



In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (First Nations) culture, our children and family are everything. When it comes to keeping our children safe, we all have a role - as individuals and families but also, as the community organisations we are part of





CULTURAL SAFETY AND WHAT IT MEANS

For First Nations peoples, cultural safety is more than providing an environment in the workplace that ensures cultural recognition and valuing lived experiences. It is also more than working to empower children and their families. It is about building cultural connections and relationships based on mutual trust and respect evidenced within Indigenous cultures and social systems, and stories which are inclusive of languages, family kinships, protocols and obligations.

Key elements of culturally safe workplaces and services

Knowledge and respect for self: Awareness of how one's own cultural values, knowledge, skills and attitudes are formed and affect others, including a responsibility to address their unconscious bias, racism and discrimination.

Knowledge and respect for First Nations people: Knowledge of the diversity of First Nations peoples, communities and cultures, and the skills and attitudes to work effectively with them.

A commitment to redesigning organisations and systems to reduce racism and discrimination: Strategic and institutional reform to remove barriers to optimal health, wellbeing and safety outcomes for Aboriginal people.

Cultural safety is an ongoing learning journey: An ongoing and response learning framework that includes the need to unlearn unconscious bias and racism and relearn First Nations cultural values.





Why is cultural safety important?

Cultural safety is a fundamental human right. It's also a legislative requirement of public agencies to provide safety in the workplace.

The workplace environment, services and settings for health, wellbeing and safety must be culturally safe for all people.

For a fair and equitable society free from racism and discrimination, we must address the underlying causes of culturally unsafe practice.

In culture and community, cultural safety is about connecting with Elders and drawing upon their cultural knowledge about cultural connection and relationships within families and country – what these mean and how they are enacted to apply cultural protocols and obligations to build and maintain trust and respect.

Cultural safety is about acknowledging the multi-dimensional cultural and spiritual structures of First Nations peoples and communities which comprise of:

- Cultural Connections including land and country, knowledge, law and practices
- Spiritual Connections including worldviews, traditional systems of knowledge, lore/law and practices
- Social Connections including family, kinship and community





From a cultural position, Cultural Safety is ensuring respectful relationships when working with First Nations children and families – listening to stories, valuing their lived experiences, knowledges and worldviews; and building connection and trusting relationships

What does cultural safety look like in practice?

Cultural Safety in practice in therapeutic care with First Nations children and young people means making the time to listen from our koort (our heart) to what young people and their families are telling us – in their words, presence and actions. The following points to consider:

- Taking time to listen to a child and young person's story
- Building cultural connection and relationships through yarning and storytelling with the child and young person, and their families
- Encouraging the child and young person's expression of culture, values and beliefs
- Enabling the child and young person to connect the dots of their family's culture and history
- Work in ways that value the child and young person's lived experiences and story

These points are appropriate when supporting and assisting a young person to make meaning of what has happened for them in the past and for the present, and for them to envision their future – connected to their culture, family and country; and strong in their identity.





Kaadaninny – to sit, listen and learn

In Nyungah language the word *kaadaninny* is to sit, listen and learn, which means to sit and listen to the stories told, and also how these connect to other words which have meaning for – hearing, thinking and understanding – that provide instructions for how we listen to stories and learn the meanings in them to work appropriately with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (Kickett, Chandran and Mitchell, 2019).

