

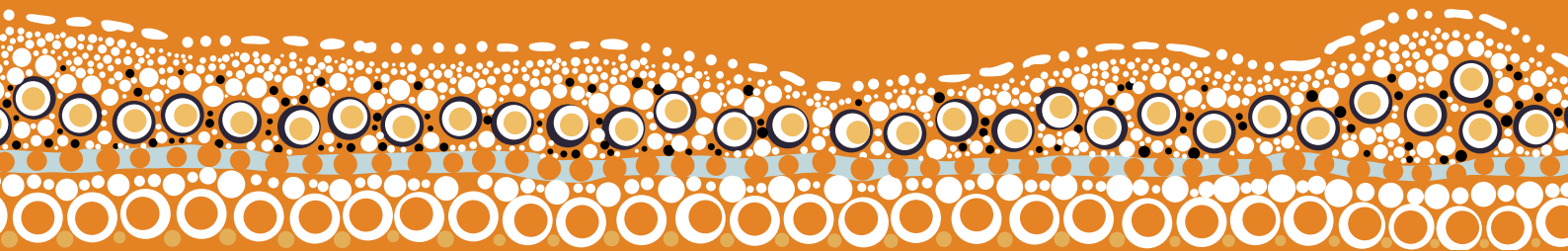


ACT
Government

KOORI PRE CURRICULUM

'Think big for our Mob.'

Shona Chapman



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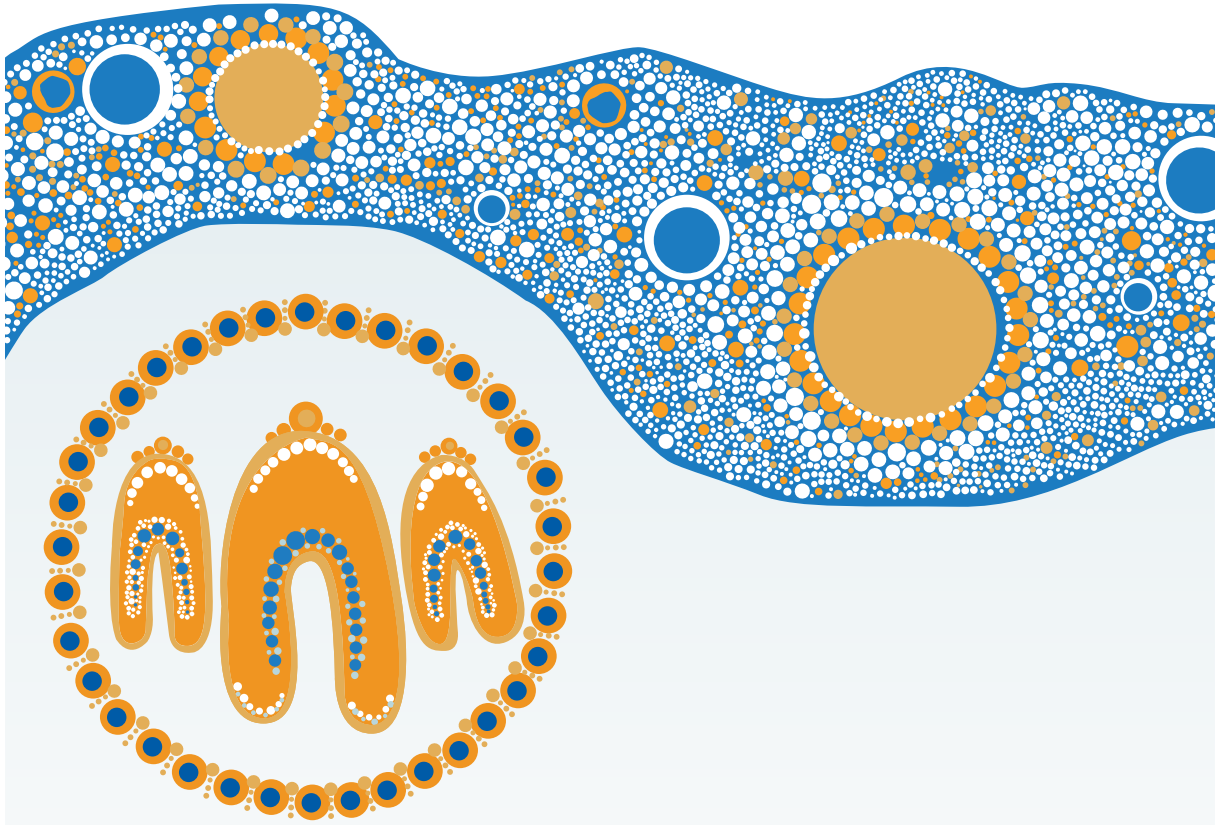
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Acknowledgement

