


**SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives on health and wellbeing

Unit 1	Understanding health and wellbeing
Area of study 1	Health perspectives and influences: Outcome 1
Key knowledge these activities address	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives on health and wellbeing</li> <li>indicators used to measure the health status of Australians, including incidence and prevalence of health conditions, morbidity, rates of hospitalisation, burden of disease, mortality, life expectancy, core activity limitation, psychological distress and self-assessed health status</li> <li>sociocultural factors that contribute to variations in health behaviours and health status for youth such as peer group, family, housing, education, employment, income, and access to health information and support services (including through digital technologies).</li> </ul>
Key skills these activities address	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>analyse various meanings of health and wellbeing</li> <li>describe different dimensions of health and wellbeing</li> <li>explain a range of sociocultural factors that contribute to variations in the health status and health behaviours of Australia's youth.</li> </ul>
Learning Aim	Be aware of the range of definitions/ explanations for health and wellbeing in the community.
Learning Process	Students understand that health isn't a concrete concept, different cultures focus on the various dimensions of health and wellbeing to define and come to a deeper understanding of health and wellbeing for the individual and the community in which they are situated.
Resources	<p>Teacher notes adapted from Oxfam Australia's Live Strong Resource:</p> <p><b>How is health defined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no one term that translates health in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages – generally it is seen as 'Life'. (Gatjil Djerrkura, NT).</li> <li>'Not just the physical well-being of the individual but the social, emotional, and cultural well-being of the whole community. This is the whole-of-life view and it also includes the cyclical concept of life-death-life.' (National Aboriginal Health Strategy Report, 1989).</li> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples view health as a collective asset whereas many non-Indigenous western cultures see health as an individual asset.</li> <li>Links for connection to Culture and Country on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health</li> </ul>

<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<p><b>Links for connection to Culture and Country on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health</b></p> <p>"Aboriginal health" means not just the physical well-being of an individual but refers to the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole Community in which each individual is able to achieve their full potential as a human being, thereby bringing about the total wellbeing of their community. It is a whole-of-life view and includes the cyclical concept of life- death-life. Health care services should strive to achieve the state where every individual is able to achieve their full potential as a human being and thus bring about the total well-being of their community." 2 From an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective, health is complex and multifaceted. It includes physical health of individuals, social and emotional health, and the wellbeing of whole communities.4 Connection to Culture and Country are just one example.</p> <p>Culture and Country for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are linked. However, there isn't just one Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander culture, but many. The Aboriginal Language map shows just how many Aboriginal Nations or Countries there are, both before and after invasion. There may be many cultural similarities but also differences across Nations.</p> <p>See the interactive map from AIATSIS to check your area: <a href="http://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/aboriginal-australia-map">http://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/aboriginal-australia-map</a></p>
	<p><b>Aboriginal Connection to, and respect for, Country</b></p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not view the land like many western societies. They didn't own the land, and do not now own the land, but rather see themselves almost like guardians of their Country. Connection to Country is, and still remains, a complex relationship.</p> <p>An example of Connection to Country is taken from the Ngarrindjeri nation, an Aboriginal nation of 18 language groups who occupied, and still inhabit, the Lower Murray, Coorong and Lakes area of South Australia:</p> <p>"The Ngarrindjeri nation... use the term Ruwe/Ruwar to encapsulate the interconnection between country, body, and spirit. This interconnection is fundamental to wellbeing and it is for this reason that healthy lands and waters are critical to healthy Ngarrindjeri people and culture. Creation ancestors such as Ngurunderi give Ngarrindjeri traditional responsibility to care for Ruwe/Ruwar."3</p> <p>Their lands and waters extended 30km up the Murray from Lake Alexandrina, the length of the Coorong and the coastal area to Encounter Bay. Today this Aboriginal group is still very strong, with a large community of people based in the Lower Murray and Coorong area.</p> <p>Point McLeay Mission was founded on the shores of Lake Alexandrina in 1859 by the Aborigines' Friends Association for the Aboriginal people of the Lower Lakes. George Taplin, the Congregational minister, was its first administrator. Following Government administration from 1916, Point McLeay was returned to the Ngarrindjeri people in 1974 and renamed Raukkan in 1982.3</p>

