



Reflect, Respect, Respond:

Protocols for culturally respectful engagement with First Nations communities



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Acknowledgement of Country

Be You acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of all the Lands on which we work and learn.

We recognise their deep and ongoing connection to Country and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present, and extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

May we actively honour the past, cherish the opportunities of the present and work together for the future of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and communities.

To learn more about the Country you're on, visit the [Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies \(AIATSIS\) Map of Indigenous Australia](#).

Kevin Wilson – Wongutha artist and designer based in Perth (Boorloo), WA

The artwork within this guide represents people coming together around a yarning circle. The yarning circles symbolise these spaces we come together to understand better ways to help our community, how to work alongside respectfully and ways we can build the skills individually to benefit the spaces we walk within.

Contributors to this resource: Mystique Dia, Esma Livermore, Nina Ross, Jessica Staines, Nathaniel Tamwoy, Juanita Wilson and Duane Vickery.

A note from Be You

Be You strongly recommends engaging with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's (AITSL) Indigenous cultural responsiveness framework and tools before you engage with this guide.

[AITSL Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Self-Reflection Tool](#)

This online tool poses questions to help you reflect deeply on assumptions, attitudes and biases about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, languages and cultures.

[AITSL Indigenous cultural responsiveness capability framework](#)

This framework includes a set of guiding values and principles and tangible, achievable steps you can take to embody behaviours and attitudes that are culturally responsive within your context.

[AITSL Indigenous cultural responsiveness continuum](#)

This continuum aims to assist educators and leaders to critically reflect on and develop their ability to be more responsive to the knowledge, skills, and cultural identities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Connecting with First Nations children, young people, families and communities starts with asking yourself why you want to engage and how you hope to strengthen your pedagogical practice and deepen relationships.

Understanding your intent and engaging purposefully are key to including cultural responsiveness in your learning community.

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Introduction

“We know we should, but we don’t know how.”

This is a sentiment shared by many educators about including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in their curriculum and learning community.

As an educator, you may be afraid of doing the wrong thing or causing offence. It may be difficult to determine the quality of information and resources available.

This shouldn’t discourage you from doing the work.

Recognising and acknowledging culture and identity are integral protective factors for the social and emotional wellbeing of First Nations children and young people.

The National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing (2017) identifies 9 guiding principles:

1. Health as holistic
2. The right to self-determination
3. The need for cultural understanding
4. The impact of trauma and loss
5. Recognition of human rights
6. The impact of racism and stigma
7. Recognition of the centrality of kinship
8. Recognition of cultural diversity
9. Recognition of Aboriginal strengths.

Be You invited a panel of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experts in early childhood, primary and secondary education to shape this guide in their own words.

This guide shares these experts’ voices, with information, reflection and suggested actions around topics such as connecting with communities and families, protocols, culturally responsive curriculum, terminology and policies.

What are First Nations protocols?

The term ‘protocols’ encompasses a broad range of ethical obligations and behaviours that guide First Nations communities. Protocols can assist you to navigate and connect respectfully with communities.

Since colonisation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have faced extreme discrimination, which continues to lead to losses of their rights and traditions. By observing and following local protocols, you are valuing, respecting and enacting First Nations histories, cultures and knowledge.

Protocols have been passed down over thousands of years and continue as living traditions. Please note there may be information or answers that can’t be shared, depending on who in the community holds this knowledge and what they are able to reveal. This may not only apply to non-Indigenous people, but also First Nations Peoples from different communities.

Considerations while using this guide

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures are diverse. Across Australia, there are more than 250 nations, many comprising multiple clans with their own languages and protocols.

This guide provides information to reflect on and actions to consider in your learning community. But it is just the starting point.

Be You strongly encourages you to consult with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to consider the best ways to approach and deepen your engagement in appropriate ways.

You may make mistakes over time. You are on a learning journey. Taking part in cultural responsiveness training may minimise the risk of mistakes.

If a community member expresses that something that you have said or done was disrespectful, as disheartening as this may feel, please listen, show respect and try again with new understanding.

Reflect on your reactions to these protocols if they upset you. Sit with that feeling and unpack your own biases. Take this opportunity to unlearn and relearn.

Your early learning service or school may be in an area with large Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities and many First Nations staff members, children or young people. You may be in a learning environment with few – or no – First Nations-identifying students or staff members. There may also be educators, children or young people who choose not to identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or may not have a strong connection to culture, for different reasons.

Wherever you are, whatever your setting – this guide is for all educators across Australia to create safe, welcoming and culturally responsive learning communities.

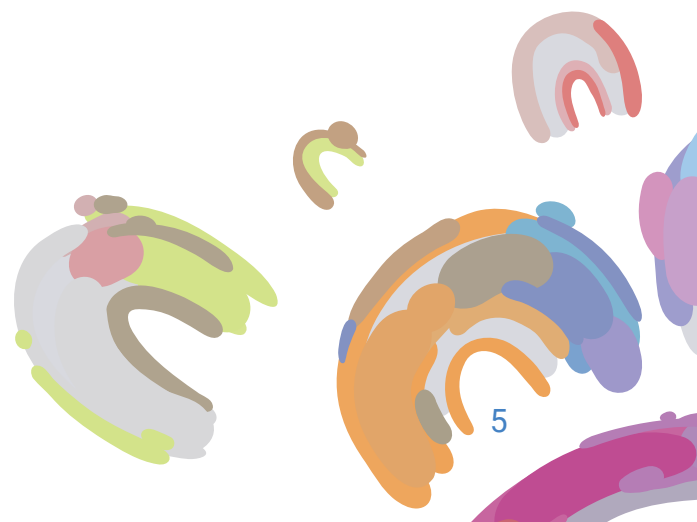
Be You hopes you reflect on the information in these pages and consider how you can adapt it for your setting.

When you engage in cultural responsiveness and inclusivity with purpose, this will benefit everyone in your learning community.

Thank you

Be You warmly thanks the panel of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators and artist who shared their cultural and professional expertise to write, design and review this resource. Thank you to Mystique Dia, Esma Livermore, Nina Ross, Jessica Staines, Nathaniel Tamwoy, Juanita Wilson, Kevin Wilson and Duane Vickery for sharing your knowledge and personal journeys to benefit future generations. It was a privilege to share time, develop connections and work with you.