The Education Directorate acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional owners and custodians of the Canberra region. The region is also an important meeting place and significant to other Aboriginal groups.

We also acknowledge and pay respect to the Wreck Bay peoples as traditional owners and custodians of the land on which the Jervis Bay school is located.

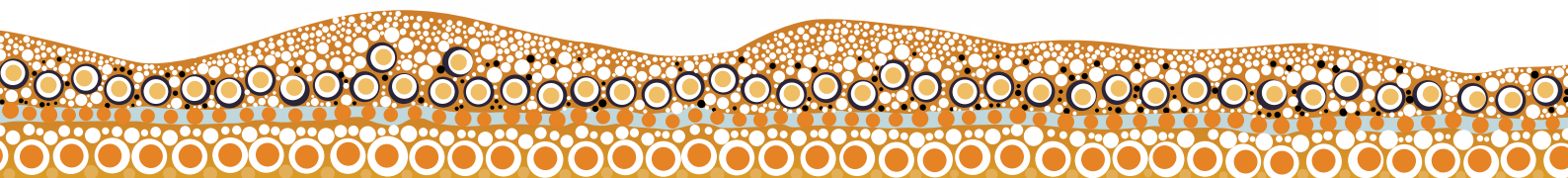
We respect the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and their continuing culture, and contribution they make to the Canberra region and the life of our city.



A big thank you to Mob including
children, families and community.

This curriculum would not have
been possible without your kindness,
generosity, thoughts, ideas, knowledge,
hopes and dreams for Koori Pre.

Shona Chapman



OVERVIEW

VISION

A high quality, high expectation and holistic early childhood program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the ACT, grounded in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, knowledges and values, that recognises that children and their families are **strong, proud and deadly**.

A BIT ABOUT WORDS

Words used by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community are included in this document. For example, the word 'Mob' refers to extended family, clan or wider community group or people from a particular place or Country.

A BIT ABOUT KOORI PRE CO-DESIGN

The Koori Preschool Co-design is a key deliverable of the first phase of *Set up for Success: An early childhood strategy for the ACT*.

The objective is to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Canberra and Wreck Bay to co-design the evolution of a Koori Preschool Program that meets the communities' needs and aspirations, now and into the future, particularly around cultural safety and integrity. This is consistent with the commitment to self-determination in the *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019–2028* and aligned to the *Future of Education Strategy 2018–2028*.

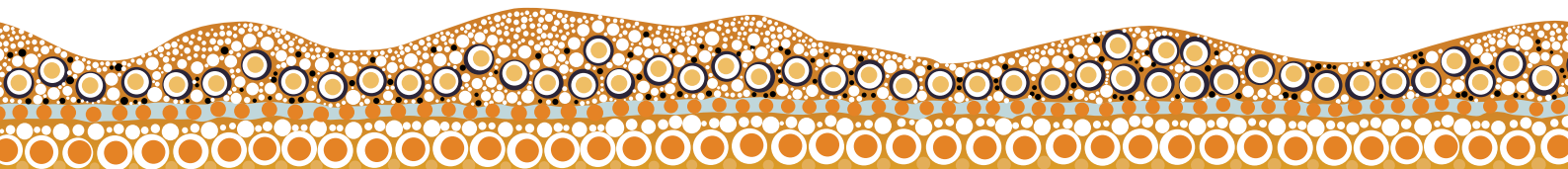
The co-design process, led by proud Ngiyampaa and Wiradjuri woman, Shona Chapman, is guided by the *Koori Pre Co-design Project Cultural Safety Framework* and shaped by three Ngunnawal words:

- **ngarambay** which translates to listen, hear, perceive
- **dhuni** which translates to talk
- **binyin** which translates to find.

