

Appendix C

PROMOTING CULTURE, DIVERSITY AND SAFETY

We seek to partner with Aboriginal Church Communities, like St Martin De Porres Catholic Aboriginal community in Darwin, and with the National Catholic ASTI body, NATSICC in providing the best safeguarding practice that is culturally appropriate and safe for the diverse cultures and languages of the ATSI people.

Cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people

“Strong cultural identity, connections to family and community, and cultural care practices are non-negotiable factors in keeping our children safe.” Sharron Williams, SNAICC Chairperson (quoted in SNAICC 2017)

In an organisational context, cultural safety is defined by the experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. Consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and local communities can be a useful starting point in supporting cultural identity and building |cultural safety.

Respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and promoting cultural safety are the

foundations upon which child safety grows.

It is also important to acknowledge that Aboriginal people are the First Peoples who have an ongoing connection to this country beyond 60,000 years (possibly 80,000 years).

Key principles for respecting culture:

- Sharing cultural safety information with clergy, employees and volunteers (e.g. through training, induction).
- Reflecting on the key messages and practices within your organisation in relation to promoting cultural safety (e.g. what would it look like, feel like and sound like to be culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, children and young people?)
- Incorporate cultural safety into your organisation’s policy, procedures and meeting agenda.
- Communicating in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner.
- Seeking input from families about how to communicate child safety information in a culturally appropriate way.
- Respecting Aboriginal culture by creating a physical environment that is respectful of culture (e.g. selecting representational symbols, objects and images in consultation with Aboriginal families, children and young people).
- Observation of key events that celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait culture e.g. NAIDOC week.

- Learning or staying current with the negative impacts of past government policies and practices (e.g. Stolen Generations).
- Encouraging and creating opportunities for families, young people and children to express their Aboriginal cultural identity without fear of retribution or discrimination.
- Consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and listening to “their voice” when undertaking organisational planning and decision-making activities.
- Communicating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to find out how best to be inclusive and respectful of cultural needs.
- Supporting education that strengthens culture and identity.
- Promoting the connection to land and country and learning about cultural heritage from elders.
- Strengthening kinship ties and supporting observance of social obligations.

Providing cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people is recognised as a protective factor in protecting children and young people from abuse.

RESOURCES

CPSL website Tools standard 4: Melbourne Archdiocese Promoting the Safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People

NATSICC website and Online Cultural awareness course