Resource Guide

Health and Physical Education

The information and resources contained in this guide provide a platform for teachers and educators to consider how to effectively embed important ideas around reconciliation, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions, within the specific subject/learning area of Health and Physical Education. Please note that this guide is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive, and that users are encouraged to consult with their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in engaging with the material contained in the guide.

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Please be aware this guide may contain references to names and works of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that are now deceased. External links may also include names and images of those who are now deceased.
Background and Introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Physical Education

“[Health and] healing goes beyond treating…disease. It is about working towards reclaiming a sense of balance and harmony in the physical, psychological, social, cultural and spiritual works of our people, and practicing our profession in a manner that upholds these multiple dimensions of Indigenous health” – Professor Helen Milroy, Aboriginal Child Psychiatrist and Australia’s first Aboriginal medical Doctor.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Australia’s colonial history has been characterised by devastating land dispossession, violence, and overt and unapologetic racism. Such inequitable and severe disruptions to community and cultural life can have profound impacts on both physical and socio-emotional health and wellbeing. Research into the current context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health frequently points to the enduring, intergenerational impacts of unjust colonial policies and practices, and the imperative to “close the gap” between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australian mental and physical health outcomes. While this guide focuses predominantly on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, programs, and events that have played a positive role in health and physical education in the postcolonial context, it is important to appreciate that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been engaged in positive health and physical education activities for thousands of years prior to colonisation. Cultural knowledges around physical and spiritual healing practices; the uses of native Australian bush tucker/medicine; everyday physical activity such as hunting and gathering; participation in active customs such as dance; as well as participation in traditional games all represent traditional modes of maintaining physical health, all the while contributing to the continuation of culture. To give just a couple of examples, team configuration conventions in the Juwularai game of boogalah work to teach players about Dhé or totems, and the Datiwuy game of waayin serves to educate players about bird and animal tracks to assist with traditional hunting activity. Similarly, the physical activity of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance often also has metaphysical connections to the Dreaming, drawing on stylised and symbolic movement to convey culturally and spiritually significant stories and Songlines.

Often, beyond an individual’s physical well-being, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concepts of health thus simultaneously encapsulate the social, emotional, cultural and spiritual wellbeing of the whole community. An individual and community’s wellbeing is also conceived to be deeply tied to the natural environment, reflecting the importance of caring for, and connecting to, Country. That is, according to a “healthy culture, healthy country” perspective, there is a clear synthesis between the health of culture, the health of Country, and the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members. Furthermore, as indicated through the quote by Professor Helen Milroy above, the promotion of health and healing in the present and into the future relies as much on actively recognising past ancestral knowledges and colonial injustices alike. This holistic understanding of health and physical education is, therefore, crucial to understanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical, athletic, social and cultural events and issues to this day.
Timeline of Key Dates in the Contemporary History of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Physical Education

This timeline chronologically lists some of the key dates in the more recent history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Physical Education and/or with regard to the relationship between health, physical education and reconciliation more generally.

- **60,000+ years ago:**
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia have maintained longstanding conventions and conceptualisations pertaining to health, physical education and wider wellbeing for tens of thousands of years.

- **1866:**
  - A historic year for cricket in Australia, when an Aboriginal cricket team from the western district of Victoria played against the exclusive Melbourne Cricket Club. Just over a year later (in 1868), this Aboriginal team became Australia’s first-ever cricket team to tour England (10 years before the first non-Indigenous Test team).

- **1870-1912:**
  - During this period, Aboriginal sprinters dominated professional athletics and were often able to win significant prize money. For many, it provided an escape from the controls placed on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples under the Protection system.

- **1960:**
  - [Kevin Coombs](https://example.com) was the first Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Paralympian, first representing Australia (in wheelchair basketball) at the Rome Paralympics (and at four subsequent Paralympic Games)

- **1962:**
  - [Jeff Dynevor](https://example.com) (boxer) became the first Aboriginal athlete to win a Commonwealth Games World Medal.

- **1964:**
  - The first known Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Olympians, [Adrian Blair](https://example.com) (boxer) and [Michael Ah Matt](https://example.com) (basketballer) competed at the Tokyo Olympic Games.

- **1971:**
  - The first [Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS)](https://example.com) was initiated on a voluntary basis in Redfern, Sydney

- **1973:**
  - [Arthur Beetson](https://example.com) (Rugby League player and coach) became the first Aboriginal athlete to captain an Australian team in any sport.

