



In Focus webinar

Reflect, Respect, Respond: when engaging with First Nations communities

Be You Culturally Respectful Resources supporting curriculum practices

These Be You resources have been designed for you who wish to build a genuine connection and deepen their engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, families and communities. They were co-designed by Be You with a panel of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators across Australia.

These resources can support you in schools and early learning services to improve cultural responsiveness.

There is a strong emphasis on self-reflection as a starting point before learning about First Nations perspectives.

Awareness of your attitudes, biases and assumptions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and language will provide a clear sense of where you are in your journey now towards embedding culturally responsive curriculum practices. The [Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's \(AITSL\) intercultural framework and tools](#) can help you gain insight into your current attitudes.

Fostering respectful and meaningful connections with First Nations communities

Be You strongly encourages educators and leaders to use this guide as a starting point and follow advice from local First Nations peoples, communities and education consultative bodies.

You can learn more about [Culturally respectful engagement for learning communities](#) on the [Be You website](#).

The resources include:

- [Protocols for culturally respectful engagement with First Nations communities](#) with practical strategies, including how to develop culturally responsive curriculum and discuss culturally sensitive topics in your early learning service or school and more.
- Tips on [Creating a Stakeholder List](#) so you can seek out knowledge holders and organisations specific to your school or service's local community.
- [Cultural responsiveness in learning communities: A focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples](#) highlights common strategies used in culturally responsive pedagogy and links to national frameworks and the curriculum. It also outlines some of the significant challenges that educators can encounter when implementing culturally responsive pedagogy.
- Links to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, communities and languages provided in [Organisations for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and cultures](#).
- The [Cultural Actions Catalogue](#) was co-designed with Aboriginal Elders, educators, health services and community members across the Kimberley and Pilbara regions. It can be adapted for any learning community that is looking to be more inclusive, culturally responsive and incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history.

Take action

- Ask yourself why you want to engage First Nations communities and how you hope to strengthen your pedagogical practice – become aware of your personal biases and how they inform your beliefs and assumptions.
- As a whole learning community or with colleagues, engage in honest, open conversations about barriers and enablers to fostering meaningful and respectful connections with First Nations communities in your context.
- Consider which resources will support your learning community on its path forward to create welcoming, culturally responsive services and schools.

Go deeper

- For early learning and school age care services, discuss with your team the updates throughout the [Approved Learning Frameworks](#), which strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and how these resources can support this.
- For schools, discuss how these resources can support you with the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority](#) to embed the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Cultures in all the learning areas.
- Read how inclusive practices and fostering an inclusive environment and a sense of belonging protect the rights of children and young people and support mental health and wellbeing in the [Include module](#).
- Explore strategies for connecting and developing relationships in your learning broader communities in the [Connect module](#).