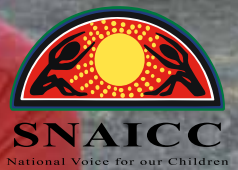
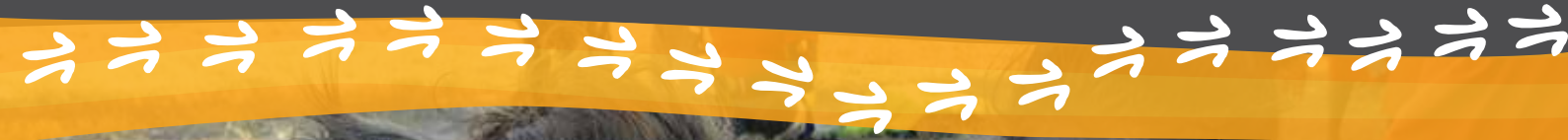


# PROMOTING, EXPLORING AND CELEBRATING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURES

# 1

## OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY



Culture is central to a child's individuality, identity and sense of belonging and success in lifelong learning. To support the identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and to enhance the knowledge of non-Indigenous children, early childhood services should pay attention to the cultural identity of the Aboriginal community in which they are situated. The Early Years Learning Framework ask educators to build upon children's understandings of diversity, specifically Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

### IN THIS FACT SHEET EDUCATORS WILL:

- Read a case study on how one Kindergarten incorporates their local Aboriginal culture
- Find a list of further suggestions for incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into your curriculum
- Find links to national and state specific culture and language resources.
- Understand the importance of bringing the local Aboriginal community into your service and the protocols that may surround this
- How educators can connect with NAIDOC week and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day (NAICD)
- Learn more about the importance of family for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- Discover how a Kindergarten incorporated an Aboriginal perspective into their program.
- Find links to organisations that sell Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educational resources
- Begin to understand the diversity of child-rearing practices utilised in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Find links to information about native plants
- Understand more about Torres Strait Islanders people and culture

## BOROONDARA KINDERGARTEN

This case study is based on a discussion with Julio Estorninho at Boroondara kindergarten explains how he includes information on the local Aboriginal people from his area.

### CASE STUDY

We have used this map a few different ways in the kindergarten, as a basis of displays to make explicit the different Countries and the diversity of Aboriginal languages within Victoria. These displays have been in the foyer for the children, families and teachers to look at when entering or leaving the centre.

At times, the children may have a small group discussion with a teacher in the foyer during a session. We have been able to provide a variety of lenses through which to view the different areas of Victoria identified on this map.

- identifying that we are playing, learning and working on Wurundjeri land and that all of Victoria (and the rest of Australia) is Aboriginal land (displaying the Aboriginal flag, with explanation of meaning, alongside the map)
- explaining the origin and meaning of the name of the kindergarten. A Woiwurrung word meaning "Shady place" (Boroondara)
- identifying which land and language groups are members of the Kulin nation
- asking people to identify where they have lived, live or holidayed in Victoria and helping them understand on whose land they have been/are on
- when Lionel Rose died: showing on what country he was born (Warragul)
- displaying a range of Victorian Aboriginal books and linking the authors, illustrators and stories to places on the map. Reading these stories to children in front of the map and discussing the areas identified.

