

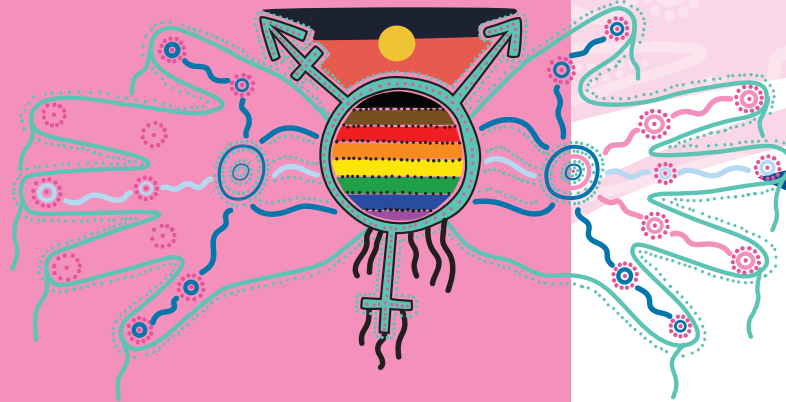
LGBTIQA+

Supporting Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQA+ Mob



VACCA
Connected by culture

VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL
CHILD CARE AGENCY



What supports are available for carers and staff at VACCA?

At VACCA, there are a range of supports, programs and services that provide the opportunity for young people to develop their cultural and LGBTIQA+ identity.

Supports for developing cultural identity at VACCA:

- **Cultural Strengthening Programs** – Our cultural programs strengthen children and young people's connection to culture. Programs include; cultural camps, Narrun Yana Art Collective and the Koorie Tiddas Youth Choir. For more information about these programs, visit the Cultural Strengthening Programs website or call your local VACCA office.
- **LGBTIQA+ Supports** – VACCA's LGBTIQA+ Snr Quality Advisor can provide support and guidance for VACCA workers working with young people who require support to develop their LGBTIQA+ identity. There are a range of resources at VACCA you can access to assist you in supporting young LGBTIQA+ people. To connect with our LGBTIQA+ Snr Quality Advisor, email rainbow@vacca.org

This fact sheet aims to provide information and guidance for carers, staff and LGBTIQA+ allies to support someone in the development of their cultural and LGBTIQA+ identity.

Why is supporting LGBTIQA+ Mob important?

Identity is the way we view ourselves, who we are and what makes us who we are. Developing our identity is an enormous and important step in developing and maintaining positive wellbeing. We gain a sense of identity from our internal sense of self and by feeling valued as a part of a wider group and community.

Sometimes learning who we are can be scary, isolating and difficult. Feeling supported to develop and affirm our identity can have a very real and positive impact on our wellbeing.

For Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQA+ people, having a strong sense of cultural and LGBTIQA+ identity that is respected by the people around them is very important and can help with overcoming barriers and challenges.

It's important that all aspects of our identity are supported. There are many components that make us who we are, and all of these deserve the love, attention and support they require.



What can I do to support someone with developing their cultural identity?

Some ways you can support young Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander people to develop their cultural identity include:

- **Learning about Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander History and Culture** – You can choose to learn about Dreamtime Stories, cultural practices and Aboriginal Countries, languages and tribes. Aboriginal society is very diverse. Kinship, relationship to Country, the preservation of cultural customs, laws and languages are all important elements of the cultural identity of Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander people.
- **Understanding a young person's cultural heritage** – This could include supporting a young person to come to know where they came from, who their mob is, and who their family is. If a young person doesn't yet know this, you could learn about the land in which the young person is living or where they have come from.
- **Celebrate Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander culture** – Participate in cultural events, activities to strengthen a young person's connection to culture and community.
- **Access Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander Community Services** – Link the young person up with services provided by Aboriginal organisations so the young person can receive culturally safe support/s.
- **Understand the lasting impacts of colonisation** – The Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander community continue to experience loss of land, language, aspects of culture, removal of children and disrupted kinship systems. By understanding the lasting impacts of colonisation on our communities, it highlights one of the many reasons why celebrating culture is so important.

What can I do to support someone's LGBTIQ+ identity?

Some ways we can support young people to develop their LGBTIQ+ identity include:

- **Creating safe and affirming spaces where diversity is celebrated** – This might include displaying rainbow flags, pronoun pins and other LGBTIQ+ materials in places that the young person accesses.
- **Challenging gender norms and heteronormativity** – In the home, challenge gender-based roles and assumptions. For example, redistribute household tasks in a way that doesn't perpetuate stereotypical gender-based roles. Another example could be exploring different clothing styles without considering the gender of the person who would typically wear these items.
- **Educating yourself and others** – It is important to educate yourself about how to be inclusive of the LGBTIQ+ community. Devote time to learning about the services and support that are available for LGBTIQ+ young people.
- **Be aware of what discrimination looks like in all its forms** – By being aware of what discrimination looks like in all its various forms so you can empower and educate young people on how to positively respond to these challenges.

