

Child Spirit Seeing and Child Spirit Dreaming

By Samarra Toby

“As a First Nations doctor and Mother to a child with autism we view and see our children in a way of their spirit and being, they are not defined by a diagnosis. Our Gangulu and South Sea cultural connections acknowledge that the health and broader life ecosystems transition through unpredictable yet recurring cycles of growth and creation.

The Gangulu have an evolving knowledge network acquired by ancestors over hundreds of thousands of years – time immemorial through direct contact with the environment, land and waters. This knowledge is specific to our homelands – Gangulu country – and includes the relationships between plants, animals, traditional medicines, natural phenomena, landscapes and timing of events that are used for lifeways.

The Gangulu people, our homeland, our spirit dreaming and the environment are an interconnected framework that envelops our children in care and centredness – we are one organism. Intergenerational knowledge and connection to our homelands, spiritual, physical, emotional and community wellbeing helps us to identify and redefine challenges for our children, with interwoven solutions within a cultural framework of healing and acceptance of ‘child spirit seeing’ and ‘child seeing dreaming.’ The Gangulu consider our children to be the centre of our spiritual and cultural ecosystem and all things focus on their spiritual, physical, psychosocial and dreaming wellbeing.”

If you would like to learn more about the National Guideline for the assessment and diagnosis of autism, please visit:

autismcrc.com.au/assessment-and-diagnosis

National Guideline

For the assessment and diagnosis of autism in Australia

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SECOND AGE OF DREAMING

NORTH

RED

AIR / MIND

MOON

SUNRISE - SPRING
NEW BEGINNINGS
VISUALISED DREAMING
INFANCY
INNOCENCE

NIGHT / WINTER

EARTH

ANIMALS
RIGHT TIMING
POWER
REST AND REGENERATION
WISDOM DREAMING
SPIRITUAL PROTECTION IN
OUR HOMELAND
HOMELAND BASED
LEARNING ON COUNTRY



FIRST AGE
OF
CREATION

WEST

BLACK

THIRD AGE
OF
REGENERATION

EAST

YELLOW

WATER / SPIRIT
HEART

WATER

EMOTION
SUNSET / HARVEST
COMPLETION / DEATH
ANCESTORS
ENTERING DREAMTIME
SHARING TEACHINGS &
PRAYERS

MIDDAY SUN / SUMMER

SUN

PLANTS
ENERGY
ADOLESCENCE
TRUST
TRADITIONAL FOODS,
GATHERING AND HARVESTING
BIOCENTRIC ECOLOGY

FOURTH AGE OF SPIRIT HEART

SOUTH

WHITE

Respecting First Nations Peoples



Services should be culturally-affirming for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other First Peoples, built on an acknowledgment of the barriers to accessing supports that they may experience; an understanding of current and historical truths and their enduring impact; and respect for deep connection to Country, language, customs, and traditions.