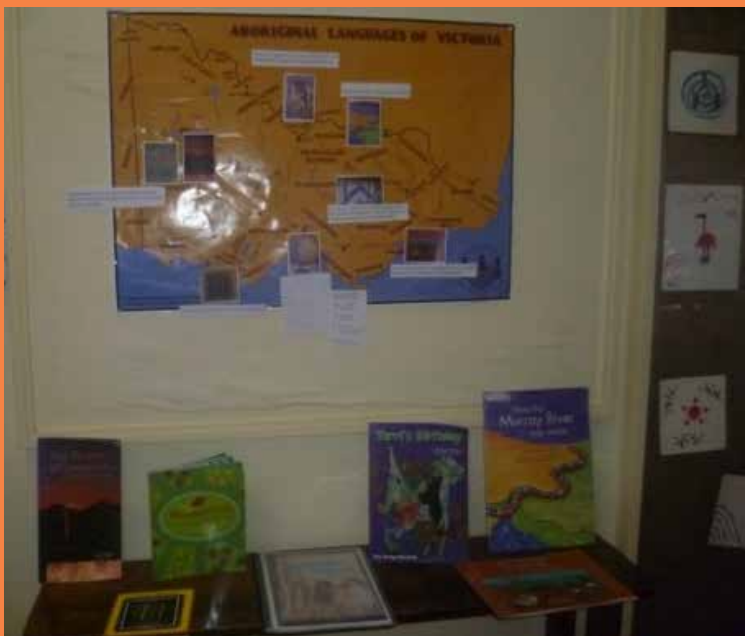


### FURTHER IDEAS ON HOW TO INCLUDE INFORMATION ON YOUR LOCAL AREA:

- Classroom labels in English and local language
- Local artwork by local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artists bought from reputable, ethical sources
- Foyer and classroom displays celebration special events with links to local events/people, such as
  - **Sorry Day (26th May),**
  - **NAIDOC Week (First Sunday in July) or**
  - **Children's Day (4th August)**
- Discussions with children about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture.

### HOW CAN YOU FIND MORE INFORMATION ON CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE?

- Contact your local Aboriginal organisation
- Explore the links on the following page







## **NATIONAL LANGUAGE AND CULTURE LINKS**

<http://ourlanguages.org.au/>

<https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/language/#axzz4dngT9sif>

<https://gambay.com.au/>

<http://splash.abc.net.au/newsandarticles/blog/-/b/2198867/this-indigenous-language-map-helps-kids-understand-australia>

<https://indigenous.sl.nsw.gov.au/>

<http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/1916032/discover-the-diversity-of-australia-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-languages>

## **AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

<http://muurrbay.org.au/>

## **NEW SOUTH WALES**

<https://mgns.wa.gov.au/sector/aboriginal/>

<http://www.aboriginalheritage.org/>

<http://muurrbay.org.au/>

[http://www.bundyculture.com.au/6/166524.ashx?lv\\_crumb=67715](http://www.bundyculture.com.au/6/166524.ashx?lv_crumb=67715)

<http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/2454638/say-hello-in-dharug>

<http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/1915357/name-parts-of-the-body-in-dhurga>

## **NORTHERN TERRITORY**

<http://www.cdu.edu.au/laal/>

## **SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

<http://www.mobilelanguagesteam.com.au/>

<http://www.reconciliationsa.org.au/>

<https://www.adelaide.edu.au/kwp/>

<http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/2007357/learn-to-count-in-kaurna>

## **TASMANIA**

<http://www.aboriginalheritage.tas.gov.au/aboriginal-cultural-heritage>

<http://www.aboriginalheritage.tas.gov.au/aboriginal-cultural-heritage/language>

## **VICTORIA**

<http://www.vaclang.org.au/>

<https://museumvictoria.com.au/bunjilaka/visiting/first-peoples/victorian-languages/>

<http://kooieheritagetrust.com.au/>

## **WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

<https://www.noongarculture.org.au/>

<http://museum.wa.gov.au/research/collections/aboriginal-western-australians/aboriginal-cultures-collection>

<http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/2307474/noongar-language>

## **QUEENSLAND**

<http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/atsi/languages>



## HOW DO I GO ABOUT INVITING COMMUNITY MEMBERS INTO MY SERVICE?

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is a great source of strength to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families, including the important connections to country, spirituality, family and community. Creating culturally safe, welcoming environments that encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait family members to spend time in a service is one way to recognise the importance of family. Children feel a strong sense of identity when their families are honoured, celebrated and included at their service. Engaging with the Aboriginal community authentically supports early years educators to deliver culturally relevant education to all young children. Family and community are valuable sources of cultural knowledge and skills and working alongside one another assists children to feel as sense of belonging to the wider community.

### HOW CAN AN EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICE BE CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE?

- Respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture as a source of strength to children, families and communities
- Recognising the continuing impact of the history and legacies of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities today
- Recognising the strengths, resilience and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

- Recognising the importance of the wider family network in parenting children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and other related cultural differences in child rearing practices compared to non-Indigenous communities
- Committing to informed and meaningful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement in the design, development and delivery of services
- Ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities have a sense of ownership and leadership in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of programs targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Understanding that non-Indigenous services should not compete with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific services but work with them to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific services having a recognised leadership role
- Acknowledging that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisation are in an unequal situation in forming partnerships with non-Indigenous organisation.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.snaicc.org.au/training/training-programs/place-culture-early-years-cultural-competency/>





In this experience an early years teacher worked with two Aboriginal children and an Elder. The teacher presented the Aboriginal Australia map, which illustrates the 250 'Countries' or language groups of Australia. Using a toy car, the teacher showed the children the country she was born and the journey she took to get to the country on which the preschool was located. The teacher invited the children's relative to show the children where she was born and this prompted the Elder to tell the group about her childhood. The experience finished with the children singing 'The wheels on the bus'.

