

ENROLMENT

Identifying a Family's Language Background

Effective communication with the family/carer is essential to the enrolment, care and inclusion of a child in your service. To assure good communication with families and carers from Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and to assess if support relating to information sharing is required, it is essential to identify the families/carers:

- area/country of origin.
- language spoken.
- language literacy.

It is important to remember several points:

- spoken and written languages may differ.
- some families may not be able to read or write in their own language.
- certain languages are only verbal and do not exist in a written form.

Below are some suggestions to help you through this part of the inclusion process.

Checklist of Ideas

- Display a world/Australia map in a prominent place, like an entrance. Ask the family to point to or place a pin on the country (and town if possible) where they are from.
- Display/show a list of scripts and languages for the family to find the one they are able to read. Write down the name of the language next to the script.
- Show any other examples of languages in your centre, e.g. bilingual books, letters from other Indigenous and CALD families, bilingual notices, to the family to assess whether they can read them.
- If you can find out the name of the area the family comes from but not the language, tell BISS the area and BISS will endeavour to send you some samples of languages to show to the family. One area can have many languages.
- If the family cannot read or write but can understand the question "What language do you speak?" write down how their answer *sounds* to you, tell BISS and we will do some investigative work for you.
- Try and identify if and what their second language might be. For example, a person from a Sudanese background may speak the language Dinka at home, but also speak and read Arabic.

Related BISS Information Sheets:

- Identifying the correct Language and Script (non-Indigenous)
- Assessing the need for an Interpreter
- Preparing for Enrolment

Self- help Resources:

BISS has perused these websites. No responsibility is taken for the content of these websites

Maps of the world with language indication

<http://www.mapsofworld.com/world-language-map.htm>

Map with languages of Australia

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_map.asp?name=AU&seq=10

Aboriginal language map NT

http://www.dlgh.nt.gov.au/ais/data/assets/pdf_file/0015/6540/Region_map_A4.pdf

Aboriginal language listing NT

http://www.dlgh.nt.gov.au/ais/___data/assets/pdf_file/0016/6541/Regions_and_their_languages.pdf

Comprehensive language by country chart

<http://multilingualbooks.com/fromcountry2lang.html>

Listing of official languages of countries

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_official_languages

REFERENCES

1. Department of Local Government an Housing, Aboriginal Interpreter Services (AIS) and Interpreting and Translation Services (ITS) Northern Territory
2. 'Identifying Languages' The Western Australian Languages Services Policy 2008