The binyin (findings) which inform this Framework come from ngarambay (listening and hearing) and dhuni (yarning) with children and adults from each of the Koori Preschools as well as with representatives from community organisations, peak bodies, schools, government and community.

The project team is indebted to Ngunnawal woman, Megan Daley, for granting permission to use the words, and to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and community for their kindness and generosity in sharing their thoughts, ideas, knowledge, hopes and dreams about Koori Pre.

This Koori Pre Curriculum is informed by the *Koori Pre Cultural Safety Framework* and the *Early Years Learning Framework*.



A BIT ABOUT KOORI PRE

Koori Pre started in 1993. At this time, the ACT Education Directorate's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander section (formerly known as Indigenous Policy and Organisational Practice and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Student Support) provided a teacher and an assistant who travelled between Holt, Narrabundah and Wanniasa Koori Preschools. Between 1993 and 1997, families had access to a bus which transported children to Koori Preschool. The Koori Pre teaching assistant accompanied the children on the bus.

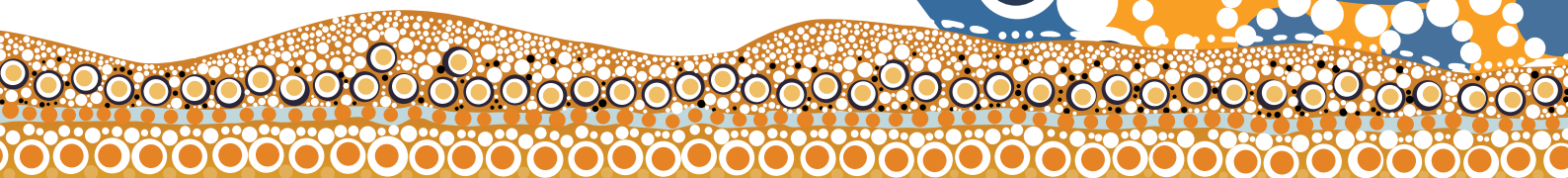
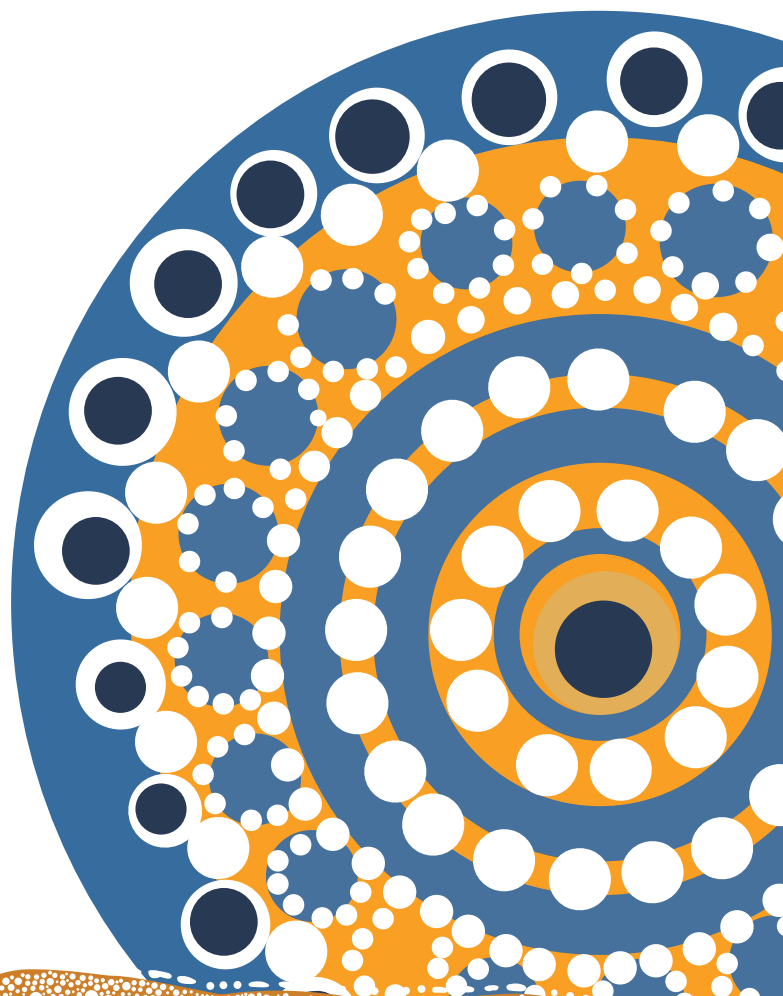
Following a trial in 2011, the management of Narrabundah, Wanniasa, Ngunnawal (established in 2005) and Richardson (relocated from Calwell in 2011) Koori Preschools became the responsibility of the school principal. Holt Koori Preschool continued to be managed by the Directorate's Early Childhood Education Section until 2012 when it came under the management of Kingsford Smith School.