This intentional teaching is something that can be facilitated with children from all backgrounds as it presents an Aboriginal lens to familiar knowledge and experiences. The use of the Aboriginal Australia map is an authentic way to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives as it can be used alongside many learning experiences and conversations throughout the program. The insight and stories from the Elder is invaluable for educators and children and is representative of the traditional oral passing of knowledge that has occurred for over 60,000 years. This example illustrates the storytelling traditions of oral culture and traditional cultural practices, and connections to the importance placed on identifying and recounting one's relationship to other people, particularly in family structures, and to country and community.



When building relationships with Elders be mindful that they have a 'high cultural load' and have many responsibilities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and the non-Indigenous community. When trying to make contact with Elders don't be discouraged if it takes a few attempts to begin to form a relationship.

## REFLECTION

How, can you start reviewing your practice when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children?

For example: In partnership with families and community how will you:

- Ensure that the child feels a sense of belonging here as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person?
- Support the child in being a proud Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person?
- Support the child in becoming a future Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander adult?

## LINKS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Where to purchase an Aboriginal Australia map

<http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/shop/product/the-aiatsis-map-indigenous-australia-folded-594x841mm/>

An online, interactive Aboriginal Australia map

<http://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/aiatsis-map-indigenous-australia>

More information on why country is important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

<https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/land/meaning-of-land-to-aboriginal-people#axzz4dKd340OU>

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural needs

<http://www.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/02932.pdf>

Child Right's Education kit

SNAICC has developed a series of resources for children and adults. These resources make up a children's rights education set aimed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children around the ages of approximately 3-7. <http://www.snaicc.org.au/child-rights-education-kit-child-rights-educators-guide-snaicc-2013-resource/>

Victorian Aboriginal language resources

<http://www.vaclang.org.au/>

<https://museumvictoria.com.au/bunjilaka/visiting/first-peoples/victorian-languages/>

Further cultural competency training

<http://www.snaicc.org.au/training/training-programs/>

## HOW CAN I INCORPORATE NAIDOC OR NAIDC WEEK INTO THE PROGRAM?

<http://www.naidoc.org.au/>

<http://aboriginalchildrensday.com.au/>

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities throughout the nation will have events and activities in which you or your ECEC service can participate. Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations can be a great resource for finding out what is being held in your local area. The newspapers *Koori Mail* and *National Indigenous Times* are also a good source for local events – they provide a calendar of events throughout the year. Local Indigenous Coordination Centres fund NAIDOC week events and are also a good starting point for local activities happening in communities. Attending these events can help non-Indigenous educators get to know their local community, their strengths and the issues affecting them.

Ideally, NAIDOC week is a time for early childhood services to reflect upon their journey in developing their cultural competence and building on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in their programs.

However if your early childhood service is just beginning to explore Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander perspectives NAIDOC week can be the impetus for the start of your cultural competence journey.

### MORE INFORMATION ABOUT INDIGENOUS COORDINATION CENTRES

<http://www.atns.net.au/subcategory.asp?subcategoryID=112>

### REFLECTION

How can you incorporate NAIDOC Week and NAIDC into your program?

What would it mean for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people if you only included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives at NAIDOC week?

## IDENTITY AND FAMILY

The Early Years Learning Framework asks educators to consider the ‘culture and context of family as central to children’s sense of being and belonging, and to success in lifelong learning’ (EYLF, 2009, p.16).

### HOW CAN YOU UNDERSTAND THE CULTURE AND CONTEXT OF ABORIGINAL AND/OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN IN YOUR EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTING?

Educators can begin to form an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship systems. These are a complex system of family relations and extended family relationships are central to the way culture is passed on and how society is organised.

The kinship system determines how people relate to each other and, their roles, responsibilities and obligations in relation to one another, to ceremonial business and to land.

*These systems vary across Australia.*

It is important that early childhood educators recognise the wider family network in parenting children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and other related cultural differences in child rearing practices compared to non-Indigenous communities. See child-rearing practices below.

