

# ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURE AWARENESS CENTRE POLICY

*References: National Law 167, 168 National Regulations 73-76, 103,105  
National Quality Standard 1.1, 1.2, 3.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.2*

## Policy Statement

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G8 Education understands the importance of recognising that Aboriginality is not about skin colour. Aboriginality means something different for each child and their family.

Since the 1980's the Federal Government has used a definition that is broken into three parts. An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is a person who:

1. Is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.
2. Identifies himself or herself as of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.
3. Is accepted by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.


At G8 Education we endeavor to support every child in building a strong sense of their identity i.e., who they are and where they belong. We will provide children the right to their identity and to live and learn within their culture. We believe this is especially important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children whose distinctive culture and lifestyle have in the past been threatened and undermined by dominant cultures.

Our centre aims to foster children's positive self-esteem and to preserve their own culture and personal identity. It is with this aim that we educate all children of not only the things that make them unique but also those things that make them similar to establish an appreciation of diversity.

## Policy Guidelines

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- The centre endeavors to support Indigenous children and their families to nurture their culture, their identity and their spirituality with guidance from leading authorities in this field.
- Curriculum will incorporate cultural activities and use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources (music, posters, books, paintings etc.) in a way that is meaningful and not tokenistic.
- Encourage the involvement of parents and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults in the educational program.
- Promote children's awareness of the things that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have in common with each other and with those not within that culture and the awareness of the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures from the other cultural representations in the centre and wider community. This encourages acceptance of diversity and helps to minimise discriminatory practices.

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- Team members will provide an environment that encourages activity-based learning by allowing children to explore and experiment for themselves and allowing them to make their own sense of things around them.
- Team members will serve as role models for anti-bias practices and lead by example so that children have a positive influence to guide them in acceptable behaviours and knowing what behaviours will not be supported.
- Team members will provide Indigenous children time to observe, think, practice skills, be independent and be responsible. They also need to give Indigenous children the freedom to explore and to use their senses as well as provide opportunities for real life and hands-on experiences to enable them to understand how things work. Team members are aware of the way Indigenous children learn and respect that Indigenous children learn from experiences such as touch, feel and by doing.
- Centre teams will listen to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, respect their views and allow opportunities for family and community members to be involved in centre programs e.g., inviting local elders to significant centre events.
- All team members must check or have prior permission to use photos of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders/children due to grief and loss traditions. Respect for this custom must be adhered to at all times.
- Team members are encouraged and provided resources to increase their knowledge of Aboriginal Australia in the past and present. This assists them to apply this knowledge, skill and attitudes to create accessible and inclusive early childhood environments. It is also important that each team member educates themselves, so they can feel confident in passing on knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture to all in a meaningful and informed way.
- Centre teams are supported when reconciliation action plans are being implemented.
- This policy is also guided by the *Anti-Bias, Inclusion and Cultural Diversity Policy*.

## Policy Review


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- The centre will review the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Culture Awareness Policy and related documents every year or as new information arises.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the centre to review the Policy and Procedures.
- Team members are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be encouraged to be actively involved.

## Sources


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- Consultation with management, team members and families.
- Cultural Awareness Package (Australian National Training Authority)
- [www.community.nsw.gov.au](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au) Working with Aboriginal people and communities.
- [www.reconciliation.org.au](http://www.reconciliation.org.au) Reconciliation Action Plan

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- [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au) - Aboriginal Australia NCAC fact sheet and all documents relating to the National Quality Framework including but not limited to:
  - National Law Guide and National Regulations Guide
  - National Quality Standard Guide
  - Quality Improvement Plan Guide



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