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Connection before curriculum: A reflection

by Nathaniel Tamwoy (Argun-Badhulaig)

In my culture on Badu Island, when you're old enough to grow a beard, your Uncles shave your facial hair in a special ceremony. This significant event culminates in feasting, traditional dancing and singing.

The shaving ceremony is a rite of passage to becoming a man.

But the first time I shaved I was at school. The deputy principal had handed me a razor, saying my facial hair was against school policy.

So, I shaved myself. It was confronting, but I just wanted to be safe. I wanted to avoid getting in trouble. I thought, 'If I get it done, she'll stop bothering me'.

I couldn't explain to her what this meant to my family, to my community. I wasn't confident enough in my English to explain the significance or express to her how I felt.

The community and my family understood why it happened. But I didn't realise how much this experience would weigh on me later.

As I grow into leadership positions in my community, sometimes I have a bit of imposter syndrome, as though I haven't earned this. It's like being asked to teach a class, but you think, 'I haven't graduated'. I was the only son in my family who didn't experience our shaving ceremony.

I was one of so many children whose schooling restricts our ability to hold on to our identity, language and cultural practices.

I was just a child. It shouldn't have fallen to me to explain my culture. The school should have consulted with our community before I was put in that position. The school should have had much more inclusive policies and practices.


It is the educator's responsibility to create a space of authentic listening, a safe space for children not only to learn Western knowledge but to practice and maintain their cultural identity and knowledge.

And it's not just within the school gates. It's about showing up and advocating for First Nations children – and peoples – outside the school.

It's about valuing the knowledge and culture that has been passed down to us for generations.

It's about critically reflecting on and challenging the lens through which you see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, peoples and history.

It's about purposefully engaging and not expecting First Nations educators to solve problems that have been created by Western systems.




For us, the work in advocating for and supporting our communities doesn't end when the school bell rings.

My experience is just one example of why it's important to meaningfully connect and build trust with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Connecting with community begins with connecting to yourself – not just as an educator, but as a person. Words like love, trust and relationships can be feared in the education sector. But for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, nothing good happens without them.

Community relationships take time. Not a lesson, a week, a term. They take years and require consistency, intentionality and authenticity from educators and learning communities.

Relationships should be intergenerational and deep. They should not be transactional. Each one of us is an integral, interdependent part of the community. Personal relationships build the connective tissue that binds us together. They give us strength and resilience so that we can face challenges collectively. That is how we have survived in the face of adversity for 65,000 years.



Educators must be self-reflexive in creating the practice needed to build relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. It is the children and young people's knowledge of how 'to be' in the community that educators must learn.

Ultimately, educators teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people need to educate themselves about the Country on which and the people with whom they work.

Connect with your humanity and let that inform the educator you become.

Be a lifelong learner as well as a lifelong educator.

Connecting with community

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are diverse and composed of Traditional Owners, Elders, Knowledge Holders, Language Custodians, families, children, First Nations businesses and organisations. Connecting with community is something educators must do to authentically include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives effectively and respectfully in your curriculum.

Building authentic relationships will encourage deeper trust, enable meaningful conversations and promote mutual understanding and collaboration. This is also key in ensuring early learning services and schools are culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Identifying key stakeholders

Mapping out your community connections is recommended to identify key stakeholders and the nuances of their different roles. Doing this groundwork helps ensure educators consult the correct people and access the right information.

The best way to identify First Nations community stakeholders is to get out and be a part of community. NAIDOC and Reconciliation Week are important periods when communities around the Nation gather to celebrate. When attending events during these times, be sure to introduce yourself to community members, First Nations businesses and organisations. Collect information about local programs to help you create your [Stakeholder List](#).

Additionally, Be You has compiled a [list of organisations and resources](#) you can use to begin your research.

First steps

Many educators voice their struggle in forming connections with the local First Nations community. This may be difficult for many reasons. Community members may be wary of your early learning service or school as the Australian education system has historically been a means of colonisation, assimilation and enforcing Western knowledge and culture. In addition, First Nations communities and individuals may also have their own experiences of racism and systemic discrimination, marginalisation and disadvantage.

While there is no blanket approach or fail-safe method, these strategies may support the process of inviting connection:

- Take time to consider why you want to connect with community. Being clear on your intentions and what you need will help you identify the correct person to contact. Remember, First Nations peoples are not generalists and there are nuances in the various roles that community members have. It's also worth noting that not all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples know about or want to share their culture.
- Take responsibility for educating yourself and building your cultural capacity before asking questions of community. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members often say they are exhausted from constantly having to educate others, particularly about sensitive subjects such as the Stolen Generations. It's important for educators to understand the emotional toll this has. It's preferable that you seek formal consultation and professional development and ask these questions in an appropriate forum.
- Make contact in person instead of on the phone or email. Connecting face-to-face is how a lot of blak business is done. It allows community to place you and build a rapport.
- Have realistic expectations. Many First Nations peoples have had negative experiences with mainstream institutions, such as schools and hospitals. It can take time to develop trust.
- After making a request, allow space and time for community to get back to you. It's important not to expect anyone to answer on the spot as often this results in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples feeling pressured to agree.
- Be proactive, not reactive. Focus on establishing a genuine relationship with your community that is not based upon a need or transaction. Go slow and allow time for community to get to know you and what you are about.
- When engaging community for a service, be clear and upfront from the beginning that you will pay them for their expertise. Do your research beforehand on the appropriate fees for services and ensure your budget can accommodate this before reaching out. Asking Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to donate their time and volunteer their knowledge and services is not acceptable.
- While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and service providers appreciate your support, NAIDOC and Reconciliation Week are very busy times of the year. Many First Nations people use these periods as time to be with their families and communities, preferring not to do school visits. Supporting First Nations businesses all year round, and not just during significant dates and celebrations, is much appreciated.

You can read more about community connection in the [Cultural Actions Catalogue](#).

Communication protocols

Understanding the specific communication protocols of your area is important. Here are some that you may need to be aware of:

- The use of eye contact differs from community to community. In some communities, direct eye contact is considered offensive, rude or aggressive, while avoiding eye contact is a sign of respect.
- The use of silence is intentional and signals a time to contemplate and reflect on what is being said. Be mindful not to misinterpret silence as agreement or a lack of understanding. Try not to lead conversations and instead engage in active listening. Take your cues from the First Nations people in the room.
- Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are multi-lingual. English may be their second, third or fourth language. Avoid jargon and the use of acronyms.
- In some First Nations communities, questioning is not normal custom. Knowledge is shared on Elders' and Knowledge Holders' time and terms. Be prepared not to have all your questions answered immediately or at all.

