

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Creating a Welcoming Environment for Aboriginal Families at Your School

Artwork adapted from
Takira Simon-Brown's
Health nayri.

A hand holding a branch of a plant with small white flowers against a background of stylized Aboriginal art. The art features a yellow circular motif with black and white patterns, and several small blue fish-like shapes. The background is a dark, textured brown with wavy lines.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND COUNTRY

Move Well Eat Well acknowledge the palawa people as the traditional custodians of the unceded land and waterways of lutruwita. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Move Well Eat Well recognise the negative impact of past and current injustices on palawa people and want to express our commitment to promote cultural awareness and respect.

Since the beginning of time palawa people's traditional foods and lifestyle have promoted physical, emotional and community health and wellbeing.

We value their cultural and educational practices and learn from these to strengthen the health and wellbeing of all children and young people growing up on lutruwita.

Introduction

Move Well Eat Well assists schools to have a positive and inclusive whole school approach to health and wellbeing. We recognise having a positive sense of cultural identity is an important part of wellbeing.

Cultural respect is the recognition, protection and continued enhancement of the inherent rights, cultures and traditions of Aboriginal people¹. A whole school approach to Aboriginal cultural respect is important for supporting wellbeing and creating a welcoming environment for Aboriginal families in your school.

Building a culturally respectful school is an ongoing commitment. It can include:

- undertaking professional learning to increase cultural awareness
- ensuring the physical environment is welcoming to Aboriginal families and communities
- working in partnership with local Aboriginal organisations, and
- providing opportunities for students to deepen their knowledge of the rich, diverse Aboriginal cultures.

Here are some simple steps to get you started.

RESPECTFUL LANGUAGE

Always write the word Aboriginal using a capital A.

Always write the whole word when referring to Aboriginal and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

It's ok to ask Aboriginal community members which term they prefer.

TERMS TO USE

Tasmanian Aboriginal person/people.

Aboriginal person/people.

palawa/pakana.

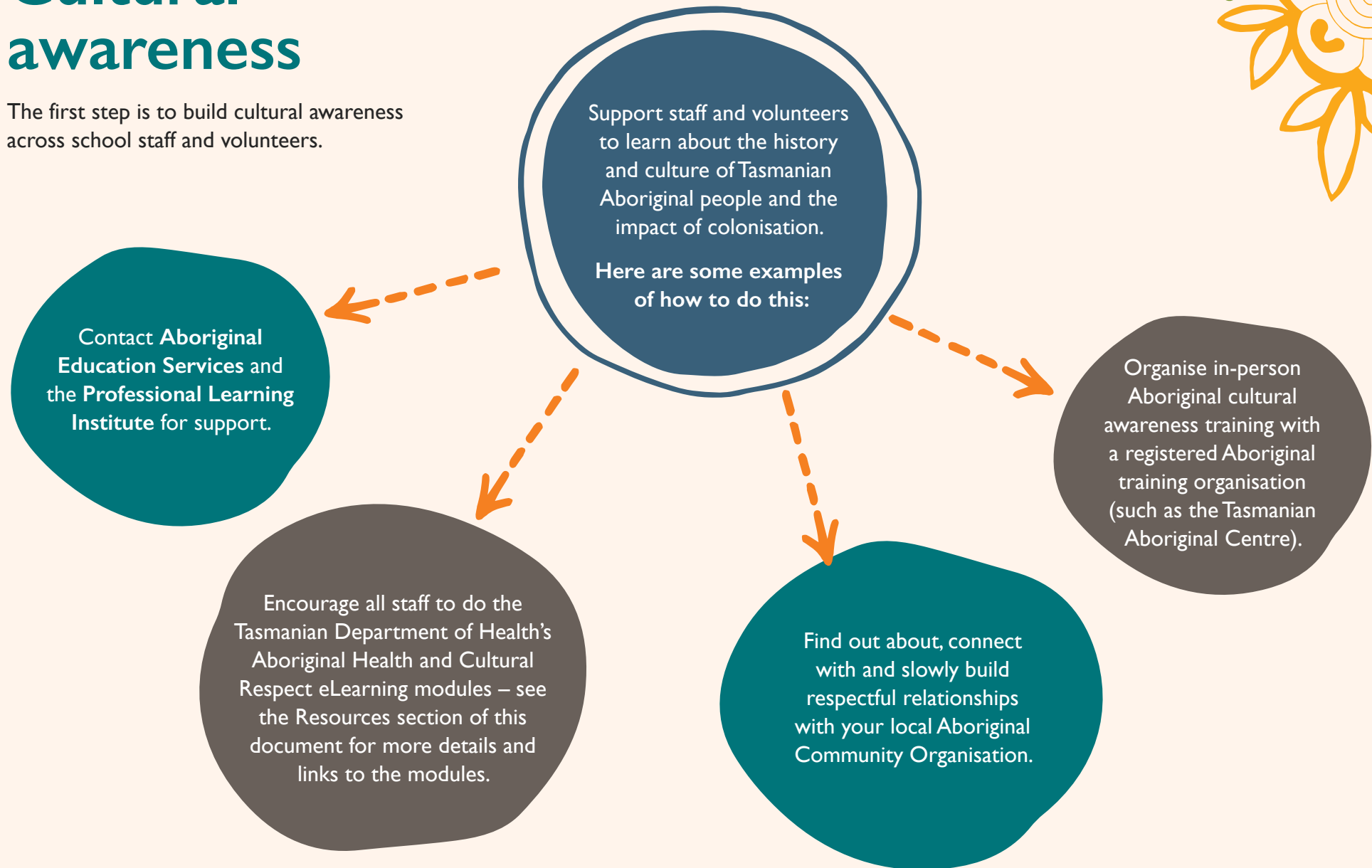
First Nations.

