

Standard 4

Cultural safety policy

NPAQ is committed to our Cultural Safety Policy to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people who participate in our programs feel welcome and empowered to share their stories and maintain their cultural identity. This is through everyday practices, purposeful staff meetings, consultation with community, and regular review of this policy for continued improvement.

Cultural safety is a core value. NPAQ is committed to the Universal Principal (1) to provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety of children and youth who are Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islander persons. Cultural safety practices have been embedded into other NPAQ policies and procedures to ensure the supportive ethos of the organisation is clear to volunteers and staff upon induction, or even before their engagement, with the organisation or staff directly.

NPAQ policies and procedures encourage cultural safety as defined by the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC). This details the child being provided with a safe, nurturing and positive environment where they are comfortable with being themselves, expressing their culture... their spiritual and belief systems, and they are supported by the carer... [who] respects their Aboriginality and therefore encourages their sense of self and identity (SNAICC, 2021) (or 2).

NPAQ also acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander definition of wellbeing:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities describe wellbeing as encompassing the social, emotional, spiritual and cultural wellbeing of a person. (3)
- All aspects of a child's wellbeing are intrinsically linked and cannot be separated out. (4)

NPAQ work and events occur at various locations across Queensland and beyond. Welcome to Country will be delivered by Traditional Owners or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have been given permission from Traditional Owners to welcome visitors to their Country for such events. If not available, an Acknowledgement of Country will be conducted sincerely by staff to show respect for Traditional Owners and the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Country.

It is expected that volunteers and staff comply with our Cultural Safety Policy and uphold the Child Safe Standards. This is communicated through induction paperwork and ongoing training and demonstrated through the actions of existing staff and volunteers. If they are unsure of their obligations, volunteers and staff are encouraged to ask questions to leadership and may self-identify for additional training topics, which will be provided where reasonably feasible. As appropriate, NPAQ staff and volunteers will also attend community events and promote these within our organisation.

NPAQ commits to a strict zero-tolerance stance on racism in all forms. Any behaviour, language, or practice that demeans, excludes, or harms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is prohibited. Children's safety and wellbeing objectives will be included in volunteer and staff performance reviews. All incidents of racism will be taken seriously, investigated promptly and addressed with appropriate consequences. This may include changes to operations of future programs and events, group or individual training of volunteers or staff, termination of a volunteer position or employee contract, or reporting to relevant external authorities if a breach is deemed critical.

NPAQ acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people have the right to feel safe, be listened to and taken seriously, be involved in decisions that affect them, have their cultural identity respected without question and be free from bullying, harassment and abuse of any kind. We foster an environment where they feel comfortable to ask questions if they don't understand something and time will be given to listen and understand their world views.

NPAQ will pause or cease program activities if a volunteer or staff member is not present at all times or if leadership feel they are not adequately supervising the program activities. Volunteers and staff are subject to unannounced supervision by leadership to ensure they are meeting expectations and complying with the Cultural Safety Policy, other NPAQ policies which have cultural safety aspects embedded, and Code of Conduct. Disclosures and suspicions of harm will be reported to the relevant authority in the required timeframes.

NPAQ has implemented procedures with volunteers and staff to report culturally unsafe incidents. This includes creating a supportive environment where children can report to volunteers or staff, during program activities or when it occurs, or whoever they are most comfortable approaching. Families, volunteers and staff are to report culturally unsafe incidents to the CEO via email: ceo@npaq.org.au or in person. If possible, the concern or incident should not be discussed in front of the child or young person involved. They are encouraged to report when the incident occurs or as soon

as reasonably possible afterwards, so concerns can be addressed and complaints responded to in a timely manner.

NPAQ is supportive of Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) where Traditional Owners provide environmental protection of land and waterways, but also, importantly, cultural values. We recognise the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander's embedded culture in Country and they cannot be separated. We acknowledge that IPAs provide the opportunity to connect with Country and support children and young people through intergenerational transfer of knowledge with family and community.

To continue to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, NPAQ will regularly review and update policies and procedures. A recurring agenda item dedicated to Child Safety Policy, which includes cultural safety, will be included in future staff and board meetings.

Definition:

- (1) The Universal Principle is about providing an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Last accessed 31 Dec 2025: [Quick reference guide to implementing the Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards in Queensland 0.pdf](#)

Reference list:

- (2) SNAICC. (2021). Cultural Safety. Last accessed 31 Dec 2025: www.supportingcarers.snaicc.org.au/connecting-to-culture/cultural-safety
- (3) Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet. (2021). Social and emotional wellbeing. Last accessed 31 Dec 2025: <https://healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/learn/health-topics/social-and-emotional-wellbeing/>
- (4) VACCA. (2010). Building Respectful Partnerships: the commitment to Aboriginal cultural competence in Child and Family Services. Fitzroy: VACCA, p. 28.

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