



## SBS submission to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Closing the Gap Refresh April 2018

### *Key Points*

- The Special Broadcasting Service Corporation (SBS) is a public broadcaster with a unique purpose to inspire all Australians to explore, appreciate and celebrate our diverse world and in doing so, contribute to a cohesive society.
- National Indigenous Television (NITV) is the home of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander storytelling, and has been proudly part of SBS since 2012.<sup>1</sup> NITV is a national free-to-air channel on SBS made by, for and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples<sup>2</sup> and delivers Australia's only national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander television news service.
- NITV informs, educates and entertains its Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences. Stories, culture, languages, healthy aspirations and development are key components of its content.
- NITV and SBS can play a key role in Closing the Gap outcomes in the areas of education, childhood development and adult health:
  - Globally, access to Indigenous media is a human right and fundamental to delivering content and access to culture through an Indigenous lens.
  - Screen content for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people contributes to early childhood development, a positive sense of identity and healthy outcomes.
  - Through SBS Learn, the reach of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content is extended to classrooms, with the portal providing free educational tools for teachers and students.
- NITV services, whilst not directed by, support current policy such as the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013-2023<sup>3</sup>, with culture acknowledged as being central to health for individuals, families and communities.

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<sup>1</sup> NITV first operated in 2007 as a private company; then, in 2012 merged with SBS.

<sup>2</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander is used as the preferred term in this submission other than where a title or quote is retained, and when referencing Indigenous peoples in a global context.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Health, Australian Government, *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023*: [URL](#).

- Digital accessibility and inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is a key factor for the social and cultural determinants of health.
- Further, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led media informs and educates non-Indigenous Australians about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. SBS is uniquely positioned to deliver these outcomes, including through our in language radio services.

## Recommendations

- *That the indicators include targets and measurements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on screen; with cultural benefits supporting other Closing the Gap targets and indicators.*
- *That the important role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led media and NITV be recognised across government portfolios, to be included in relevant indicators.*
- *That the Council of Australian Governments recognises the value of NITV in achieving the new Closing the Gap targets.*
- *Cultural transmission through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led media and storytelling should be recognised in the new Closing the Gap indicators.*
- *Cross-Government support for content for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people should be given, including support to NITV to deliver its strategy for children and young people, for entertainment and education.*
- *SBS Learn should be recognised as a key platform for curriculum for all Australians, providing learning resources related to content for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.*
- *Additional funding for SBS and NITV, directed to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content, including for children and young people.*
- *Digital accessibility and inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be considered as a key factor contributing to health and education outcomes.*
- *Determine coordinated initiatives and indicators as part of Closing the Gap, for digital access and inclusion (including metropolitan, regional, and rural Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples).*

## *Introduction*

SBS welcomes the opportunity to submit to the *Closing the Gap Refresh*, a joint initiative of the Council of Australian Governments. This submission addresses the *Closing the Gap: The Next Phase – Public Discussion Paper* (the **Discussion Paper**). SBS is working to strengthen links with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy across all government departments and portfolios.

While the activities of SBS and NITV are not specifically directed by Closing the Gap targets, we recognise their importance and note the current and potential contribution that SBS, as a national broadcaster, can make to achieving the refreshed targets, particularly in relation to cultural transmission, childhood development, education, employment, social cohesion – all contributing to health.

SBS reaches almost 100 per cent of the population through its six free-to-air TV channels (SBS, SBS HD, SBS VICELAND, SBS VICELAND HD, Food Network and NITV), and eight radio stations (SBS Radio 1, 2, 3, and 4, SBS Arabic24 including SBS PopDesi, SBS Chill and SBS PopAsia). Engagement is being significantly extended through SBS's digital services, including SBS On Demand and portals which make online audio programming and information available in nearly 70 languages other than English. NITV Radio is among the many audio programs available across the SBS network.

SBS' focus and commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and stories is important in an increasingly diverse Australian society. The number of cultures and languages in Australia overall is expanding.<sup>4</sup> It is important to invest in media that is dedicated to telling stories about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and contemporary cultures, to enable participation and understanding for multicultural communities.

