

SNAICC Values Statement

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

Preamble

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are living cultures that survive through our children. Our children's cultural identity must be respected in accordance with our ancestral ways, family and cultural traditions and community values. This can be done by providing a setting of loving, caring and safe families with opportunities for children's growth, development and self empowerment. For our children to be healthy our culture must be healthy.

The innocent spirit of our children must be protected by listening, having faith in children, giving them opportunities to develop their self confidence and supporting them to contribute to their family and community.

It is our responsibility to support our young people to understand and follow our cultural ways and become role models and mentors for the younger generations thus ensuring the continuation of our culture. This involves trusting and empowering young people, allowing them to learn from their mistakes and having faith in them to ensure the survival of the oldest living culture in history.

1. SNAICC believes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have the right to;
 - be kept safe from physical and psychological harm
 - live in communities that are safe and free from violence
 - identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Australians
 - be proud of their history, cultural beliefs and practices
 - maintain connections to their lands, community, family and kinship systems
 - learn and practice their Indigenous language
 - freely develop, express and enjoy their own spirituality
 - life long education that strengthens their cultural identity
 - be taught their cultural heritage and obligations by their Elders
 - benefit from the knowledge of their Elders to guide their journey in life

2. SNAICC believes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children;
 - are a communities present and future
 - achieve their full potential when they enjoy access to optimum health care, early childhood support, developmental opportunities, cultural knowledge, education and economic security
 - should be taught to respect their Elders, other family members and the broader community
 - enrich their family and community from the moment they are born and make a positive contribution as members of the community when supported to do so

3. SNAICC believes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families have the primary responsibility to raise their children well by nurturing and protecting them, developing their cultural identity, explaining to them their place within their family, teaching them to understand limits and act responsibly and placing children's needs and interests ahead of their own.