

# FACT SHEET

## The Voice to Parliament



## Respectful Dialogue

With the referendum upon us, it is important to remember and respect that our friends, family and community will not always agree on the conversation, the outcome or the plan by the government. Considering this, it is important to maintain and engage in respectful conversations with our community.

This can be extremely difficult at times, given the media attention and how emotive this outcome will be. Sometimes it is about disagreeing respectfully, but what does that mean?

Below are a few things to consider when discussing the Voice and the Referendum.

### Speaking in a Positive Way

When communicating, be honest, open, and polite. Framing your message in a positive way can have a powerful impact on the conversation, leaving the other person feeling good at the end of it.

Positive and respectful communication reinforces the value of individual abilities, qualities, and achievements. Acknowledging their concerns and worries validates that person.

### Speak the Truth, Fairly

Respectful communication is built on honesty and fairness. Adopting a respectful communication approach in interactions will allow all parties to contribute proportionally, creating a dialogue built on fairness. Gossiping or sharing of information without facts may lead to a lack of trust.

### Active Listening

Active listening is a powerful tool in ensuring respectful communication. Active listening means being engaged in the dialogue, setting aside distractions in our thoughts and environment. Whilst many people attempt to multitask whilst listening to information being presented

verbally, it is impossible to achieve. Receiving information from others in a respectful way requires stopping what you are doing to give the other person your full attention, not speaking over or interrupting and using words to encourage the speaker to continue.

### Body Language and Non-Verbal Cues

When communicating with others, they receive the information by more than just listening to what you are saying. Non-verbal cues play a key role in effectively conveying your message across.

### Inclusive Language

To be respectful, means to show courtesy and consideration for others and not to discriminate.

[Respectful Communication Tip Sheet \(stackpathcdn.com\)](https://stackpathcdn.com/Respectful-Communication-Tip-Sheet.pdf)

### What Do You Want to Achieve by Having This Conversation?

Before you start this conversation, what do you want out of it? Sometimes no one will change their mind, no one will learn anything and it may not even be interesting. If you don't think someone will change their mind, but you want to understand their perspective, don't get distracted by trying to convince them.

### Ask Lots of Questions

By using this an opportunity to ask people what they think, you will learn more and are less likely to feel pressure or stress. Finding out more about why a person believes what they do, helps you understand them better and for you to find common ground.

## Understand Your Level of Control

It is always important to focus on the things you can control yourself, while also acknowledging the things you can't control.

It can be useful to remind yourself that some people might never change their minds about the things they believe. So, while it remains difficult to change the minds of people around you, you can definitely control your own actions.

## Know When to Change the Topic

Even if you enjoy chatting about politics, if it starts making you feel stressed or sad it can be a good idea to change the topic or take a break from the conversation. Here are a few signs that it's time to take a break:

- The other person is being rude or disrespectful.
- The other person is bringing your personal identity, such as your gender, ethnicity or sexuality, into the discussion in a negative way.
- You're feeling anxious or frustrated.

If you need support and someone to speak to about this, contact **13 YARN**.

[A guide to discussing politics with friends and family | ReachOut Australia](#)

### More information

For more information about the Voice, including NSWALC's principles in relation to the Voice, please visit [NSWALC's website](#).