Notes:

1. https://www.health.tas.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/Improving_Aboriginal_Cultural_Respect_Across_Tasmania%27s_Health_System_Action_Plan_2021-2026.pdf

Cultural awareness

The first step is to build cultural awareness across school staff and volunteers.



Creating a welcoming environment

A welcoming environment recognises the importance of the cultural beliefs and practices of Aboriginal people and improves the visibility of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture.

Here are some ideas:

Have welcome signs using palawa kani words – *ya pulingina / hello welcome.*

Display the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags at reception.

Display an Acknowledgement Plaque, for example: 'Example Primary School acknowledges palawa people and the Country our school is located on.'

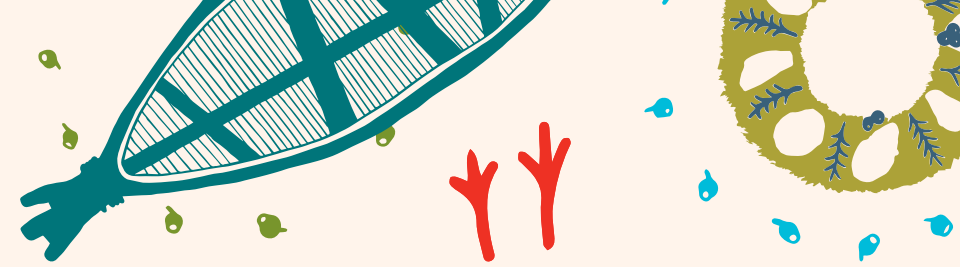
Engage Aboriginal musicians to provide music for events or play Aboriginal music in the classroom.

Exhibit Tasmanian Aboriginal artwork.

Provide toys and games from Aboriginal cultures.

When making cultural displays recognise the maker, country and language of where the object is from.

Provide an Acknowledgement of Country at the start of school assemblies and events.



Working in partnership with community

Move Well Eat Well recognise that Aboriginal people are the knowledge holders and provide best practice in promoting health and wellbeing for Aboriginal people. Partnerships with Aboriginal people and community are important for building cultural respect.

Here are some ideas:

Visit your local Aboriginal organisation or invite them to your school to share age-appropriate cultural activities.