Sorry Business

When an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person passes, it sends ripples throughout the whole community. The grieving period is generally known as Sorry Business. This time is unique for each community, family and individual. It can involve ceremony, taking down photographs of the deceased and not speaking their name for a period of time. During times of Sorry Business, family and community obligations take priority over any prior engagements and commitments made with early learning services or schools. For example, this may impact a child or young person's attendance.

Sorry Business may be particularly challenging for a child or young person if they live off-Country or away from their community. They may feel the loss of connection and distance from home acutely. The child or young person may need to travel home and be absent from the learning community for an extended period.

You can support them by demonstrating you respect the significance of Sorry Business. This may include postponing any planned meetings with the child, young person or family, amending deadlines or adjusting homework and assignments that may be due during this time and supporting the child or young person to catch up on work when they return from absence.

Conflicting advice

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and peoples are diverse. Identities and culture are not fixed but fluid and shaped by many external factors such as politics, popular culture, individual relationships, experiences and opportunities. It's important to understand that First Nations peoples don't all think and feel the same way.

It's common for educators to receive conflicting advice. You may be unsure of how to proceed. When navigating this space, consider the following:

- Assess the validity of the source. Is the information source credible, such as a First Nations Knowledge Holder? Or is it something you have googled?
- Refer to your Stakeholder List. Have you asked the right questions of the right people?
- Don't over-consult. Whilst it's important to listen to multiple voices, it's equally important to act.
- Match advice given with your philosophy, pedagogy and practice. Does it resonate or conflict?

Lateral violence

Also known as horizontal violence or intra-racial conflict, lateral violence refers to negative behaviour that may occur within a race or culture – including within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Lateral violence is often a product of historical, social and cultural dynamics, such as colonisation, oppression and powerlessness. It may include gossiping, bullying, shaming, social exclusion and physical violence.

Lateral violence between First Nations communities and individuals can be complex and intergenerational due to relationship dynamics and the importance of community and kinship ties (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2011).

Occasionally educators may encounter lateral violence. You may be warned off working with a particular person or group. It's important not to take sides or get involved in these situations. Refer back to your Stakeholder List to identify the appropriate people to engage and work with in these instances.



Relationships with families

Connecting with families is integral to supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of all children and young people in your learning community.

Developing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families can be complex due to kinship and shared responsibilities of raising children and young people. This can also be due to intergenerational trauma caused by racist and unjust historical events and policies of Australia's past.

Understanding family structures

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family structures are regulated by a dynamic kinship system determined by social bonds, physical and emotional relationships to Country and connections to ancestral spirits. You can learn more in this [Reconciliation Australia video about family and kinship](#).

Responsibilities for raising the child or young person may extend beyond the 'nuclear' Western family structure. It may involve a closer relationship with Aunts, Uncles, cousins and grandparents. Children or young people may refer to their Uncle and Auntie as their Father or Mother. They know who their Mother and Father are, but these other family members may have equal importance.

Providing information to a range of family members and flexibility around having multiple family members in meetings acknowledges these shared roles. For example, families should be invited to advise their individual contexts and kinship structures to inform drop-off and pick-up policies. This will enable additional family members to collect children or young people during and after school or service hours.



Case study

Shared family responsibilities

Frank is 5-year-old boy attending his first year of school in a rural town. He lives with his mum, Louise, and dad, Gavin, who are part of a large and well-known family. Ms Stewart, Frank's teacher, met Louise and Gavin on Frank's orientation day. She is a first-year graduate and is new to town. It's her first time living and working away from home. Ms Roslyn is a local Aboriginal teacher working in an upper primary classroom. She is also Frank's Aunty (his mum's sister).

At Frank's first assembly, he excitedly tells Ms Stewart that he sees his mum. The teacher looks around and doesn't see Louise, so she tells him his mum isn't here. Frank jumps up, points to Ms Roslyn and exclaims, "There, Mum Roslyn, she's there Miss." Ms Stewart tells Frank, "That is not your mum, she is your Aunty" and tells him to sit down. Frank gets upset and repeatedly says that she is in fact, his Mum Roz.

Ms Mandi, a First Nations educator, notices Frank is upset and settles him away from the assembly. Ms Mandi speaks with Ms Stewart after school, explaining the family structures and relationships.

For reflection

- Think about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in your learning environment. Do you know what Country they belong to? Do you know who the significant people are in their home life? Consider engaging with their school or service profiles to learn more and build relationships with families and carers.
- Think about the cultural competency professional learning offered at your school. Does it educate staff about the complex roles and responsibilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families?
- Follow the social media pages of local First Nations community organisations and educational businesses for ongoing learning and engagement.

Developing relationships

Building trust with all families and caregivers can take time and continuous work. In addition to this, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families may have barriers to entering an early learning service or school or talking to educators.

Historically, the formal education system in Australia has served as a tool of colonisation. It was used to enforce Western knowledge and beliefs and deny First Nations knowledge, languages, beliefs and rights. This has had significant intergenerational and ongoing impacts on the educational experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities.

This history of institutional racism may influence families' discomfort when engaging with learning communities. They may also feel unwelcome due to their own school experiences or the behaviour of previous educators in services or schools.

Power dynamics and cultural safety

Families want to make sure that your learning community is a safe space for their child. A place where the child will be valued, understood and safe to be themselves. Building relationships with families is about connection before curriculum.

Reflect on the power dynamic that exists in educational institutions and the wider community and how this may be confronting to families. Consider the impact this can have in addition to the dynamic between dominant and non-dominant cultures. When meeting for the first time or discussing enrolment, consider inviting families to nominate a culturally safe meeting place for them. If possible, you may also like to invite a First Nations staff member or another community member to join these conversations. These considerations may help families feel more comfortable to connect and speak freely.

Culturally safe spaces

Consider how you can make your learning community a welcoming, culturally safe space. These may include:

- encouraging children and young people to develop meaningful Acknowledgements of Country and displaying them in your learning community
- using local language or dialects in signage, if appropriate for the local community
- inviting and paying a local First Nations artist to paint a mural.

You can find more practical examples for creating culturally safe spaces in the [Cultural Actions Catalogue](#) and [Narragunnawali resources](#).

