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CHILDREN ARE CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNERS



Services promote children as confident and involved learners through play-based, strengths based approach and by maintaining higher expectations of children's capabilities.

IN THIS FACT SHEET EDUCATORS WILL:

- Explore the importance of relationships and strengths based pedagogies
- Read about case studies which reflect learning environments which are rich in culture
- Understand the importance of maintaining high expectations and what this looks like in practise.

SUPPORTIVE AND STABLE RELATIONSHIPS WITH EDUCATORS

Educators should be familiar with the child's culture as well as their family network and ensure a culturally safe learning environment. (see Fact Sheet Outcome 3)

WHY A STRENGTHS BASED APPROACH?

Educators need to be able to recognise and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family relationships and child-rearing practices in its varied forms.

Being informed about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, participating in community life and attending community events can result in a greater appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, participating in community life and attending community events can result in a greater appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and the rich role it plays in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The ACER Little J & Big Cuz Initiative was developed with Aboriginal worldviews and knowledges and the *Early Years Learning Framework (2009)*. In Episode 1: Lucky Undies, the teacher Ms Chen recognises Little J's ability to try new things.

Follow the link for more educator resources based on this episode:

<https://www.littlejandbigcuz.com.au/uploads/files/EP1-LuckyUndies.pdf>

CHILDREN DIRECTING THEIR OWN LEARNING

Many contemporary early childhood pedagogies are compatible with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child-rearing practises. Examples include when adults encourage children's independence and how children learn through observing others.

Acer's Little J & Big Cuz Ep. 4: Right under you nose, shows the teacher encouraging Little J's independence and autonomy.

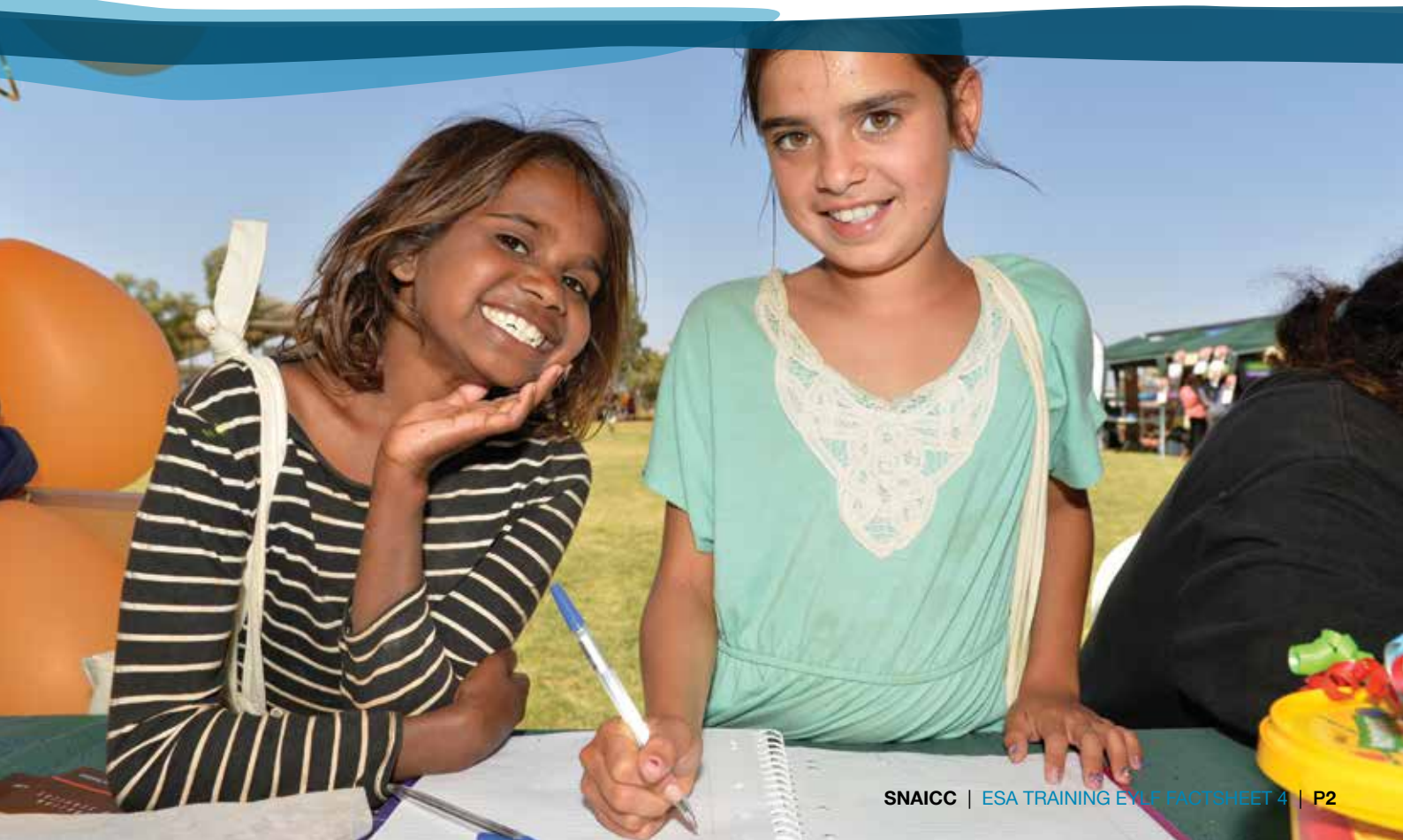
Further educator resources can be found at:

https://www.littlejandbigcuz.com.au/uploads/files/EP4-Right_Under_Your_Nose.pdf

OPEN-ENDED, UNSTRUCTURED LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

The link below illustrates how play is used as a mechanism for building upon the language skills of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children.

https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p_10/qklg_pd_ati_learning.pdf



LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Learning environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children can reflect the local natural environment. Set up a learning environment that reflects the local natural environment and encourages children to explore different natural materials – for example local beach or bush habitats. This also helps children to feel connected to the land and their local culture.

CASE STUDY

AN EXAMPLE FROM A MULTIFUNCTIONAL ABORIGINAL CHILDREN'S SERVICE (MACS) OPERATING IN RISDON COVE, TASMANIA.

This case study is based on a discussion with Director Alison Overeem. Taken from SNAICC resource- Learning from Good Practice: Implementing the Early Years Learning Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children.

Learning environments at the Aboriginal Children's Centre utilise natural materials, natural experiences and natural environments, and the building design reflects this philosophy. Alison feels that this is beneficial for children by 'connecting children back to country and to nature' and encouraging them to be active and healthy. To support this there are no computers or televisions in any of the learning environments, something that parents encourage. Materials in the centre consist of timber, cane and natural materials and fibre, with very little plastic. Alison explains how when they transitioned to using these natural materials they had expected it to take time for children to learn how to engage with the environment. They are now seeing the benefits in terms of children's expanded imaginations, problem solving skills and creativity. Alison illustrates this, describing how she recently observed a young girl collecting 'pickles' for the kitchen- acorns from a tree – where before she would have used plastic kitchen toys. Alison feels that using natural materials is about creating learning environments that challenge children to explore what something could be, instead of what it is. She expresses how 'it's about saying that there's so much out there in that natural environment to listen to, to see, to touch, to smell.'

HIGH EXPECTATIONS OF CHILDREN

By providing children with the skills and abilities to identify and mitigate risk educators are promoting children's capacity to succeed in the challenges of life and therefore encouraging high expectations.

CASE STUDY

BIRELEE, A MULTIFUNCTIONAL ABORIGINAL CHILDREN'S SERVICE (MACS) TAMWORTH, NSW.

This case study is based on a discussion with Director Louise Cave. Taken from SNAICC resource – Learning from Good Practice: Implementing the Early Years Learning Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children.

Behind their transition to school is a philosophy of high expectation of children and equity. Louise explains how, 'we make sure that (our children) start school as capable as we can ensure it. And so if something little gets in the way we nut it out with schools pretty quickly...we try and engage with schools and let them know about children's certain behaviour at certain times of the day and how we've managed it, so the child's not labelled really early on. We share simple strategies.'