SBS has made continued investment in exclusive and distinctive content for SBS On Demand, as it provides more than 6,000 hours of programming across more than 10 distribution platforms. This includes exclusive premiere titles across key genres of drama, film and documentary, including SBS commissioned content scheduled and distributed across television and digital platforms.

Through content across all platforms, SBS inspires a richer, more holistic understanding of our world and presents surprising perspectives in entertaining, educational and innovative ways.

## *The importance of Indigenous media*

In 2007 the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* was adopted with Article 16 providing that:

1. *Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-indigenous media without discrimination.*
2. *States shall take effective measures to ensure that State-owned media duly reflect indigenous cultural diversity. States, without prejudice to ensuring full freedom of expression, should encourage privately-owned media to adequately reflect indigenous cultural diversity.*

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<sup>4</sup> 2016 Census - 1.3m people migrated to Australia between 2011-2016.

Funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-controlled media in Australia was a recommendation of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) 1989-1996. The overwhelming negative portrayal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories in mainstream media was seen as a contributing factor to the poor relations between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.<sup>5</sup>

Decades of debate followed the RCIADIC recommendations until some proceeds from the initial sale of Telstra went to the establishment of NITV. NITV first operated in 2007 as a private company.

NITV merged with SBS in 2012. An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative sits on the SBS Board<sup>6</sup>, and there is also Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the SBS Community Advisory Committee (CAC).<sup>7</sup>

SBS and NITV provide an important training and employment platform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, promoting pathways for some of Australia's best known Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander film makers, writers, producers and journalists. Over four percent of SBS staff identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and 66% of NITV staff identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples.<sup>8</sup>

NITV is a member of the World Indigenous Television Broadcasting Network (WITBN)<sup>9</sup>, using partnerships to share Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content with the world, and to reciprocally share global Indigenous news, current affairs and programming.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in Australian screen drama, according to *Seeing Ourselves: Reflections on Diversity in TV Drama*, is reported at 5% of main characters. The total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is approximately 2.8%.<sup>10 11</sup>

Ms Penny Smallacombe, Head of Indigenous at Screen Australia, suggested in 2016:

*You cannot underestimate how powerful it is for Indigenous people to turn on the TV and see a face that looks like their own. Whilst overall diversity on Australian screens clearly has a very long way to go, what the Indigenous experience shows is when you have Indigenous decision makers within funding bodies and broadcasters, coupled with initiatives that support Indigenous writers, directors, producers and actors, diversity and good entertainment can be one and the same.<sup>12</sup>*

SBS supports broader indicators as suggested in the Discussion Paper, for the needs and healthy aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Screen diversity and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation provides cultural benefits and contributes to improving Australia's narrative of the First Australians, within Australia and abroad.

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<sup>5</sup> Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Recommendations, *Accommodating Difference: Relations Between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal People*: 205-209. [URL](#)

<sup>6</sup> Section 17(1) (d) of the SBS Act, stipulates that at least one Board member must be an Indigenous person.

<sup>7</sup> SBS CAC: [URL](#).

<sup>8</sup> As of 28 February, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> World Indigenous Television Broadcasting Network, [URL](#)

<sup>10</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (ABS) [URL](#).

<sup>11</sup> Screen Australia, *Seeing Ourselves: Reflections on Diversity in TV Drama*, 2016: [URL](#).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

## Recommendations

- That the indicators include targets and measurements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on screen; with cultural benefits supporting other Closing the Gap targets and indicators.
- That the important role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led media and NITV be recognised across government portfolios, to be included in relevant indicators.

### *NITV and Closing the Gap*

NITV provides a positive exploration and celebration of historical and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and languages, through drama and documentary; news and current affairs; sport; factual entertainment programs; and feature films. NITV works closely with, and supports, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander production sector across Australia.