Seek advice from local Aboriginal people and organisations about appropriate classroom activities, resources and experiences that would be meaningful for your local context.

Support staff to participate in learning about local Aboriginal culture and histories.

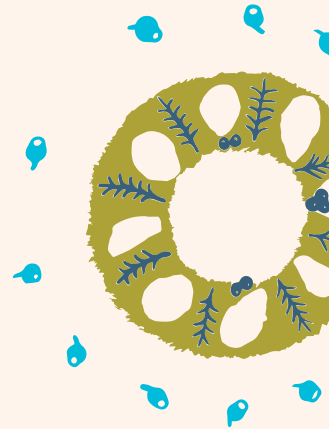
Engage with Aboriginal Education Officers and Aboriginal Education Workers where available.

Follow a local and/or state-wide Aboriginal organisation's Facebook page to learn more about local cultural resources and activities.

When possible, employ local Aboriginal artists or community members to work with students in the classroom.

Avoid placing expectations on Aboriginal students or community members to share details of their histories or cultural knowledge.

Respect their choices in sharing information or experiences.



The Australian Curriculum

There are many opportunities to incorporate **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures when teaching The Australian Curriculum.**

Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories is a cross-curricular priority. The **Australian Professional Learning Standards** for teachers (standards 1.4 and 2.4) reflect this professional practice.

Support and participate in cultural events that are significant to Tasmanian Aboriginal people, for example:

- NAIDOC week
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day
- Calendar of Aboriginal Significant Dates and Events such as National Day of Healing

Department of Premier and Cabinet
(dpac.tas.gov.au)

Teach students an Acknowledgement of Country. This example is from Bumble Bee Early Education and Care and Katherine Isolated Children's Service.

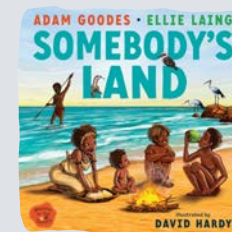
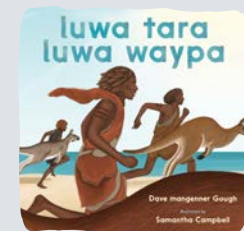
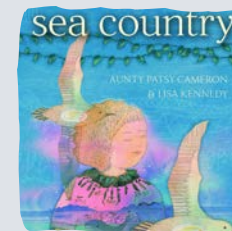
Acknowledgment of Aboriginal People and Country

*Here is the Land
Here is the Sky
Here are my friends
and here am I
We play today
On traditional Land
With First Nation people
we walk hand in hand
We'd like to say thank you
For letting us share
The Land that you love
we promise to take care*

Support children to learn palawa kani words for Tasmanian places, major landmarks, animals, birds etc.

Share stories and books written by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors, for example:

- Lola's New Cousin by Luana Towney
- Muwinina Country by Luana Towney
- Sea Country by Aunty Patsy Cameron and Lisa Kennedy



Resources

It is important to engage with Tasmanian Aboriginal resources where possible.

This helps your school community to deepen their understanding of local Aboriginal people and culture.

TASMANIAN ABORIGINAL CENTRE

The Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre has been responsible for the retrieval and revival of palawa kani, the language of Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

Not enough words of the original palawa languages were recorded to rebuild them exactly as they were spoken.

Over the past 20 years, palawa kani has been rebuilt by combining words retrieved from as many of the original languages as possible.



1. Resources and guidance on palawa kani for educators:

<http://tacinc.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Resources-on-palawa-kani-for-educators.pdf>

2. Each school can request use of palawa kani by emailing the palawa kani Language Program at language@tacinc.com.au. Each school is requested to address the Policy and Protocol for Use at:

<https://tacinc.com.au/the-policy-and-protocol-for-use-of-palawa-kani-aboriginal-language/>

3. The palawa kani Information and Entertainment sheet has many useful links, including songs and phrases approved for use in the wider community:

<https://tacinc.com.au/palawa-kani-information-and-entertainment/>

4. The lutruwita/Tasmania online interactive map has over 200 original names with pronunciation and history. These names are freely available for the public to use at:

<http://tacinc.com.au/pulingina-to-lutruwita-tasmania-place-names-map/>

Image: Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre Website – Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre

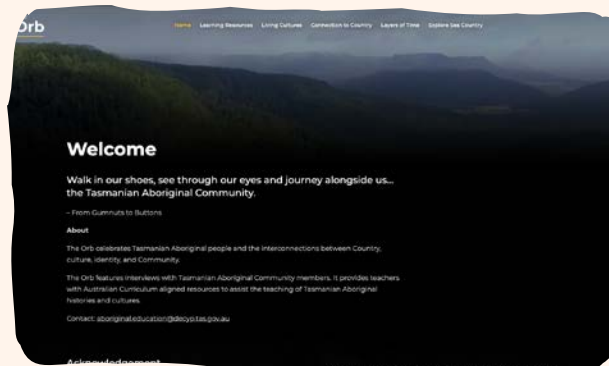
Resources

THE ORB HISTORY AND TIMELINE

The Orb is a collection of online resources to assist the teaching of Tasmanian Aboriginal histories and cultures, developed by Aboriginal Education Services.

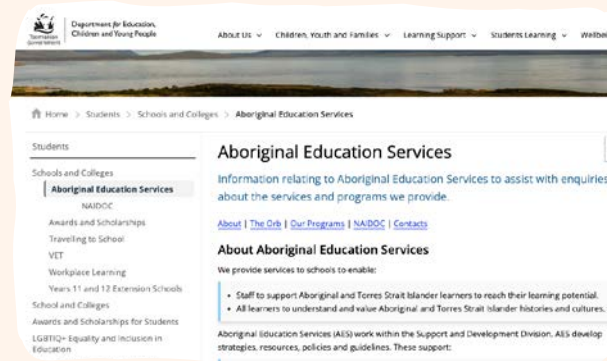
You can access these resources here:

<https://www.theorb.tas.gov.au/>



ABORIGINAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Aboriginal Education Services (Tasmanian Department for Education for Children and Young People) assists schools to enable all children to reach their learning potential.



They support opportunities for all Tasmanian learners to understand and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.

The Aboriginal Education library is available for everyone to use. The library is open during school terms.

If you are outside the Hobart area a parcel of resources can be sent to you.

Tasmanian Government centres will receive a reply-paid label for returning the resources.

Non-government centres need to pay the return postage costs themselves.

The Aboriginal Education Library Catalogue can be accessed online at:

https://talis.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_AU/eab/



Contact the Aboriginal Education Library for hard copy resources: 30 Raminea Rd, Lindisfarne 7015 Phone: 6165 5480

An activity in the Tasmanian Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy is for the **Professional Learning Institute** to deliver professional learning on ways to understand, recognise and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Image Left: The Orb - Tasmanian Department for Education for Children and Young People

Image Right: Aboriginal Education Services - Tasmanian Department for Education for Children and Young People

Resources

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND COUNTRY

An Acknowledgement demonstrates respect for Aboriginal people and cultures. Involving children daily in saying the Acknowledgment of Country helps them show respect for the cultural identity of the Aboriginal community in which they are situated.

This guide, developed for the Tasmanian State Service, provides information on when, how and why to use an Acknowledgement of Aboriginal People and Country or a Welcome to Country:

www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/ssmo/aboriginal_employment_strategy/Acknowledgement_Welcome_Guide

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) ABORIGINAL CULTURAL RESPECT IN HEALTH SERVICE E-LEARNING MODULE

This online learning module is a resource for health workers to create respectful health services, environments and workplaces for Aboriginal people.