Currently, Koori Pre offers preschool to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged three to five years at Ngunnawal Primary School, Kingsford Smith School, Narrabundah Early Childhood School, Richardson Primary School and Wanniasa School. Children under the age of three can attend a Koori Preschool when accompanied by a parent or carer.

*Co-design, in essence,
is nothing about us,
nothing implemented
without us.*

June Oscar

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Social Justice Commissioner, 2019



KOORI PRE CURRICULUM

The Koori Pre Curriculum is intended as a guiding document to achieve the vision of Koori Pre Co-design by ensuring that pedagogy and practice are anchored in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and honours 'what matters to Mob'. It should be read and used in conjunction with the *Koori Pre Cultural Safety Framework*.

The Koori Pre Curriculum aligns with the principles, practices and learning outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).



1 MOB

Children grow up **strong** in holistic, place-based Koori Pre that responds to their strengths, expectations and aspirations and the strengths, expectations and aspirations of their families and community.

LEARNING OUTCOME

EYLF 1 Children have a strong sense of identity.

EYLF 4 Children are confident and involved learners.

2 PLACE

Children grow up **proud** in authentic and connected spaces that reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and promote belonging, identity, family knowledge and connection with community and Country.

LEARNING OUTCOME

EYLF 2 Children are connected with and contribute to their world.

EYLF 3 Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.

3 WAY

Children grow up **deadly** when families and staff work and walk together the Koori Pre way.

LEARNING OUTCOME

EYLF 5 Children are effective communicators.

GOAL	FOCUS	LEARNING OUTCOME	INDICATOR
I am strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity and belonging • Family knowledge • Culture • Community and Country • Environments 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children have a strong sense of identity. 4. Children are confident and involved learners. 	Children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate pride and strength in their identity • share a sense of belonging to their family, culture, community, and Country • demonstrate confidence and resilience • are active participants in their learning • use a range of cultural ways including stories, songs, art, music, and dance to explore and represent learning • make choices and decisions.
I am proud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strength and wellbeing • Culture • Family and community • Both-ways learning • Language 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world. 3. Children are confident and involved learners. 	Children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • play and learn in culturally safe, authentic and responsive environments • feel safe and secure • demonstrate physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing • are active participants in their community • are connected to and care for Ngunnawal Country.
I am deadly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Relationships • Transition 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Children are effective communicators. 	Children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are confident communicators • communicate through story, songs, art, music and dance • get along with others • demonstrate cultural continuity.

When [our] children go to school they take their family with them. They take their skills, their knowledge, their beliefs. You don't just leave all of that at the door. You take it with you, so you can't change and be someone else as you enter the classroom.

Fleer 2004 cited in SNAICC 2013



Children grow up *strong* in holistic, place-based Koori Pre that responds to their strengths and to the strengths, expectations and aspirations of their families and community.

- I know my Mob and where I am from.
- I belong to my family, my culture and my community.
- I know myself.
- I am a both-ways learner.
- I deserve the best.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How does our Koori Pre connect children to cultures, communities and Countries?
- How does our Koori Pre build upon and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being?

