

WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2023 Young folks activity



Mums and Dads, Grandmas and Grandpas, favourite Aunts and Uncles, teachers ... get together with young folks in your circles and be creative for human rights!!

Here's the story: Who are Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul?

Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul are First Nations men and Traditional Owners of the islands of Boigu and Saibai in the Torres Strait. They are called "Uncle" as a term of respect because they are community leaders. Their island homes form the most northerly part of Australia and sit just 4km off the southern coast of Papua New Guinea.

Find the islands here: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Torres+Strait+Islands/@-10.01494,141.1119868,4z/data=!4m6!3m5!1s0x69b069c14e004a8d:0x2742d14f7a57471b!8m2!3d-9.9815567!4d142.5552179!16zL20vMDJwM3hf?entry=ttu>

Their families have lived in their Country for thousands of years. They have the oldest living culture in the world and their traditions are strongly connected to their Country. The term "Country" is often used by Aboriginal Peoples to describe the lands, waterways and seas to which they are connected. The term also includes ideas about law, customs, language, spiritual beliefs, cultural practices, foods, family and identity.

Since their islands are small and low-lying, they are particularly exposed to the harmful impacts of climate change. Rising seas, increasing temperatures and biodiversity loss mean that they are at risk of losing their homes, access to food and water and their healthy environment. As large parts of their islands become uninhabitable they will be forced to leave. Their homes could disappear beneath the rising seas and they will lose who they are, their culture and spirituality.

Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul are determined to protect their communities before it's too late. Their sacred sites where they do ceremonies, and the knowledge and connection to Country that their ancestors have passed down for thousands of years, could be lost. Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul are calling on the Australian government to take effective action against climate change.

Here's how you can show Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul that you support them in their fight to protect their island homes.

Close your eyes for a moment and picture your home, community and the beauty in the natural environment that surrounds you. Think about how your home and environment might be transformed because of climate change and what you can do to protect and sustain them.

Use your art materials to illustrate your homes or communities. Show how they are being challenged by climate change (changing weather, extreme heat, floods, fires..) and also what things are being done locally to fight climate change. Think about people who are most at risk, who will find the changes difficult to handle and show how they could be helped.

Respectfully add some images from Uncle Paul and Uncle Pabai's culture to your drawing. Their totems are the crocodile, the dog and the yam leaf – which is also the symbol for peace. Other symbols include water, waves, islands and canoes. Blue, green, white and black are the colours of the Torres Strait flag.

Write a message to Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul on your drawing. Say a little about who you are, where you are from, why you care and what climate impacts you worry about. Show Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul that you believe in them and support what they are doing.

Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul speak English and Kalaw Kawaw Ya, the language spoken on the islands of Boigu and Saibai. You could include this example message:

Mura kalmel sipa (Kalaw Kawaw Ya)

Together we unite (English)

Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul will feel so excited to receive support from all over the world.

Send your message:

Bring your illustrated message to Group Nine's Write for Rights event at KPL meeting room D, Saturday December 9, 11-4. We will take a picture of you with it and put it on our Facebook page.

-or-

Take a picture of you and your family working on the picture or with the finished product and email it to : groupnine9@gmail.com

Then mail your illustrated message to:

Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul

c/o Amnesty International Australia Locked bag 23

Broadway, NSW, 2007

Australia