to create a platform for community members from across these regions to identify shared issues and place based, Aboriginal-led solutions for presentation and discussion with government.

The 2022, 2023 and 2024 meetings have taken place on Southern Yamatji Country at Bundiyarra Aboriginal Community Aboriginal Corporation in Geraldton, attended by First Nations people from across the region.

Day 1 is for First Nations people only, for discussion and decision making.

Day 2 involves invited parliamentary and agency guests and speakers from local, State and Federal Government, as well as other influencers and decision-makers.

The role of the Mid West Aboriginal Organisations Alliance (MAOA)

The member organisations of the Midwest Aboriginal Organisations Alliance (MAOA) accepted the community's invitation that came from the 2023 on-Country meeting to steer actions and advocate on progress to government on the Yamatji On-Country Call to Action.

Community members identified MAOA as an existing group that - with improved government support - could become a registered corporation and take on the role of a Peak agency for the region. See the back of this document for a list of currently active MAOA member organisations.

Supporting future responses through MAOA draws on and strengthens ACCO membership and governance. It provides a way to work with government and hold them to account, while at the same time supporting and building local capability. It strengthens capacity to respond to local issues and also supports local First Nations peoples across a range of areas aligned with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

At the 2024 on-Country meeting, community heard from MAOA on what progress they had made on the CTA since the 2023 meeting, including involvement with and support to date provided by the Mid West District Leadership Group (DLG) (coordinated by State Government Department of Communities). This has included secretariat support, and support towards strategic planning and expanded community engagement.

Links to State and National reform

Our Calls to Action align directly with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap priority areas, focussing on changing the way governments work with us, as demonstrated in the tables detailing the community's Calls to Action later in this document.

Specifically, we seek to:

- Strengthen and establish formal partnerships and shared decision making (Priority Reform 1)
- Build the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Sector. (Priority Reform 2)
- Transform government organisations so they work better for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Priority Reform 3)
- Improve and share access to data and information to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to make informed decisions (Priority Reform 4)

In 2022 – and again in 2023 and 2024 – community requested government representatives update and then report on their progress on the CTA statement, so that progress can be measured, and community and government can work together to create change.

School involvement

A special component of the annual meetings has been the involvement of young people, through both pre-event workshops and subsequent presentations and participation on each day by local youth leaders from high schools, and performances by primary and secondary students.

YMAC has invited students from high schools in Geraldton and Carnarvon to participate in Yamatji On-Country in 2022, 2023, and 2024. This has occurred through:

- Pre-event workshops at which the young people workshopped their issues affecting young people in their community, and the solutions and change they would like to see happen.
- Youth Presentation to community members on Day 1 based on outcomes from the workshops, followed by participation in community discussions and decision-making.
- Youth Presentation to invited guests on Day 2, as well as nominated young people to speak on community Calls to Action alongside community members.

The Calls to Action from the young people at the three Yamatji On-Country meetings to date are now incorporated into the 2024 Call to Action, (highlighted by items coloured like this text box).

The 2024 Calls to Action

Systemic Change

In this Call to Action we call for increased and improved support for self-determined and place-based governance. These action items aim to support strong, place-based, and systemic responses to community issues raised at the 2022, 2023 and 2024 Yamatji On-Country meetings.

While the State government’s initial response to this aspect of the Call to Action through provision of a one-off grant to MAOA is commendable and encouraging, further action and ongoing support is needed for MAOA and its member organisations to ensure more effective short, medium and longer-term outcomes.