<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<p>This is further explained in the video “We are Ngarrindjeri” 5 : <a href="https://vimeo.com/98509879">https://vimeo.com/98509879</a></p> <p>Demonstrating where or what country one is from is critical to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person for their self-identity, and when introducing themselves to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p> <p>However, there are many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who do not know their country or mob due to forced removals from country or family (Stolen Generation). Since identity is core to social and emotional health, not knowing Culture and Country can have a negative impact on health.</p>
<p><b>References</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A national Aboriginal health strategy / prepared by the National Aboriginal Health Strategy Working Party by Australia. National Aboriginal Health Strategy Working Party [Canberra]: [National Aboriginal Health Strategy Working Party], [1989.]</li> <li>2. Steve Hemming and Daryle Rigney INNOVATION IN GOVERNANCE Ngarrindjeri futures: Negotiating a future through Caring for Ruwe/Ruwar (lands, waters and all living things) <a href="http://www.nature.org/cs/groups/webcontent/@web/@australia/documents/document/prd_062391.pdf">http://www.nature.org/cs/groups/webcontent/@web/@australia/documents/document/prd_062391.pdf</a></li> <li>3. State Library of South Australia: <a href="http://guides.slsa.sa.gov.au/Aboriginal_Missions/PointMcLeay">http://guides.slsa.sa.gov.au/Aboriginal_Missions/PointMcLeay</a></li> <li>4. Social and Emotional Well-Being Framework, A National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well-Bring 2004 – 2009, <a href="http://www.naccho.org.au/download/aboriginal-health/social_and_emotional_well_being_framework_20042009.pdf">http://www.naccho.org.au/download/aboriginal-health/social_and_emotional_well_being_framework_20042009.pdf</a></li> <li>5. Video credit: “We Are Ngarrindjeri” Developed and produced by Change Media in partnership with the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority © 2015 Change Media and Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority <a href="http://www.changemedia.net.au/projects/we-are-ngarrindjeri">http://www.changemedia.net.au/projects/we-are-ngarrindjeri</a> <a href="http://www.ngarrindjeri.org.au/">http://www.ngarrindjeri.org.au/</a></li> </ol>
<p><b>Learning Activity</b> <b>These are available as Student Worksheets.</b></p>	<p><b>Activity 1a: Identity (Worksheet available)</b></p> <p>Students are required to create a flag that represents their own identity. They can draw on ideas from family, where they are from, traditions and celebrations in family and culture. Encourage students to draw pictures to represent different aspects of their identity as opposed to writing words. Suggest a focus on different colours that they will use.</p> <p>Students then write down how their identity is represented in the flag. Before discussing their choices with the person next to them and why they are of importance to their identity.</p> <p>Students will then colour in the Indigenous Australian flag (see below)</p>  <p><b>The different colours on the flag represent:</b></p> <p><b>Black:</b> represents the Aboriginal people of Australia</p> <p><b>Yellow:</b> represents the Sun, giver of life and protector</p> <p><b>Red:</b> represents the red Earth, the red ochre used in ceremonies and Aboriginal peoples spiritual relation to the land.</p> <p>Naidoc (2016) <a href="http://www.naidoc.org.au/indigenous-australian-flags">http://www.naidoc.org.au/indigenous-australian-flags</a></p> <p>Discuss with your class what the different colours on the flag represent and how this may portray Indigenous Australian identity.</p>