### FAMILY KINSHIP ACTIVITY

<http://www.supportingcarers.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/02454.pdf>

YouTube clip further explaining the kinship system:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mNtPcW4t1PY>

The importance of family for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people:

<http://www.supportingcarers.snaicc.org.au/connecting-to-culture/connection-to-family/>

<http://www.vaccho.org.au/assets/01-RESOURCES/TOPIC-AREA/KMS/BOORAI-BUNDLE/VACCHO-BOORAI-POSTER-FAMILY.pdf>



# IDENTITY AND ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATORS AND STAFF

To enhance the cultural safety of your early childhood service it can be helpful to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators. Employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from the local community is vital in supporting the cultural competence of staff, programs and approaches.

## SUPPORTING CULTURAL COMPETENCE

(taken from SNAICC publication *A Place for Culture?*)

<b>WHAT IS IT?</b>	Key cultural competencies include: a commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination and respectful partnerships; cultural awareness; cultural respect; cultural responsiveness; cultural safety; and cross-cultural practice and care.
<b>WHY DO IT?</b>	Culturally competent staff, programs and approaches lead to higher enrolment of and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.
<b>WHAT'S THE BENEFIT?</b>	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families are more likely to feel comfortable using a service that employs Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culturally competent staff and programmatic approaches.
<b>HOW CAN I DO IT?</b>	<b>REFLECT</b>  Is our program culturally competent/aware and appropriate?  Do we employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from the local community who can support us to ensure that our program is culturally competent?  Do we have a relationship with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community?  How do we utilise their knowledge in every day practice?  How do we include the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, families and Elders in our centre and what features within our service support a sense of belonging?

A Maori nursing fraternity defined cultural safety as:

“An environment that is safe for people: where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening.”



# IDENTITY AND CULTURE

Below are some links to purchase Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander educational resources for your early childhood setting. When purchasing resources, it is important to make sure they were made by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and that a percentage of the proceeds go to the creators.

TIP

When introducing stories, artwork etc. from other parts of Australia talk about whose mob the story or artwork comes from and use the Aboriginal Australia map to illustrate this.

<http://www.snaicc.org.au/shop/>  
<http://www.yarnstrongsista.com/>  
<http://batchelorpress.com/>  
<http://www.globalkidsoz.com.au/australia.php>

**WHEN IS IT APPROPRIATE TO FLY THE ABORIGINAL AND/OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER FLAG?**

**CAN WE REPRODUCE STYLES OF ART SUCH AS DOT PAINTING?**

Early childhood educators may be unsure about how to introduce elements of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture in their centres.

Read on for some more information and ideas about how to do this.

**FLYING THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER FLAGS**

One of the guiding principles of the National Quality Framework is that 'Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued' (ACECQA, 2009). Early childhood services can recognise and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through the display of the flags.

Australia has three national flags.

The flags may be flown or displayed throughout the year. You can avoid tokenism by firstly explaining to children what they are, what they represent and the meanings of the flags.

You can contact your local member for parliament to ask them to supply you with an Aboriginal, Australian and/or Torres Strait Islander flag. To find out your local member visit [http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Members](http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Members)



Aboriginal flag



Torres Strait Islander flag



Australian flag

Australia has three national flags.





Aboriginal flag



Torres Strait Islander flag

## ABORIGINAL FLAG

The Aboriginal flag is a very important symbol for Aboriginal people. The flag represents cultural resilience, affirmation and identity.

The Aboriginal flag is divided horizontally into equal halves of black (top) and red (bottom), with a yellow circle in the centre. The black symbolizes the Aboriginal people and the yellow symbolizes the sun, the constant giver of life. Red depicts the earth and also represents ochre, which is used by Aboriginal people in ceremonies.

The flag was designed by Harold Thomas and was first flown at Victoria Square, Adelaide, on National Aborigines Day on 12 July 1971. It was used later at the tent embassy in Canberra in 1972.

Today the flag has been adopted by all Aboriginal groups and is flown or displayed permanently at Aboriginal centres throughout Australia. In 1995, the Aboriginal flag was formally recognised as a 'flag of Australia' by the Australian Government.

## TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER FLAG

The late Bernard Namok designed the Torres Strait Islander flag. The flag stands for the unity and identity of all Torres Strait Islanders. It features three horizontal coloured stripes, with green at the top and bottom, and blue in between, divided by thin black lines. A white dhari (headdress) sits in the centre, with a five-pointed star underneath it.

The colour green represents the land, blue represents the sea, and black stands for the people. The white dhari is a symbol of all Torres Strait Islanders, and the five-pointed star represents the island groups. Used in navigation, the star is also an important symbol for the seafaring Torres Strait Islander people. The colour white of the star represents peace.