Our Systemic Change Call to Action	Closing the Gap Outcomes
<p>1. State and Federal Government to provide an annual itemised report of responses to and activity being undertaken against each specific Call to Action in this statement by the end of December 2024. Accountability and transparency are key to ensuring that we can measure our progress and work together to create change.</p>	Outcome 17
<p>2. To embed local and place-based consultative mechanisms, we call on government to provide ongoing funding to the Midwest Aboriginal Organisations Alliance (MAOA) to engage an Executive Officer that would, among other things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope the establishment of a Yamatji On-Country Reference Group (YRG). The YRG could provide a local, ‘grassroots’ feedback and accountability mechanism on the delivery of local services and advise on appropriate responses – both proactive, and reactive to local community issues. They could be utilised to inform appropriate responses to the 2022 Call to Action items, and support responses to the youth priorities, amongst other issues that will present in the future. • advocate for and assist our people to work through an often overly complicated service system to help highlight and escalate current system failings. As per the proposed model, this mechanism could sit within MAOA and work closely with the YRG, as respond directly by supporting and listening to young people. • Support delivery on the MAOA Strategic Plan to be developed through the one-off funding provided by Department of Communities to MAOA in 2024 in response to this Call to Action. 	Outcomes 8, 17
<p>3. Provide proper funding to support MAOA and its member organisations to deliver services, visit communities in the Mid West, Murchison and Gascoyne, as well as host regular meetings, forums and consultations to better understand community needs across the region.</p>	Outcomes 8, 17

<p>4. Work with MAOA and grass-roots community members to co-design roll-out of the State Governments new <i>ACCO Strategy</i> in our region. Make sure that First Nations people are making decisions about how funding is allocated in our communities, and make sure they are people from within our communities.</p>	<p>Outcomes 8, 17</p>
<p>5. Support and Listen to our Young People.</p> <p>a) We support our young people and call on government agencies to work with our youth and ACCOs to progress their <i>Calls to Action</i> across the areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racism and Lateral Violence (see Racism Call to Action) • Youth Substance Use (see Health and Wellbeing Call to Action) • Reconnecting to Culture* (see Health and Wellbeing Call to Action) • Intergenerational Trauma (see Health and Wellbeing Call to Action) • Home Life (see Health and Wellbeing Call to Action) <p>b) In 2023, our young people requested the Department of Education, and the Commissioner for Children and Young People work with our young people and their schools to hold a separate youth forum to explore solutions to the risk areas they have raised at Yamatji On-Country.</p> <p>c) Our young people have asked for more single-issue workshops for Aboriginal young people to discuss their issues and concerns with the aim to develop solutions that can be applied in the community.</p>	<p>Outcomes 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16</p>

*Having been involved in the Yamatji On-Country event for three years, the young people returning to the 2024 meeting agreed in a pre-event workshop that they wanted to recognise that their culture is not 'lost' (as stated in their 2023 statement). Rather, they wanted to acknowledge their culture and seek avenues to 'reconnect' and learn more about their family and community.

Racism

We invite government to become an ally that influences and facilitates opportunities to strengthen relationships between First Nations peoples and the wider community.

Discrimination and racism remain an ongoing issue for First Nations peoples – now more than ever.

Systemic discrimination and racism remain embedded in our society and can range from discrete gestures and undertones to direct and confrontational acts of segregation and exclusion.

The impact of discrimination and racism is destructive, harmful and causes extreme distress. Being treated adversely because of our race breaches our human rights and is a community priority that we want addressed.

Our young people have also identified racism as a critical and ongoing issue, with them facing racism daily. They are tired of the judgement and stereotyping they often face in both their schools and in the wider community.

Our Racism Call to Action	Closing the Gap Outcomes
1. Advise on any culturally specific frameworks or measures being taken to address systemic racism. This should be undertaken by all WA State government agencies delivering services in our region, as outlined below.	All Outcomes
2. Increase education and cultural immersion programs across all areas of our community, especially in educational institutions, curriculum, workplaces and the public sector. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All government agency staff in the region – not limited to frontline and public facing staff – to undertake cultural awareness training that is localised, culturally informed and appropriate to Yamatji people. • Community members welcome the new Aboriginal Community Engagement Group formed by WA Police in Geraldton and asks that this group include cultural awareness for ALL WA Police staff in its remit. • Work with community and young people to develop and deliver an education program on racism in our schools, that includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) A whole-of-school approach, presented by people with lived experience b) Providing techniques and skills to deal with racism and its effects on young people c) Delivery to ALL students – not just Aboriginal students. d) Sharing of Culture, to improving understanding and respect of our culture and beliefs. 	Outcomes 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16
3. Improve ethical, cultural and moral standards and censorship across all forms of media, especially social media.	Outcome 14