- **1974:**
  - The national umbrella AMS organisation, the National Aboriginal and Islander Health Organisation (NAIHO) was formed.

- **1984:**
  - At the New York Paralympic Games, [Peter Kirby](https://example.com) became the first Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander athlete to win a Paralympic gold medal as part of the Australian men’s 4x100m relay team.
• **1988:**
  - The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody was initiated.

• **1991:**
  - The final report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody was published, which led to the establishment of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and thus the formal process of reconciliation in Australia.

• **1996:**
  - Nova Peris became the first Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander athlete to win an Olympic gold medal when she was part of the Australian women’s hockey team at the Atlanta Olympic Games.

• **1997:**
  - The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission released Bringing them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their families.

• **2000:**
  - At the Sydney Olympic Games, Cathy Freeman carried both the Australian and Aboriginal Flag—a symbol of reconciliation and her pride in her Aboriginal heritage—during her victory lap after winning Gold in the 400m sprint.

• **2005:**
  - The AFL put together a panel to select an Indigenous Team of the Century to mark the 100th anniversary of the first senior Australian rules game played by an Aboriginal player (Joe Johnson).

• **2007:**
  - Oxfam released the Close the Gap: Solutions to the Indigenous Health Crisis facing Australia report, with the subsequent Close the Gap campaign being launched on April 4 to push for Federal, State and Territory Governments to commit to closing the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation. The first National Close the Gap day was correspondingly held this year.

• **2009:**
  - Australia pledged official support of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which includes a number of health-related Articles.
  - Following the 2008 national Apology to the Stolen Generations, and based on a national consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the Healing Foundation was established.

For a more detailed timeline focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health policies specifically, you may also like to visit: [http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/health-infrastructure/policies/reviews/health-policy-timeline](http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/health-infrastructure/policies/reviews/health-policy-timeline)
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Physical Education Organisations, Programs, Projects and Campaigns

The following list includes a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and physical education organisations, programs, projects or campaigns that are either active today, or have played an active role in the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and physical education in Australia. Note that some of these organisations, programs, projects or campaigns may not be exclusively Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned or governed, but are nevertheless meaningfully dedicated to supporting positive health and physical education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

- Aboriginal and Islander Medical/Health Services
- Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT) Indigenous Leadership Program
- Arthur Beetson Foundation
- Australian Indigenous Doctors’ Association (AIDA)
- Australian Indigenous Health InfoNet
- beyondblue The Invisible Discriminator campaign
- beyondblue/Brisbane Indigenous Media Association (BIMA) Proppa Deadly project
- beyondblue Stories for Keeping Strong
- Close the Gap campaign
- Deadly Choices campaign
- Family Matters campaign
- Healing Foundation
- Kids Matter Aboriginal animations project
- LIME Network
- Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team
- Lowitja Institute
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Association (NATSIHWA)
- National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy (NASCA)
- Poche Indigenous Health Network
- South Australian Aboriginal Sports Training Academy (SAASTA)
- Tanya Oxtoby Football Coaching
- The Enemy Within
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sportspeople

The lists below provides the names of a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sportspeople, past and present. You may wish to carry out some further research around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander athletes from your local area, or indeed compare the diverse stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sportspeople across Australia.

**Australian Rules Football**

Adam Goodes  
Barry Cable  
Chris Johnson  
Cyril Rioli  
David Wirrpanda  
Derek Kickett  
Gavin Wanganeen  
Jeff Farmer  
Lance “Buddy” Franklin  
Leroy Jetta  
Mark Williams  
Michael Long  
Nicky Winmar  
Patrick “Paddy” Ryder  
Peter Matera  
Shaun Burgoyne  
Stephen Michael

Andrew McLeod  
Chance Bateman  
Chris Lewis  
Danyele Pearce  
Darryl White  
Des Headland  
Graham “Polly” Farmer  
James “Jim” Krakouer  
Leon Davis  
Lewis Jetta  
Maurice Rioli  
Michael O’Loughlin  
Norm McDonald  
Peter Burgoyne  
Phil Krakouer  
Sir Douglas Nicholls  
Syd Jackson


**Basketball**

Danny Morseu  
Kevin Coombs  (Wheelchair basketball)  
Nathan Jawai  
Patrick “Patty” Mills  
Rohanee Cox