Along with the Aboriginal flag, the Torres Strait Islander flag was also recognised as a flag of Australia by the Australian Government in 1995.



## MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER FLAGS

<http://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/aboriginal-flag>

<http://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/torres-strait-islander-flag>



### USE RED, BLACK, YELLOW AND GREEN, BLUE AND WHITE COLOURS IN DIFFERENT DISPLAYS.

The use of red, black, yellow and green, blue and white colours in different displays and activities and further promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Make Aboriginal flag handprints discussing with children the meanings of the colours.

### LOOK AROUND THE CENTRE AND MAKE SURE THAT THE CENTRE'S ENVIRONMENT SAYS 'IF YOU'RE ABORIGINAL YOU BELONG HERE'.

- Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags
- Have Acknowledgement of Country signs displayed <https://antar.org.au/shop>
- Purchase authentic resources designed by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people e.g. <http://www.globalkidsoz.com.au/australia.php>
- Promote local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events and services
- Use images or photographs, such as posters, that acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures.

### SHARE DREAMING STORIES WITH CHILDREN AS A VALUABLE, CREATIVE FUN WAY TO TALK ABOUT CULTURE.

<https://www.readings.com.au/collection/recommended-indigenous-australian-childrens-books>



## PUT A CULTURAL SPIN ON EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

### CASE STUDY

Non-Indigenous children in a 4-year-old kindergarten program in the western suburbs of Melbourne were interested in space. Their teacher had incorporated different learning experiences linked to this interest. The teacher had previously explored Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture with the children so the children were somewhat familiar with the First Peoples of Australia.

The teacher explained to the children that the dreaming story she was about to tell them were from the Kamilaroi people of north-west New South Wales. She showed them their country on the Aboriginal Australia map displayed on the wall.

There was a brief discussion about the location of the kindergarten and where various children lived. Next, the teacher described how some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people use the stars to tell stories and pass on information. She explained that in the story she was about to show them, the stars are used to tell people the correct time of year to collect emu eggs. The group watched the YouTube clip together and then had a discussion about the clip.

### REFLECTION

How could the teacher find out if the Aboriginal people local to her area have stories linked to astronomy?

What other curriculum areas could you link with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives?

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2009/07/27/2632463.htm?site=science/indepthfeature>

Through Our Eyes - Dhinawan 'Emu' In The Sky with Ben Flick  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzFYFutiwoA&t=6s>

Episode 2: Wombat Rex of ACER's Little J & Big Cuz series explores Indigenous stories in the night sky. Below is a link to the educator resources developed for this episode.  
[https://www.littlejandbigcuz.com.au/uploads/files/EP2-Wombat\\_Rex.pdf](https://www.littlejandbigcuz.com.au/uploads/files/EP2-Wombat_Rex.pdf)



### FURTHER IDEAS

- Use charcoal for drawing (make your own charcoal and include the children in the process).  
<http://www.abc.net.au/gardening/stories/s3238626.htm>
- Listen to child-appropriate traditional and contemporary music by artists such as Dr. G. Yunupingu, Jessica Mauboy, Dan Sultan, Thelma Plum, Archie Roach, and Wildflower.  
NOTE: Not every song from artists listed will be child-friendly so always check lyrics before playing for children.
- Learn and teach the names of native animals in your local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language. See list of language links below.
- Cook bush foods and damper with children.  
<http://www.supportingcarers.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/02459.pdf>  
<http://www.supportingcarers.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/02459.pdf>
- Install Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander apps onto digital devices <https://www.creativespirits.info/resources/apps#axzz4fsoldJ00>
- Tell stories and draw with children in sand or dirt.
- Tell stories orally
- Explore Aboriginal art techniques such as cross-hatching and dot-painting
- Make and paint with ochre
- Engage local artists in the community to share their skills e.g. weaving
- Include native herbs in play dough recipes  
<https://www.creativespirits.info/resources/apps#axzz4duoOaTdo>
- Learn and teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander games [https://www.ausport.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/402191/SP\\_31864\\_TIG\\_resource\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ausport.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/402191/SP_31864_TIG_resource_FINAL.pdf)





# ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILD-REARING PRACTICES

**Understanding, utilising and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child-rearing practices strengthens culture and helps to foster a strong sense of belonging for children and families.**

Children have a special place within family and community. Where they are born signifies connection to the land and/or sea. Today, many Aboriginal children are born 'outside' their country. It is their relationship and identity with their language group that gives a child a connection to their country.