HOW

- Get to know the child and family before they start.
- Learn the names of immediate and extended family.
- Start a conversation to learn as much as you can about the Country and language of each child.
- Greet children and families at the gate and welcome families in.
- Reach out directly to families through face to face conversations and phone calls.
- Invest time in building safe, respectful, and trusting relationships.
- Listen.
- Be open to and incorporate parent/caregiver ideas to strengthen cultural identity.
- Create opportunities every day for children to explore different aspects of their identities through play, yarning and relationships.
- Work with children, families, and community to co-design curriculum to ensure children's experience is relevant and connected to their lives and culture.
- Explore culture as part of everyday experience through art, stories, music, ceremony, traditions, songs and dance.
- Build on children's knowledge of people, land, place, time and technology.
- Organise Family Days, Meet and Greets, BBQs, shared lunches and cultural visits.
- Find ways to connect Mob across the school such as a Buddy Program.
- Invite families and Community to organise and celebrate significant days such as NAIDOC Week and Children's Day.
- Strengthen transitions into and out of Koori Preschool.
- Learn more about anti-bias curriculum.



Children grow up ***proud*** in authentic and connected spaces that reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and promote belonging, identity, family knowledge and connection with community and Country.

- I see, feel and hear my culture all around me.
- My family is respected and honoured as my first and most important teacher.
- I have strong and trusting relationships with my educators.
- I am connected to my community.
- I play and learn on Country.

GUIDING QUESTION

- What makes our Koori Pre, Koori?

HOW

- Develop an Acknowledgement of Country with children, families/caregivers, and community.
- Acknowledge Country every day.
- Display and learn about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags.
- Display the Aboriginal languages map and use it to learn about Ngunnawal Country and other Countries.
- Work with the Ngunnawal Language Group to embed language.
- Consult Traditional Owner Language Groups for permission to use other Languages.
- Display and use cultural resources such as artworks and artefacts.
- Choose and use stories, books, songs, music and dance that reflect traditional and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and cultures.
- Design and furnish learning places to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teaching methodologies.
- Create a yarning circle space.
- Establish a bush tucker or Indigenous plant garden.
- Embed a culturally responsive and flexible timetable.
- Create an environment that is free from bias, prejudice, and racism.
- Create a space for families to have a cuppa.
- Get to know your place. Find out who the community is, what services are close by, who you can partner with and where you can take children to play and learn on Country.
- Embrace every opportunity to meet, learn and play, on and with Country.
- Learn more about nature-based and place-based pedagogy.
- Reflect on and review your cultural awareness and responsiveness.

A YARN ABOUT PLACE

As soon as you walk in the door, you know this is a place for Koori kids and families. You can see, hear, touch, smell, and feel culture everywhere. From Auntie Wendy's Mob playing on the CD inviting kids to join in singing The Wheels on the Holden to Lee Anne encouraging the children to wash their hands with soap leaves before joining her to make native rosemary damper to share for morning tea. Kids and adults are welcomed with a smile and a yarn. Family knowledge about their heritages, kids, cultures, and families is valued and incorporated into the curriculum to foster the children's learning, identity, and wellbeing.

Lee-Anne explained that staff members reviewed the Healing Foundation document to identify outcomes the Koori Play Group wanted to achieve and

came up with seven pillars. Each term they think about how to match their planning across the seven pillars. The opportunity for children to cook with native ingredients, listen to Ngunnawal stories such as Dyrri the Frog as retold by Ngunnawal Elder Don Bell, go for a walk, and grow plants is all connected to the Use Country to Support Cultural Connection pillar. Planning in this way makes the program meaningful and reflects what's important to the families and the service.





Children grow up *deadly* when families and staff work and walk together the Koori Pre way.

- My family and community know me best.
- My family has a right to share in decision-making about me.
- I have a right to contribute to decisions about me.
- I bring cultural ways of being and belonging, knowing and learning about my world.
- I am a future community leader.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

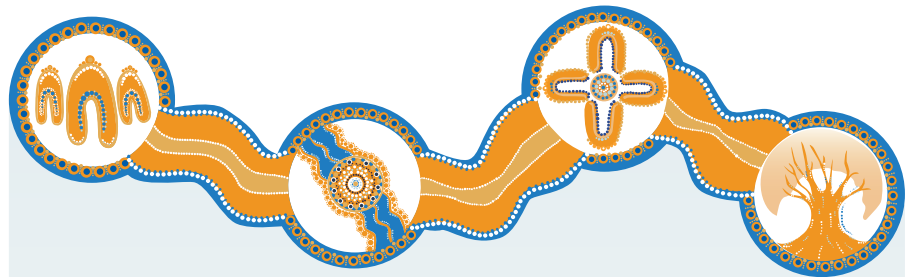
- How do Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and community members know they have a place and a voice at Koori Pre?
- How do transitions value and promote cultural continuity?