4. Increase the representation of culturally diverse groups, especially First Nations peoples across the community.	Outcome 8
5. Enforce a zero-tolerance stance on all forms of discrimination and racism, especially on social media.	Outcome 14
6. Ensure opportunities for truth-telling are provided and promoted to better educate and deconstruct myths and stereotypes.	Outcome 3
7. Become an ally that influences and facilitates opportunities to strengthen relationships between First Nations peoples and the wider community.	All Outcomes
8. We support our Young People in their additional calls for action to reduce Racism and Lateral Violence : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harsher punishments for racist comments and jokes within schools • An easier process to report racism • More cultural awareness for all students, by having language classes and more Aboriginal people invited into our schools. 	Outcome 17

Housing and Accommodation

Housing remains an issue requiring urgent attention. Affordability and access are in crisis, with community reporting these have worsened between the 2023 and 2024 on-Country meetings. There are more people sleeping on the streets and in their cars. Regional and remote communities across the Midwest, Murchison and Gascoyne regions are experiencing housing shortages, overcrowding and homelessness at alarming rates. Overcrowding in our houses leads to worse outcomes in many of the other Calls to Action.

The gap between affordable public housing, housing availability and homeownership continues to widen. Public housing waitlists have excessive and unacceptable wait times that further strain the public housing system.

The build-up of low socio-economic housing clusters further segregates us as community members and impacts on our sense of community belonging, pride and inclusion. Affordable and secure housing is our citizenship right and is a community priority that we want urgently addressed.

Our Housing and Accommodation Call to Action	Closing the Gap Outcomes
1. Review and reduce housing waitlist timeframes.	Outcome 9
2. Report on investment in, and activity related to increasing or improving public housing stock since the 2022 Yamatji On-Country meeting. The report should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the numbers of vacant housing stock available, and sharing any plans to make vacant houses available, • Ensuring housing stock is in good condition prior to allocation and placement, • Ensuring placement is spread across locations where applicable and not in cluster areas, • Identifying where investment is required to meet needs of the community, • Allocating age-appropriate housing, especially for young people transitioning into independent living. 	Outcome 9
3. Report on action taken since 2022 to establish First Nations advisory boards (with equal representatives per language group relevant to Yamatji community) to assist with reviewing waitlists and allocation of housing.	Outcomes 9, 17
4. Review tenancy education programs conducted with new and existing primary tenants on their right and obligations, including rental payments, repairs and maintenance, tenant liability, etc. and work with local ACCOs to strengthen and expand these programs.	Outcome 8, 9, 17

5. Report on existing alternative support programs designed to assist people in addressing outstanding tenancy issues and enabling them to obtain public housing.	Outcome 8, 9, 17
6. Provide information on the number of people currently being supported to access housing as part of a prison release re-entry support plan, and details on what this support looks like.	Outcomes 9, 10, 17
7. Increase funding streamline access to short term/crisis accommodation, such as hostels and halfway houses, especially for prison release, homeless people.	Outcomes 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
8. Report on the number of First Nations staff employed by the Department of Communities (Housing) in key roles, including information on currently available training and other mechanisms designed to support retention and career progression.	Outcomes 7, 8, 17
9. Establish and invest in a program co-designed Housing Project with the ACCO sector that trains and employs local First Nations people to build, renovate and maintain public housing stock.	Outcomes 7, 8, 9, 17
10. Community acknowledges the State Government's September 2024 announcement inviting ACCOs to submit Expressions of Interest to perform housing maintenance works. Work with us to understand and address some of the structural issues within this new program that are preventing local ACCOs from getting involved.	Outcomes 7, 8, 9, 17
11. Provide details of any planned review and/or reform being undertaken regarding the Keystart Home Ownership program to better support people to transition into home ownership.	Outcome 8, 9, 17

