



# Reconciliation in action

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## Doontanboro Kura for the next generation

The Doontanboro Kura | Melville Waters Dreaming exhibition at Yagan Mia - Wireless Hill is the culmination of the two-year, Noongar led Place Names Melville project. Place Names Melville was produced by CAN, Moodjar and the City of Melville, and funded by Lotterywest.

An important part of Doontanboro Kura was a series of youth outreaches in the form of excursions to the exhibition, where students from Melville Senior High, Brentwood Primary School, and attendees of the Willagee Youth Drop-In were invited to immerse themselves in Noongar language and culture.

The young people were welcomed by Noongar Elders, bridging generations, and fostering a deep sense of connection before being invited to explore the exhibition.

### Mapping Boodja

After a guided tour with Noelene Mantellato and Noongar Elder, young people uncovered the rich narratives behind the placenames. Each name revealed stories and traditions, inviting them to appreciate the significance of these names in the context of reconciliation.

By integrating this knowledge into their learning journey, students not only gained insight into the history of the land they inhabit but also began to understand the wisdom and heritage that has shaped their community.

Putting into practice, their knowledge of language and culture discovered during the exhibition, students mapped the place names onto large floor mats while discussing pronunciation and connection to each place. Discussions formed naturally over what places meant to them, creating an emotional and personal connection to the newly learned place name.



# Reconciliation in action cont.

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## Collaborative Artwork

At Yagan Mia, the home of the long-necked turtle, students engaged in a sensory experience, using natural materials from the site to create a Yaakin (long-necked turtle) collage. Lead by a Noongar elder, this artistic endeavour reinforced the significance of place names and their histories, highlighting the vital connection to the land. Through this shared experience, students embraced the richness of First Nations culture, acknowledging the profound heritage that exists in their midst.

While many attendees were not First Nations, the commitment of schools to include this vital aspect of history in their curriculum is integral to encourage our ongoing commitment to reconciliation. To assist with this commitment, the Place Names and Museums team commit to providing schools with loanable resources to schools to make the decoded knowledge obtained during the Place Names project accessible to the next generations. Elements from Doontanboro Kura will also be installed in the Melville Civic Centre in the coming months as a visual reminder of our commitment to reconciliation.



Highlights of the outreach included an excursion for First Nations youth who attend the Willagee Youth Drop-In. A powerful connection blossomed, empowering them to continue to take pride in their culture. Guided by a Noongar elder, the young people felt a palpable sense of belonging and encouragement, culminating in a heartfelt embrace of their identity.

Elder Terry Morich addressed our youth as warriors, “where are my warriors?”. Watching these young warriors stand a little taller in the pride of their culture underscored the importance of reconciliation, and should remind us all that meaningful action must continue through programs like this, fostering understanding, respect, and unity.