NITV invests significantly in Indigenous News and Current Affairs (**INACA**). In 2015–16, an extensive review of INACA was carried out, resulting in a new working model and a more comprehensive offering, featuring weeknight, prime-time series *The Point*, and an increase in digital reporting via NITV Online.

With the objective of reaching more Australians and making a greater impact across all platforms, NITV operates its INACA service via a 'one news room' or 'one team model' with multi-platform Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander video journalists equipped to deliver across the schedule and online.

In 2018 the service has evolved to audience needs, and will deliver news aimed at further engagement with younger viewers, as well as a weekly panel investigation program. NITV also participates in a news exchange with other Indigenous media organisations.

NITV invests in commissioning new Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content, acquisitions, and sport, including for digital platforms. A recent highlight of NITV commissioned content was the documentary series *You Are Here*, broadcast in 2017.

This initiative was developed to support and lead the national discussion regarding the potential referendum to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Constitution of Australia. *You Are Here* presented four unique stories of Australian identity, by Aboriginal film makers, to provoke discussion of our shared history.<sup>13</sup>

*You Are Here* opened and premiered at the Sydney Film Festival 2017, with Luke Buckmaster from *The Guardian* describing it as 'Australia's most vital documentary series in years?'.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *You Are Here* explores the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia today. From national issues, to personal battles and triumphs, each story inspires a sense of place and allows viewers to discover new perspectives on the Australian spirit through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander storytelling.

<sup>14</sup> The Guardian, 2017: [URL](#).



*You Are Here – We Don't Need A Map, In My Own Words, Connection To Country and Occupation: Native*

Improving cultural understanding and providing all Australians the opportunity to learn about, appreciate and understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and languages, is supported by Reconciliation Australia (as evidenced, for example, in its *The State of Reconciliation in Australia* report of 2016).<sup>15</sup>

Cultural transmission through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led media and storytelling is directly linked to new Closing the Gap indicators and health policy. A collective investment is required in strengthening policy links and working cross government, to privilege NITV as the premier broadcaster of Indigenous content in Australia.

NITV is well positioned for promoting access to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural determinants of health. NITV services, whilst not directed by, support current policy such as the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013-2023*<sup>16</sup>, with culture acknowledged as being central to health for individuals, families and communities.

#### Recommendations

- *That the Council of Australian Governments recognises the value of NITV in achieving the new Closing the Gap targets.*
- *Cultural transmission through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led media and storytelling should be recognised in the new Closing the Gap indicators.*

#### ***Making a difference: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people on screen***

NITV is placing increasing focus on broadcasting and publishing content that is specifically designed for children and young people.

With 53% per cent of the total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population aged under 25 years, content specifically designed for children and young people is of particular importance.<sup>17</sup>

NITV has had recent success with its first animated children's program, *Little J & Big Cuz* (detail of which is provided at **Appendix A**), the first season of which was broadcast in early 2017 and streamed on SBS On Demand.

<sup>15</sup> Reconciliation Australia, *The State of Reconciliation in Australia*, 2016, page 8, [URL](#).

<sup>16</sup> Department of Health, Australian Government, *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013-2023*: [URL](#).

<sup>17</sup> ABS, [URL](#).

In February 2018 *Grace Beside Me* commenced broadcast on NITV – a 13 part television series which follows the story of Fuzzy Mac, a teenager trying to balance average teenage life within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander realm of culture and spirits.



The young stars of *Grace Beside Me* – Mairehau Grace-Smith, Kylicric Masella and Tjirdm McGuire.

The series has been nominated for the 2018 UNESCO Special Prize at the prestigious Prix Jeunesse and has attracted critical acclaim. For example, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age* and *Canberra Times* noted the following:

*Adapted from Sue McPherson's award-winning novel, Grace Beside Me is a welcome addition to the children's TV marketplace, with a charming protagonist played by Kylicric Masella.*<sup>18</sup>

Providing access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to historical and contemporary cultures and languages, and the opportunity to see their lived experience on screen—and supporting this content with educational resources—should be a cross-portfolio Government priority.