<p><b>Learning Activity</b> These are available as Student Worksheets.</p>	<p>Ask students about the colours they used on their own flags and what they may represent.</p> <p>Have a class discussion about identity. Brainstorm the different factors that can influence an individual's identity. Students will write down ideas and share with the person next to them.</p> <p>Discuss the Indigenous Australian flag in relation to identity and the various dimensions of health and wellbeing. With each of the three colours shown on the Indigenous flag, write down at least three points for how the representations could tie in with identity and health and wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Ideas:</b> (can expand further with students)</p> <p><b>Black:</b> The sense of community, family, traditions</p> <p><b>Yellow:</b> Spiritual beliefs, connection to country, tradition</p> <p><b>Red:</b> Spiritual relation to the land, cultures, traditions/ceremonies</p> <p>Discuss with students how strong connections to any of these facets of identity will in turn strengthen an individual's health and wellbeing.</p>
	<p><b>Activity 1b: Health definitions (Worksheet available)</b></p> <p>Students will read the following example of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders peoples perceptions of health and non-Indigenous peoples perceptions of health then complete the questions below.</p> <p>The following is an example of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people perceptions of health:</p> <p><b>How is health defined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no one term that translates health in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages – generally it is seen as 'Life'. (Gatjil Djerrkura, NT).</li> <li>• 'Not just the physical well-being of the individual but the social, emotional, and cultural well-being of the whole community. This is the whole-of-life view and it also includes the cyclical concept of life-death-life.' (National Aboriginal Health Strategy Report, 1989).</li> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples view health as a collective asset whereas many non-Indigenous western cultures see health as an individual asset.</li> </ul> <p>The following is an example of non-Indigenous people perceptions of health:</p> <p><b>How is health defined by non-Indigenous peoples?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. <sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Health is the absence of any disease or impairment. <sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Health is a state that allows the individual to adequately cope with all demands of daily life. <sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Health is a state of balance, an equilibrium that an individual has established within himself and between himself and his social and physical environment. <sup>2</sup></li> </ul>

