

WAKAKIRRI ASSOCIATION INC.



**WAKAKIRRI**

AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST PERFORMING ARTS EVENT FOR SCHOOLS

# TEACHER INFORMATION KIT

*Great Stories Inspire Change*

CONTACT: 02 9669 3777 | [WAKAKIRRI@WAKAKIRRI.COM](mailto:WAKAKIRRI@WAKAKIRRI.COM) | [WWW.WAKAKIRRI.COM](http://WWW.WAKAKIRRI.COM)

EST 1992

# WAKAKIRRI NATIONAL STORY-DANCE FESTIVAL



## THE ART OF STORY-DANCE

'Great Stories Inspire change'. Wakakirri is a National Story-Dance Festival for schools that develops student engagement and wellbeing through participation in the Performing Arts

Schools participate by creating Story-Dances that they perform at live theatres in cities and selected regional areas around Australia. Schools who cannot attend a live event can participate via Wakakirri Video.

Each year schools create and perform Story-Dances for Wakakirri that reflect students' ideas and aspirations. Schools will explore themes and concepts that address various topics such as: environmental, social, cultural, health, historical, entertainment & stories about reconciliation are all popular themes.

Wakakirri is open to all types of Primary & Secondary schools, Dance Studios and Community Groups.



WAKAKIRRI ASSOCIATION INC.



## HISTORY

# ARTS EDUCATION AT ITS BEST!

### **Australia's largest performing arts event for schools!**

Founded in 1992 from a government youth enterprise business scheme by school teacher Matthew Samuel and production manager Adam Loxley who wanted to expose more young people to the positive outcomes created by participation in the Performing Arts.

Wakakirri means 'to dance' according to the Wangaaypuwan people from Cobar, NSW. Wakakirri chose the name to give the event a uniquely Australian feel.

*"Empowering students to become changemakers!"*



### **Today Wakakirri is Australia's largest performing arts event for schools.**

- The Wakakirri Primary School Challenge became a national event in 1998.
- The 'not-for-profit' Wakakirri Association Inc. was established in 2005.
- In 2013 the Victorian Wakakirri Secondary School Challenge was created with the support of the Victorian Government in response to the demise of the High School Rock Eisteddfod.



## OVERVIEW

# WHAT IS A STORY-DANCE?

A Wakakirri Story Dance is a 3-7 minute student performance utilising a combination of dancing, creative movement and acting to pre-recorded music. Schools can tell any story that has a clear progression using costumes, sets, props, lighting, projection, hair & make-up to enhance their performance and send that message!

Participating schools create a Story-Dance to perform in a professional theatre to audiences that consist of families, friends, and the wider community. The show is also attended by the National Ambassadors who will award schools for their creativity in different categories. Schools who cannot attend a live performance can send their entry in via video.

Wakakirri is open to all schools (public and private), dance studios and community groups. Students with any level of experience can participate. An importance is placed on creative movement and drama rather than technical dance. Emphasis is also placed on inventive storytelling and sustainability, not expensive and extravagant productions. Wakakirri encourages schools to minimise their footprint when creating productions with special recognition to schools that excel in this area.

A unique sense of camaraderie develops among the students, as participants spend Show Day rehearsing and engaging with other schools at the student function with our Ambassadors and perform live on stage. Each production is filmed for our online showcase.



### Costs

**Wakakirri Live:** \$39.00 per student and includes certificates and a digital copy of your school's performance. Additional costs include props, costumes and transport to the theatre.

**Wakakirri Video:** \$200 per entry and includes screening, certificates and feedback.

### Schedule of Events

#### Term 4

- New season - Registrations open
- Current season - National Awards announced

#### Term 1

- Teacher Workshops
- Registrations close (end of Term 1)

#### Term 3

- Wakakirri Video submissions due (Aug)
- Wakakirri Live Performance Nights (Aug)
- Wakakirri Live Awards Nights (Sep)







**"DO IT!!! IT'S LIFE CHANGING FOR TEACHERS AND IT'S LIFE CHANGING FOR THE KIDS"**  
MATILDA BEETGE - ST BRIGID'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, NSW





# THE BENEFITS OF WAKAKIRRI

HERE ARE THE TOP 5 REASONS SCHOOLS CONSISTENTLY GIVE WHEN ASKED, "WHY PARTICIPATE IN WAKAKIRRI?"