HOW

- Learn about the impact of invasion, colonisation and past and present policies.
- Be aware of issues that impact families such as housing, deaths, low income, transport and trauma.
- Be guided by and learn with your co-educator and Early Years Engagement Officer.
- Understand and acknowledge Cultural Load.
- Hold open days and enrolment days at the beginning and end of each year.
- Develop respectful reciprocal relationships with community organisations such as Gugan Gulwan.
- Provide resources and equipment such as uniforms, bags and lunchboxes for children to be Koori Pre ready.
- Establish and maintain connections and partnerships through playgroups, inviting community organisations to hold meetings or events at Koori Pre.
- Involve children and families in decision making.
- Establish a cultural position on the parent committee or school board.
- Participate in community events outside Koori Pre such as Reconciliation Week.
- Plan for transitions and continuity of learning.
- Take complaints seriously and work with families and community to follow up.
- Undertake trauma training.
- Apply for grants to embed opportunities such as Elder in residence program, lunchbox program and visits from cultural specialists and excursions.
- Challenge assumptions, recognise complicity and call out stereotypes.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- How do we learn about the stories, knowledges, and cultures of families and caregivers at Koori Pre?
- How are the stories, knowledges, and cultures of families and communities represented in our Koori Pre environments?
- What is the experience of children at Koori Pre?
- What is the experience of families and caregivers at Koori Pre?



Culture is a living, breathing, entity, it is like water, it will always find a path, a way to evolve, even when it stays in the one place, water will promote life. As such, despite colonisation, invasion and war, my people evolve culturally, our maintenance and revitalisation of culture, dance, ceremony, art, hierarchy, philosophies and doctrines are fuelled not only from what was, but also, from what is, our culture, our people, our voice, evolves. It is fed from the pre-contact period, the contact period and the here and now, it is also fed from possibility and hope, it is fed from the hope of a better tomorrow.

We use our visual art to paint a new cultural tapestry for the nation, we use our songs to sing of what was, what is and what can be, our art shapes a new national identity, our past is a foundation for all this hope. Our art is a tool for cultural capacity building not only for ourselves, but for others, for all."

Richard J Frankland

Gunditjmara author, musician, artist, 2018

RESOURCES

WEBSITES

- *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019–2028*, <<https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/atsia/agreement-2019-2028?msclkid=eb4d5a61cf1b11ec8cd2fc134b35772b>>.
- *ACT Indigenous Protocols*, <www.communityservices.act.gov.au/atsia/indigenous-protocols>.
- *Set Up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT*, <https://www.education.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1620347/Early-Childhood-Strategy-for-the-ACT.pdf>.

FILMS AND VIDEOS

- *In My Blood It Runs*, <<https://inmyblooditruns.com/>>.
- *VAEAI Best Practice in Koorie – Inclusive Early Childhood Education* <www.vaeai.org.au/best-practice-in-koorie-inclusive-early-childhood-education/>.
- MACS Modules 1&2, <https://youtu.be/UdaeoKT_ECU>.
- MACS Module 3, <<https://youtu.be/xA4rOL4Tt3s>>.
- Bubup Wilam, <www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNjj2QRAvuA>.



People, Place, Mob and Way by Megan Daley.

ABOUT THE ARTIST



People, Place, Mob and Way by Ngunnawal and Wiradjuri artist Megan Daley was commissioned as part of the Koori Pre Co-design.

Megan spent her childhood on Wiradjuri Country in Wellington New South Wales, before moving to Canberra in 1999. Her art is often reflective of the two places she calls home. Megan works as a Child and Family Worker with the ACT Government and is passionate about Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing and childhood development.

The acrylic on canvas painting comprises four circles linked by a pathway. Each circle represents one of the four Cultural Safety Commitments identified and developed through the Koori Pre Co-design.

These are People, Place, Mob and Way.

People is represented by four people sitting together, sharing stories and learning.

Place is represented as a common meeting point where people come together to share learning and culture.