Police and Justice

Community relations between First Nations peoples and the Police and Justice system has remained tense. Over recent years, the international ‘Blak Lives Matter’ movement has created a platform for First Nations people to raise awareness of the injustice being experienced both currently and historically.

Poor community relations with Police, underpinned by systemic discrimination and racism is a significant contributor to the overrepresentation of incarceration rates of First Nations people, especially men.

At the 2024 Yamatji On-Country event, several incarceration issues were raised by the community including requiring an update on the progression of abolishing Unit 18 at Hakea Prison and improvements to Banksia Hill Detention Centre to ensure our young people’s mental health and wellbeing concerns were being addressed while incarcerated.

The need for a more easily accessible pathway to employment for incarcerated community members on their release from prison to ensure they can integrate back into society in a positive way was also discussed at the 2024 meeting.

While a cultural shift is occurring within the Police force and Justice system, the pace is inconsistent, ad hoc and is not responsive to the needs of our communities. Being treated in a respectful, fair and just manner is again, a citizenship right and privilege. Our **Call to Action** in relation to this priority is one that requires mutual respect and commitment from all parties.

Our Police and Justice Call to Action	Closing the Gap Outcomes
1. Work with community members and ACCOs to reinstate the preventative programs and services our community know work, with a focus on engaging young people in a range of activities to keep them out of the justice system.	Outcomes 4, 5, 7, 10, 11
2. Report on place-based Cultural Awareness training that has occurred for Police Officers and Justice staff since the 2022 Yamatji On-Country meeting (please also see 2. under our Racism Call to Action). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure Police adhere to correct cultural and community protocols. 	Outcomes 10, 11, 17
3. Report on engagement that has occurred with local First Nations peoples (family and community members), especially Traditional Owners and Elders when people come into adverse contact with the criminal justice system.	Outcomes 10, 11, 17
4. Report on the status of the Aboriginal Visitors Scheme, with a view to allocating additional funding.	Outcomes 1, 14
5. Support Police Officers and Justice staff to regularly engage in community events and build positive relationships with local community members, especially First Nations people.	Outcomes 10, 11

6. Provide information on how Police and the Justice system ensure First Nations peoples are informed of their legal and human rights.	Outcomes 10, 11, 17
7. Police to undertake appropriate training in Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) that includes improving understanding of victims, to reduce unintended and/or negative consequences when they are interacting with police.	Outcomes 10, 11, 12, 13
8. Restore community confidence by ensuring Police are held accountable for misconduct or wrongdoing.	Outcomes 10, 11

Education

Education is fundamental to development and lifelong skills. However, although it is a legal requirement that children have access to education, many First Nations children and their parents/families across the Midwest, Murchison and Gascoyne regions continue to be highly disengaged from the education system and are spiralling through the gaps without any intervention.

We have identified concerns with teenage pregnancy, alcohol and drug use, bullying and violence, and an increase in youth crime and antisocial behaviours. The school community, learning environment and curriculum is not responsive to the learning and development needs of highly disengaged children and young people. Further to this, the lack of culturally secure and responsive re-engagement alternative education programs creates systemic barriers that exclude highly disengaged children and young people.

There appears to be a reluctance to take formal action and/or mandatory report parents/families who are not supporting their children's education. Ensuring the education and school community is providing a culturally safe and secure learning environment for highly disengaged children and young people is a key priority with our **Call to Action**.

