



Australian Parents Council Inc

Indigenous Parent Factor: Successful early learning at home and school

Key principles

The development of IPF was founded on sound education principles and the desires of Indigenous Australians which remain relevant today. Some of these are listed below:

- **Parents are the first educators of their children** (Human Rights Commission Act 1981; Evangelou 2004);
- **The first few years of a child's development are crucial** in setting the foundation for life-long learning (Fish 2002);
- **All young Indigenous people have the capacity to learn** (MCEETYA 2000);
- **Home learning provides children with the valuable and vital basic building blocks of learning** which will be further built on by formal schooling (Comber 1999);
- **A child's education is an important partnership between home and school** (Russell 1991);
- **The relationship between home and school literacy practices impact on students' school success** (Cairney & Ruge 1997; DEST 2005);
- **Closer ties between home and school, especially for culturally diverse families, can improve students' chances of school success** (Cairney & Ruge 1997);
- **Indigenous children come to school with a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds and that these be recognised by Indigenous parents and school personnel as valued foundational stones** for the child's future literacy proficiency (Koppe 2000; QCEC 1996; Tripcony 2000);
- **A child's English literacy proficiency can be improved if parents demonstrate to their child that literacy is important;**
- **A child's literacy proficiency can improve if parents are involved in the day to day education of their child** (Jones & Rowley 1990; Dept. of Educ. Qld 2004);
- **If parents and carers of children are to participate more fully in their children's education they require assistance in understanding the literacy practices and academic jargon of schools** (QCEC 1996);
- **The negative effect of the mismatch between home and school literacies can be minimised by greater communication, understanding and coordination of both** (McNoughton 1995);
- **A vital aspect of a child's success at school is the partnership between home and school** (Dunne 2000);
- **School staff need to value the wealth of literacy practices that children engage in at home** (Comber 1999; Tripcony 2000);
- **Australian Indigenous parents have expressed that they do want their children to be proficient in English literacies as well as maintaining strength and confidence in their cultural heritage and home language/s** (QCEC 1996; DETYA 2000);
- **Australian Indigenous ways of learning can be used effectively for up-skilling Indigenous parents in adult learning contexts** (DEST 2004);
- **Negative past personal and historical education experiences often deter Indigenous people from participating in their child's education** (QIECB 2006);



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- **Indigenous children have a greater chance of being successful in school if their parents and carers are more involved in their schooling (DETYA 2000);**
- **Indigenous children have a greater chance of being successful in school if their parents and carers are confident in participating in the educational decision making for their children (DETYA 2000);**
- **Indigenous parents can take an active and effective role in the education of their children in partnership with the school (QCEC 1996);**
- **Indigenous children have a greater chance of equitable education outcomes commensurate with their non-Indigenous peers** if they engage fully in formal schooling and particularly have access to these facilities in the early years of schooling. This requires the provision and ease of access of such facilities by school authorities and that Indigenous parents value early childhood education and regular attendance as a priority (DEST 2003; HREOC 2000; MCEETYA 2000).