

# WELLBEING AND EXPERIENCES OF RACISM



## Results from Waves 11 and 12 (2018/19)

Racism and discrimination in Australia impacts children, youth and their families. Experiences can build resilience and educate others, however, often they can be negative. *Footprints in Time* asked youth and their families where and how they experience racism. In the Wave 11 and 12 report, the relationship between experiences of racism and wellbeing were explored.



### Dads of *Footprints in Time* youth often see others being treated unfairly.

**In the 12 months before the survey Dads personal experiences of racism included...**

<b>2 in 3</b>	<b>Seeing others treated unfairly</b>
<b>1 in 3</b>	<b>Being ignored</b>
<b>1 in 3</b>	<b>Being stared at rudely</b>
<b>2 in 5</b>	<b>Being told you are not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander</b>
<b>1 in 4</b>	<b>Being told they don't look Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander</b>



### Experiencing racism impacts wellbeing.

When Dads were asked how they usually react to racism and discrimination some said that it depends on the situation. Some Dads said they will make the choice to walk away, others said they will choose to correct the other person and educate them.

The everyday occurrences of racism in the lives of *Footprints in Time* families impacts wellbeing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who experienced racism less often, reported more happiness and satisfaction in their lives.

Understanding what racism looks like and how it impacts people is critical to reducing racism in Australia.

Dads of the *Footprints in Time* youth were most likely to see racism in their everyday life when they saw other people being treated unfairly because they were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. These experiences came from many different sources but were mostly seen at services, in public places, during interactions with police or security and in the work place.

Dads of *Footprints in Time* youth want others to be educated about racism. It is important to acknowledge racism and make it safe to talk about.

**"Sometimes I make a point of correcting, other times... just walk away"**

**"Try to correct and educate the person"**

## Footprints in Time youth with fewer experiences of racism reported greater wellbeing.

Footprints in Time youth were asked about their personal experiences of racism. This included if they felt they were stared at or ignored, if people picked fights with them or if they had seen others treated unfairly because they are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Footprints in Time youth who reported fewer experiences of racism in 2017 were more likely to report better mental health and wellbeing when responding to the survey in 2017 and 2019.

## Footprints in Time youth in cities and regional areas are more likely to report they have been bullied because they are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

One in four parents or caregivers reported that their child was bullied because they were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Footprints in Time youth aged between 13 and 16 who were in high school experienced a higher rate of racist bullying than those aged 10 to 12 in primary school.

Bullying was most frequently experienced by Footprints in Time youth living in major cities and outer regional areas with children in remote areas reporting the lowest rates of racist bullying.

**Major cities**

**39%**

**Inner and Outer Regional**

**35%**

**Remote and Very Remote**

**13%**

### Supporting youth to identify and address incidents of racism looks like:

- Educating people about racism and its impact
- Building and maintaining positive cultural identity
- Acknowledging racism and making it safe to talk about racism and discrimination
- Empowering young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to identify racism and discrimination
- Encouraging youth to identify resilience and strengths in their communities
- Encouraging youth to seek support

### This can happen by:

- Governments and institutions taking responsibility to reduce exposure to racism and discrimination
- Recognising when and where racism and discrimination are experienced
- Addressing this in the delivery of services and programs that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

**DISCLAIMER** This factsheet uses unit record data from *Footprints in Time*: the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC). LSIC was conducted by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS). We acknowledge the role and support of state and territory departments of education and Catholic dioceses in the collection of LSIC data. The findings and views reported in this factsheet, however, are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Australian Government, DSS, or the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and their communities involved in this study.

#### FULL REPORT

*Footprints in Time*, The Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children, Report from Wave 11 and 12. The Kids Research Institute Australia.

For more information on the *Footprints in Time* study <https://www.dss.gov.au/lsic>

**PREPARED BY**