For community sector and non-government organisations:

1. Visit <https://dhhs.sproutlabs.com.au>
2. Create a username and password (if you don't already have one)
3. Go to 'Students & Volunteers'
4. Scroll to 'Aboriginal Cultural Respect in Health Services'

ASK AWAY! VIDEO SERIES

The Ask Away! videos share the experiences and ideas of 13 Tasmanian Aboriginal people from across lutruwita/ Tasmania. The videos were made by Tasmanian Aboriginal filmmakers. You can access the video series and an accompanying discussion guide here:

<https://www.health.tas.gov.au/publications/ask-away-videos-and-discussion-guide>

LEARNING PALAWA KANI VIDEO

Watch 'Learning palawa kani - Behind the News' on YouTube to understand why



it is important to respect the reconstruction of palawa kani language:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EqVSYzryo6g>

Each school can request use of palawa kani by emailing the palawa kani Language Program at language@tacinc.com.au.

Each school is requested to address the Policy and Protocol for Use, which can be accessed at:

<https://tacinc.com.au/the-policy-and-protocol-for-use-of-palawa-kani-aboriginal-language/>.

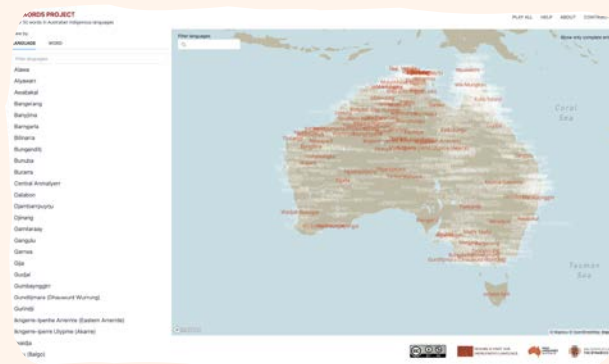
Image: Tasmanian Aboriginal People speak palawa kani video – Behind The News

Resources

50 WORDS

Read and hear 50 words in palawa kani and other Aboriginal languages here:

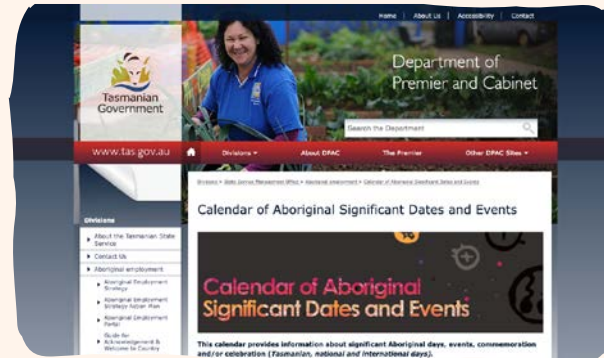
<https://50words.online/>



SIGNIFICANT ABORIGINAL DATES AND EVENTS

This calendar provides information about significant Tasmanian, national and international days, events, commemorations and/or celebrations for Aboriginal people:

https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/ssmo/aboriginal_employment_strategy/aboriginal_significant_dates



National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day is held on 4 August each year.

Find out more about the day and resources here:

<https://aboriginalchildrensday.com.au>

NAIDOC week is held in the first week of July each year to celebrate and recognise the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Find out more about the day and resources here:

<https://www.naidoc.org.au/>

ABORIGINAL AND/OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES FLAGS

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples flags can be requested from your local parliamentary member (free) or purchased from Dream Time Kullilla Art at www.kullillaart.com.au.

To find all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses check out Supply Nation at www.supplynation.org.au.

Image Left: 50 Words website - 50 Words
Image Right: Calendar of Aboriginal Significant Dates and Events - Tasmanian Department of Premier and Cabinet

Resources

EARLY CHILDHOOD AUSTRALIA RECONCILIATION RESOURCES

Create your Reconciliation Action Plan:

<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/our-work/narragunnawali/>

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING AUTHORITY (ACARA) RESOURCES

Intercultural Understanding overview:

www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/intercultural-understanding/