**Boxing**

Anthony Mundine  
Damien Hooper  
Dave Sands

Cameron Hammond  
Daniel Geale  
Elliot (‘Elley’) Bennett
Francis (‘Frank’) Roberts
Jeffrey Dynevor
Joe Williams
Keith Saunders
Lionel Rose
Paul Fleming
Robbie Peden
Wally Carr

Hector Thompson
Jerry Jerome
Johnny Jarrett (Patten)
Lawrence Austin
Neville Williams
Renold Quinlan
Ron Richards

Cricket

Ashleigh Gardner
Eddie Gilbert
Jack Marsh
John McGuire
Lydia Williams

Daniel Christian
Edna Newfong (Crouch)
Jason Gillespie
Johnny Mullagh
Mabel Crouch (Campbell)

Darts

Beau Anderson
Kyle Anderson

Hockey

Baeden Choppy
Des Abbott
Jarrad Chester (Ice Hockey)
Joel Carroll
Lorelle Morrissey
Nova Peris-Kneebone

Horse Racing

Darby McCarthy
Frank Reys
Leigh-Anne Goodwin
Merv Maynard
Norm Rose
Richard Lawrence (‘Darby’) McCarthy

Motorsports

Brendon Cook
Netball

Beryl Friday
Marcia Ella-Duncan
Sharon Finnan-White

Rugby League

Aidan Sezer
Amber Pilley
Anthony Mitchell
Ben Jones
Brad Tighe
Brett Grogan
Caitlin Moran
Chris McKenna
Cory Paterson
Craig Trindall
Dane Nielsen
David Peachey
Donald Malone
Eric Simms
Frank Stokes
George Longbottom
Greg Bird
Isaac Gordon
Jamal Idris
Jason Bulgarelli
Jharal Yow Yeh
Joel Thompson
Johnny Jarrett (Patten)
Justin Doyle
Keirran Moseley
Kevin McGuiness
Larry Corowa
Lenny Beckett
Luke Walsh
Maurice Blair
Molly O’Connell
Nathan Peats
Paul Shaw
Preston Campbell
Reece Robinson
Robert Laurie
Ron Saddler
Sam Backo
Sarah Field
Albert Kelly
Amos Roberts
Anthony Mundine
Blake Ferguson
Brenko Lee
Brian Kelly
Caleb Binge
Chris Sandow
Corey Stewart
Daine Laurie
Daniel Wagon
Dean Widders
Dylan Farrell
Esikeli “Esi” Tonga
Fred Briggs
George Rose
Greg Inglis
Jack Wighton
James Roberts
Jason Edwards
John Williams
John Ferguson
Jonathan Wright
Justin Hodges
Kelsey Parkin
Kevin Yow Yeh
Lauren Motlop
Leo Dynevor
Mal Cochrane
Michael Bani
Nakia Davis-Welsh
Owen Craigie
Percy Knight
Ray Thompson
Rhys Wesser
Robert Lui
Roy Bell
Sam Bowie
Scott Prince
Albert Torrens
Andrew Fifita
Arthur Beetson
Beau Champion
Brenton Bowen
Bruce Stewart
Carl Webb
Cliff Lyons
Craig Garvey
Dale Shearer
Darrell Trindall
Dennis Moran
Edrick Lee
Ewan McGrady
Gavin Lester
Gordon Tallis
Ian Lacey
Jake Foster
Jamie Soward
Jayden Hodges
Joel Moon
John Simon
Josh Hoffman
Kandy Kennedy
Ken Nagas
Kurt Baptiste
Laurie Daley
Lionel Morgan
Marmin Barba
Michael Lett
Nathan Blacklock
Palmer Wapau
Peter Jensen
Rebecca Riley
Richard Williams
Rod Jensen
Royston Lightning
Sam Thaiday
Shannon Hegarty
Alex Johnston
Andrew Walker
Ben Barba
Bo De La Cruz
Briony Livingstone
Burnum Burnum
Chris Grevsmuhl
Colin Scott
Craig Salvatori
Dane Gagai
David Fifita
Derrick Watkins
Emily Young
Frank Fisher
George Green
Graham Lyons
Ian Russell
Jake Friend
Jamie Simpson
Jeff Hardy
Joel Romelo
Johnathan Thurston
Justin Carney
Kevin Longbottom
Kyle Turner
Lavina Phillips
Luke Kelly
Matt Sing
Milton Thaiday
Nathan Merritt
Paul Davis
PJ Marsh
Rebecca Young
Ricky Walford
Ron Gibbs
Ryan James
Samartha Leisha
Shannon Walker
Shea Moylan
Steve Ella
Tallulah Tillet
Tony Hearn
Tyrone Peachey
Wayne Alberts
Will Robinson
Yileen Gordon