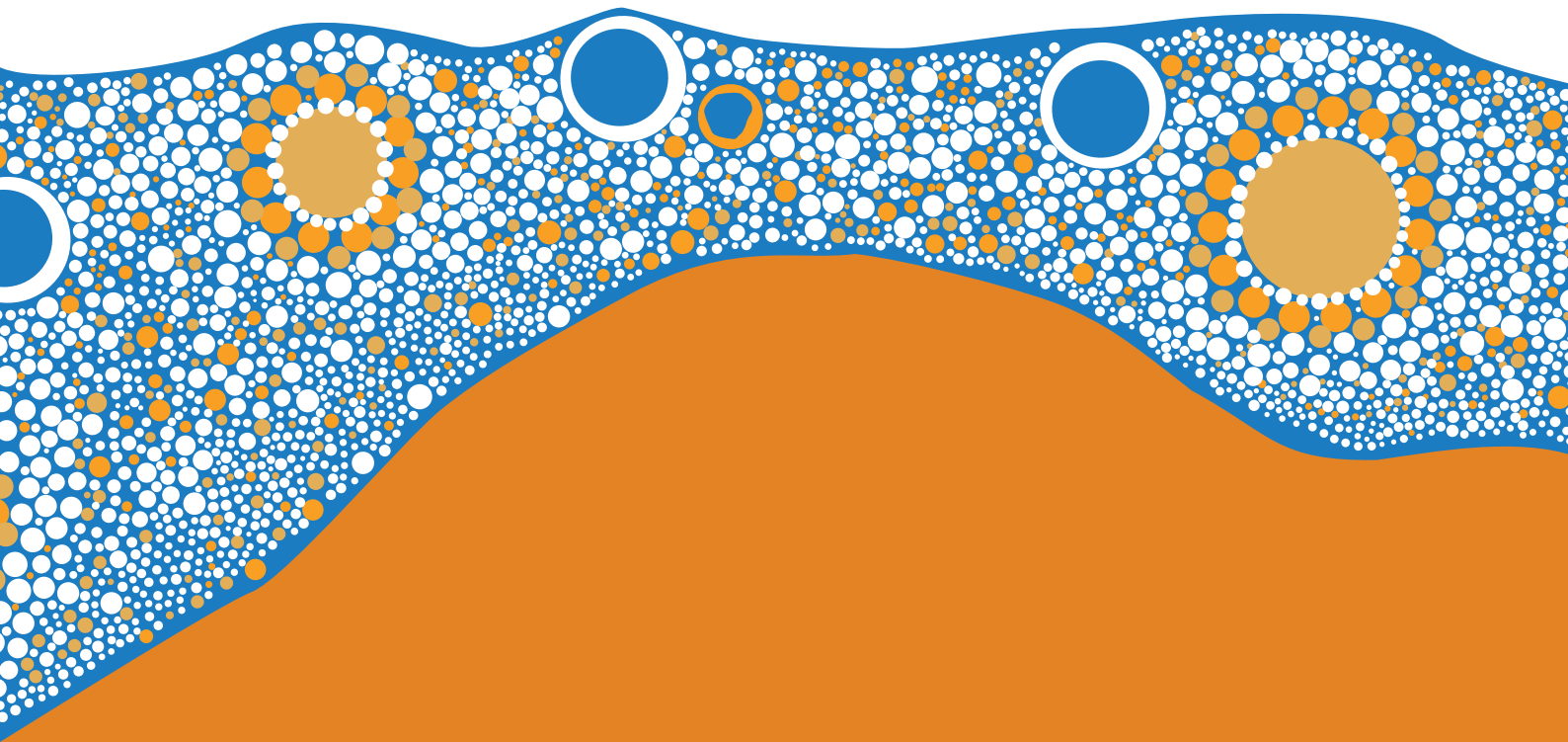
Mob is represented by a guardian figure such as a mother, father, grandparent or carer and the families who care for the children who attend Koori Pre.

Way is represented by a tree which symbolises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing.

The thousands of stars in the night sky at the top of the painting represent thousands of years of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge. The bright stars represent the success and opportunities for children in Koori Pre.



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[www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/
public-schools-in-the-act/koori-preschools](http://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/public-schools-in-the-act/koori-preschools)