It is extremely important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to see themselves positively represented on television, radio, digital and social media—to ensure social inclusion and economic participation, and to contribute to early childhood development and a positive sense of identity.

Content made for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people has been flagged as a key priority area for SBS in the upcoming triennial funding process. This content is highly specialised and cannot simply be bought off the shelf from other countries.

At a time when other commercial free-to-air broadcasters are seeking to reduce production of Australian screen content for children, SBS aspires to increase its contribution in this specific area.

This will result in more inspiring content of relevance for all Australian children and young people – in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families – as well as supporting the Australian screen production sector.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are otherwise at risk of only being depicted in the media in times of crisis.

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<sup>18</sup> Sydney Morning Herald, 12 February, 2018, [URL](#).

Cultural continuity is a known protective factor for Indigenous young people,<sup>19</sup> with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led media playing a vital role to contribute to cultural preservation and education. Further, it is well accepted that television programs can help improve children's school readiness by building literacy and numeracy skills, resilience and healthy behaviours.

Similarly, in education, SBS extends its reach online by providing a suite of resources via SBS Learn, the online home of free educational and school learning materials that deepens engagement with SBS programming and initiatives, and providing a platform for teachers and students to share their work.<sup>20</sup>

SBS Learn has published the *Grace Beside Me* study guide, which notes that the series is relevant to units of work in the learning areas of English, Humanities and Social Sciences and Media Arts.<sup>21</sup> SBS Learn has also published resources linked to the *You Are Here* documentary series referred to above, to extend the reach of these important pieces of content into classrooms, working in partnership with other national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

#### Recommendations

- *Cross-Government support for content for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people should be given, including support to NITV to deliver its strategy for children and young people, for entertainment and education.*
- *SBS Learn should be recognised as a key platform for curriculum for all Australians, providing learning resources related to content for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.*
- *Additional funding for SBS and NITV, directed to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content, including for children and young people.*

#### ***Digital access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples***

The unprecedented rise of social and digital media has happened within the same decade that NITV has been in existence.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority's (ACMA) 2017 report into children's television viewing and multi-screen behaviour found that children under the age of 14 are using almost three different platforms to watch children's programs, and nearly all children are using multiple devices.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Chandler, M & Lalonde, E, *Cultural Continuity as a Protective Factor against Suicide in First Nations*, 2008 – [URL](#).

<sup>20</sup> The SBS Learn educational hub is at [URL](#). Recent examples of SBS Learn projects include: teacher resources such as *My Grandmother's Lingo*, an interactive resource aimed at preserving Indigenous language, which has won both a Walkley award and an interactive innovation award at the renowned 2017 South by Southwest conference; the *You Are Here* series, including Warwick Thornton's *We Don't Need a Map*, which explores the Southern Cross as it relates to Australian identity; and, *Grace Beside Me*.

<sup>21</sup> Study Guide – *Grace Beside Me*, SBS Learn, [URL](#).

<sup>22</sup> Australian Communications and Media Authority (2017), *Children's television viewing and multi-screen behavior*, [URL](#).



A report in 2018, by Carlson and Frazer *Social Media Mob: Being Indigenous Online* provides evidence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as early adopters of social media, and insight into identity, kinship ties, social connection and the experience of racism in modern media.<sup>23</sup>

Increasingly programming, particularly for children and young people, must be available on streaming services, and apps designed for multiple devices. SBS and NITV's programming is available through SBS On Demand across multiple platforms.

The continued accessibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to quality Australian content is of great importance, and should be considered with support for the creation of this content, together with environments that promote culturally safe consumption, such as NITV.