Our Education Call to Action	Closing the Gap Outcomes
1. Report on any new strategies or programs introduced to integrate First Nations culture, heritage, language and history into the education curriculum since 2022.	Outcomes 3, 4, 5, 16
2. Report on employment data of First Nations teaching staff in our schools from 2022 to 2024; including the number of teaching staff employed, and the current recruitment processes that select suitably qualified people who are committed to providing quality education outcomes for students.	Outcomes 3, 4, 5, 16
3. Provide details of any culturally responsive re-engagement programs for disengaged students re-entering the school system, including children and young people re-entering from the juvenile justice system since 2022.	Outcomes 3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 17
4. Report on any alternative education programs in development, or currently being delivered, on-Country.	Outcomes 3, 4, 5, 7, 10 11
5. Share information on any support programs currently being provided to highly disengaged parents/families to reintegrate them within the school community and/or their children's educational needs.	Outcomes 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 17
6. Report on the status of the development and/or implementation of any place-based School Safety Strategy that engages family and community members to assist with managing incidence of bullying and violence in the school; and retains engagement of students in a culturally safe and inclusive way.	Outcomes 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 14, 17

<p>7. Consider and respond to our Young People's Calls to Action in their Youth Statements from 2022 and 2023 relating to their experiences in the education system, as laid out below.</p>	<p>Outcomes 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 16, 17</p>
<p>8. We support our Young People in their Call to Action addressing Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) With the number of Aboriginal students at our schools growing more AIEO's are needed in our schools to maintain current rations and ensure better results. b) Opportunity to learn about our culture from a young age, either within our families and community or through a school-based program that includes the opportunity to hear from our Elders and Traditional Owners. c) We would like someone to teach us more about our languages so that our language isn't lost and so we can pass it down to our future generations. This includes in high schools - not just primary schools. (from 2023 Bucket List) d) Currently the AIEO's in our schools do a fantastic job with what they teach us and with the resources they have, but with the number of Aboriginal students at our schools growing compared to AIEO's, we feel more AIEO's are needed in our schools to achieve better results. (from 2023 Bucket List) 	<p>Outcomes 4, 5, 6, 7</p>
<p>9. We support our Young People in their Call to Action addressing Higher Education (from 2023 Bucket List)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Young people are interested in attending higher education, but unless the TAFE and Universities run 'tasters,' they may not know about what they offer, and therefore not feel confident enough to attend when they finish Year 12. TAFE and University tasters should be exciting and interesting, to encourage young people to attend higher education. 	<p>Outcomes 5, 6, 7, 8</p>

Employment, Training and Economic Development

Employment, training and economic development opportunities for First Nations peoples living in regional and remote areas across the Midwest, Murchison and Gascoyne regions continue to present with ongoing challenges.

Many communities are still recovering from the impacts of COVID-19 and the adverse effects to job seeker requirements. Whilst many primary industries were able to maintain stable operations, worker shortages are on the rise.

To ensure First Nations peoples are placed in a favourable position to maximise employment, training and economic development opportunities, we have identified investment is required to build our capacity and capability to participate in our local economy as an employee or business operator.

Our Employment, Training & Economic Development Call to Action	Closing the Gap Outcomes
1. Report on progress <u>within our region on ACCOs</u> being given priority to deliver the services our community needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our ACCOs are sufficiently funded, including the ability to properly remunerate our staff to undertake the critical frontline work they are doing in our communities. • Work with our ACCOs to co-design local delivery of the State Government's new <i>ACCO Strategy</i>. 	Outcomes 8, 17
2. Report on the number of permanent positions currently held by First Nations people within each government agency (50D and other) and department in the region, as well as any traineeships and internships. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support truly place-based solutions and outcomes, any Aboriginal employment targets should be updated or amended to reflect the percentage of our community that are Aboriginal, not the (lower) national average. • Training and career development opportunities should be developed and provided to ensure First Nations staff are working in middle-management and decision-making roles, so that we can affect change on behalf of our communities. • Provide information on existing mentor programs across government agencies that support jobseekers to successfully transition into and retain employment. 	Outcomes 6, 7, 8, 17
3. Report on the number of government contracts awarded to First Nations businesses in our region, including progress since 2022.	Outcomes 8, 17
4. Provide details of existing and planned business support for emerging First Nations business owners/operators.	Outcomes 8, 17
5. Work with us to ensure that training delivery and assessment is person-centred to our learning and development needs, and relevant to current industry needs.	Outcomes 6, 7, 8