Below is a table comparing child-rearing practices comparing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with Non-Indigenous families. Keep in mind that these are descriptions of broad practices and won't necessarily be true for every family.

NOTE: Using Kearins' descriptive comparison, Lynore Giea, a Bwgcolman woman from Palm Island Nth QLD looked at three generations of child rearing on Palm Island and applied the table as a framework that interprets child rearing practices of white Australian culture and Aboriginal culture -child rearing on Palm Island to demonstrate the difference in cultural worldview.

Geia, L. (2012) *First steps, making footprints: intergenerational Palm Island families Indigenous stories (narratives) of childrearing practice strengths*. PhD thesis, James Cook University.

WHITE AUSTRALIAN CULTURE		AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURE	
Obligation	Treat babies as helpless creatures who need all decisions made for them, and need to be fed regularly	'big boy/ big girl'	Adults see babies as autonomous individuals – the baby knows whether he/she is hungry
Sleeping	Children are placed to sleep in quietness and alone sheltered from noise and roughness of life	'Sleeping with bub'	Babies are not put alone and kept with the group – communal sleeping or being held by family
Spoilt	Babies are not to be overindulged and not to be spoilt	'Loving them up'	Babies are treated with extreme indulgence by everyone – not seen as spoilt and are able to demand whatever they need
Milestones	As children grow the main task is to train - toilet training, obedience training. The child learns to understand disciplinary words such as 'no', 'stop', 'naughty'. As well as approval words such as 'good boy/ girl' and 'isn't he/she clever'	Knowing your child	Mothers and caretakers stand back and observes to ensure safety and only intervenes when danger is sensed
Teaching	Verbal instructions to teach simple instruction and perform tasks	'growing up our piccaninnies'	Parents job is to be helping the young child grow up. Children learn by observing other and mimicking the behavior without verbal training from the adult
Chores	Children are not expected to be independent in eating, dressing, washing until at least four years of age	'right way wrong way'	Children become good judges of their own ability to preform tasks
Control of movements	Children are expected to stay in the vicinity of their mother or caretaker	'many eyes, one community'	Children mix with all age groups and move in-between and out of sight-overseen by the rest of the family
Learning	Physical skills allowed to develop slowly, parents prevent children from attempting activities they consider too dangerous	Observing	Babies are held in a manner so they can observe and interact with others
Protection	Children are expected not to cope with, or ignore damage to their bodies. Parents hurry to pick up fallen babies, 'kiss better'	'you're right, try again...'	Children take very little notice of damage to their bodies, such as cuts, bruises, burns etc. They normally don't ask for assistance/go to adults for help and carry on in what they were doing. They will change their activity if they judge the previous activity is dangerous to them
Control	Learning styles rest on the experiences that requires the child to learn obedience from adults	'elders eyes'	Children grow up respecting those they admire, like and will listen to them. Children have no obligation to listen and obey. They choose to meet another's request or not. There is no punishment if they do not obey a request.

## MORE INFORMATION ON CHILD-REARING PRACTICES

(from SNAICC resource Growing up our way: Practices matrix)

The Aboriginal model of child rearing trusts the child's knowledge of it's own states, both physical and emotional. When the three year old is tired someone will carry it. No one says, 'Three year olds are old enough to walk'. In fact, no one makes generalisations about children at all.

Parents are pleased to see the child's daring (risk taking) and neither encourage nor discourage. Just as the mother assumes that the baby knows best what it wants. So the adult assumes that the child knows best his or her own abilities and skills, and will exercise sensible judgement in using the...underlying this is an attitude of basic trust in the child and basic trust in the physical world in which the child develops.

## BABIES

The infants are subjected to no routines and exist and exist as appendages to their caretakers' activities. They receive a high level of stimulation from other people and relatively little from the non-human environment. They are held and carried in positions that foster rapid physical development and (they) are encouraged to perform activities beyond their physical capabilities...their contacts with fathers are invariably warm and supportive (though distant). The communication directed at (babies/young children) is most often of a non-verbal nature.

The lack of concern shown about ordinary 'dirt' in connection with children and babies is (due to the fact that dirt) is merely accepted as a normal aspect of life and arouses neither positive nor negative emotions in adults. Indeed this, like most other Aboriginal child rearing practices, is governed by the principle of never interfering in a child's activities until it, or another, indicates distress. This principle is crucial in understanding the attitudes towards children in this period.