Have an open-door policy to actively listen to feedback or concerns. Invite families and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to be involved in learning activities.

You can share information about yourself, your family and your culture to build trust and invite a reciprocal relationship. When asking for personal information from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and caregivers, consider if you were asked the same, would your questions be appropriate or relevant?

Offer different opportunities for families to feel comfortable and safe, enabling them to provide feedback to the learning community. For example, you could have a suggestion box, use emails or surveys. Different feedback methods enable families to choose how they would like to have their say and whether they would like to remain anonymous.

While inviting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to be involved in activities, be mindful of asking them to deliver services or educate you on cultural matters. This isn't appropriate and may place undue stress or burden on families.

Respectfully asking questions will help you build positive relationships and help gain insight into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in your learning community. But this should only be done after you have done your own research to learn about First Nations cultures and histories.

If there are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff or team members employed at your learning community, they are a valuable source of cultural and community knowledge. They may already have strong relationships with families, allowing them to regularly check in with them in unobtrusive ways that allow reciprocal relationships.

Be mindful not to overburden First Nations staff or team members. Their work in the community often extends beyond service or school hours and their wellbeing should be a priority for your learning community.

You can learn more about the importance of inviting and building connections with children and young people in the [Cultural Actions Catalogue](#).

Personal learning plans or Individual learning plans

Ensure you develop learning plans for First Nations children and young people that focus on culture while setting goals and strategies for outcomes about learning and wellbeing success. These learning plans should be written with the child or young person and their family, and link to the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. You should consult with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff members when developing learning plans for First Nations children and young people.

Learning plans that include the cultural needs of First Nations children and young people allow for a sense of identity within the learning community. They highlight the individual needs of each child and young person. These plans also make learning communities accountable for their professional obligations to create culturally safe learning environments.

Koori Curriculum has created a [Cultural Learning Plan](#) template you may like to use.

It can be repetitive for children, young people and their families to keep providing information to different educators in a learning community. As an educator, best practice is to check what is already in place before contacting families. For example:

- Holding handover conversations with other educators
- Referring to learning plans
- Connecting with Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers, First Nations staff or wellbeing staff
- Checking student profiles.

In a school context, when setting homework, determine whether children and young people have a reliable internet access, equipment and a quiet space to complete their learning tasks at home. Could taking work home add to stress or embarrassment if they don't have somewhere to study? Be sure to provide alternative or flexible methods. For example, setting tasks that don't require internet access or creating a 'homework club' after school, giving children and young people time and space to complete tasks outside the home environment.

Case study

Making Connections

Miss Melody has recently taken over a class that requires positive behaviour support. During the handover, the principal informs Miss Melody that many parents are contacted weekly regarding their child's behaviour. After this meeting, Miss Melody wants a more rounded picture of the class dynamics, so she has a conversation with Mr Nate, an Aboriginal support staff member in the classroom.

At first, Mr Nate is taken aback by the classroom teacher's interest in his perspective. No teacher or administration staff members have asked for his views in the 6 years he has worked there. Miss Melody assures him she wants to know about the school's relationships with the children and families.

After a productive conversation, Miss Melody and Mr Nate develop an action plan in which she first invites families into the classroom to introduce herself. She asks if it is appropriate to visit families who could not attend if Mr Nate or another First Nations staff member accompanies her.

The teaching team plans to recognise the children's 'deadly'* learning and ensure they regularly communicate this with families.

When Miss Melody makes her first positive phone call to a child's father, he assumes his daughter is in trouble again. After the teacher explains that she is calling to inform him about his daughter's positive behaviour, he expresses his appreciation. In the past, he had only heard from the school when something was wrong. The next day, the child excitedly tells Miss Melody and Mr Nate that her dad had made her favourite dinner last night because the teacher rang him about her 'deadly' learning.

For reflection

- Reflect on the communications you have had with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. How many of them have been negative?
- How many days are you aware of that celebrate or commemorate days or weeks of national significance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the reconciliation movement?
- Research local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events in your area to attend with your friends or family.

*Deadly is an Aboriginal English word for 'fantastic,' 'excellent' or 'great'.

Curriculum

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have worked tirelessly to tell their story against the resistance of the colonisers' narrative. For this reason, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and perspectives should be the foundation for all learning experiences, not just on special 'cultural' days. Inclusion of First Nations perspectives should not be tokenistic or superficial but genuine engagement, as explored throughout this guide.

International research (Lee et al, 2007, as cited in Perso, 2012) has identified 7 common characteristics of culturally responsive practice in education. However, these qualities should be integral to all learning communities to benefit all children and young people.

1. A climate of caring, respect, and the valuing of children and young peoples' cultures fostered in the learning setting.
2. Bridges are built between academic learning and children and young peoples' prior understanding, knowledge, native language and values.
3. Educators all learn from and about children and young peoples' culture, language and learning styles to make instruction more meaningful and relevant to their lives.
4. Local knowledge, language and culture are fully integrated into the curriculum, not added to it.
5. Educators have high expectations for all children and young people, and for each other.
6. Effective learning practices are challenging, cooperative and hands on, with less emphasis on rote memorisation and lecture formats.
7. Staff or team members build trust and partnerships with families, especially families marginalised by learning communities in the past.

When including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in your curriculum, you should seek community consultation. In order to respectfully and authentically include cultural perspectives in your program, you need first to understand the perspectives, values and needs of the local community. Each community's ideas and protocols differ from the next and will greatly impact what is deemed appropriate and respectful practice in your early learning service or school.

As an educator, you need to think carefully and intentionally about your community consultation process. Identifying how you will consult, with who, why and when can support you in understanding what your role is. It can also help determine your personal responsibility for seeking information and prevent overwhelming precious relationships.

Community-led learning

While you are required to embed perspectives and celebrate culture in your curriculum, this should be informed by providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to share their culture directly with children and young people. For example, in an early childhood context, curriculum should combine community-led learning, educator-led play and learning and child-directed play and learning.

Ensure you refer to the relevant standards to guide your processes and work. For example, the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) standards, Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and the Australian Curriculum cross-curriculum priority: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures.

What can and should be shared by educators is best identified by the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community. However, here are some general principles we recommend you consider in your curriculum planning:

- Provide a balance of contemporary and traditional perspectives. Remember to seek permission from cultural Custodians to share and include things like language and Dreaming stories. Build your cultural knowledge to help you feel confident when discussing cultural topics and themes.
- Showcase the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities and include urban, regional and local contexts.