Health and Wellbeing

Many issues and concerns faced by Aboriginal people are overarched by a mental health umbrella and must therefore be front and centre - for every level of government. Suicide in our community– often a tragic consequence of poor mental health and lack of access to proper support - is too real, too frequent, and at a crisis level. The severe lack of mental health support in our region needs urgent attention – NOW.

Our physical, social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing health care needs continues to be a priority for community members across the Midwest, Murchison, and Gascoyne regions. Many of us experience issues with access and affordable health care as a result of living in regional and remote areas.

The impact of alcohol and drugs places further risks to the mental health needs of many family members. Rehabilitation and healing centres on-Country is in high demand, but resourcing and funding remains is still lacking. Many of our family members continue to experience barriers with accessing adequate health care which deters them from engaging, placing them at further risk.

While some of us have access to our local Aboriginal Medical Service this does not always meet our health care needs. We recognise the need to have access to adequate health services that meet our holistic care needs on-Country.

Our young people in their Calls to Action have identified Alcohol and Drugs, Online Bullying, Reconnecting to Culture, Intergenerational Trauma and Home Environment as issues affecting health and wellbeing. Their Calls to Action on these issues are included below. They recognise the interconnectedness of these issues, and the negative consequences on mental health and wellbeing, self-esteem, domestic violence, and increased crime. They also call for ALL students (not just Aboriginal students) to be involved in many of the solutions offered.

Our Health and Wellbeing Call to Action	Closing the Gap Outcomes
1. Report on progress towards realising our request for a culturally safe and appropriate Rehabilitation and Family Healing Centre on-Country.	Outcomes 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
2. Provide an update on our request for a review of the Mental Health Act 2014, including to review whether a parent, guardian or primary care giver can have rights to admit an adult into mental health services and care unit if they are mentally incapacitated due to their mental health condition.	Outcomes 1, 10, 12, 13, 14
3. Develop and improve access to existing programs and opportunities offering professional support to community members, allowing them to learn new skills to break cycles of violence (e.g. emotional control, conflict resolution).	Outcomes 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
4. Increase funding opportunities and support for preventative education programs that address mental health and social and emotional wellbeing.	Outcomes 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
5. Work with us to urgently audit existing services for mental health and suicide prevention, in order to identify gaps, resourcing	Outcomes 1, 14

shortfalls, and to ensure culturally appropriate and accessible outcomes.	
6. Report on any progress made on our request to increase the number of permanent employment positions held by and made available to First Nations people in the Health sector.	Outcome 8
7. Report on progress towards ensuring staff in front line roles – both medical and administrative – undertake place-based cultural awareness training.	Outcomes 1, 2, 4, 8, 14, 16, 17
<p>8. We support our Young People in their Calls to Action on Alcohol and Drug Use / Youth Substance Abuse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More education, especially at a young age, on the dangers of alcohol and drug use, and the negative outcomes that stem from their abuse. • Support local Aboriginal Medical Services and other health ACCOs to visit schools and run health education programs, including on the effects of substance abuse and how to deal with social pressure to use drugs and alcohol. • Allow and facilitate for local Aboriginal Medical Services and other health ACCOs to run more workshops in schools on health issues affecting today’s youth and ensure that any workshops include both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, so that we can learn together. 	Outcomes 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 14
<p>9. We support our Young People in their Calls to Action addressing Reconnecting to Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and expand young peoples’ opportunities to learn more about their Culture from a young age. • Improve and expand access for students to learn local Aboriginal languages in our schools - in high schools as well as primary schools – so that we can pass our languages on to future generations. • Increase and develop opportunities for young Aboriginal people to engage with our Elders and other Traditional Owners, through programs in schools, as well as through on-Country education programs. • Support youth forums or camps, where young people can learn about a range of different topics, including language and Culture. Ideally these camps will be held on-Country, providing opportunities to discuss different issues facing young people and possible solutions, while being grounded and connected to Country. 	Outcomes 3, 5, 15, 16
<p>10. We support our Young People in their Calls to Action addressing Online Bullying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate young people on social media and their ability to block and report harmful content. • Social media platforms to take more responsibility for harmful content. • Permanently removing and banning access to people who have account and phone numbers linked to harmful content. 	Outcomes 1, 14

