



ganbina

Partner Update

Ganbina Agents of Change

Impact and importance of education for Aboriginal children and young people.

“You can’t be what you can’t see”.

Our shared purpose has never been clearer: education remains one of the most powerful forces for change in the lives of Aboriginal children and young people. The latest reports continue to reinforce what our communities have long known when Aboriginal learners are supported, respected and given the opportunities they deserve, the impact is profound. We see stronger engagement, improved wellbeing and pathways that open not just for individuals, but for families and future generations.

Across every measure that matters attendance, cultural safety, early years development, and transitions into further learning and employment the evidence shows that meaningful progress happens when partnerships are strong and when Aboriginal voices lead the way. These findings remind us that our work is not only necessary, but urgent. The disparities remain real, but so does the momentum created when schools, communities and partners stand together with a shared commitment to equity.

This update highlights the impact we are achieving collectively, the challenges that still require our focus, and the opportunities ahead to deepen our support for Aboriginal children and young people. Most importantly, it reaffirms that education is not just a system responsibility it is a community promise. Every step forward we take together strengthens that promise.

This promise is reflected in initiatives like Nangarna Nilang Gunya (Think Future) Ganbina’s First Steps to Employment Academy which strengthens learning-to-employment pathways by building confidence and capability through culturally safe, practical modules and connection to industry.



Employment and Pathways for Aboriginal children and young People

The Role of Ganbina's Workforce

At Ganbina, employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are understood as the result of long term, intentional workforce practice, not single programs or moments of transition. Our workforce supports participants across a continuum of experiences, starting in early secondary school and extending through education, training, and into employment recognising that pathways are rarely linear and change over time.

Ganbina staff have worked alongside participants for years, often across multiple life stages. This continuity allows our workforce to respond flexibly as young people move between school, TAFE, work, caring responsibilities, and community commitments. Rather than seeing pauses or changes as setbacks, staff reframe these moments as part of learning and growth, helping participants stay connected and focused on their longer term goals. Persistence, not speed, is the measure of success.

A core focus of Ganbina's workforce is aspiration and identity. Staff are often among the trusted adults who help young people first imagine futures that include skilled employment, further study, and leadership. This work begins well before formal career decision making. Through mentoring, encouragement, exposure to workplaces and learning environments, and role model visibility, staff help young people build confidence gradually and sustainably. Confidence grows through relationships and seeing what is possible, not through pressure or fixed timelines.

Ganbina's workforce also plays a critical role in bridging education and employment. Staff actively coordinate pathways by building strong employer partnerships, supporting cadetships and work integrated learning opportunities, and helping participants balance earning, learning, and cultural obligations. This includes coaching on workplace expectations, supporting transitions into employment, and advocating with employers when challenges arise ensuring issues are addressed early and constructively.

Equally important is Ganbina's wraparound, culturally safe approach. Staff regularly identify and respond to barriers such as housing instability, financial stress, transport issues, wellbeing concerns, or academic confidence. The workforce's ability to act quickly, coordinate supports, and provide a trusted point of contact reduces disengagement at critical transition points and keeps participants on track.

Together, this work reflects Ganbina's workforce model in action: long term relationships, flexible pathways, cultural strength, and continuity of support. By staying connected as participants move from childhood through adolescence into adulthood, Ganbina's workforce helps turn opportunity into sustained employment outcomes benefiting not only individuals, but families, workplaces, and communities.

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Ganbina's First Steps to Employment Academy

Nangarna Nilang Gunya meaning “Think Future” in Yorta Yorta language, is a holistic initiative led by Ganbina to support participants on their pathway to employment. Delivered through the First Steps to Employment Academy, the program focuses on building confidence and strengthening capabilities as participants prepare for future opportunities.

The program is further enriched by activities such as Careers Night and Industry Tours, providing valuable real-world exposure and connections as participants move toward meaningful and sustainable employment.



Hayden Newton-King
Employment and Training Coordinator

2026 Ganbina Careers Night

Connecting Pathways, People and Possibility

Careers Night is one of the keyways we bring our education to employment approach to life. The evening creates a welcoming, culturally safe space where Aboriginal young people, and their families can explore career options, ask questions, and connect directly with employers, training providers, and education institutions, all in one place.

For many of our participants, Careers Night is not just about choosing a job or course. It is about being able to “see what is possible”. Walking through the career circuit, young people have the opportunity to speak face to face with organisations from a wide range of industries, including health, education, business, government, trades, universities, and community services. These conversations help demystify pathways, build confidence, and show that there is no single “right” journey into work.