It is important to also highlight there is disparity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians in terms of access to information and communications technology (ICT) for the purposes of education and connection to society. This suggests that, in practice, basic enjoyment of media and streaming services may not be being afforded to all Australians.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data has been used longitudinally by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR) to outline the digital divide that exists between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.<sup>24</sup> The analysis identified issues with retention of internet access, along with barriers to access in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ICT. Remoteness, income, employment, education and demography are key factors impacting digital accessibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Research by Radoll and Hunter provides insight into the demography and links to social determinants of health. The *Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2017* also supports that the gap between low and high income households relating to digital inclusion is widening.<sup>25</sup>

South Australia's *Health in All Policies, Digital Technologies Health Lens project*,<sup>26</sup> whilst prepared some years ago, provides evidence-based recommendations for applying a health lens when looking at digital access and inclusion in low socioeconomic groups.

Whilst there are initiatives that are working towards digital capacity in remote Australia, such as *Broadband for the Bush Alliance*,<sup>27</sup> coordinated initiatives and indicators for Closing the Gap should consider the whole Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, and not just remote locations, in relation to digital access and inclusion, with a particular focus on accessibility of key government funded public content services, such as the public broadcasters. Further, digital accessibility and inclusion should be recognised as a key factor for the social and cultural determinants of health.

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<sup>23</sup> Carlson, B. & Frazer, R. (2018). *Social Media Mob: Being Indigenous Online*, Macquarie University, Sydney [URL](#).

<sup>24</sup> Radoll, P & Hunter, B, *Dynamics of the Digital Divide*, CAEPR Working Paper 120/2017, ANU: [URL](#).

<sup>25</sup> Australian Institute of Family Studies, *Report: Measuring Australia's digital divide: the Australian digital inclusion index 2017*, [URL](#).

<sup>26</sup> South Australian Government, *Health in All Policies, Digital Technology, Health Analysis Lens Project*, 2008: [URL](#).

<sup>27</sup> Broadband for the Bush Alliance, [URL](#).

### Recommendations

- *Digital accessibility and inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be considered as a key factor contributing to health and education outcomes.*
- *Determine coordinated initiatives and indicators as part of Closing the Gap, for digital access and inclusion (including metropolitan, regional, and rural Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples).*

### Community & Industry Engagement

SBS aims to inspire all communities and connect with stakeholders across the country by contributing to social cohesion and projects with social impact.

In addition to its inspiring content, SBS and NITV's training and employment strategies has provided pathways for some of Australia's best known Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander film makers, writers, producers and journalists. SBS and NITV engage in a range of activities to improve representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in other roles, such as the SBS legal cadetship program.

SBS and NITV also collaborate on "Meet the Broadcaster" sessions. Mostly in conjunction with state screen agencies, community leaders are invited to meet with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander production sector to discuss SBS and NITV's direction in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content, as well as local issues. Throughout NITV's history, community engagement sessions have been held in the Torres Strait, Cairns and Yirrkala. Information sessions were also held in capital cities.

NITV has a leading role to play in multi-faceted representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in media, and to provide a platform for dialogue about progress in achieving the new Closing the Gap targets. NITV, together with its partners in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media sector, provide voice, reporting and programming to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences. NITV is a valuable resource for all sectors working towards Closing the Gap targets and the social and cultural determinants of health.

SBS and NITV promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led initiatives to ensure that commissioned content engages key creatives that are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to increase representation in the screen and production sector - behind the camera, as well as in front of it.

This commitment is further extended where possible to partnerships. NITV is open to being an industry partner in research, including where relevant to:

- the impact of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander television and media in Australia since the **RCIADIC** recommendations;
- culture and the role of Indigenous television and media;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media workforce;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's and youth content strategies; and
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content and education.



SBS is committed to engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and policy areas to support the aim of being the premier broadcaster of Indigenous content in Australia.

In 2016, NITV was a broadcast partner for the Garma Festival, with strong SBS and NITV representation at the festival over a number of years. The coverage was part of the 'NITV in the NT' suite of programming, which included major events like the NAIDOC Ball in Darwin.

In 2017, NITV again had coverage of Garma, delivering important, comprehensive national coverage across the whole event – including the discussion forums featuring the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.