Sid Domic
Steve Renouf
Timana Tahu
Travis Robinson
Tyrone Roberts
Wendell Sailor
Will Smith

Simone Smith
Suvannah Connors
Tom Learoyd-Lahrs
Travis Waddell
Tyson Andrews
Wes Patten
Willie Isa

Stephanie Mooka
Tahlia Hunter
Tony Currie
Ty Williams
Wally McArthur
Will Chambers
Willie Tonga

Rugby Union

Andrew Walker
Burnum Burnum
Frank Ivory
Glen Ella
Kurtley Beale
Mahalia Murphy
Matt Hodgson
Nathan Black
Shannon Walker
Will Chambers

Anthony Fainga’a
Colby Fainga’a
Gary Ella
Jim Williams
Lloyd McDermott
Mark Ella
Milton Thaiday
Saia Fainga’a
Timanu Tahu

Soccer

Charles Perkins
Dr Gordon Briscoe AO
Jade North
Kasey Wehrman
Tanya Oxtoby

David Williams
Harry Williams
John Kundereri Moriarty
Kyah Simon
Travis Dodd

Softball

Jeff Goolagong
Joanne Lesiputty
Stacey Porter
Vanessa Stokes

Swimming

Ben Austin
Samantha Riley
Tennis

Evonne Goolagong Cawley
Ashleigh Barty

Track and Field

Benn Harradine (Discuss Thrower)
Cathy Freeman (Runner)
Joshua Ross (Runner)
Kyle Bernard Vander Kuyp (Hurdler)
Nova Peris (Runner)
Patrick Johnson (Runner)
Percy Hobson (High Jumper)
Robert "Robbie" Crowther (Long Jumper)

You may also be interested in searching for Aboriginal and Islander Sports Hall of Fame members by visiting: http://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/aboriginal-and-islander-sports-hall-fame
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Physical Education Events/Celebrations

The list below features a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and physical education-related events and/or celebrations.

- **AFL Indigenous Round**
- **City of Port Adelaide Enfield Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Awards** (including specific Sports Person of the Year Award)
- **Indigenous Sport Queensland Sports Awards**
- **NSW Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout – 'Koori Knockout'**
- **Leaders in Indigenous Medical Education (LIME) Connection Conference**
- **Murri Rugby League Carnival**
- **NAIDOC Awards** (including specific Sportsperson of the Year Award)
- **National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Association Conference**
- (Former) **National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sports Awards**
- **National Aboriginal Wellbeing Conference**
- **National Close the Gap Day**
Other Online Guides/Reference Materials

- ABC Splash (2010) *Tasty bush tucker*, [http://splash.abc.net.au/home#l/media/30798/understanding-bush-foods](http://splash.abc.net.au/home#l/media/30798/understanding-bush-foods)


Reflective Questions for Health and Physical Education Staff and Students

- How have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures influenced Australian health, sports and physical education, and what active role do these histories and cultures play today?

- What is the relationship between physical, socio-emotional, cultural and spiritual wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples? Why is this relationship important to appreciate?

- What is the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and physical education and other subject/learning areas such as Dance, History, or Geography? Why are these relationships important?

- What are some of the similarities and differences between non-Indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and practices relating to health and physical education? What are some of the ways in which these conventions have or can work together in interesting and important ways?

- Choose to research an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander sportsperson, health professional or wellbeing campaigner. What is the importance of his or her contributions to health and physical education, either at the local or (inter)national scale?

- Choose to research a key date in the more contemporary history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and physical education. What was, or is, the significance of this event to the subject/learning area of health and physical education and/or to reconciliation?

- Where possible and appropriate, organise an excursion to a public Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health or physical education-related event. What important messages, information or ideas did you gain through engaging with this event?

- How might your school or early learning service contribute to the celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and physical education?

- How can embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures into the study and practice of Health and Physical Education help to foster reconciliation?