- Intentionally use resources that showcase the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and families such as skin colour and family structure.
- Holistically program and plan to include culture in context to topics of inquiry and children and young people's interests, instead of teaching about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as a topic, theme or interest.
- Include culture every day and not just during special days.
- Discuss Australia's true history as well as current affairs and issues that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities today.
- Purchase resources from First Nations-owned education businesses, such as Koori Curriculum and Teaching Indigenous Perspectives in the Australian Curriculum (TIPIAC). You can find more certified First Nations businesses at [Supply Nation](#).



Overall, take a multifaceted approach toward Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and consider all opportunities for culture to be included and celebrated. You may do this by creating inclusive learning and play environments, including culture within children and young people's interests and topics of enquiry, and using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogies to teach about culture.

Creating inclusive play spaces and learning environments allows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to see themselves reflected in all places and spaces within your setting, not just in one 'cultural corner' in a classroom or front foyer. Cultural materials should be used functionally and not just there for aesthetic purposes.

Topics of inquiry and children and young people's interests are great vehicles for learning and provide opportunities for culture to be embedded meaningfully. Sharing culture through play and in context to children and young people's interests ensures that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are foregrounded in your curriculums, not added as an afterthought.



Case study

Teacher as the learner and learner as the teacher

Liz is a 16-year-old proud Aboriginal girl who loves art and engaging with cultural practices. During English class, all students were asked to translate a play by Shakespeare into a contemporary setting and present a class speech on their content. Liz decided to be creative, and with permission from her class teacher, Mr Allen, and the subject coordinator Mr Evans, incorporated some of her knowledge of cultural practices of Possum Skin Cloak to translate Macbeth into a precolonial timeframe.

Liz spent time sketching a Possum Skin Cloak design, making up her own symbols and a key to map out Macbeth's themes, journey and relationships. She included some sections of leftover possum skin from a community project she'd been involved in.

After the presentation, as Liz was packing up to leave, Mr Allen chatted to her about the history of colonisation, using inappropriate terminology. When Liz respectfully informed him of preferred terms and some historical facts, Mr Allen spoke over her and told her, as a qualified history teacher, he knew more about the topic than she did. Liz felt uncomfortable and upset. Her friend supported her to tell Ms Pine, a teacher she trusted, who then reported it to the principal.

For reflection

- Using a student's cultural identity and interests can be a wonderful engagement tool. How have Mr Allen and Mr Evans attempted to do this with Liz?
- How could Mr Allen engage in a conversation about Liz's culture and the true history of Australia in a more appropriate and respectful way?
- What suggestions would you pass on to Mr Allen to help him build upon his cultural responsiveness and engage in respectful and reciprocal relationships with First Nations students?

Music and art

Music and art experiences can be a great way for educators to celebrate and include culture in the curriculum. When exploring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music and art in your learning community, it's important to uphold the integrity of the piece and pay respect to the artist.

Art Gallery of South Australia education coordinator Kylie Neagle developed guidelines to help educators follow an ethical process. Neagle (2019) advises educators to identify:

1. What is the work of art?
2. What are the main ideas, themes or concepts in the artist's work?
3. How does this relate to the world of my students?
4. What are some ways children can respond without creating copies of the artist's work?

Furthermore, while there is no set approach educators should follow when procuring and working with First Nations art and music, these general principles are recommended:

- Set aside a budget to procure art and resources ethically. Don't print images you found online.
- Engage First Nations artists in the local Community and create opportunities for artist-in-residence programs.
- Support local artists and learn about traditional First Nations art from your area.
- Expose children to a diverse range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, not limited to your local area.
- Don't copy or recreate art pieces.
- Support businesses registered with Supply Nation, the Aboriginal Art Association of Australia or members of the Indigenous Art Code.

Gender roles

Some parts of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures have defined gender roles. These are most commonly visible to non-Indigenous people when observing cultural music and dance practices. However, Women's and Men's Business is much deeper and relates to much more than this.

As an educator, you aim to be inclusive of all children or young people and not discriminate based on gender. You may face an ethical dilemma if exploring culturally gendered practices, such as playing the yidaki (didgeridoo), in your learning community. Protocols regarding women using this instrument can differ across communities and within families. However, it is commonly preferred that women don't play and, in some instances, don't touch the yidaki.

Researching and respecting the local community's preferences in these instances is important. If women and girls can't engage with an instrument, it may be more appropriate not to play it in your learning setting. You may wish to look for alternatives, such as inviting a musician to play, listening to or watching recordings of the instrument being played or exploring alternative instruments, such as clapping sticks, which all children can play.

Sensitive subjects

While it's not always possible to have an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person collaborate and co-deliver lessons, it's important to seek consultation regarding sensitive subjects. This is specifically important when discussing and teaching about the Stolen Generations and other aspects of history pertaining to the ill-treatment and injustices endured by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In an early childhood context, you also need to consider what is age-appropriate to share with children. When educators intend to broach sensitive topics with young children, it's important to intentionally plan these experiences first. Share your intentions with and seek feedback from colleagues, children's families and, where possible, community.

It's also important to have a holistic and individual understanding of the children in your classroom and the community that you are working in. There are many current affairs and issues that First Nations children and young people may disproportionately face, such as mental health issues, substance abuse, homelessness and domestic violence. Having knowledge of your community context and the children or young people you teach helps to ensure you navigate classroom content and discussions sensitively and respectfully.

Addressing 26 January

This date is known by many names, including Day of Mourning, Survival Day, Invasion Day, Aboriginal Sovereignty Day and Australia Day. Each community, family and individual will have their own views regarding the date. These views and beliefs can sometimes clash and contradict within an early learning service or school community.

Early learning services and schools often celebrate national dates of significance to bring the community together. However, educators need to consider that some dates have a greater capacity to exclude than to include. Learning communities need to review their inclusive policies and practices to ensure they are inclusive of all children, young people and families, not just the majority. Critically reflecting on these practices should be done proactively to ensure the inclusion of all current and future children and families. You can read more about this in the 'Policies and processes' section of this guide.

It's important to manage families' expectations about how your learning community intends to respond to dates of significance. For example, you might encourage leaders to amend your inclusion policy to clarify what is and isn't celebrated or acknowledged and how and the reasons for these decisions.