### REFERENCE

Hamilton, A 1981, *Nature and Nurture: Aboriginal child rearing in north-central Arnhem Land*, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra

## CHILDREN

Today, Aboriginal communities see children as central to the life and change of the community. In many aspects, the role of children in these communities remains unchanged.

### REFERENCE

SNAICC 2010, *Working and Walking Together: supporting family relationship services to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and organisations*.

## REFLECTION

What are your reactions to these child-rearing practices? Are there some you can relate to? Do you object to any of them?

How might these practices impact on the work you do with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children? How would your opinion on these practices affect your relationships?

What do these relationships tell you about the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?

## MOTHERS AND FATHERS

Amongst the central Australian Aboriginal language groups the biological mother's sisters are also referred to as the child's mothers. The mother's sisters have an obligation to support her to carry out her daily roles and responsibilities.

'The role of the father in child care is very noticeable among these (Pitjantjatjara) people; fathers carry their small children about with them, feed them, talk and sing to them, entertain them with sand stories and even cook special foods for them, when they are available. This is in marked contrast to the lack of involvement in the care of small children in Arnhem Land'.

The father's role in early child rearing is to see that the mother is responsible in her role. Others have also observed that a father tended to take a supervisory role over the mother's child rearing, sometimes expressing anger with a mother for castigating a child, particularly a son.

### REFERENCE

Warrki Jarrinjaku ACRS Project Team 2002, *Warrki Jarrinjaku Jintangkamanu Purananjaku – 'Working Together Everyone and Listening'*, Aboriginal Child Rearing and Associated Research: A Review of the Literature, Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra

'Mother is the word commonly used when a Tiwi Island child is referring to either his biological mother or to any of his biological mother's sisters. The child rearing manifests itself in many ways. It is not uncommon for a woman to give her child to one of her sister to grow the child up'

### REFERENCE

Davis, R and Dikstein, J 1997, 'It Just Doesn't Fit: The Tiwi family and the Family Law Act – can the two be reconciled?', *Alternative Law Journal*, vol. 22, no. 2, April

Often Aboriginal women rear children alone. They do so for many reasons, including broken relationships, the high mortality rate of Aboriginal man, and the high proportion of men in prison.

### REFERENCE

Bourke, E 1993, 'The First Australians: kinship, family and identity', *Family Matters*, August, no. 35

The father's main role is as the protector and provider for the family... it is clear that for many Aboriginal communities, the traditional roles of men have changed through the effects of colonisation.

### REFERENCE

SNAICC 2010, *Working and Walking Together: supporting family relationship services to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and organisations*.

# IDENTITY, NATURE AND TRADITION

## REFLECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE CENTRE'S PLAY AREAS BY INCLUDING NATIVE PLANTS FROM LOCAL AREA

NOTE – make sure to check if plants are safe for use with young children.

Establishing a connection with nature through gardens, outdoor play environments and nature walks helps children to build a strong connection to their world, develop environmental responsibility, an awareness of the seasons and how to care for plants and bush tucker and feel that they belong, to the land.

### NATIONAL

<http://www.anbg.gov.au/gardens/visiting/exploring/aboriginal-trail/>

<http://anpsa.org.au/links.html#aboriginal>

### AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

<http://www.act.gov.au/browse/topics/environment/plants>

[http://www.tams.act.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/389947/Plant\\_local\\_to\\_the\\_canberra\\_region.pdf](http://www.tams.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/389947/Plant_local_to_the_canberra_region.pdf)

### NEW SOUTH WALES

<https://www.lifestyle.com.au/plant-guide/nsw-plants.aspx>

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cpp/CmnReferencesPlants.htm>

<http://austplants.com.au/>

### NORTHERN TERRITORY

<https://www.lifestyle.com.au/plant-guide/nt-plants.aspx>

<https://nt.gov.au/environment/native-plants/identify-native-plants>

<http://eflora.nt.gov.au/>

### TASMANIA

<http://dppw.tas.gov.au/conservation/flora-of-tasmania/native-plant-species>

<http://www.potn.com.au/>

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

<http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidentloftyranges/plants-and-animals/native-plants-animals-and-biodiversity/native-plants>

<http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/aridlands/plants-and-animals/native-plants-and-animals/native-plants>

### QUEENSLAND

<https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/plants/native-plants/>

