

## Things you can do with families

**Video 2** and the following **For Reflection Activities** can be used in staff meetings or individually to reflect on how you and your centre support and develop cultural competence in infant / toddler programs.

*“Get to know us, Get to know me”*

(Save the Children Mooroopna)

➤ **Liaising with families and exchanging knowledge about culture and the children in your care is integral to adopting best practice.**

Through the devastating impact of European settlement in what is now called Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families have survived and often thrived. However early childhood educators need to appreciate that Australia's first people who were custodians of the land for over 60,000 years including surviving the ice age, have experienced significant loss, sadness and injustice Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC), 2016.

Read more: <http://www.snaicc.org.au/>

In Australia some families are “closely connected to traditional practice and law and language in rural areas, some live an urban Aboriginal contemporary life and some are separated from land and language” (Child Australia & Yorganop, 2016 p.9).

*For a national perspective on making services welcoming for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families you may find the booklet “A Welcoming Yarn” helpful.*

<https://childaustralia.org.au/educator-resources/>

*“Get to know us, Get to know me”* (Save the Children Mooroopna).

➤ **Grow your relationships with families.** Families are a rich resource for understanding their child and building cultural understanding. Family members may not choose to be a cultural advocate for a myriad of reasons; they may not have the capacity to do so for a myriad of reasons - so it is respectful to be sensitive to these choices. Building sensitive, respectful relationships will provide a foundation for any potential collaboration that may occur.

*E.g. A family member may enjoy sharing their musical skills on the guitar with very young children.*

*“When early childhood educators are looking at purchasing Aboriginal resources, they should be asking questions: as an example - Are the artefacts made by Aboriginal people? What are the language groups of the Aboriginal people of the artists? If you support Aboriginal crafts-people, you are supporting the economics of Aboriginal communities and families”*

(Annette Sax; Yarn Strong Sista)

For a language map, go to the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages website. There is a language map and a multitude of other information and resources.

<http://www.vaclang.org.au/Resources/maps.html>