

Feeling stronger and more connected

Mia (student) and Chloe (parent) – regional SA school

Pilot 2

In 2024, Mia was a Year 11 student at a rural high school. Initially hesitant about participating in the Recognition of Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge and Learning pilot, she was unsure if she had done enough work related to her culture. Encouraged by her mother and teacher, Mia decided to participate.

Reflecting on her experience, Mia said, "I didn't know about the project until my teacher told me. At first, I didn't want to do it because it seemed overwhelming, but I decided to bring everything together and see if it would work. My project included my artwork, volunteering, cultural fundraisers, NAIDOC Week awards, and feather flowering. It was a bit about me."

She added, "I was hesitant because I didn't feel I knew much about my culture. But I wanted to do something different for myself. Once I put everything together, I realised I had a lot to show, and it felt good to display my accomplishments."

Mia also mentioned the positive impact on her relationships, saying, "I did my interview with an assistant principal I didn't know well. She appreciated my story and was very passionate about it. Now, we greet each other at school, and she's helpful with other subjects too. My classmates congratulated me, and I felt special because of the recognition."

Mia's advice to others considering participating in the program is, "Don't stress. It's not as hard as it looks. Finding resources and organising everything is a bit challenging, but once it's done, you'll feel accomplished."

Chloe, a parent, became involved in the Recognition of Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge and Learning pilot to support her daughter Mia, recognising the importance of cultural identity.

"I can be pushy about cultural stuff because we didn't have it when I was in high school. This program helps students get to know who they are, so I was like, 'Yes, let's do it.'"

She continued, "Mia has always been strong about her culture and doesn't tolerate bullying or racism. This project helped her realise her contributions to the community through volunteering and other activities. It was a step in the right direction to help her feel stronger and more connected."

Chloe added, "It's hard because we're not from here. I've been on my own country, but my kids haven't experienced that. We're accepted in the community, but we don't have family here. The more Mia is involved in things like this, the stronger she becomes. She has pride in who she is, and this program helped her get closer to her culture."