<http://www.sgapqld.org.au/>

### VICTORIA

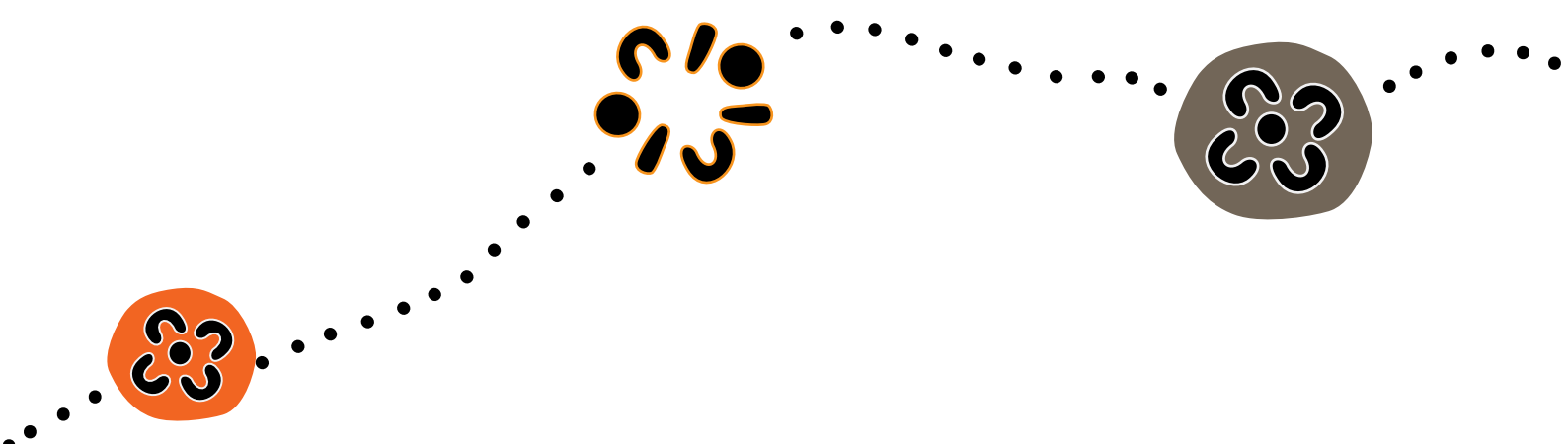
[https://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/documents/RBGV\\_VINC\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](https://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/documents/RBGV_VINC_Fact_Sheet.pdf)

[http://shellharbourkids.com.au/media/GMGC\\_ResourceKit\\_V2.pdf](http://shellharbourkids.com.au/media/GMGC_ResourceKit_V2.pdf)

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

<http://www.ventura-homes.com.au/veryventura/the-best-native-plants-for-western-australian-gardens/>

<http://www.australianplants.com/plants.aspx?filter=true&key=origin&value=9>





# CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

## NATIONAL/STATE SPECIFIC LANGUAGE LINKS

### NATIONAL LANGUAGE AND CULTURE LINKS

<http://ourlanguages.org.au/>

<https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/language/#axzz4dngT9sif>

<https://gambay.com.au/>

<http://splash.abc.net.au/newsandarticles/blog/-/b/2198867/this-indigenous-language-map-helps-kids-understand-australia>

<https://indigenous.sl.nsw.gov.au/>

### AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

<http://muurrbay.org.au/>

### NEW SOUTH WALES

<https://mgns.wa.gov.au/sector/aboriginal/>

<http://www.aboriginalheritage.org/>

<http://muurrbay.org.au/>

<https://open.abc.net.au/explore/139618>

<https://open.abc.net.au/explore/112156>

### NORTHERN TERRITORY

<http://www.cdu.edu.au/laal/>

<http://batchelorpress.com/>

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

<http://www.mobilelanguageteam.com.au/>

<http://www.reconciliationsa.org.au/>

<https://www.adelaide.edu.au/kwp/>

### VICTORIA

<http://www.vaclang.org.au/>

<https://museumvictoria.com.au/bunjilaka/visiting/first-peoples/victorian-languages/>

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

<https://www.noongarculture.org.au/>

<http://museum.wa.gov.au/research/collections/aboriginal-western-australians/aboriginal-cultures-collection>

<https://open.abc.net.au/explore/130945>

### QUEENSLAND

<http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/atsi/languages>

[https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p\\_10/qklg\\_pd\\_at\\_si\\_continua.pdf](https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p_10/qklg_pd_at_si_continua.pdf)

<https://open.abc.net.au/explore/139618>

