

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

## 2

## CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD



Connecting to nature helps to further develop children's sense of identity. Focusing on children's relationship with nature helps them to be connected with and contribute to their world. The EYLF explains that 'children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment (...) when educators consider the nature of children's connectedness to the land'. (EYLF, 2009, p.29)

### IN THIS FACT SHEET EDUCATORS WILL:

- Find links to cultural knowledge regarding the natural environment and weather systems.
- Consider connection to nature through animals
- Reflect upon how we can teach children to become socially aware
- Look at the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and reflect upon how to be inclusive of Torres Strait Islander cultures.



## HOW CAN WE SUPPORT ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN'S CONNECTION TO COUNTRY?

## HOW CAN WE UTILISE OUR OUTDOOR AND LOCAL NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS TO CONNECT WITH NATURE?

Explore the relevant links below and consider how you can use the resources to explore nature from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander perspective.

### INDIGENOUS WEATHER KNOWLEDGE

<http://www.bom.gov.au/iwk/index.shtml>

<http://www.abc.net.au/science/features/indigenous/>

### AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

<http://www.environment.act.gov.au/parks-conservation/parks-and-reserves/find-a-park/namadgi-national-park/namadgi-national-park>

### NEW SOUTH WALES

<http://www.bluemountainwalkabout.com/frames.htm>

<https://www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/Learn/Primary-School-Excursions/Royal-Botanic-Garden-Primary-School-Excursions/Connection-and-Country>

<http://www.bom.gov.au/iwk/dharawal/index.shtml>

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

[http://www.academia.edu/11760527/The\\_Kurna\\_Calendar\\_Seasons\\_of\\_the\\_Adelaide\\_Plains](http://www.academia.edu/11760527/The_Kurna_Calendar_Seasons_of_the_Adelaide_Plains)

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

<http://www.bom.gov.au/iwk/nyoongar/>

### NORTHERN TERRITORY

<https://www.csiro.au/en/Research/Environment/Land-management/Indigenous/Indigenous-calendars>

<http://www.bom.gov.au/iwk/jawoyn/index.shtml>

<http://www.bom.gov.au/iwk/maung/index.shtml>

<http://www.bom.gov.au/iwk/miriwoong/index.shtml>

### 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)

<https://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/learn/programs/early-childhood-melbourne>

<http://www.bom.gov.au/iwk/brambuk/index.shtml>

<http://www.herringisland.org/seasons1.htm>

### QUEENSLAND

<http://www.bom.gov.au/iwk/tiwi/index.shtml>



**EPISODE 5: Goanna Ate My Homework of ACER's Little J & Big Cuz's series explores the idea of connecting to nature as Little J attempts to find bush tucker. The link below directs you to the educator resources developed for this episode.**

[https://www.littlejandbigcuz.com.au/uploads/files/EP5\\_Goanna\\_Ate\\_My\\_Homework.pdf](https://www.littlejandbigcuz.com.au/uploads/files/EP5_Goanna_Ate_My_Homework.pdf)

## HOW CAN WE CONNECT WITH NATURE AND ANIMALS?

Consider having a centre pet – a native animal such as a turtle or a lizard can be kept with a license in some states. Find out the local Aboriginal name (see Fact Sheet Outcome 1 for a list of language resources) for the animal and link in local knowledge and stories about that animal after consultation with traditional owners where possible.

## HOW CAN WE INSTIL A SENSE OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN CHILDREN?

The early childhood setting could be a part of the Great Book Swap that is run by the Indigenous Literacy Foundation, raising money to raise literacy levels in remote communities.

Children bring in a pre-loved book and swap it for another, for a gold coin donation.

For more information:

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

## DIVERSITY

### HOW CAN WE PROMOTE THE DIVERSITY OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURES?

### HOW CAN WE EXPLORE AND CELEBRATE EACH CHILD'S FAMILY?

### WHY SHOULD I INCLUDE TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PERSPECTIVES IN MY CURRICULUM?

Educators can use family mapping and discussions between families, educators and children (see Fact Sheet Outcome 1 – kinship systems)

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





## WHO ARE TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE?

Torres Strait Islanders are the Indigenous people of the Torres Strait Islands. Their culture and identity is separate from that of the Aboriginal peoples of the mainland of Australia.

Approximately 33,300 people identify as of Torres Strait Islander origin and 21,100 identify as of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin. However, the figures are uncertain due to the unreliability of the census data. Although Torres Strait Islanders live in all states of Australia, most of the population live on the mainland of Queensland.

Of the 6,000 or so who live in the Torres Strait between the tip of Cape York in Queensland and Papua New Guinea, approximately half live on Thursday Island, and the remainder live on the 14 outer islands in the Strait. Europeans formerly established Thursday Island as the administrative hub, and today, is now the administrative and commercial centre of the Torres Strait. The Island has a multicultural population of Islanders, Asians and Australians of European origin.

## WHY AND HOW SHOULD I INCLUDE TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURE IN OUR CURRICULUM?

Educators may find it difficult to include Torres Strait Islander culture – particularly if they are located far from Northeast Australia. However it is important that Torres Strait Islander people are recognised together with Aboriginal people as the First Peoples of Australia, while also acknowledging the distinct differences between the cultures.

## SOME IDEAS FOR EXPLORING TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURE

- Research and celebrate the Coming of the Light festival (1st July) with children
- Compare the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags ask children what they think the colours and shapes represent and then find out together by consulting books or the Internet.
- Use an Aboriginal Australia map to show children where the Torres Strait Islands are.

### TORRES STRAIT ISLAND MAP

[http://www.tsra.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/3158/DOC13-001711-TSRA-Map-Torres-Strait-Region-Feb-2013.pdf](http://www.tsra.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/3158/DOC13-001711-TSRA-Map-Torres-Strait-Region-Feb-2013.pdf)

### TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN'S BOOKS

<http://www.edex.com.au/let-s-learn-about-the-torres-strait-islands-big-book.html?gclid=CJ3IOeyJrdMCFUxwwAodxFAHXw>

<https://www.magabala.com/bakir-and-bi.html>

<https://www.magabala.com/wandihnu-and-the-old-dugong.html>

### FOR MORE INFORMATION ON TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURE

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

<http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/2182257/visit-the-torres-strait>

The link below directs you to a transcript of a video regarding welcoming Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to school.

[https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p\\_10/qklg\\_pd\\_atssi\\_welcom\\_kindy\\_tscript.pdf](https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p_10/qklg_pd_atssi_welcom_kindy_tscript.pdf)