## 1. Inclusive and Accessible for All Students

Wakakirri is designed to be inclusive, giving every student the opportunity to shine, regardless of experience, ability, or background.

## 2. Enhances Self-Esteem and Confidence

By overcoming the challenge of rehearsing and performing, students experience a sense of accomplishment and pride, which can significantly improve their self-esteem and overall confidence.

## 3. Builds a Sense of Belonging

Participating in a group performance fosters a strong sense of belonging, encouraging students to connect with peers, develop friendships, and feel part of a community.

## 4. Promotes Teamwork and Collaboration

Working together on a Story-Dance helps students build teamwork, communication, and collaboration skills that are essential in both academic and personal growth.

## 5. Encourages Positive Relationships

Through collaboration and teamwork, students build positive relationships with their classmates and teachers, strengthening the classroom environment and boosting social wellbeing.



*"We thought it was an absolutely fantastic experience for our students and school community. The outcomes for our students were amazing!"*



# WAKAKIRRI ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM

NEED HELP GETTING INVOLVED IN WAKAKIRRI? A WAKAKIRRI ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM COULD BE THE SOLUTION!

We understand that schools may need assistance to get involved in Wakakirri, especially if they are under-resourced or their teachers have limited time. That's why we offer the Wakakirri Artist in Residence program as a solution. Wakakirri can provide a qualified expert Facilitator that will come to your school and help create a story-dance performance for everyone involved!

## WHY CHOOSE THE AIR PROGRAM?

- Flexible Options: Our facilitators can either lead the creative process or collaborate with your teachers to lighten the workload.
- Expert Guidance: From the initial planning stages to rehearsals and the final performance, our facilitators are there every step of the way.
- Time/Cost effective: AIR programs fit within busy school schedules, saving valuable time and resources.
- Practice Videos: Students can practice independently with digital dance videos, accessible anytime.
- Versatile Showcase Options: Choose to perform at Wakakirri Live, via video, or at school events.

Empower your school to take part in Wakakirri without the extra pressure! Learn more about how the Artist in Residence program can help, and let's bring story-dance to life for your students in a way that fits your unique needs.

*"The AIR program made life so much easier for us to be able to be a part of the Wakakirri performance!"*

## BEGINNERS PROGRAM

The easiest way to do Wakakirri! Schools select a pre-designed story-dance from our catalog, complete with script, choreography, soundtrack, costume suggestions, set design, and a lighting plan—all ready to deliver in just 12 hours of rehearsals by a Wakakirri Facilitator. Students also have access to practice videos, letting them rehearse independently at their own pace. This program is perfect for schools that need a streamlined solution, with every detail planned out to make it easy for teachers and enjoyable for students.

Price starts from \$3569

## ADVANCED PROGRAM

Ideal for schools wanting a more hands-on approach, this program lets your team work with a Wakakirri Facilitator to design an original story-dance from scratch. Our facilitator will guide the creation of the story, choreography, soundtrack, costumes, set, and lighting over 12 hours of rehearsals. This program provides a collaborative, customised experience, ensuring a high-quality performance that everyone can be proud of.

Price starts from \$4235





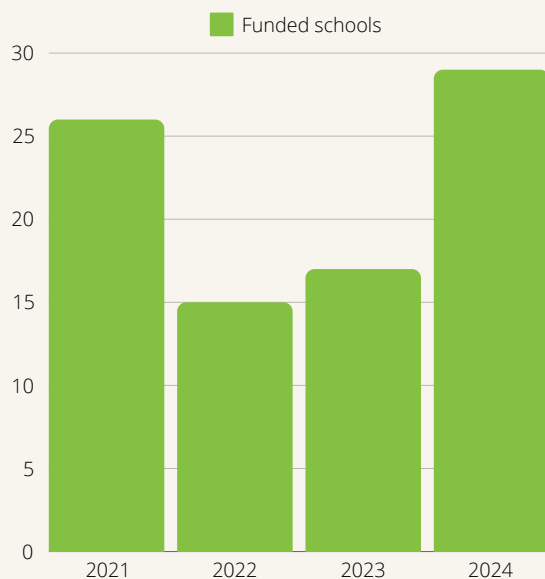
# DISADVANTAGED SCHOOLS SUPPORT

*"The impact of our schools involvement in Wakakirri is reflected in our students sense of belonging."*