<p><b>Learning Activity</b> These are available as Student Worksheets.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In the venn diagram to be completed individually, students will identify similarities and differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous understandings of health and wellbeing. In their own words they will list how health is viewed by Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The differences will be listed on differing sides of the venn diagram in the correct circle, whilst the similarities between the two definitions of health and wellbeing will be listed in the overlapping section.</li> <li>2. In small groups students will discuss the similarities and differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous understandings of health and wellbeing, as well as how non-Indigenous populations can learn from the Indigenous Australian definition of health and wellbeing.</li> </ol> <p>Example: There is great value in learning from different cultures. Some ways in which non-Indigenous Australians can learn from the Indigenous Australian definition of health could be by approaching health with a more holistic view. Health is not merely physical, or the absence of disease, but is made up of many facets that are inclusive of social, emotional and cultural health. Health is perceived as “not just the physical wellbeing of an individual but the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole community. Even if only one person is sick, the whole community hurts.”<sup>3</sup></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. In small groups, students brainstorm and create a mind map to present their beliefs of how non-Indigenous populations can learn from the Indigenous Australian definition of health and wellbeing.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>References:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. World Health Organisation, 1948. <a href="http://www.who.int/about/mission/en/">http://www.who.int/about/mission/en/</a></li> <li>2. (Sartorius, N. (2006). The Meanings of Health and its Promotion. Croatian Medical Journal, 47(4), 662–664.</li> <li>3. <a href="http://www.bullinahahs.org.au/about-us/aboriginal-definition-of-health">http://www.bullinahahs.org.au/about-us/aboriginal-definition-of-health</a></li> </ol>
	<p><b>Student Activity 1c: Case Study (Worksheet available)</b></p> <p>Read the following information individually or as a class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Aboriginal health” means not just the physical wellbeing of an individual but refers to the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole Community in which each individual is able to achieve their full potential as a human being, thereby bringing about the total wellbeing of their Community.</li> <li>• It is a whole-of-life view and includes the cyclical concept of life-death-life.</li> <li>• From an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective, health is complex and multifaceted. It includes physical health of individuals, social and emotional health, and the wellbeing of whole communities.</li> <li>• Culture and Country for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are linked, there isn’t just one Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander culture, but many. There may be many cultural similarities but also differences across Nations.</li> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not view the land like many western societies. They didn’t own the land, and do not now own the land, but rather see themselves almost like guardians of their Country. Connection to Country is, and still remains, a complex relationship.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Learning Activity</b> These are available as Student Worksheets.</p>	<p>An example of Connection to Country is taken from the Ngarrindjeri nation, an Aboriginal nation of 18 language groups who occupied, and still inhabit, the Lower Murray, Coorong and Lakes area of South Australia:</p> <p>“The Ngarrindjeri nation... use the term Ruwe/Ruwar to encapsulate the interconnection between country, body, and spirit. This interconnection is fundamental to wellbeing and it is for this reason that healthy lands and waters are critical to healthy Ngarrindjeri people and culture. Creation ancestors such as Ngurunderi give Ngarrindjeri traditional responsibility to care for Ruwe/Ruwar.”</p> <p>Their lands and waters extended 30km up the Murray from Lake Alexandrina, the length of the Coorong and the coastal area to Encounter Bay. Today, this Aboriginal group is still very strong, with a large community of people based in the Lower Murray and Coorong area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrating where or what country one is from is critical to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person for their self-identity, and when introducing themselves to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</li> <li>• However, there are many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who do not know their country or mob due to forced removals from country or family (Stolen Generation).</li> <li>• Since identity is core to social and emotional health and wellbeing, not knowing Culture and Country can have a negative impact on health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>												
	<p>After reading the case study and watching the video “We are Ngarrindjeri”, answer the following questions.</p> <p>1. Students read through the above case study and list examples in the table below of ways in which certain dimensions of health are defined.</p> <p>Complete the following table: <b>Below are some examples, these can be extended upon</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="304 1285 1493 1603"> <thead> <tr> <th>Dimensions of health and wellbeing</th> <th>Examples of the dimensions of health and wellbeing in the case study</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Physical</td> <td>Physical wellbeing, absence of disease.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Social</td> <td>Community is a large aspect of Indigenous Australian health. The wellbeing of whole communities is valued.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Emotional</td> <td>Identity is core to emotional health, knowing culture and country.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mental</td> <td>View themselves as guardians of their country.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Spiritual</td> <td>Whole-of-life view, cyclical concept of life-death-life.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Dimensions of health and wellbeing	Examples of the dimensions of health and wellbeing in the case study	Physical	Physical wellbeing, absence of disease.	Social	Community is a large aspect of Indigenous Australian health. The wellbeing of whole communities is valued.	Emotional	Identity is core to emotional health, knowing culture and country.	Mental	View themselves as guardians of their country.	Spiritual	Whole-of-life view, cyclical concept of life-death-life.
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**Learning Activity**  
These are available as Student Worksheets.

2. Students to complete the 'versus' tables below. For each dimension of health and wellbeing, think about how the health and wellbeing of an individual may be affected based upon whether an individual has either a strong connection to this dimension of health, or a weak/non-existent connection.

a) Physical health:

Strong connection	Weak/non-existent connection

b) Social health:

Strong connection	Weak/non-existent connection

c) Emotional health:

Strong connection	Weak/non-existent connection

d) Mental health:

Strong connection	Weak/non-existent connection

e) Spiritual health:

Strong connection	Weak/non-existent connection

<p><b>Learning Activity</b> These are available as Student Worksheets.</p>	<p>3. For each of the sociocultural factors listed below, discuss the contribution each makes to the variations in health status that exist in Australia's youth between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.</p> <p><b>Family:</b></p> <p><b>Education:</b></p> <p><b>Income:</b></p> <p><b>Access to health information:</b></p> <p>4. Students to develop a storyboard or comic strip demonstrating the links/ relationships between the dimensions of health and wellbeing as demonstrated in the case study.</p>
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