

# Information sheet

## BELONGING, BEING & BECOMING

### Cultural responsiveness

Cultural responsiveness is a contemporary way to think about culture and enables individuals and organisations to be respectful of everyone's backgrounds, beliefs, values, customs, knowledges, lifestyles and social behaviours.

Educators who are culturally responsive respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, doing and being and celebrate the benefits of diversity. Educators who demonstrate cultural responsiveness honour differences and take action in the face of unfairness or discrimination.

This information sheet highlights the changes to the *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2.0, 2022* (EYLF V2.0) Practice, Cultural responsiveness. It provides you with reflective questions as you consider your practice, service philosophy and children's program in relation to this practice.



#### Links to the [National Quality Standard \(NQS\)](#)

The NQS recognises the potential of the educational program and practices to enhance each child's learning and development. The EYLF V2.0 Practice, Cultural responsiveness is reflected in several quality areas of the NQS, with a particular focus in:

##### QA1: Educational program and practice

**Element 1.1.1:** Approved learning framework – Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.

**Element 1.1.2:** Child-centred – Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.

##### QA4: Staffing arrangements

**Element 4.2.1:** Professional collaboration – Management, educators and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills.

##### QA5: Relationships with children

**Element 5.1.2:** Dignity and rights of the child – The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.

##### QA6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

**Element 6.1.2:** Parent views are respected – The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision making about their child's learning and wellbeing.

**Element 6.2.3:** Community engagement – The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

##### QA7: Governance and Leadership

**Element 7.1.1:** Service philosophy and purpose – A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations.

Being culturally responsive includes a genuine commitment to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of the curriculum.

## What is the change?

- The practice has been renamed Cultural responsiveness.
- The content has been updated to include:
  - » a description of cultural responsiveness and what it encompasses
  - » examples of culturally responsive educators
  - » educators working with children, families and members of the community to build culturally safe and secure environments.

## Rationale for the change

- Renaming the Practice to Cultural responsiveness reflects a deeper understanding of all cultures and diversity and a commitment to embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all areas of professional practice.
- Research and thinking in this area encourages educators to move beyond cultural competence to cultural responsiveness. Cultural responsiveness is characterised by respect for cultures that are not your own, ongoing self-reflection, continued learning and a commitment to improving professional practice in this area.

## What this looks like in practice?

- Educators recognise that the cultural backgrounds and kinship systems of families contribute to children's identity and sense of belonging. They provide experiences, equipment, materials and resources, that support a meaningful and embedded approach to inclusion.
- Educators demonstrate an ongoing commitment to developing their own cultural knowledge in a three-way process with children, families and communities.
- Educators demonstrate a genuine commitment to learn about and embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of the curriculum.
- Educators support and guide children to be culturally competent and responsive by taking actions in the face of unfairness and discrimination.
- All educators collaborate with children, their families and members of the community to build culturally safe and secure environments and use this knowledge to inform their practice.
- Educators implement anti-bias approaches, including social justice approaches to address racism/bias in the setting/community.
- Educators embed democratic and fair practices in their setting, including the importance of being a responsible citizen.
- Children are supported to build culturally safe learning spaces in collaboration with their peers, families and communities.

## Reflective questions and provocations

- How does your service philosophy guide and reflect a commitment to cultural responsiveness?
  - » The Education Hub – [Principles for culturally responsive teaching in early childhood education](#)
- What systems are in place for educators to learn about multiple perspectives and diversity in all its forms?
  - » TED Talk – [The danger of a single story | Chimamanda Adichie 2020 \(YouTube\)](#)
- How are educators provided the opportunity to explore and build their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, family and individual diversity?
  - » Be You – [Cultural Actions Catalogue](#)
- What does it mean to learn through culture rather than about culture?
  - » Child Australia – [Cultural Connections booklet](#)
- In what ways do you support all educators to communicate effectively and sensitively with people, recognising diverse ways of communicating and interacting across cultures?
  - » Be You – [Explore how learning communities empower through cultural connections](#)
- In what ways does your service's approach reflect the unique geographical, cultural and community context of the service and welcome, respect and draw on the voices, priorities and strengths of the children and families at the service?
  - » ACECQA – We hear you blog – [Collaborative partnerships with families and communities](#)
- What aspects of the cultures of children, families, educators and community members reflected in the indoor and outdoor learning environments?
  - » Child Australia – [Welcoming conversations with culturally and linguistically diverse families](#)
- How do you support children to explore groups to which they belong without reinforcing stereotypes?
  - » Be You – [Planning for Empowerment](#)
- How might your culture, or the way you view and understand your world, affect the relationships you have with children, families, colleagues and community?
  - » Australian Human Rights Commission – [Face the Facts: Cultural Diversity](#)
- How do you support children to gather information, ask questions, seek clarification and consider possibilities about their own cultures and heritage?
  - » Be You – [Including young children's voices](#)

## ACECQA references and resources

- Australian Government Department of Education – [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2.0, 2022](#)
- ACECQA – [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- ACECQA – [We hear you blog – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities](#)
- ACECQA – [We hear you blog – Embedding culture in sustainable ways](#)

## Other references and resources

- Australian Human Rights Commission – [Face the facts: Cultural diversity](#)
  - Be You – [Cultural Actions Catalogue](#)
  - Be You – [Including Young Children’s Voices](#)
- © Australian Government. All rights are reserved.
- Commonwealth of Australia – [Developing a Sense of belonging and identity \(Poster\)](#)
  - PSC National Alliance – [Exploring diversity and equity in education and care services](#)