Policies and procedures should always be underpinned by overarching frameworks such as the National Quality Standards, Code of Ethics, Early Years Learning Framework or the Australian Curriculum, not personal opinions.

In 2018 Early Childhood Australia (ECA) issued a statement in solidarity with Reconciliation Australia. ECA encouraged educators to not celebrate Australia on or around 26 January as they felt the national day should be changed to a date that is inclusive for all Australians.

However, this doesn't mean educators should ignore the date completely. By avoiding 26 January, educators are missing an opportunity to engage in and discuss social justice, equality and equity issues with children and young people.

There are many books that can be used as conversation-starters in your learning community. These include:

- 'Day Break' by Amy McQuire
- 'The Sacred Hill' by Gordon Hookey
- 'Sorry Sorry' by Anne Kerr
- 'Somebody's Land' by Adam Goodes and Ellie Laing

For young people:

- 'The Boy from the Mish' by Gary Lonesborough
- 'Lies, Damned Lies' by Claire G. Coleman
- 'Song of the Crocodile' by Nardi Simpson
- 'Swallow the Air' by Tara June Winch

Pedagogy and practice

We encourage you to use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogies to shape, inform and guide your practice. If you're a non-Indigenous educator, understand that your ways of knowing, being and doing can greatly differ to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children or young people in your care.

Intentional teaching practices informed by First Nations pedagogies support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to reach the same learning outcomes as their non-Indigenous peers. These practices enable them to thrive in the early years and at school.

First Nations pedagogies are suitable and benefit all learners, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous.



Language and terminology

It should be recognised that any English words used as collective names for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are imposed and therefore are politically powerful. Some are offensive or have negative historical connotations and should be avoided.

Here is a quick guide:

Preferred terms	Language or terms to avoid
<p>Aboriginal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As an adjective, for example, 'an Aboriginal person' <p>First Nations</p> <p>First Peoples</p> <p>If known, distinguishing whether someone is an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander person</p> <p>If known, identifying the person by their Country, Community or language group</p>	<p>Aborigine</p> <p>Aboriginal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a noun, for example referring to a person as 'an Aboriginal' Adding pronouns such as 'those', 'these' or 'our' before 'Aboriginal' <p>Indigenous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This term describes flora or fauna native to a country and may not be appropriate when referring to people. Please note some communities and organisations may use the term 'Indigenous'. It's best to follow community guidance. <p>'Natives' or any reference to blood quantum or caste</p> <p>Shortening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander to 'ATSI'</p>

Please note that this is not a comprehensive list of terms.

Some publications still use some terms or phrases best avoided, so be mindful and pre-read all texts for your learning community. Avoid using texts with outdated, offensive or inappropriate terms. If you use these terms, ensure you provide context and use the outdated terms as a teachable moment for truth-telling.

Preferred terms such as First Nations or First Peoples acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first inhabitants, custodians and owners of the lands across the continent. These plural terms also reflect the diversity and cultural richness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Self-identified collective terms such as Noongar (south-west Western Australia) and Koori (New South Wales and Victoria) are appropriate for their applicable areas. Where possible, it's always best to find the local names for particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language groups, for example, Nyul Nyul, Wiradjuri, Yorta Yorta or Arrernte Peoples. Consult with local First Nations people to clarify the appropriate use of these and other terms.

To learn more about respectful and inclusive language, visit the [Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education Terminology Guide](#).

Language diversity

Historically, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were punished for speaking their languages. As time progressed, schools and non-Indigenous teaching staff considered Aboriginal languages and dialects 'gibberish'. This is offensive and placed immense shame on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people at school. It resulted in the loss of many languages.

Aboriginal English

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were also shamed for speaking Aboriginal English, despite it being an English dialect. Derogatory words were used to describe this dialect, such as 'broken' or 'rubbish' English. While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are reclaiming their languages and dialect, it's disrespectful for non-Indigenous people to use Aboriginal English. Recognising that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people come from home environments with different linguistic backgrounds can help you as an educator to adjust your practices to ensure better comprehension and communication (Perso, 2012).

Strengths-based approach

Because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages have been devalued for so long, many educators lower their perceptions of children and young people's intelligence rather than acknowledge the language barrier. It's imperative that you don't adopt a deficit approach. Instead, seek professional learning to build your knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and 'code meshing'. You are the model for Standard Australian English, please seek permission from the community to use any language.



Case study

Living languages

Matilda is a 4-year-old who attends long day care. She lives with her mother and father, and they all speak Aboriginal English at home. Matilda engages in all learning activities at the service and especially loves story time where she regularly answers questions and shares her thoughts.

Matilda's educator is new to the service and has not undertaken any culturally responsive professional learning. After reading Aesop's fable 'The Tortoise and the Hare', the educator asked the children: "What happened in the story?"

Matilda excitedly answered: "That turtle bin kill'em* that hare." The educator didn't understand this response. She told Matilda the turtle did not "kill the hare" and there was no killing in the story at all.

Matilda thought she was in trouble and sat quietly on the mat. She was disengaged from the lesson and is now reluctant to share during learning time.

*Kill or Kill'em means 'beat or win' in many Aboriginal English dialects in northern Western Australia.

For reflection

- How may Matilda's teacher have managed that interaction differently?
- Consider reviewing your curriculum documents to identify where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and content are or could be more strongly included in your curriculum planning.
- Think about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources you use in your practice. Are they relevant, up-to-date and written from a First Nations perspective? Consider engaging with [AIATSIS Guide to evaluating and selecting education resources](#).

Policies and processes

Introducing inclusive policies and processes is a clear way to include cultural responsiveness in your learning community.

Start by consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and families about appropriate policies and how you can implement them. You should also consult with the Local Aboriginal Land Council and local cultural organisations regarding protocols, policies and practices. Ensure all staff or team members in your learning community know about policies.

Enrolment

As explored in the 'Relationships with families' section of this guide, consider ways to invite connection and enable First Nations families to feel comfortable when first engaging with your learning community.

You should have an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander educator or support staff member present at enrolment interviews with identified First Nations families, whenever possible. If your learning community doesn't currently have any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff members, engage with your state's First Nations education consultative group or a staff member from a neighbouring school or service.

Having an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff member present may help families feel comfortable asking questions and ensure that their child will be culturally supported in the service or school. It establishes your setting as a culturally safe learning community from the outset.

