ACECQA

Information sheet
MY TIME, OUR PLACE

Cultural responsiveness

Cultural responsiveness is a contemporary way to think about culture and enables individuals and organisations to be respectful of all backgrounds, beliefs, values, customs, knowledges, lifestyles and social behaviours.

Educators who are culturally responsive, respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, doing and being and celebrate the benefits of diversity.

Educators who demonstrate Cultural responsiveness honour differences and take action in the face of unfairness or discrimination.

This information sheet supports the Practice, Cultural Responsiveness from *My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia (MTOP) V2.0.*

Links to the National Quality Standard (NQS)

The NQS recognises the potential of the educational program and practices to enhance each child's learning and development. The MTOP V2.0 Practice, Cultural responsiveness is reflected in several quality areas of the NQS, with a particular focus in:

QA1: Educational program and practice

Element 1.1.1: Approved learning framework – Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.

Element 1.1.2: Child-centred – Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.

QA4: Staffing arrangements

Element 4.2.1: Professional collaboration – Management, educators and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills.

QA5: Relationships with children

Element 5.1.2: Dignity and rights of the child – The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.

QA6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Element 6.1.2: Parent views are respected – The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision making about their child's learning and wellbeing.

Element 6.2.3: Community engagement – The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

QA7: Governance and Leadership

Element 7.1.1: Service philosophy and purpose – A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations.

Educators who are culturally responsive, respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, doing and being and celebrate the benefits of diversity.

Being culturally responsive includes a genuine commitment to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of the curriculum.

Cultural Responsiveness

- Research and thinking in this area encourages educators to move beyond cultural competence to cultural responsiveness.
- It promotes a contemporary way to think about culture and enables individuals and organisations to be respectful of all backgrounds, beliefs, values, customs, knowledges, lifestyles and social behaviours.
- Cultural responsiveness reflects a deeper understanding of all cultures and diversity and a commitment to embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all areas of professional practice.
- Cultural responsiveness is characterised by respect for cultures that are not your own, ongoing self-reflection, continued learning and a commitment to improving professional practice in this area.

What does this look like in practice?

- Educators recognise that the cultural backgrounds and kinship systems of the families contribute to children's identity and sense of belonging when choosing materials. They provide resources and materials that support a meaningful and embedded approach to inclusion.
- Cultural responsiveness is evident in everyday practice when educators demonstrate an ongoing commitment to developing their own cultural knowledge in a three-way process with children, families and communities.
- Educators demonstrate a genuine commitment to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of the curriculum.
- Educators support and guide children to be culturally competent and responsive by taking actions in the face of unfairness and discrimination.
- All educators collaborate with children, their families and members of the community to build culturally safe and secure environments and use this knowledge to inform their practice.
- Educators implement anti-bias approaches, including social justice approaches to address racism/bias in the setting/community.
- Educators embed democratic and fair practices in their setting, including the importance of being a responsible citizen.
- Children are supported to build culturally safe learning spaces in collaboration with their peers, families and communities.

What might this look like for school age children?

- Educators are knowledgeable of each child and young person's family context.
- Educators have an awareness of their own world view and biases.
- Educators communicate effectively and sensitively with people, recognising diverse ways of communicating and interacting across cultures.
- Environments for children and young people are culturally safe and children and young people are encouraged to take culturally responsive actions in the face of unfairness/discrimination.
- Children, young people, educators and family are actively engaged in embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.
- Children and young people are supported to gather information, ask questions, seek clarification and consider possibilities about their own lives.
- Children and young people are supported to explore groups to which they belong without reinforcing stereotypes.

Reflective questions and provocations

- How has individual educator and collective service knowledge about children, young people, family and community been informed? How does this support a culturally safe environment where children and young people's rights are respected?
  - » TED Talk – [The danger of a single story | Chimamanda Adichie 2020 (YouTube)](#)
- In what ways do you support all educators to communicate effectively and sensitively with people, recognising diverse ways of communicating and interacting across cultures? What practices support children, young people and families belonging to the school age care space?
  - » Australian Human Rights Commission – [What are children's rights? (YouTube)](#)
  - » Child Safe Organisations – [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy template](#)
  - » [Keeping our kids safe - SNAICC](#)
- In what ways does your service's approach reflect the unique geographical, cultural and community context of the service and welcome, respect and draw on the voices, priorities and strengths of the children, young people and families at the service? What elements of the service philosophy support cultural responsiveness and identity?
  - » The Education Hub – [Principles for culturally responsive teaching in early childhood education](#)

- How have stories about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders informed educator practice individually and collectively?
  » ABC Q+A – [Steven Oliver – An Acknowledgement Of | Live on Q+A (YouTube)](#)
- How does the quality improvement plan support educators, children and young people to deepen their understanding of culturally responsive actions and create a culturally safe place?
  » Child Safe Organisations – [National Principles](#)

ACECQA references and resources

- Australian Government Department of Education – [My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia V2.0, 2022](#)
- ACECQA – [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- ACECQA – [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) resources](#)

Other references and resources

- ABC Q+A – [Steven Oliver – An Acknowledgement Of | Live on Q+A (YouTube)](#)
- Australian Human Rights Commission – [Let's talk about racism](#)
- Australian Human Rights Commission – [Let's talk about bodies, identity and sexuality](#)
- Australian Human Rights Commission – [Let's talk about disability](#)
- Australian Human Rights Commission – [Let's talk about refugees](#)
- Child Australia – [Welcoming conversations with culturally and linguistically diverse families](#)
- Child Safe Organisations – [National Principles](#)
- Child Safe Organisations – [Practical tools](#)
- SNAICC - [Keeping our kids safe](#)
- Commonwealth of Australia – [Early Childhood Resource Hub newsletter: Diverse families](#)
- Justin Butler – [Who's your mob? Aboriginal mapping: Beginning with the strong story](#)
- Rainbow families – [Love (still) makes a family: A report into discrimination faced by LGBTIQ+-parented families when accessing Australian Government services](#)
- TED Talk – [The danger of a single story | Chimamanda Adichie 2020 (YouTube)](#)
- The Education Hub – [Principles for culturally responsive teaching in early childhood education.](#)