The Wakakirri Inspiration Fund raises funds to help schools in disadvantaged communities participate in Wakakirri.

Funded by donations, the Wakakirri Inspiration Fund directly assists disadvantaged schools by covering the cost of participation fees.

- Any school can apply.
- Schools with an ICSEA of less than 1000 are prioritised.
- Schools that have never participated in Wakakirri before are prioritised.
- Applications must be received before the yearly funding cycles close in April.
- Average subsidy to school \$1000.



## FUNDING APPLICATION

### Alkira Secondary College

"We are a school that has been struggling for years to build up their performing arts exposure. We have have hard working teachers and students but funding has been hard. A lot of our students come from families that are struggling financially and would benefit with a helping hand for the entrance fee.

After COVID restrictions ruined us from performing for the last couple of years, the students need something to grab them back into the world of performance. Wakakirri would be a great opportunity for them to express their stories and be embraced back into that world."







**“WAKAKIRRI IS UNMATCHED IN MY  
35 YEARS OF EDUCATION”**

**SHARON KING - BASS VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL ,VICTORIA**





# UNLOCK YOUR WAKAKIRRI SUCCESS WITH OUR RESOURCES

WAKAKIRRI HAS A WEALTH OF RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS TO ACCESS:

## TEACHERS FACEBOOK GROUP

Connect with your peers, collaborate, and share ideas. It's your community for support and inspiration.

## HOW TO GUIDE

Get your school's Story-Dance planning and pre-production on the right track with our 'Secrets to Success' How-To guide. It's your roadmap to creating a stunning performance.

## ONLINE WORKSHOPS

Discover the secrets to a successful Wakakirri performance in our online Zoom sessions.

## STORY-DANCE VIDEOS & TUTORIALS

Our easy-to-follow video tutorials provide valuable insights into the art of Story-Dance. You can also view a collection of past Story-Dances to get inspired!

## ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM

The Wakakirri Artist in Residence Program (AIR) provides assistance to schools that do not have the time, resources or expertise to participate in Wakakirri. See page 6 for more information.

## BOOK A FREE CALL WITH A WAKA EXPERT

Our dedicated team of Waka experts are ready to answer your questions and guide you through every step of bringing Wakakirri to your school. Book a call today and let us help you embark on your Wakakirri adventure!





# NATIONAL AWARDS & FESTIVAL MOTIF

Schools can choose to tell any story that they wish. Schools' performances are often inspired by the Wakakirri ethos 'great stories inspire change' and the annual festival motif (in 2025 the motif is MIND OVER MATTER: TALES OF INNER STRENGTH).

Wakakirri acknowledges schools who exemplify the Wakakirri ethos 'Great Stories Inspire Change' (schools efforts in raising awareness, community building and excellence in performing arts). Each year, outstanding performances that embody the values of the Wakakirri ethos are recognised through the selection of national winners.



## NORTHERN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS TECHNOLOGY **Don't Give Up**

The work explores the different struggles and mental illnesses that exist within society, such as alcohol and drug addiction, depression, anxiety, bipolar and eating disorders.



## OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART **The Power of One Voice**

Told through the story of Malala, all girls deserve to be educated. She would not be silenced; her resilient spirit enabled her to fight oppression and inspire others to fight for equality of education.



## HOPPERS CROSSING SECONDARY COLLEGE **Be Careful What You Whisper**

This story recognises the impacts rumours and the digital world can have on individuals' reputations and the behaviours we would like young people to display instead.