Completing enrolment paperwork can also be overwhelming for some family members. It may evoke feelings of shame if they don't speak Standard Australian English or have low literacy levels. Consider offering support to complete any paperwork.

Asking for a birth certificate may be complicated or traumatic for some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families for multiple reasons. You may need to ask a First Nations staff member whether this is appropriate or reach out to other organisations to ensure legal documents are up-to-date.

Depending on your state or territory's rules, a statutory declaration, letter from a doctor confirming the child's birth date or another official document with the child's birth name and date may be accepted.

Fees

As with all families, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families should be made aware of any hardship policies and fee assistance available. As explored in the 'Relationships with families' section, developing strong partnerships with all families is important to ensure you can conduct any potentially challenging conversations sensitively and respectfully.

Policies

Consult with First Nations staff members when writing learning community policies to ensure you consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives. For example, a school's uniform policy should be culturally inclusive. It should be developed considering First Nations and other cultural customs, such as hairstyles, tattoos and piercings.

Being open and understanding when communicating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families helps build positive relationships and can help schools and services understand diverse and sometimes complex circumstances. This is essential when educators are recording incidents and following assessment policies.

School or service staff responsible for recording attendance should have processes in place where they communicate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to ensure they are aware of and consider individual circumstances. Reflect on the impact of cultural obligations and travel on punctuality and attendance and consider culturally responsive approaches to late arrivals.

Your policies should include a section about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. This section should outline that families must be provided with policies, documents and links to local support services. They should also be informed about any First Nations staff members in your school or service.

Anti-racism and discrimination

Racism is a leading cause of mental health and wellbeing issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Reconciliation Australia's [2022 Australian Reconciliation Barometer](#) revealed 60% of the First Nations people surveyed experienced at least one form of racial prejudice within the 6-month survey period. Racism and discrimination occur across all cultures. It's important to acknowledge the power imbalances that exist in learning communities and foster cultural respect and understanding.

While it's important to support children and young people to "develop healthy and robust cultural identity and develop skills and resilience to manage racist events" (Westerman, 2019), it's vital that your learning community develops clear anti-discrimination and anti-racism policies and enforces them.

These anti-discrimination and anti-racism policies should outline that no child, young person or educator should face discrimination and that discriminatory behaviour won't be tolerated. They should also state how your learning community will respond to such behaviour. All families and caregivers must have access to the school or service's Code of Conduct and be assured that racist and discriminatory behaviour will have consequences in your learning community.

Furthermore, educators should have high expectations for all children and young people to reach their potential, regardless of race or background. As an educator, you should continually reflect on your own conscious or unconscious biases. Addressing bias and promoting cultural safety are ongoing responsibilities for educators.

Statutory or mandatory reporting

Educators should follow legal requirements. Consider respectful and appropriate language, terminology and context carefully if your report involves First Nations children or young people.

Suspension and expulsion

There is significant evidence that suspensions and expulsions from school increase the likelihood of contact with the criminal justice system (The Bugmy Bar Book Project, 2019). Furthermore, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are at higher risk of suspension and exclusion (Graham et al, 2023).

If you are in a school setting, consider processes for restorative behaviour management. If relationships break down, restorative justice is about having “fair, responsive processes in place in which everyone can share their stories, hear the impact of their actions, repair the relational harm and figure out the best way forward, together” (Reimer, 2019).

Learn more about using [restorative behaviour management in your classroom or school](#).

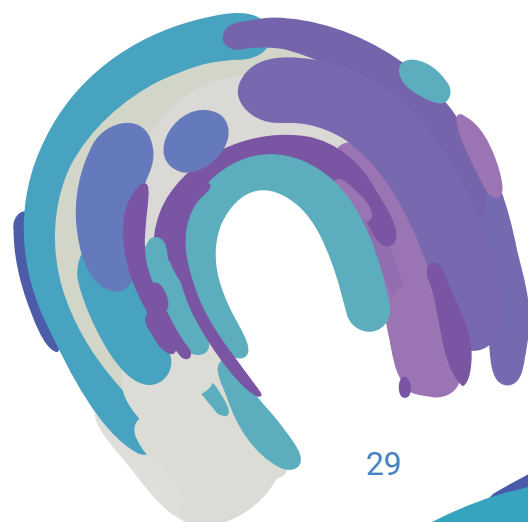
Disciplinary policies and processes should be written in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sector representatives. Meetings with First Nations children, young people and families should always include a cultural representative for support.

Employment

Early learning services and schools should make a concerted effort to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at all levels in the workplace. Where possible, capacity building and leadership opportunities should be available to current staff and community members.

Ensure you have an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander representative present when interviewing candidates for identified positions. It's also important to introduce and maintain cultural safety and authenticity in your employment practices.

Making a genuine effort to employ First Nations staff or team members, and visibility of First Nations peoples with a variety of jobs, will also provide role models and inspire all children and young people in your learning community.



Case study

Challenging conversations

Jeramiah is a 12-year-old boy who lives with his nan, Anne, a well-respected community Elder, on a property outside town. His mum lives in a small flat on the property, but Jeramiah has limited contact with her due to court orders. Anne tries her best raising her grandson along with 4 other grandbabies.

Jeramiah is finding school difficult to navigate. There has been a lot of communication from different teachers to Anne regarding Jeramiah's engagement in class, completion of learning tasks and behaviour on and off the playground. Anne also finds Jeramiah's issues at school hard to manage. She doesn't really understand the school's processes or the jargon they use.

Anne is requested to attend a meeting at school. She needs to find a babysitter for her other children in order to attend. When she arrives, she sees she is the only woman and Aboriginal person, apart from Jeramiah, sitting at the conference table. During the meeting, the deputy principal, Mr Argyle and lead teachers of curriculum and wellbeing, Mr Davis and Mr Kelly discuss suspensions and possible expulsions. Anne feels lost and unable to advocate for her grandson.

For reflection

- What should the deputy principal, Mr Argyle and lead teachers, Mr Davis and Mr Kelly consider when arranging a meeting with Anne and Jeramiah?
- How might past educational policies and events, Anne's experiences with educational institutions, and current family arrangements impact on successful educational and wellbeing outcomes for Jeramiah?
- How could this school's policies regarding curriculum and behaviour become easier to understand and access for families of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and all students?
- It is important to make meetings, interviews and communication culturally safe for First Nations students and families. How can educators create a culturally safe space to engage in conversations?

