



TEACHING ABOUT THE STOLEN GENERATIONS

Narragunnawali
Reconciliation in Schools
and Early Learning



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Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning is a Reconciliation Australia program that support schools and early learning services in Australia to develop environments that foster a higher level of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions.

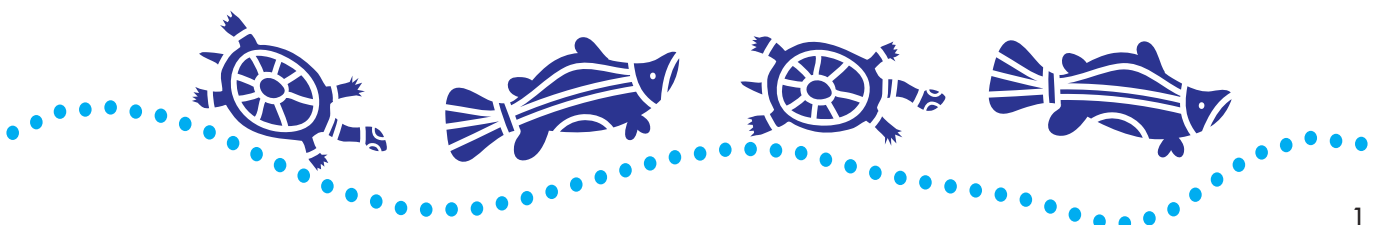
Narragunnawali have developed the following guidelines to support and assist teachers in teaching about the *Stolen Generations* in a respectful and appropriate way.

As with all resources, teachers are encouraged to read and view the learning resources and all the supporting material prior to showing them to students. The content in the Bringing them Home resources addresses some significant themes and it is important for teachers to feel comfortable with the content before introducing it in the classroom.

- Talk, if possible, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff, families and/or community members before using these learning resources. This resource discusses the Stolen Generations and themes that may be sensitive for students and teachers, and particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Considering and pre-empting possible responses is very important.

Because of the often distinct, place-based nature of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identities and community relationships, it can also be significant to explore the concept of connecting to Country from your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community perspective.

- Set classroom ground rules: Due to the sensitive nature of the content around the Stolen Generations, setting classroom ground rules with your students before teaching this material is an important step in creating a safe space and helping develop mutual respect and understanding between the members of your classroom community.



Examples of Classroom Ground Rules

Be respectful: Each person has their own beliefs and values.

Value diversity: Each person has their own world views, experiences and opinions.

Listen politely: Each person has a right to contribute without pressure or intimidation.

Act with honour and courage: Be brave in sharing experiences, ideas and opinions.

Appreciate privacy: Each person has the right to uphold their privacy.

Act responsibly: Share feedback with thoughtful consideration and a positive attitude towards others.

As each classroom is unique, add any further rules that may be relevant to your community.



Other ideas for consideration:

- Encourage students to frame discussion comments as their own (as in “I think”) and avoid forceful language (such as “you should”). Also encourage students to draw on evidence from their viewing, and from further critical research, in shaping their responses—engaging with diverse perspectives, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, is key to formulating strong understandings and responses and avoids potentially traumatic experiences by not including speculative and assumption-based activities.
- When responding to others in classroom discussion or within the associated activities, encourage students to challenge ideas rather than people.
- Allow adequate time at the end of each viewing session for students to debrief the content, for discussion and associated activities.
- Valuing individual beliefs and values does not mean that discrimination should be tolerated. If a student says something that is racist, it is important to speak up and let them know that racism is unacceptable. The [Racism. It Stops with Me](#) campaign has some suggestions for responding to racism. The teaching resources [Take a stand against racism](#) and [Tackling racism in Australia](#) also provide guidance for teachers as well as suggestions for learning activities.
- Further guidance around fostering safe and respectful learning environments is available from Reconciliation Australia’s [Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning](#) online platform. The following resources may be particularly helpful:
 - [Cultural Safety and Respect in the Classroom](#)
 - [Guide to Using Respectful and Inclusive Language and Terminology](#)