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the possibility of handing out fines to creators and contributors to racist pages. • Be more consistent with education being provided to youth regarding social media, especially to the younger generations. • Encourage and enable young people to speak up about our own struggles that we've overcome regarding cyber-bullying. 	
<p>11. We support our Young People in their Calls to Action addressing Home Environment / Intergenerational Trauma leading to Violence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to available support services for those faced with an unsafe home life, and/or unsafe neighbourhoods. • Develop and expand education and support programs offered for addressing family domestic violence to empower families and address feelings of shame. • Improve opportunities for employment and economic development, so we can live in safer neighbourhoods. • Expand use of social media to promote anti-violence messages. 	<p>Outcomes 1, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14</p>
<p>12. Additional actions for Health and Wellbeing arising from the Youth 2023 Bucket List are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and expand visible advertising for mental health services in the Geraldton region – not just for youth – to improve access to services and promote information sharing amongst family members. • Recognising that after-school sports and activities involve significant costs and can deter from participation, provide more funding for afterschool activities that are not athletic focused. This will help raise young peoples' self-esteem and improve mental health and wellbeing.* • Provide support for Aboriginal Medical Services to extend service delivery to the North side of Waggrakine, so that the entire Geraldton Aboriginal community has access to a culturally appropriate health service. 	<p>Outcomes 1, 5, 14</p>

*The 2024 Yamatji On-Country Report also contains a list of activities (and considerations in presenting them) additional to sport that could be offered to Geraldton Youth.

Further Information

Previous Calls to Action and Closing the Gap

Click on the links below to navigate to the following documents:

- *2022 Yamatji On-Country Call to Action*
- *2022 Yamatji On-Country Youth Statement*
- *2023 Yamatji On-Country Call to Action*
- *2023 Yamatji On-Country Youth Statement*
- *Closing the Gap Agreement*

Participating Schools – 2022, 2023 2024

- Geraldton Senior High School
- Champion Bay Senior High School
- Nagle Catholic College
- Carnarvon Community College (2023)
- *Geraldton Christian College (2023)*
- *Geraldton Primary School*
- *Rangeway Primary School (2024)*

Midwest Aboriginal Organisations Alliance (MAOA)

The following form part of the current active membership of the Mid West Aboriginal organisations Alliance (MAOA), with Department of Communities providing secretariat support

- Murchison Regional Aboriginal Corporation
- Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation
- Geraldton Streetwork Aboriginal Corporation (Streeties)
- Bundiyarra Aboriginal Community Aboriginal Corporation
- Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service (GRAMS)
- Wajarri Yamaji Aboriginal Corporation
- Dr Charmaine Green (Yamatji Arts)
- Rani Randall - community representative
- MEEDAC (Midwest Employment and Economic Development Aboriginal Corporation)

Contact Us

About this Call to Action

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Calls to Action Project Officer: Mr Henry Sims (Perth): hsims@ymac.org.au

About the Yamatji On-Country event and youth component

Project Officer: Mr Ken Capwell (Geraldton) kcapewell@ymac.org.au

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