Other considerations

Paying for services and knowledge

As with anyone, it's disrespectful to ask Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to work for free. Some family members may offer to volunteer their time, but it's essential to consider your budget when engaging people to provide services such as knowledge-sharing, art and experiences.

If you invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community or family members to lead cultural activities, make sure they are treated professionally and paid fairly for their time and knowledge.

If your learning community employs Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff members, it's important to respect their time, professional boundaries and mental health. For example, while they may be able to deliver certain lessons or have valuable community connections, it may not be in their capacity or skill set to paint a mural or teach specific content.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples bear the cultural load of feeling like they have to educate non-Indigenous people, often without being compensated for their time. Although your questioning may come from a genuine place of knowledge-seeking, please respect your colleagues.

Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property

Navigating the fine line between cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation can be tricky for many educators, as is determining what your role is versus the role of First Nations communities and families.

Indigenous cultural intellectual property (ICIP) is a right that First Nations people have to protect their traditional art and culture. According to First Nations law firm Terri Janke and Company (Moran, 2020), ICIP covers:

- Literary, performing and artistic works (Copyright)
- Languages
- Types of knowledge, including spiritual knowledge
- Tangible and intangible cultural property
- Indigenous ancestral remains and genetic material
- Cultural environmental resources
- Sites of Indigenous significance
- Documentation of Indigenous heritage

For educators, this means that you can't assume the right to teach or pass on to others something that has been shared with you. In early learning services and schools, it's particularly important to be mindful of this when sharing Dreaming stories, language, traditional art techniques and dance.

If you're unsure about whether something is appropriate to share, it's always a good idea to ask the person teaching you what the protocol is for respectful conduct in passing information on.

Glossary

Bias: inclination or prejudice for or against a person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair.

Code: a linguistic term that describes the dialectal and vernacular words that make up a language.

Code meshing: an approach to communication that assumes all dialects and languages are equal in their complexity and value. In practice, it acts as combining, or meshing, different 'codes' within one context. In the past 'code-switching' was adopted as the ideal method for navigating cultural and linguistic differences. But the term assumed non-Standard Australian English speakers would need to bear the load of adjusting between their language or dialect and Standard Australian English to suit the context and situation.

Community: for First Nations Peoples, Community is about connectedness, interdependency, identity and belonging. It includes connections to Country, family and kinship dynamics and shared experience. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health refers not just to the physical wellbeing of an individual but refers to the holistic social, emotional, cultural and spiritual wellbeing of the whole community.

Educator: Be You uses the term 'educator' to include all staff or team members working in early learning services, schools and school age care, who educate children and young people.

Learning community: Be You uses the umbrella term 'learning community' to describe education settings, such as early learning services, schools and school age care services.

Truth-telling: a process of openly sharing historical truths after periods of conflict to allow societies to move forward in a more inclusive way, based on justice and human rights. It recognises injustices that have been ignored and actively hidden, empowers individuals to share their stories and exposes the harms caused by colonisation that continue to impact First Nations peoples. (First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria, 2020)

Unconscious bias: a social stereotype about a person or group, such as a racial or identity group, formed outside of your conscious awareness.

Further resources

Be You

[Creating a Stakeholder List](#)

[Cultural Actions Catalogue](#)

[Cultural Responsiveness in learning communities: A focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples](#)

[Organisations for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and cultures](#)

Education

[Australian Curriculum: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures](#)

[Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership: Building a culturally responsive Australian teaching workforce](#)

[Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#)

[Narragunnawali: Attending and Reflecting on Significant Events](#)

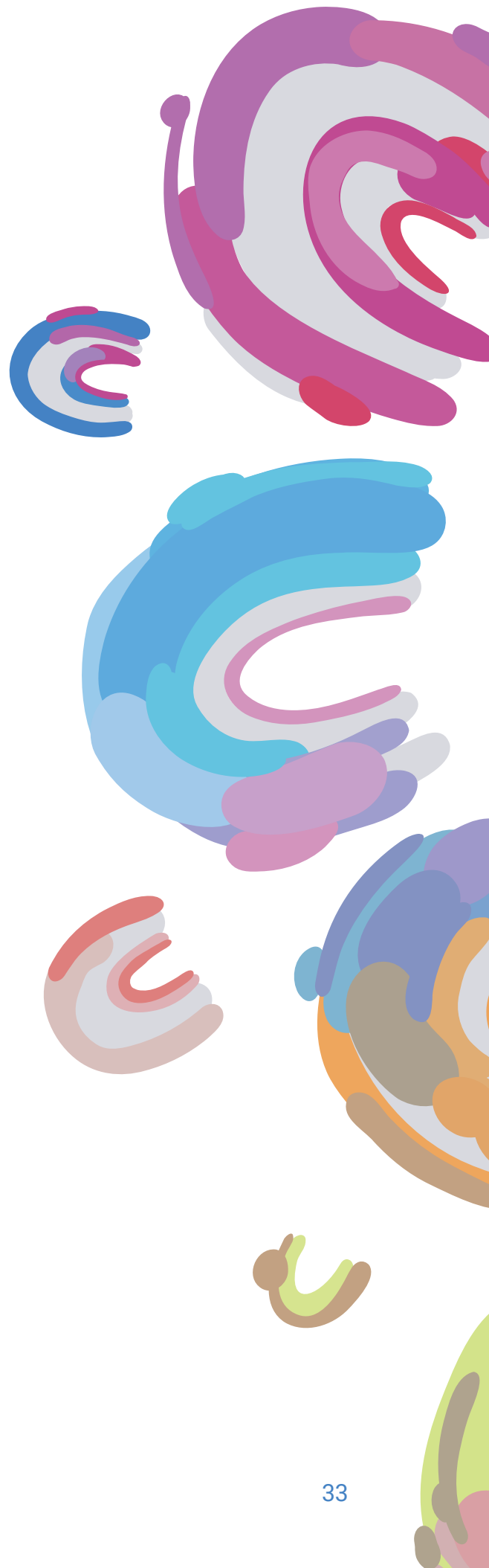
[Narragunnawali Terminology Guide](#)

First Nations

[Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies \(AIATSIS\) Guide to evaluating and selecting education resources](#)

[Koori Curriculum: Cultural Learning Plan](#)

[Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care: Promoting, Exploring and Celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures](#)



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