A powerful feature of the night is hearing from Aboriginal role models who share their own pathways. Guest speaker Nerrissa Leitch’s story, spanning school, training, and employment reflected what many of our participants experience: pathways are not always straight lines, but with the right support and persistence, meaningful employment is achievable. These stories reinforce the message that success looks different for everyone and that lived experience, culture, and resilience are strengths.

The event is also led and supported by Ganbina’s 2026 Youth Leadership Program members, with 10 young leaders playing an active role throughout the evening. Youth Leaders lead registrations, support activities, serve food and refreshments, and coordinate the raffle draws, gaining valuable event management, leadership, and teamwork experience. Their involvement not only builds their own skills and confidence but also provides visible role models for younger participants, showing the leadership opportunities available through Ganbina.

Careers Night highlights the importance of relationships and community. Families are encouraged to attend alongside participants, recognising the vital role family and community play in decision making and aspiration building. Partners and exhibitors don’t just share information; they listen, answer questions, and begin relationships that often continue well beyond the event.

For Ganbina’s workforce, Careers Night is an extension of the everyday work we do. Staff and Youth Leaders support conversations, help participants make connections, and follow up on opportunities that emerge whether that’s work experience, a cadetship, further study, or the next step in exploring an interest.

Ultimately, Ganbina Careers Night reflects our belief that strong employment outcomes are built through exposure, support, leadership, and genuine partnerships creating pathways that benefit individuals, families, and communities now and into the future.



Nerrissa Leitch
Presenter



Nuhlira Morgan
Youth Leadership Member

“ A powerful event contributing to greater equity for our regions First Nations students. Exhibitors ”

2026 Industry Tours

Building Readiness Through Visibility, Planning and Connection

Ganbina's 2026 Industry Tours are a core part of how we build long term readiness for employment and further education, starting early and strengthening with each year level. Delivered across Years 7, 8 and 9, the tours are intentionally designed as a connected pathway that supports students to build knowledge, confidence, and agency over time rather than expecting decisions to be made at a single point.

At the heart of the tours is a simple but powerful principle: **"You can't be what you can't see."** For many Aboriginal students, exposure to workplaces, training settings, and learning environments outside the classroom is critical in shaping aspiration. By seeing what work looks like, meeting people in different roles, and hearing real stories about pathways, students begin to imagine themselves in those futures.

The **Year 7 Discovery Tour** is about laying the foundations. As students transition into secondary school, the focus is on relationship building, teamwork, leadership, and feeling comfortable in new environments. Through age appropriate, engaging experiences, students are introduced to learning beyond the classroom and begin to see education as something connected to the real world. This early exposure supports confidence, belonging, and positive engagement at a crucial transition point.

The **Year 8 Options Tour** builds on this foundation by supporting students to explore subject choices and learning pathways as they progress through secondary school. Through guided visits and conversations, students gain insight into different options and begin reflecting on their interests and strengths. This tour supports informed decision making and helps students understand how subject choices link to future study and employment opportunities.

By **Year 9**, the focus shifts more directly to future planning. The **Pathways Tour** supports students to explore senior secondary, post school, training and employment pathways. Through site visits and practical discussions, students gain a clearer understanding of what different pathways involve, and the skills required to achieve their goals. This strengthens readiness for senior schooling and early career planning.

Importantly, the Industry Tours connect directly with other Ganbina opportunities, including Careers Night. Concepts introduced during tours industries, roles, training pathways are reinforced when students later meet employers, educators, and role models face to face. Together, the tours and Careers Night create multiple touchpoints where students can see possibilities, ask questions, and build relationships. Collectively, the Industry Tours reflect Ganbina's commitment to early, continuous, and culturally grounded planning for employment supporting students to move forward with confidence, clarity, and choice.



“ I loved IAG they were unreal, I even got given a T-shirt and really like hearing about the Graduate Program and that they have designated positions for Aboriginal people in some programs. ”

Participant



“ Ganbina’s Careers Night was amazing last night. The Year 11 Leadership Group looked organised and professional, and I was so proud to see Caleb on stage delivering the Acknowledgement to Country. ”

Mock Interviewer

“ The Envato table was amazing, I enjoyed talking and learning about what they do. I feel like I am very creative, so I related to their company. ”

Participant

“ The mock interview.” I got a lot out of it ready for my real interview; the interviewers were really good. ”

Participant



“ A wonderful evening to celebrate all the outstanding young people within Ganbina. We loved being a part of it. ”

Exhibitor



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