

Reading Writing **Hotline**

1300 6 555 06



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Reading Writing Hotline helping to revitalise First Nations languages this NAIDOC Week

The theme of NAIDOC week this week is ‘Our Languages Matter’ and the Reading Writing Hotline has partnered with First Languages Australia to celebrate by launching a new resource to support learning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

The Reading Writing Hotline, a free national service that helps adults with literacy and numeracy skills, is launching a new website feature that directs people to resources for learning First Languages and guides people to the appropriate ways to connect with communities to make their inquiries.

Reading Writing Hotline Manager, Vanessa Iles, said the new resource addresses a recent increase in requests for information from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

“In our conversations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander callers many have expressed interest in learning their traditional languages.

“As well as working with callers on improving English literacy, we’ve been able to connect callers with First Nations language classes and resources. We’re now launching a website section with this information in one place.

“This is the just the first step. With help from the community we’re hoping to grow the knowledge bank as people share their resources and knowledge.

“Callers have shared their grandparents’ stories of being forbidden from speaking their languages on missions, reserves, and even in their homelands.

“We need to work together to revitalise these ancient languages, many of which are in danger of being lost, despite their immense spiritual and cultural significance and the knowledge they hold,” Ms Iles said.

Faith Baisden from First Languages Australia said that learning traditional languages is not just for children but for a growing number of adults.

“The Reading Writing Hotline is working with us to make sure that people know the correct protocols around learning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. This means that learning language must happen through a connection and relationship with the language community – if and when the community is willing to offer lessons. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients of the Hotline will be supported to get back in touch with their community and will be welcomed and encouraged to reconnect with the language of their family.

For more information about Aboriginal language resources or improving literacy, call the Hotline on **1300 6 555 06** or visit the website **readingwritinghotline.edu.au**

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