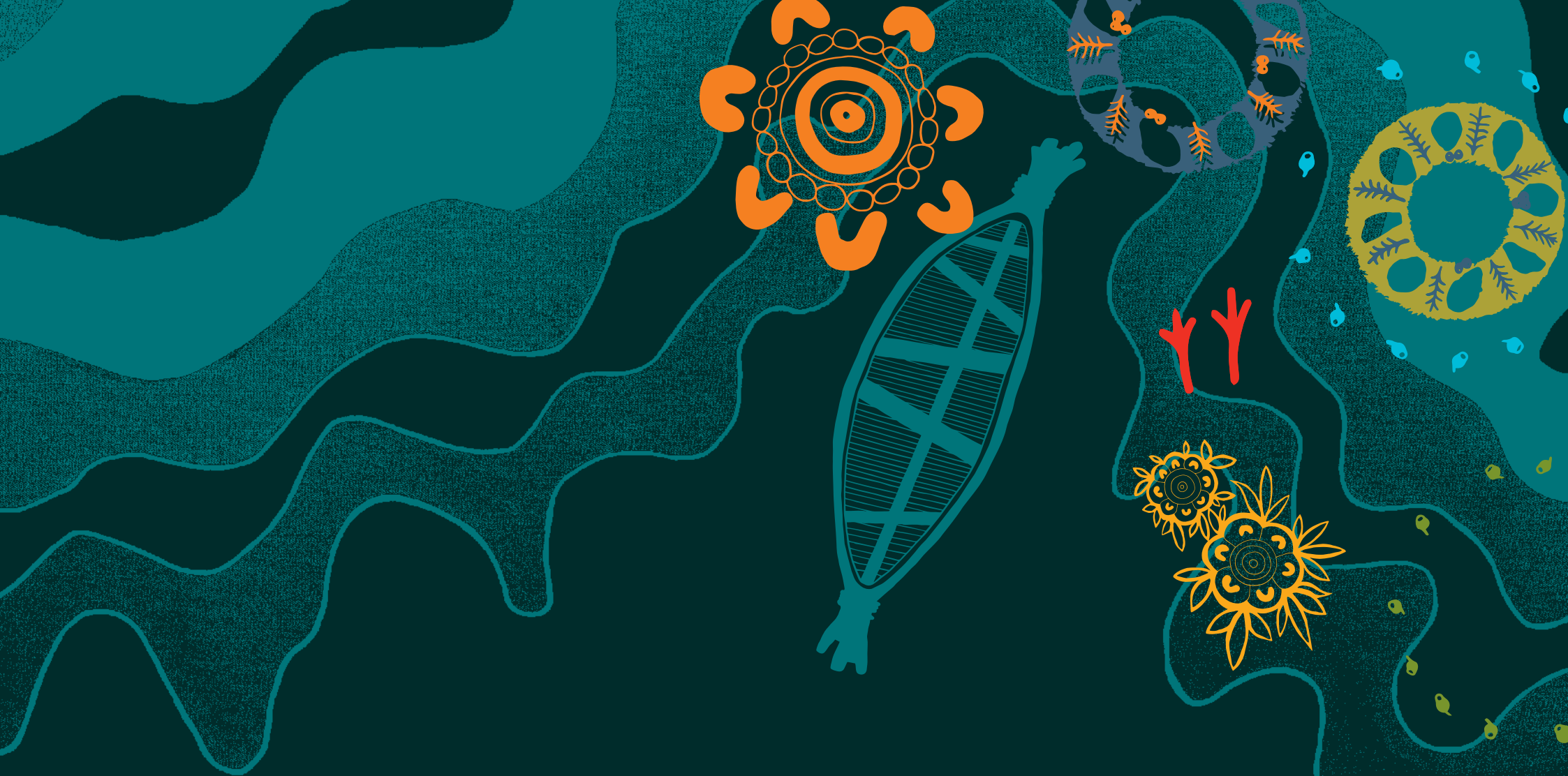
Intercultural Understanding learning continuum:

www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/media/1075/general-capabilities-intercultural-understanding-learning-continuum.pdf

Opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures in the Australian Curriculum:

www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/media/5653/ccp-tbi-f-6-ver5-online.pdf





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Artwork adapted from
Takira Simon-Brown's
Health nayri.