In conclusion, SBS and NITV supports that with new targets and indicators, there is every opportunity for Governments and organisations collectively, to close the life expectancy gap and improve social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## Appendix A

### Case Study: Little J & Big Cuz

In 2017, NITV presented *Little J & Big Cuz*, a 13 part contemporary children's animation series aimed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the K–2 school range (aged 4–6 years). The series was translated into Djambarrpuyngu, Pitjantjatjara, Arrernte, Walmajarri, Yawuru and Palawa kani. The series focuses on the lives of five year old Little J, and nine year old Big Cuz, who are a couple of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian kids living with their Nanna and Old Dog. The series synopsis notes that:

*Little J and Big Cuz are busy with the ups and downs of playground and classroom. There's always something surprising going on whether it's at school, in the backyard...or beyond. The gaps in Nanna's ramshackle fence lead to Saltwater, Desert and Freshwater Country. With the help of Nanna and their teacher Ms Chen, Little J and Big Cuz are finding out all about culture, community and country.*

The series offers a proud and positive view of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia, and the opportunities for learning within it, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children as they prepare for school.

*Little J & Big Cuz* was developed in partnership with the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), the Secretariat for Aboriginal and Islander Childcare (SNAICC) and Ned Lander Media. Its focus is on school transition with a program of outreach, games, asset development and learning resources for educators made freely available nationally on the series website.<sup>28</sup>

#### *Extending Little J & Big Cuz through educational resources*

Accompanying each episode of *Little J and Big Cuz* is a range of teaching and learning resources founded in the Early Years Learning Frameworks and the National Curriculum. These learning documents have been created as a spring-board for engaging with and embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and pedagogies in Early Years education environments (K–2). The intention is to provide a starting point for educators as they:

- Engage with local and broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to learn from and with their communities, build authentic relationships and grow a language that shares and respects the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, knowledges and cultures.
- Consider the transitions that take place in children's lives every day and the role of educators to work with children and families to support these transitional moments. These moments of transition can be really big moments, such as the transition from early childhood into primary school, or other moments such as moving from one space into another, or one learning experience to another.
- Consider the spaces in their indoor and outdoor environments and the possibilities of the key ideas of Indigenous Knowledges and culture and how these can build on current understandings and create new learning opportunities for all children,

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.littlejandbigcuz.com.au/>.

families, schools and the wider community.

**Little J & Big Cuz** EPISODE 1  
Lucky Undies

**Little J & Big Cuz** EPISODE 2  
Wombat Rex

**Little J & Big Cuz** EPISODE 3  
New Tricks

**Educators**

The learning perspectives educators should:

- Engage with and build on children's existing knowledge and experiences
- Engage with and build on children's existing knowledge and experiences
- Consider the ways in which children learn
- Consider and how to engage with and build on children's existing knowledge and experiences

The learning perspectives educators should:

- Engage with and build on children's existing knowledge and experiences
- Engage with and build on children's existing knowledge and experiences
- Consider the ways in which children learn
- Consider and how to engage with and build on children's existing knowledge and experiences

The learning documents for each episode are a springboard for engaging with and embedding Indigenous perspectives and pedagogies in early childhood environments. The following ideas have been developed to engage educators and children in diverse ways. The intention is to provide a starting point and educators are encouraged to:

- Engage with local and broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to learn from and with their communities.
- Engage with local and broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to build authentic relationships.
- Consider the transitions that take place in children's lives every day and our role as educators to work with children and families to support them during this time. The moments of transition can be big events such as the transition from early childhood into Primary school coming from home into kinder every day or from one learning experience to another in the early learning environment.
- Consider the spaces in your indoor and outdoor environments and the possibilities of the key ideas of Indigenous knowledge and culture and how these can build on current understandings and create new learning opportunities with children, families and community.
- Engage with your local community to grow a language that shares and respects the voices of Indigenous peoples, their knowledge and their cultures.

*Educator resources for each episode.*



*Little J & Big Cuz was broadcast terrestrially, but is also delivered via a significant online presence—including a dedicated website, episode availability on SBS On Demand and Facebook content—making it available at any time.*