## CASE STUDY

# 25 YEARS OF WAKAKIRRI AT STRATHFIELD NORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL

“Our experience with Wakakirri over the past 25 years has been deeply enriching and transformative for the school community. Strathfield North Public School is committed to creating inclusive and engaging learning environments that foster the development of the whole child, as outlined in our strategic improvement plan.

Through Wakakirri, we provide our students with an extraordinary platform to creatively express their ideas and engage in meaningful storytelling through dance. This experience aligns closely with our focus on student voice, well-being, and community engagement. Wakakirri is an essential part of our extra-curricular offerings that helps to promote student well-being, resilience, and collaboration. The program allows students to work together on a shared goal, developing confidence, teamwork, and communication skills.

Importantly, it also helps strengthen connections across generations, as many of our Wakakirri staff team have in fact been Wakakirri performers, some in the same school. This continuity builds a rich legacy of participation, fostering a sense of pride and belonging for our students and their families. It creates an environment where students feel valued and supported by their peers, teachers, and the wider community.

Participation in Wakakirri is not only about artistic expression but also about nurturing a sense of social responsibility. Our Story-Dances often focus on issues that are relevant to our students and their communities, sparking conversations about positive social change. By exploring themes such as diversity, sustainability, and kindness through their performances, students develop empathy and a deeper understanding of their role in shaping the future.

Additionally, our commitment to Wakakirri and other extra-curricular programs contributes significantly to our outstanding attendance rates. Our school and community highly value the rich, diverse and inclusive creative and performing arts programs at the school.

As noted in our strategic goals, attendance is a key priority at Strathfield North Public School, and programs like Wakakirri are instrumental in keeping students engaged and excited about school. The high level of student involvement and the enthusiasm generated by Wakakirri contribute to our position as the school with the highest attendance rate in our network, enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes”.

**Adam Kasalo** (Creative & Performing Arts Coordinator)  
Strathfield North Public School.





AUSTRALIA'S LEADING INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

# WAKAKIRRI AMBASSADORS



Wakakirri enjoys the support of some of Australia's leading industry professionals who give their time to encourage the next Performing Arts generation. Wakakirri ambassadors provide support through advocacy, appearing at our live shows, mentoring workshops, and in Waka TV episodes.

*"It's so important for young people to be able to express themselves through the art of storytelling and dance. This has such a positive impact for all the students involved"*

**SIMON PRYCE**

National Wakakirri Ambassador



JUSTINE CLARKE



SIMON PRYCE



EMMA WATKINS



WAKAKIRRI ASSOCIATION INC.



EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO BECOME CHANGEMAKERS

# THE WAKAKIRRI STORY-DANCE ASSOCIATION INC.

## Our Ethos

Great stories inspire change.

## Our Vision

The WSDA believes arts education is a powerful component in developing students social and emotional wellbeing, connection and belonging at school and that every student should have access to an arts rich curriculum and education.

## Our Aims

- To help students learn about themselves and others through the creation and sharing of stories and empower them to become change-makers.
- To develop student engagement and wellbeing through participation in the Performing Arts.
- To develop the competence of Australian children, and through them the broader community, to think and act in an environmentally responsible manner.
- To foster an exchange of cultural expression and understanding between schools and communities across Australia.
- To develop student awareness of community issues including bullying, mental and physical health, homelessness, and the environment.



WAKAKIRRI ASSOCIATION INC.

NATIONAL AWARD WINNING

# EXCELLENCE IN PERFORMING ARTS EDUCATION AWARD'

2021 WINNER OF THE APATA  
"EXCELLENCE IN PERFORMING  
ARTS EDUCATION" AWARD

**The Australian Performing Arts Teachers Association.**



Wakakirri was recognised by the Australian Performing Arts Teachers Association for our contribution to performing arts education in schools at a special presentation held at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) in Sydney this May 2021.

The 'Excellence in Performing Arts Education Award' recognises an outstanding organisation working in performing arts education, providing programs that significantly contribute towards student engagement and participation; developing a love for performance and an understanding of the broader creative process.

*Pictured: Adam Loxley - Wakakirri Festival Director*

## WAKAKIRRI SUPPORTERS

