

CELEBRATING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURE

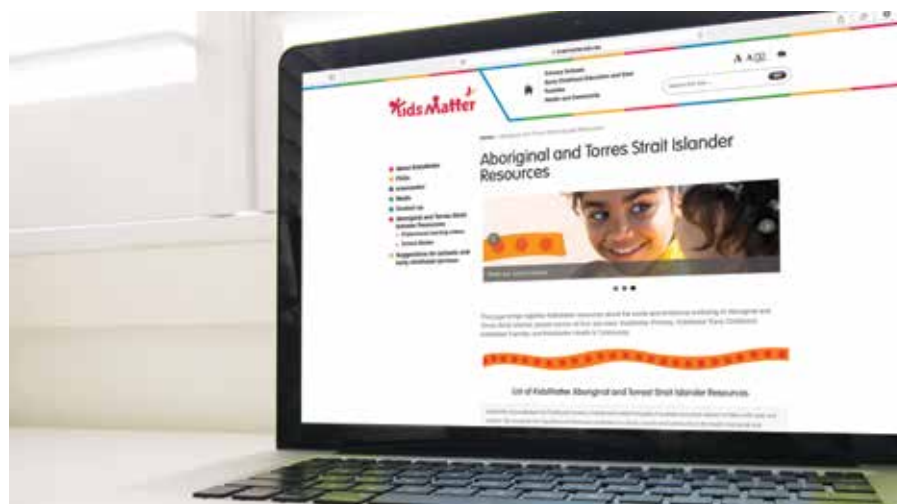
Each year from 27 May to 3 June, National Reconciliation Week provides an opportunity to take action to build respect and strengthen relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. However, any time is a good time to celebrate Australia's first-peoples and their cultures.

This year National Reconciliation Week focused on engaging the next generation. *Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning* supported early childhood services, primary and secondary schools in Australia to develop environments that foster a higher level of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions.

Here are some activities to celebrate Aboriginal culture, and connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island families, in your community:

- Find out who are the traditional owners of the land on which your service is located – talk to local Indigenous organisations and groups and the Indigenous officer at your local council. Share this information and acknowledge the traditional owners with children and families.
- Invite a member of your local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community to visit and share their culture and history.
- Display the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags at your centre and talk about what these represent. To buy flags visit Koorie Heritage Trust. For information about the flags go to AIATSIS website.
- Share picture books by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors. For suggested titles visit Magabala Books.
- Listen (and dance) to music by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians and talk about this with the children – e.g. Christine Anu, Dan Sultan, Gurumul Yunupingu, The Mills Sisters, Tjupi Band, Archie Roach, Ruby Hunter, Jimmy Little, Warumpi Band, Kev Carmody.

- Look at a wide range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art from around the country – x-ray art, watercolour paintings, dot paintings, bark paintings, printed textiles.
- Explore the lives of Indigenous sports men and women – e.g. Cathy Freeman, Adam Goodes, Nicky Winmar.
- Plan a visit or check out the Bunjilaka at Melbourne Museum: visit the Bunjilaka website
- Use Indigenous animals and plants in play to connect with your local environment.
- Let families know about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events, exhibitions, and festivals e.g. the Koorie Night Markets
- The Indigenous Professional Support Program may be able to assist. For example, the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) can provide support to raise cultural competency in mainstream early childhood services – visit the VAEAI website
- Review your *Inclusion and Equity Policy* and ensure that everyone at the service is familiar with its contents.



KidsMatter Resources

KidsMatter is a mental health and wellbeing initiative for children.

KidsMatter Early Childhood works with early childhood education and care services to support the mental health and wellbeing of young children, their families and early childhood educators using a promotion, prevention and early intervention framework. The KidsMatter website provides a range of resources which can be used to strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities.

These resources are in a range of formats, including web based and videos.

For more information visit: www.kidsmatter.edu.au/early-childhood/resources-educators-and-families

For further information visit: www.reconciliation.org.au. Early Childhood Australia also produces a range of reconciliation resources to support educators which can be viewed at ECA's learning hub website.