



Personal Tool

NAIDOC Week Celebrate, Learn, Participate

This tool was created by one of our senior clinical team members from our Victorian Office, Kate McPhee, Psychologist & Clinical Associate Coordinator at AccessEAP.

It NAIDOC Week! Like everything in 2020, it has been moved and shifted around but it has occurred despite COVID-19 changing its date. When looking through the celebrations of this week, I came across the theme: Always was and always will be. NAIDOC (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee). As someone who was still learning with cultural competence, I was so happy to have received Cultural Competency training with Arrilla. This was the first step in empowering all non First Nations AccessEAP employees to strengthen knowledge, awareness, confidence and cultural sensitivity in working with First Nations colleagues, customers, companies, and communities and to better provide culturally appropriate support.

NAIDOC week means something different to each and every one of us, and for those of us who are still listening and learning – we wanted to share some ways on walking alongside and celebrating with our First Nations colleagues and customers with cultural respect.

To those who are from the oldest living continuous culture existing on planet earth, we honour and acknowledge many of the achievements of the past and present. I look forward to learning more and encourage all to strengthen the wellbeing of the Nation by continuing to learn and develop strong and lasting relationships as we work together for a better future.

Terminology

- Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Indigenous, Aboriginal, First Nations or First Australians? What is the appropriate term? - Like every human on the planet, we like to be called what we like to be called. In an indigenous cultural capacity, get the terminology correct! Charles Sturt University in NSW tells us that the terms Indigenous, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are European constructs that have been used to describe First Nation Peoples in Australia since the time of colonisation. Prior to this time, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Peoples identified themselves by their Country.
- Due to the diversity of Aboriginal languages and cultures before colonisation, there is no Aboriginal word that refers to all Aboriginal people in Australia. It is important when referring to someone that you do so correctly. If uncertain, it may be simplest to ask and ensure you do not offend by using the incorrect terminology. Acronyms such as ATSI; TI; TSI should also be avoided. Instead, use the full term, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples or Indigenous Australians.
- Appropriate terminology acknowledges and respects the humanity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Always capitalise the first letter of the descriptors Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. It is disrespectful not to do so. It is like spelling someone's name without a capital.



- Acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on your email footer and in any meeting or ceremony you undertake. Pay respects to Elders, past, present, and future.
- Get educated. If you are not sure of the complexities that exist for those who are Indigenous or First Nations People, get reading and learning the history of Australia before colonisation. Knowledge will always be power.
- Those that identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander are 3.3% of the population. It is therefore important to remember that many of the people that you know may never have met with, worked with or been friends with someone who is a First Nations People. Encourage them to go out and get the information rather than rely on second-hand information.
- Have an open mind, as their story belongs to them, so spend some time listening and learning rather than talking or informing.
- Destigmatising racism is everyone's responsibility and letting another person know that their views are disrespectful or inappropriate (in a respectful and appropriate way) is a skill we can all improve.
- Do not assume knowledge. If someone does openly discuss cultural heritage, do not assume that they know everything about that culture. They are not the expert. It is our job to get the knowledge and information ourselves, rather than relying on others.
- Get watching! NAIDOC has teamed with both iView and Netflix to highlight Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content.

At AccessEAP, we acknowledge that many who are non First Nations Peoples are still learning and need guidance. Our message today is to join with the celebration of NAIDOC to talk it up, participate and ask for support when you need it. Check out our website or give us a call, whatever the nature of your concern, we would love to hear from you. At AccessEAP, we are proud to promote our **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Dedicated Support Line** see here for details:

[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Dedicated Support Line](#)

Remember, as your EAP, we are here to support you whatever the nature of your concerns. For a confidential conversation with one of our experienced clinical professionals, please contact AccessEAP on 1800 818 728 or contact the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Dedicated Support Line on 1800 861 085.

AccessEAP acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land we work on and their continuing connection to land, culture and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

