

Dear Prime Minister

Prime Minister, I am writing as a friend of the Baya Gawiy Buga yani Jandu yani u Centre in Fitzroy Crossing. If you visited this centre and saw the commitment of the staff, community members and service providers as well as their genuine engagement, respect and collaboration with the Traditional Owners, you would see just how vital this centre is. Please support this centre. It supports and has the capacity to support many others.

Kind regards,
Alison Hiscocks
BROOME, WA



Dear Prime Minister

Kids Club is vital to the health and wellbeing of the kids of this Indigenous community...There is no other service for children who's parents want to work. School holidays otherwise create a vacuum with nothing to do. The program improves literacy, numeracy and physical skills through providing a creative, fun, largely self directed learning environment that the children attend voluntarily. It provides much needed employment for Indigenous people.

Kids Club Out of School Hours Care
LOCKHART RIVER ABORIGINAL
SHIRE COUNCIL, QLD



Dear Prime Minister

Know culture, know self.
No culture, no self.
Aboriginal specific services matter.

Chrise Wanu



What now?

These powerful messages add to the growing evidence of the importance of these services for our children, families and communities. What's needed now is a long-term commitment to a flexible and adequately funded program.

Time is rapidly running out.



Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care

To find out more information about this initiative, please contact:
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AUSTRALIANS SPEAK UP FOR
INDIGENOUS EARLY CHILDHOOD NEEDS

The issue

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood and family support services across Australia are community development engines that nurture and protect children, and support families to raise their children strong, healthy and proud of who they are. Despite their crucial role and proven track record, many of these services are grossly underfunded, requiring them to restrict numbers, programs, staff and infrastructure, and are

facing an uncertain future, with Federal Government funding uncertain beyond June 2014.

As the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early child and family support services, SNAICC is supporting these services by calling for a 10-year Federally funded plan for integrated child and family services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

What we did

SNAICC sent postcards out to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood centres across Australia, and invited them to write a message to the Prime Minister telling him about their service.

What happened?

In the first few months we received **1200 postcards** — and more keep coming. People contributed from all walks of life: families, educators, teachers, health workers, community members and children. They sent powerful messages on the impact and benefits of these services to children, families and communities.

Here's what a few of them had to say...

Dear Prime Minister

The centre needs to stay so that I don't become a statistic as an unemployed single Indigenous parent.
Helen Ockerby
FITZROY CROSSING, WA

Dear Prime Minister

I am a GP at Tharwal Aboriginal Corporation. I see the positive impact of our child preschool program at Oorunga Wand arrah. The children are healthy, outgoing, keen to learn in a very positive environment and this is what is needed to contribute to Close the Gap.
Annette Bemand
AIRDS, NSW

Dear Prime Minister

We have the beginnings of a new and innovative concept in early years care and education. Why drop the ball now? Support the programs as they find the appropriate pathways in supporting this next generation. They are our future, give them a chance to be the next leaders and contributors to our country.
Sue Loughlin

Dear Prime Minister

I think it is vital to have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services in our area. I have utilised this service for all three of my children and it has provided an excellent foundation and readiness for their schooling. They have thrived at school and this service definitely contributed to their success.
Lylie Dobson
HELENS PARK, NSW

Dear Prime Minister

Having been a single father I struggle to find appropriate child care services for cultural & financial reasons. It's important that my child gets the best child care service, for this will effect their future. I would like my child to be educated as well as strong in identity & culture...the families these services support are the... "hard to reach families"... families that are on low income and unable to afford child care. Kind Regards
Felix Kerry
CAIRNS, QLD

Dear Prime Minister

I work closely with Indigenous families who access BBF services...Through the trusting relationships built with qualified staff in our services, we have been able to improve the health of not only the child but the family. To do this we need staff who stay with programs to build relationships with communities. We can only offer one year contracts due to one year funding agreement. Sustainable, secure, long term funding! Help us support long term strategic planning and understand we won't change the world in a day!
Kate, NT

